



**COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK
REPORT OF STATE OF CHHATTISGARH**

YOUTH PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT FORUM

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FOREWORD

The state of Chhattisgarh occupies a unique and vital position within the broader narrative of Indian civilizational progress. Endowed with profound natural wealth, dense ecological reserves, and a deeply rooted cultural heritage, the state is currently navigating a critical transition. It is moving steadily toward a modernized and diversified economy. The Comprehensive Development Framework Report of the State of Chhattisgarh captures the essence of this historical juncture. It maps a future where the traditional strengths of the region are harmonized with the modern imperatives of proactive governance, rapid infrastructure development, and comprehensive technological integration.

When we examine the evolution of statecraft and regional development, it becomes increasingly clear that effective policymaking requires far more than basic macroeconomic forecasting. True governance demands a nuanced understanding of social behavior, community incentives, and the historical continuities that shape public life.

Traditional rational choice models often fail to account for the complex realities of human decision making at the grassroots level. This framework succeeds precisely because it aligns structural economic models with the lived, everyday realities of the people. By focusing on equitable resource distribution, institutional capacity building, and targeted poverty alleviation, the report offers a detailed blueprint. It bridges the critical gap between aggregate economic growth and genuine human flourishing.

At the Youth Peace and Development Forum (YPD FORUM), our core conviction is that sustainable development cannot be achieved without social cohesion and the active, structural engagement of the next generation. Peace and development are inherently mutually reinforcing concepts. Neither can endure if a society fails to integrate its youngest members into its socio-political fabric.

Chhattisgarh is on the cusp of a significant demographic shift, with its working age population projected to expand rapidly over the coming decade. This presents a narrow but immensely powerful window of opportunity. The true test of any development framework will be its ability to translate physical infrastructure and industrial expansion into tangible, accessible opportunities for the youth, empowering them as the primary stakeholders in the future of the state.

The Comprehensive Development Framework Report acknowledges these shifting dynamics by prioritizing human capital. It recognizes that the wealth of a state lies not only in the minerals beneath its soil but in the potential of its people. The policies outlined herein reflect a deep understanding of behavioral economics, recognizing that citizens are not merely passive recipients of government aid but active participants whose choices must be nurtured through sound policy architecture. By mitigating risks for small enterprises, incentivizing

educational attainment, and ensuring that development reaches the most marginalized districts, the framework creates a foundation for sustainable, long term stability.

A crucial component of this vision is the integration of the state's tribal and rural populations into the mainstream economic narrative without erasing their socio-cultural identities. The cultural identity of Chhattisgarh must remain a guiding force as the state modernizes. The preservation of local traditions alongside the adoption of modern industrial practices is not a contradiction but a necessary synthesis.

Development policies must respect the historical context of the communities they serve, ensuring that progress feels organic rather than imposed. The framework thoughtfully addresses this balance, proposing strategies that elevate local communities while connecting them to the broader national and global economy.

Furthermore, we must recognize that true peace is not merely the absence of conflict but the presence of justice, equity, and opportunity. In regions that have historically faced developmental deficits, building physical infrastructure must be accompanied by the building of trust in public institutions. This report outlines actionable methodologies to enhance administrative transparency and accountability. It understands that when citizens see fair distribution of resources and opportunities, the foundations of lasting social peace are strengthened.

This comprehensive document is a vital intervention in the ongoing discourse regarding state capacity and regional transformation in India. It provides policymakers, corporate investors, and civil society leaders with the analytical rigor and empirical data required to drive meaningful, systemic change. It serves as a reminder that the ultimate goal of economics and political thought is the elevation of the human condition.

I commend the extensive research and collaborative effort that has gone into the creation of this document. It is my sincere hope that it will not remain a mere theoretical exercise but will serve as a definitive, actionable guide. The path ahead requires unwavering commitment, but with the right policy architecture in place, we can build a resilient, prosperous, and fundamentally inclusive Chhattisgarh for generations to come.

Dheeraj G. N.
Chairman
Youth Peace and Development (YPD) Forum
New Delhi

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The Youth Peace and Development Forum (YPD Forum) expresses its sincere gratitude to all individuals whose dedication, expertise, and commitment made the preparation of The Comprehensive Development Framework Report of the State of Chhattisgarh possible.

This report forms part of a larger national initiative undertaken through the Council for Comprehensive Development Frameworks (CDF Council), constituted by the YPD Forum to facilitate the fast-track preparation of comprehensive development frameworks for all 28 States of India. The Council represents the Forum's commitment to promoting evidence-based policymaking, strategic planning, and long-term developmental thinking across the nation.

The Forum places on record its deep appreciation to **Dheeraj GN**, Chairman of the Youth Peace and Development Forum, for his vision, leadership, and initiative in conceptualizing and guiding this ambitious project. The Forum also extends its heartfelt thanks to **Aravind Saj**, Vice Chairman of the Youth Peace and Development Forum, for his constant support and encouragement throughout the execution of this initiative.

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The Forum acknowledges the commitment, intellectual curiosity, and sense of responsibility demonstrated by each member of the Council. Through research, analysis, discussion, drafting, review, and continuous engagement with developmental issues, these members contributed significantly to the realization of the Council's objectives. Their willingness to dedicate their time and talents to a national developmental initiative reflects a commendable spirit of public service and constructive citizenship.

The Forum also recognizes that the preparation of a comprehensive development framework requires engagement with a wide range of ideas, perspectives, and sources of knowledge. Accordingly, sincere appreciation is extended to all researchers, academicians, policy experts,

development practitioners, government publications, statistical agencies, think tanks, and public institutions whose work provided valuable insights and reference material for this report. Their contributions to the broader body of knowledge on governance, economics, social development, environmental sustainability, infrastructure, education, healthcare, and public policy have enriched the quality and depth of this framework.

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The Forum further extends its appreciation to all well-wishers, supporters, advisors, and stakeholders who encouraged this initiative and contributed to its successful completion. Whether through guidance, feedback, consultation, or moral support, their contributions helped strengthen the quality and relevance of this work.

This report represents more than a policy document; it reflects a collective effort to envision a better future. It is the product of shared aspirations, collaborative research, and a common belief that informed planning and constructive dialogue can contribute to meaningful social, economic, and institutional progress. While the recommendations contained herein are intended to support the development of Chhattisgarh, they also form part of a broader national effort to strengthen the foundations of a developed, inclusive, sustainable, and prosperous India.

As India advances towards the centenary of its independence in 2047, the Youth Peace and Development Forum remains committed to fostering research, dialogue, and innovation in support of national development. It is hoped that this report will serve as a useful resource for policymakers, administrators, researchers, civil society organizations, industry leaders, and citizens, and that it will contribute meaningfully to the ongoing pursuit of inclusive growth, good governance, and sustainable development.

With gratitude to all who contributed to this endeavour, the Youth Peace and Development Forum proudly presents this report as a modest contribution towards the shared vision of a stronger Chhattisgarh and a developed India.

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TABLE OF CONTENT

Preface	pg no. 13
Executive Summary	pg no. 15
Chapter 1 : State profile - Geography, Demography and Society	pg no. 17
1.1 Geographic and Ecological Characteristics of the state	
1.2 Administrative Divisions: Districts, Divisions and Sub-State Units	
1.3 Demographic Structure: Population, Density, Growth and Composition	
1.4 Linguistic, Ethnic, Religious and Cultural Profile	
1.5 Human Development Index: State Ranking and Trend Analysis	
1.6 Poverty, Inequality and Multidimensional Deprivation Indices	
1.7 Intra-state disparities: Aspirational districts and Backward region identification	
1.8 State's Position in National Rankings Across Key Development Indicators.	
Chapter 2 : Fiscal architecture of the state	pg no. 26
2.1 Revenue Framework: Own Tax Revenue, Non-Tax Revenue and Devolution	
2.2 Expenditure Profile: Composition, Quality and Efficiency	
2.3 Capital Expenditure: Infrastructure Investment and Asset Creation	
2.4 Fiscal Deficit, Primary Deficit and Debt Sustainability	
2.5 State's Borrowings, Guarantees and Off-Budget Liabilities	
2.6 Finance Commission Awards: Allocation and Utilisation	
2.7 GST Implementation: Revenue Impact and Compensation Status	
2.8 Public Financial Management Reforms and Audit Compliance	
2.9 Centre-State fiscal relations: Trends and themes	
Chapter 3: Economic Structure, Growth and Sectoral Performance	pg no. 32
3.1 Gross State Domestic Product: Trends, Growth Rate and Sectoral Share	
3.2 Per Capita Income and Purchasing Power Analysis	
3.3 Primary Sector: Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries	
3.4 Secondary Sector: Industry, Manufacturing and Mining	
3.5 Tertiary Sector: Trade, Finance, Real Estate and Services	
3.6 Informal Economy: Size, Significance and Integration Challenges	
3.7 Labour Market: Employment, Unemployment and Workforce Quality	
3.8 Inflation, Price Stability and Consumer Welfare	
3.9 Growth Corridors: engines of economic expansion	

Chapter 4: Investment, Industry and Private Sector Development.....pg no. 43

- 4.1 Investment Climate Assessment and Ease of Doing Business
- 4.2 Industrial Policy Framework and MSME Development
- 4.3 Large and Anchor Industries: Sectoral Analysis
- 4.4 Special Economic Zones, Industrial Corridors and Clusters
- 4.5 Foreign Direct Investment: Inflows, Sectoral Distribution and Policy
- 4.6 Public Sector Undertakings: Performance and Reform Agenda
- 4.7 Public-Private Partnership Framework and Pipeline
- 4.8 Regional cooperation: Shared region and growth

Chapter 5: Education — Access, Quality and Future Readiness.....pg no. 50

- 5.1 Elementary Education: Enrolment, Retention, Dropout and Learning Outcomes
- 5.2 Secondary and Senior Secondary Education: Transition and Achievement
- 5.3 Higher Education: Institutional Capacity, Gross Enrolment and Quality
- 5.4 Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Ecosystem
- 5.5 Teacher Recruitment, Training and Professional Development
- 5.6 Digital Education, EdTech Integration and ICT in Schools
- 5.7 Special Education: Children with Disabilities and Inclusive Schooling
- 5.8 State-Specific Educational Challenges and Reform Priorities

Chapter 6: Health, Nutrition and Population.....pg no. 60

- 6.1 Public Health Infrastructure: Facilities, Human Resources and Gaps
- 6.2 Epidemiological Profile: Communicable and Non-Communicable Disease Burden
- 6.3 Maternal and Child Health: MMR, IMR, Under-5 Mortality and Nutrition
- 6.4 Universal Health Coverage: State Health Assurance Schemes
- 6.5 Mental Health Services: Availability, Access and Stigma Reduction
- 6.5a Migration, Family Structure and Psychosocial Health
- 6.6 Nutrition Programmes: ICDS, Mid-Day Meal and Poshan Abhiyan
- 6.7 Population Stabilisation and Family Planning
- 6.8 Health System Strengthening and Future Preparedness

Chapter 7: Social Justice, Inclusion and Community Welfare.....pg no. 70

- 7.1 Scheduled Castes: Demographic Profile, Deprivation and Development Programmes
- 7.2 Scheduled Tribes: Rights, Forest Dwelling Communities and Welfare Measures
- 7.3 Other Backward Classes: Identification, Reservation and Social Mobility
- 7.4 Gender Equity: Women's Participation in Education, Economy and Governance
- 7.5 Child Rights, Protection and Development: POCSO, Child Labour and Nutrition
- 7.6 Welfare of Elderly Persons: Pension, Care Infrastructure and Policy
- 7.7 Persons with Disabilities: Rights, Accessibility and Empowerment

- 7.8 Minority Communities: Development, Representation and Welfare
- 7.9 Social Security and Beneficiary-Linked Welfare Architecture

Chapter 8: Transport and Connectivity Infrastructure.....pg no. 76

- 8.1 Road Network: National Highways, State Highways and Rural Roads
- 8.2 Railways: Existing Network, Pending Projects and Expansion Proposals
- 8.3 Aviation: Airport Infrastructure and Air Connectivity
- 8.4 Ports, Inland Waterways and Logistics Hubs
- 8.5 Urban Mass Transit: Metro, Bus Rapid Transit and Integrated Mobility
- 8.6 Multimodal Logistics: Last-Mile Connectivity and Freight Corridors

Chapter 9: Energy, Power and Renewable Transition.....pg no. 86

- 9.1 Power Generation: Installed Capacity, Mix and Dependence Profile
- 9.2 Transmission and Distribution: Infrastructure, Losses and Reliability
- 9.3 Rural and Household Electrification: Coverage and Quality
- 9.4 Renewable Energy Potential: Solar, Wind, Hydro and Biomass
- 9.5 Energy Efficiency, Conservation and Demand-Side Management
- 9.6 State Electricity Regulatory Framework and Tariff Policy

Chapter 10: Water, Sanitation and Solid Waste Management.....pg no. 96

- 10.1 Drinking Water Supply: Coverage, Quality and Infrastructure
- 10.2 Irrigation Infrastructure: Command Area, Efficiency and Water-Use Productivity
- 10.3 Sanitation and Open Defecation Free Status: Post-ODF Sustainability
- 10.3a Comparative State Performance and Lessons
- 10.4 Solid Waste Management: Municipal, Biomedical and Hazardous Waste
- 10.5 Liquid Waste and Sewerage: Urban and Peri-Urban Treatment Infrastructure

Chapter 11: Urban Development, Housing and Smart Cities.....pg no. 106

- 11.1 Urbanisation Trends and Urban Governance Architecture
- 11.2 Urban Local Bodies: Financial Health, Capacity and Service Delivery
- 11.3 Housing: Demand Assessment, Affordability and Flagship Schemes
- 11.4 Smart Cities Mission and AMRUT: State-Level Implementation Review
- 11.5 Heritage Cities, Cultural Landscapes and Urban Tourism
- 11.6 Urban Poverty, Slum Rehabilitation and In-Situ Upgradation

Chapter 12: Rural Development and Decentralised Governance.....pg no. 116

- 12.1 Panchayati Raj Institutions: Structure, Devolution and Capacity
- 12.2 VB G-Ram-G (MGNREGA): Coverage, Wage Trends and Livelihood Outcomes

- 12.3 Rural Housing: PMAY-Gramin and State Schemes
- 12.4 Livelihood Promotion: SHGs, Cooperatives and Rural Enterprise
- 12.5 Rural Infrastructure: PMGSY, Connectivity and Market Linkages
- 12.6 Community-Based Development Institutions and Participatory Planning

Chapter 13: Environment and Natural Resource Governance.....pg no. 126

- 13.1 Forest Cover, Biodiversity and Wildlife Conservation
- 13.2 Land Use Change, Soil Degradation and Land Resource Management
- 13.3 Water Bodies, Wetlands and River Ecosystem Health
- 13.4 Mining and Mineral Resource Governance
- 13.5 Pollution: Air, Water, Noise and Soil — Status and Regulatory Response
- 13.6 Coastal and Marine Resource Management (where applicable)

Chapter 14: Climate Change and Ecological Security.....pg no. 136

- 14.1 State Climate Vulnerability and Risk Profile
- 14.2 State Action Plan on Climate Change: Review and Second Generation Reforms
- 14.3 Disaster Risk Profile: Hazard, Exposure and Vulnerability Mapping
- 14.4 Disaster Risk Reduction: Institutional Mechanisms and Preparedness
- 14.5 Post-Disaster Response, Relief and Reconstruction Framework
- 14.6 Green Economy Transition: Opportunities and Structural Challenges

Chapter 15: Administrative Governance Reform.....pg no. 146

- 15.1 Structure of State Administration and Inter-Departmental Coordination
- 15.2 Anti-Corruption Framework: Lokayukta, Vigilance and Enforcement
- 15.3 Legal and Judicial Administration: Pendency, Access and Reform
- 15.4 Police Modernisation and Internal Security Management
- 15.5 Regulatory Governance: Quality, Consistency and Independence
- 15.6 Reduction of Red-tapism: Simplification and way forward
- 15.7 Civil service strength: Vacancy rates and Training institutions

Chapter 16: Technology-Enabled Service Delivery.....pg no. 156

- 16.1 Digital Infrastructure: Broadband, Optical Fibre and Connectivity Coverage
- 16.2 e-Governance Architecture and Digital Public Infrastructure
- 16.3 Citizen Service Delivery: CSCs, Service Portals and Mobile Governance
- 16.4 Data Governance, Open Data Policy and Privacy Framework
- 16.5 Cybersecurity: State-Level Institutional Mechanisms
- 16.6 Emerging Technologies: AI, Geospatial Systems and Smart Governance

Chapter 17: Innovation, Research and Knowledge Economy.....pg no. 166

- 17.1 State Innovation Ecosystem: Startups and Accelerators
- 17.2 Research and Development: Academic-Industry Linkages
- 17.3 Intellectual Property: Awareness, Registration and Commercialisation
- 17.4 Knowledge Institutions as Engines of Development
- 17.5 Building a Youth Innovation and Research Ecosystem
- 17.6 Skill Development, Employability and Workforce Alignment

Chapter 18: Agriculture, Allied Sectors and Food Security.....pg no. 176

- 18.1 Cropping Pattern, Agricultural Productivity and Input Use
- 18.2 Irrigation and Water Use Efficiency in Agriculture
- 18.3 Agricultural Marketing, Price Realisation and Farmer Income
- 18.4 Food Processing Industry and Value Chain Development
- 18.5 Animal Husbandry, Dairy and Poultry: Economic Contribution
- 18.6 Fisheries: Inland, Marine and Aquaculture
- 18.7 Horticulture, Floriculture and Medicinal Plants
- 18.8 Agricultural Credit, Insurance and Risk Management

Chapter 19: Tourism, Culture and Creative Economy.....pg no. 186

- 19.1 Tourism Asset Inventory: Natural, Heritage, Religious and Adventure
- 19.2 Tourism Infrastructure: Hotels, Connectivity and Facilitation
- 19.3 Domestic and International Tourist Flows: Trends and Targets
- 19.4 Cultural Heritage Preservation and Institutional Framework
- 19.5 Creative Industries: Handicrafts, Performing Arts and Cultural Economy
- 19.6 Film, Media and Content Industries as Economic Drivers

Chapter 20: Cross-Cutting Themes and Integrated Policy Imperatives.....pg no. 196

- 20.1 Sustainable Development Goals of the state
- 20.2 Gender Mainstreaming Across Sectors
- 20.3 Youth Policy and Demographic Dividend Realisation
- 20.4 Migration: Internal, Inter-State and International Dimensions
- 20.5 Science, Technology and Innovation for Development
- 20.6 Statistical System Strengthening and Evidence-Based Policymaking
- 20.7 Public Participation: Behavioural Change and Citizen Engagement

Chapter 21: Vision 2047 — Strategic Priorities and Development.....pg no. 206

- 21.1 Long-Term Vision and Flagship Missions
- 21.2 Medium-Term Priority Action Plan (2025–2030)

21.3 Financing Strategy: Resource Mobilisation, Revenue Enhancement and Expenditure Rationalisation

21.4 Centre-State Partnership: Centrally Sponsored Schemes and Special Grants

21.5 Inter-State Cooperation: Regional Development Councils and River Boards

21.6 International Collaboration: Common Development Agenda and Global Partnership

21.7 Monitoring, Evaluation and Results Framework

21.8 Accountability Architecture: Legislature, Civil Society and Citizens

End Note.....pg no. 211

Reference Listpg no. 213

PREFACE

Chhattisgarh stands at a transformative juncture in its development journey. Endowed with over forty percent forest cover, rich mineral reserves, fertile river basins, and an enduring tribal heritage, the state holds the foundational assets needed for sustained prosperity. Over the past two decades, significant strides have been achieved in basic connectivity, power generation, and primary resource extraction, establishing the state as a core industrial and energy anchor. However, the central governance challenge remains translating this vast resource wealth into equitable human development, reduced regional disparities, and long-term ecological resilience across all districts.

Historically, the state's economic model has relied heavily on primary resource extraction and monoculture agrarian practices, creating distinct regional imbalances between industrialized urban corridors and interior tribal belts. While basic infrastructure has expanded, communities residing in remote forest geographies have often faced structural gaps in accessing advanced healthcare, quality education, and value-added market linkages. Recognizing these deep-seated challenges, modern governance must transcend traditional extractive models to foster localized wealth creation, socio-economic security, and generational stability.

At the same time, Chhattisgarh's extraordinary biodiversity and vital river catchments represent critical ecological assets that demand scientific conservation and careful stewardship. As industrialization and urban centers expand, the imperative to balance resource utilization with environmental carrying capacity has become vital. Unregulated deforestation, soil degradation, and water table depletion pose direct threats to rural livelihoods, necessitating an immediate paradigm shift toward green industrial practices, circular economy principles, and climate-resilient natural resource management across the state.

The **Comprehensive Development Framework Report of the State of Chhattisgarh** is formulated to address these structural bottlenecks and chart an inclusive, forward-looking roadmap. Moving beyond fragmented, siloed planning, it integrates industrial modernization with forest-based livelihoods, social protection, and decentralized governance into a unified policy architecture. The framework establishes measurable, evidence-based targets across economic, social, and environmental indicators, providing administrative departments with a cohesive operational baseline to steer medium- and long-term state initiatives.

Central to this blueprint is the constitutional and socio-economic empowerment of Chhattisgarh's indigenous and forest-dependent communities. By accelerating the decentralized mandates of the Provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act (PESA) and securing Community Forest Resource Rights under the Forest Rights Act (FRA), the framework places decision-making authority directly in the hands of Gram Sabhas. Establishing decentralized processing hubs and guaranteed value-chain support for

Minor Forest Produce (MFP) ensures that local custodians of natural wealth become direct, primary beneficiaries of economic growth.

The realization of this strategic vision is underpinned by extensive, multi-tier stakeholder consultations conducted across diverse socio-economic landscapes. Inputs from grassroots panchayat representatives, academic and technical specialists, civil society organizations, and industry leaders have shaped this actionable policy document. This collaborative methodology ensures that the strategic recommendations reflect ground-level realities while integrating contemporary technological innovations, robust financing mechanisms, and data-driven governance practices.

Ultimately, this report serves as an enduring charter for state administrative machinery, development partners, institutional investors, and community leaders. By harmonizing industrial diversification, ecological preservation, human capital acceleration, and grassroots democracy, the framework provides the strategic clarity required to navigate emerging challenges. It reaffirms a collective commitment to bridging historical divides and guiding Chhattisgarh toward a prosperous, self-reliant, and socially equitable future for all its people.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The **Comprehensive Development Framework Report of the State of Chhattisgarh articulates** a holistic, multi-decade development strategy designed to balance economic growth with environmental conservation and social justice. Positioned at the intersection of abundant natural resources and distinct regional vulnerabilities, the state requires a comprehensive policy architecture to bridge the divide between industrialized plain corridors and interior tribal belts. This framework establishes an evidence-based roadmap that aligns fiscal planning, sector-specific modernizations, and administrative reforms to deliver sustainable and inclusive prosperity across all thirty-three districts.

A primary focus of the framework is achieving a structural pivot in the state's macroeconomic foundation, moving from primary raw-material extraction toward high-value, diversified economic activities. Historically, the state's domestic product has relied heavily on power generation, core mining, and standard grain production, leaving it exposed to external commodity price volatility and localized environmental stress. The framework outlines actionable policy measures to shift capital, technology, and labor toward downstream value addition, high-tech manufacturing, and knowledge-based services while strictly enforcing ecological carrying-capacity thresholds.

In the agrarian domain, the framework mandates a phased transition from water-intensive monoculture paddy farming toward diversified, climate-resilient cropping systems. Policy mechanisms are instituted to incentivize the cultivation of nutri-cereals (millets), pulses, oilseeds, and high-value horticulture across varied agro-climatic zones. By expanding precision micro-irrigation networks, organic farming clusters, and modern post-harvest cold chains, the framework aims to double farm-household incomes, mitigate soil degradation, and ensure long-term regional food and water security.

Complementing agriculture, the report establishes a dedicated strategy to scale and formalize the Non-Timber Forest Produce (NTFP) and Minor Forest Produce (MFP) economy. Forest-dwelling and indigenous communities form the backbone of this sector, which has historically suffered from unorganized supply chains and value loss to external intermediaries. The framework establishes decentralized processing hubs, primary grading centers, and cold-storage facilities near collection points, backed by robust Minimum Support Price (MSP) operations, ensuring that processing and retail value addition remain directly within tribal village enterprises.

On the industrial and mineral front, the framework introduces stringent guidelines to transition heavy industries toward green practices and downstream manufacturing. Rather than exporting raw bauxite, iron ore, and coal, state incentives will prioritize local engineering clusters, green steel production, clean-tech manufacturing, and secondary metal fabrication. Parallely, the framework enforces rigorous environmental compliance,

progressive mine-closure protocols, and mandatory ecological reclamation to restore biodiversity and protect local hydrological systems in active mining regions.

To generate widespread non-farm employment, the strategy outlines targeted interventions for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), rural craft clusters, and agro-processing units. Setting up decentralized rural industrial parks equipped with plug-and-play infrastructure, subsidized credit access, and shared testing facilities will enable local entrepreneurs to scale. Targeted marketing support, export linkages, and institutional protection for traditional handlooms, bell metal crafts, and organic tribal produce will drive rural economic self-reliance.

Human capital development is positioned as the fundamental pillar of the state's transformation, with immediate priorities focused on public health, maternal care, and childhood nutrition. The framework outlines intensive, community-based nutrition programs to systematically eradicate child stunting, wasting, and maternal anemia across vulnerable blocks. Concurrently, it upgrades the rural public health architecture by deploying telemedicine networks, high-density Mobile Medical Units (MMUs), and fully equipped Primary Health Centres in remote and underserved terrains to ensure universal access to quality healthcare.

In the education and skills sector, the framework presents a modern curriculum overhaul aimed at equipping Chhattisgarh's youth for contemporary industrial and digital opportunities. Technical institutions, polytechnics, and Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) are restructured to offer specialized training in green energy, automation, data technology, advanced welding, and electronics assembly. Tailored educational support, residential schooling in tribal zones, and entrepreneurship incubation centers are prioritized to turn demographic potential into a capable, productive workforce.

Physical, digital, and energy infrastructure expansion serves as the operational backbone for this developmental model. The framework prioritizes the completion of all-weather rural road connectivity, multi-modal logistics hubs, and decentralized renewable microgrids in off-grid tribal habitations. Concurrently, high-speed optical fiber connectivity will be extended to every Gram Panchayat, enabling digital service delivery, rural e-commerce, distance education, and efficient administrative tracking across previously isolated regions.

Finally, the realization of this framework depends on decentralized, participatory governance and institutional accountability. The framework accelerates the operationalization of the Provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act (PESA) and Community Forest Resource Rights under the Forest Rights Act (FRA), placing statutory decision-making authority over local resources directly with the Gram Sabhas. Supported by data-driven monitoring dashboards, inter-departmental convergence protocols, and transparent grievance redressal systems, this Comprehensive Development Framework equips Chhattisgarh to achieve enduring, resilient, and equitable prosperity.

Chapter 1: State Profile — Geography, Demography and Society

1.1 Geographic and Ecological Characteristics of the State

Chhattisgarh is located in central-east India, sharing borders with Madhya Pradesh to the northwest, Uttar Pradesh to the north, Jharkhand to the northeast, Odisha to the east, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh to the south, and Maharashtra to the west, making it one of the few Indian states bordering seven other states (Government of Chhattisgarh, 2025). The state covers a geographical area of approximately 135,192 square kilometers, ranking it tenth among Indian states by area.

The state's terrain divides into three broad physiographic regions. The Chhattisgarh Plain, drained by the Mahanadi River and its tributaries, forms the agriculturally productive core around Raipur, Durg, and Bilaspur, and is often referred to as the "rice bowl" of central India given its dominant paddy cultivation. To the north lies the Chhota Nagpur plateau fringe, including the Surguja and Koriya districts, characterized by hilly, forested terrain and significant coal deposits. To the south lies the Bastar plateau, a heavily forested, hilly tribal-majority region that is ecologically part of the larger Deccan plateau system and remains the state's least accessible and most conflict-affected zone.

Forest cover is a defining ecological feature. According to the India State of Forest Report series published by the Forest Survey of India, Chhattisgarh consistently ranks among the top three or four states in India by both total forest area and percentage of geographical area under forest, with forest cover exceeding 40% of the state's land area (Forest Survey of India, 2023). This forest wealth underpins both the state's biodiversity, including tiger reserves at Indravati, Achanakmar, and Udanti-Sitanadi, and its mineral economy, since much of the coal and iron ore reserves lie beneath forested and, in Bastar's case, tribal-inhabited land, creating persistent land-use and rehabilitation conflicts.

The state's climate is broadly tropical, with a monsoon-dominated rainfall pattern averaging around 1,200 to 1,400 millimeters annually, concentrated between June and September, and supporting the state's paddy-centric agricultural economy. Summers are hot, with the plains region recording temperatures above 40 degrees Celsius, while the plateau regions experience comparatively moderate conditions.

1.2 Administrative Divisions: Districts, Divisions and Sub-State Units

At formation in November 2000, Chhattisgarh comprised 16 districts. Successive rounds of district reorganization, driven partly by administrative efficiency goals and partly by security considerations in Bastar, expanded this to 27 districts by 2012 and further to 33 districts by 2022, following the creation of new districts such as Manendragarh-Chirmiri-Bharatpur, Sarangarh-Bilaigarh, Mohla-Manpur-Ambagarh Chowki, Sakti, and Khairagarh-Chhuikhadan-Gandai (Government of Chhattisgarh, 2025). This trend toward smaller districts reflects a governance philosophy that smaller administrative units,

particularly in Bastar's insurgency-affected blocks, improve the reach of the district collectorate and police administration into remote areas.

The state is organized into five administrative divisions: Raipur, Durg, Bilaspur, Surguja, and Bastar, each headed by a Divisional Commissioner. Bastar division, comprising districts such as Bastar, Bijapur, Dantewada, Kanker, Kondagaon, Narayanpur, and Sukma, is administratively and developmentally distinct from the rest of the state due to the combined effects of dense forest cover, low population density, high Scheduled Tribe concentration, and the long-running Maoist insurgency.

Below the district level, Chhattisgarh's rural governance operates through a three-tier Panchayati Raj structure (Zila Panchayat, Janpad Panchayat, and Gram Panchayat), with a notable feature being the extension of the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996, across the state's Fifth Schedule areas, which cover a substantial share of Bastar and Surguja divisions and grant Gram Sabhas special powers over land acquisition, mining leases, and minor forest produce.

1.3 Demographic Structure: Population, Density, Growth and Composition

Chhattisgarh's population at the 2011 Census stood at 25,545,198, comprising 12,832,895 males and 12,712,303 females, with a sex ratio of 991 females per 1,000 males, notably above the national average of 943 (Census of India, 2011). Projections for 2026, in the continued absence of a completed decennial Census, vary by methodology and source, ranging from approximately 30.5 million to 32.3 million (StatisticsTimes, 2026; PopulationU, 2026; Data Commons, 2026), which corresponds to a decadal growth trajectory of roughly 1.1% to 1.3% annually since 2011, a moderation from the 22.6% decadal growth recorded between 2001 and 2011.

The state's population remains overwhelmingly rural, with approximately 76.8% of residents living in villages as per the 2011 Census, one of the higher rural population shares among major Indian states, though urbanization has accelerated since, concentrated in the Raipur-Durg-Bhilai and Bilaspur-Korba industrial corridors. Population density stood at 189 persons per square kilometer in 2011, well below the national average of 382, reflecting the large forested and hilly area under low-density tribal settlement in Bastar and Surguja divisions.

A demographically significant feature is Chhattisgarh's Scheduled Tribe population, recorded at 7,822,902 persons, or 30.6% of the state's population at the 2011 Census, one of the highest ST population shares among Indian states, concentrated overwhelmingly in Bastar, Surguja, and parts of Raigarh and Jashpur districts. The Scheduled Caste population stood at 3,274,269, or 12.8% of the state total (Census of India, 2011).

1.4 Linguistic, Ethnic, Religious and Cultural Profile

Chhattisgarhi, an Eastern Hindi language variant, is the dominant mother tongue, spoken by an estimated 21 million people, with Gondi, the language of the Gond tribal community, spoken by approximately 1 million, concentrated in Bastar (Census of India, 2011; PopulationU, 2026). Border districts show linguistic overlap with neighboring states, with Odia spoken in eastern districts bordering Odisha, Halabi as a Bastar-specific lingua franca among tribal communities, and Marathi and Telugu present in districts bordering Maharashtra and Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, respectively.

Religiously, the state is predominantly Hindu at 93.25% of the population as per the 2011 Census, with Muslims at 2.02%, Christians at 1.92%, and smaller Sikh, Buddhist, and Jain populations, though tribal belief systems and syncretic practices remain significant, particularly in Bastar, where formal Census religion categories do not fully capture the animist and nature-worship traditions practiced alongside or within Hindu identification (Census of India, 2011).

Ethnically and culturally, Chhattisgarh's tribal communities, principally the Gond, Halba, Baiga, Kamar, Abujhmadia, and several Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups, constitute a defining feature of the state's cultural identity, and their distinct forms of governance, art (notably Bastar's Dhokra metal craft and terracotta work), and the annual Bastar Dussehra, which follows a distinct tribal ritual calendar unrelated to the Ramayana narrative, mark the state's cultural profile as significantly different from the Hindi-belt norm often associated with central India.

1.5 Human Development Index: State Ranking and Trend Analysis

Chhattisgarh's Human Development Index consistently places it among the lower tier of major Indian states. Recent state-wise HDI analyses using National Statistical Office and UNDP-derived methodology place Chhattisgarh's HDI value in the range of 0.689 to 0.695, below the estimated national average and among the states identified as trailing performers alongside Uttar Pradesh, reflecting comparatively weaker health infrastructure, higher maternal and child mortality, and continued prevalence of communicable disease burden (Wani and Krande, 2025). The state's education index component has historically been reported around 0.526 in the Government of India's National Human Development Report framework, a figure that, while below national leaders, exceeds that of states such as Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, and Rajasthan (Government of India, National Human Development Report; cited in Wikipedia, 2026).

It is worth noting that India does not have a single, regularly updated official state-wise HDI series comparable to the UNDP's national HDI; sub-national HDI estimates instead come from academic reconstructions (such as the Global Data Lab's Subnational HDI) and periodic National Human Development Reports, with the last full official round dating to 2011. This Framework therefore treats state HDI figures as indicative estimates of relative standing rather than precise annual measurements.

Distinct from HDI, Chhattisgarh has shown stronger performance on some NITI Aayog composite indices. The state ranked second among Indian states on the NITI Aayog Fiscal Health Index 2025 with a score of 55.2 (NITI Aayog, cited in The Indian Express, 2025), reflecting relatively sound state finances even as social indicators lag. On the NITI Aayog Health Index ("Healthy States, Progressive India"), Chhattisgarh recorded a score of 52.02 out of 100, outperforming Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Rajasthan, Odisha, Bihar, Assam, and Uttar Pradesh, even as specific indicators such as women with BMI below 18.5, under-five mortality, and child underweight prevalence remained weak (NITI Aayog, cited in Wikipedia, 2026).

Within the state, HDI-linked outcomes vary sharply by social group. Scheduled Tribe populations rank at the bottom of nearly every development index tracked at the state level, a pattern consistent with the concentration of tribal populations in the least-served, most remote blocks of Bastar and Surguja divisions (Wikipedia, 2026).

1.6 Poverty, Inequality and Multidimensional Deprivation Indices

Multidimensional poverty in Chhattisgarh shows an unusually sharp geographic concentration in Bastar division. District-level estimates derived from NFHS data found multidimensional poverty rates as high as 60.8% in Bastar district and 62.3% in Narayanpur district, with Dakshin Bastar Dantewada showing that roughly two out of every three residents experienced multidimensional poverty by the applicable measure (OPHI, 2020). These figures place Bastar's constituent districts among the poorest in India by the Global MPI methodology, driven primarily by deprivations in nutrition, housing materials, cooking fuel access, and sanitation rather than income alone (OPHI, 2020).

At the national level, NITI Aayog's National Multidimensional Poverty Index has reported that approximately 135 million Indians escaped multidimensional poverty between 2015-16 and 2019-21, with national multidimensional poverty incidence estimated at 11.28% in the 2022-23 reference period (NITI Aayog, cited in ForumIAS, 2025; PMF IAS, 2025). Scheduled Tribe poverty nationally has been estimated at approximately 33%, nearly triple the national average (NITI Aayog MPI 2023, cited in Vajiram and Ravi, 2025), a pattern that maps closely onto Chhattisgarh's own ST-concentrated poverty geography given the state's 30.6% ST population share.

Hunger and food security indicators reinforce this picture. Chhattisgarh has been ranked 14th out of 17 major Indian states on hunger index measures in academic analysis, notwithstanding the state's status as the first in India to enact a dedicated Food Security Act, in December 2012, well ahead of the National Food Security Act (Sharma et al., cited in NCBI, 2022). Approximately 77% of the state's population resides in rural areas, and roughly one-third of the population is tribal, a combination that correlates strongly with continued food insecurity, dependence on the public distribution system, and reliance on daily agricultural labor as the primary income source for a large share of households (NCBI, 2022).

1.7 Intra-State Disparities: Aspirational Districts and Backward Region Identification

Chhattisgarh has one of the largest state-level contingents in NITI Aayog's Aspirational Districts Programme, launched in January 2018 to target India's most underdeveloped districts on health and nutrition, education, agriculture and water resources, financial inclusion, skill development, and basic infrastructure indicators. Depending on the programme's revision cycle, between nine and ten Chhattisgarh districts have featured on the list, including Bastar, Bijapur, Dantewada, Kanker, Kondagaon, Korba, Mahasamund, Narayanpur, Rajnandgaon, and Sukma (NITI Aayog, 2022; NITI Aayog, 2023).

Notably, three of these, Bijapur, Dantewada, and Sukma, achieved the top overall ranking among all 112 (later 117) aspirational districts nationally during 2019-2020, a result widely cited as a governance success story given these districts' simultaneous exposure to Left-Wing Extremism (WHO, 2020, reporting on NITI Aayog rankings). Sukma recorded improvement in as many as 15 of 17 tracked indicators, including a rise in institutional deliveries from 56.1% to 100% between August 2018 and August 2020, and Bijapur, Dantewada, and Sukma each showed health and nutrition score improvements exceeding 74% over the same period (WHO, 2020). This suggests that targeted, resource-intensive convergence programming can produce rapid gains even in conflict-affected geography, though the districts remain among the state's, and India's, poorest in absolute terms.

Beyond the formally designated aspirational districts, backward-region identification within Chhattisgarh consistently centers on the seven Bastar division districts (Bastar, Bijapur, Dantewada, Kanker, Kondagaon, Narayanpur, and Sukma) plus parts of Surguja division (Surguja, Jashpur, Balrampur, Koriya), where Fifth Schedule status, dense forest cover, low road density, and historically limited state presence compound to produce the state's most acute development deficits.

1.8 State's Position in National Rankings Across Key Development Indicators

Chhattisgarh's position across national ranking exercises presents a genuinely mixed picture rather than uniform under-performance. On fiscal management, the state ranked second nationally on the NITI Aayog Fiscal Health Index 2025 (The Indian Express, 2025), indicating comparatively prudent debt and deficit management. On the NITI Aayog Health Index, the state placed in the middle tier, ahead of several larger states including Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Odisha, though still trailing India's leading health performers (Wikipedia, 2026).

Chapter 2: Fiscal Architecture of the State

2.1 Revenue Framework: Own Tax Revenue, Non-Tax Revenue and Devolution

Chhattisgarh's Gross State Domestic Product for 2026-27, at current prices, is projected at approximately Rs 7,09,553 crore, representing growth of around 12% over the previous year (PRS India, 2026). Against this base, the state's total receipts, excluding borrowings, for 2026-27 are estimated at Rs 1,43,100 crore, an increase of roughly 10% over the revised estimate for 2025-26 (PRS India, 2026).

Own tax revenue has historically formed a moderate share of total receipts, standing at Rs 54,000 crore in the 2025-26 budget estimate, equivalent to about 8.5% of GSDP, itself an improvement over the 8.1% recorded in the 2024-25 revised estimate and the 7.6% recorded in 2023-24 actuals (PRS India, 2025). State GST has consistently been the single largest component of own tax revenue, accounting for approximately 34% of the total in 2025-26, with state GST collections projected to grow around 10% over the prior year's revised estimate (PRS India, 2025). For 2026-27, the state's own revenue is estimated to rise further to approximately Rs 77,000 crore (CG Competition Point, 2026).

Central transfers, comprising the state's share of central taxes as devolved on the recommendation of successive Finance Commissions and grants-in-aid for centrally sponsored schemes, remain a critical revenue pillar, particularly given Chhattisgarh's relatively modest own-tax-to-GSDP ratio compared to more industrially diversified states. Non-tax revenue, drawn substantially from mining royalties given the state's mineral wealth, also contributes meaningfully, though this source carries commodity-price volatility risk that periodically affects budget realization, as seen in 2025-26, when overall receipts excluding borrowings came in roughly 8% below the original budget estimate (PRS India, 2026).

2.2 Expenditure Profile: Composition, Quality and Efficiency

Total expenditure, excluding debt repayment, for 2026-27 is estimated at Rs 1,72,000 crore, an increase of approximately 10% over the 2025-26 revised estimate, with an additional Rs 12,300 crore earmarked for debt repayment, representing about 7% of total expenditure (PRS India, 2026; CG Competition Point, 2026). Revenue expenditure, covering salaries, pensions, interest payments, and subsidies, is budgeted at Rs 1,45,000 crore for 2026-27, up 4% over the prior year's revised estimate (PRS India, 2026).

Committed expenditure, the combination of salaries, pensions, and interest payments that structurally limits a government's fiscal flexibility, was estimated at Rs 56,793 crore in 2025-26, consuming approximately 40% of estimated revenue receipts, comprising salaries at 26% of revenue receipts, pensions at 7%, and interest payments at 7% (PRS India, 2025). This ratio had been higher in 2023-24 actuals, at 43% of revenue receipts, suggesting a modest recent improvement in the state's fiscal flexibility, though committed expenditure still consumes roughly two-fifths of the state's own revenue base, constraining discretionary and developmental spending.

Sector-wise, the 2026-27 "Sankalp" budget allocates close to 40% of total spending to social sector development and around 36% to economic activity, with the remainder directed to administrative and general services (Drishti IAS, 2026). Flagship scheme allocations for

2025-26 included substantial provisions for the Krishak Unnati Yojana (agricultural income support), the National Health Mission, the Mahatari Vandan Yojana (a women's welfare cash transfer scheme), Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin, and MGNREGA, alongside Rs 800 crore for the National Rural Livelihood Mission (PRS India, 2025). For 2026-27, the School Education Department received the highest sectoral allocation among named departments, at Rs 22,000 crore, alongside new "Education City" proposals for sensitive, low-access regions including Abujhmad and Jagargunda in Bastar (Drishti IAS, 2026).

2.3 Capital Expenditure: Infrastructure Investment and Asset Creation

Capital outlay for 2026-27 is budgeted at Rs 26,500 crore, a substantial 62-63% increase over the 2025-26 revised estimate (PRS India, 2026; CG Competition Point, 2026), reflecting a deliberate push toward infrastructure-led growth under the state's "Adhosaanrachna" (infrastructure) pillar of the Sankalp budget theme. Capital expenditure as a share of GSDP is estimated at 3.7% for 2026-27, moderating slightly from 4.1% budgeted in 2025-26, though Chhattisgarh continues to rank among the higher capex-to-GSDP states nationally (CG Competition Point, 2026).

A persistent implementation challenge, however, is the gap between budgeted and realized capital spending. In 2025-26, actual expenditure came in around 5% below the original budget, with capital outlay specifically falling roughly 38% short of the budget estimate (PRS India, 2026), a pattern common across Indian states but one that materially affects the pace of infrastructure asset creation relative to announced targets. This execution gap is an important qualifier to headline capex growth figures and should be tracked in subsequent budget cycles to assess whether the 2026-27 capex increase is realized in outturn.

2.4 Fiscal Deficit, Primary Deficit and Debt Sustainability

Fiscal deficit reporting for Chhattisgarh's 2026-27 budget shows a notable methodological divergence worth flagging explicitly. Using the standard PRS/RBI convention, which excludes public account receipts from non-debt capital receipts, the fiscal deficit for 2026-27 is estimated at 4.1% of GSDP, or Rs 28,900 crore (PRS India, 2026). The state government's own budget presentation, which nets out Special Central Assistance for capital expenditure (Rs 8,500 crore) and treats certain public account receipts differently, arrives at a net fiscal deficit figure of Rs 20,400 crore, or 2.88% of GSDP, within the 3% FRBM ceiling recommended by the Sixteenth Finance Commission for the 2026-31 period (CG Competition Point, 2026). Both figures are accurate under their respective methodologies; the gap illustrates why cross-state and cross-year fiscal comparisons require care about which convention is being applied.

The revenue account shows a small deficit of 0.3% of GSDP (Rs 2,000 crore) budgeted for 2026-27, a reversal from the revenue surplus of 0.4% of GSDP (Rs 2,804 crore) estimated for 2025-26, and a marked improvement on the 1.3% of GSDP revenue deficit recorded in 2024-25 against an initial budget target of revenue balance (PRS India, 2025, 2026). The historical trend, from a revenue deficit in 2024-25 to a slim surplus in 2025-26 back to a

small deficit in 2026-27, indicates a state operating close to the margin on current-account balance, with borrowing increasingly directed at capital rather than consumption expenditure, a generally healthier composition of debt-financed spending.

The Fifteenth and now Sixteenth Finance Commission frameworks continue to set the 3% of GSDP fiscal deficit ceiling as the benchmark for state borrowing limits, with the Sixteenth Finance Commission's recommendations applicable for the 2026-31 award period (PRS India, 2026). Interest payments, a proxy for debt servicing burden, stood at Rs 7,931 crore in 2024-25, consuming 5.4% of total expenditure that year (GovtBudget.com, 2025), a manageable though non-trivial share that bears monitoring as the state's capital expenditure and associated borrowing scale up.

2.5 State's Borrowings, Guarantees and Off-Budget Liabilities

The Government of India has, since 2020-21, extended 50-year interest-free loans to state governments specifically for capital expenditure, and these loans are excluded from the calculation of a state's statutory borrowing ceiling under FRBM norms (PRS India, 2026). Chhattisgarh has drawn on this facility as part of its capex financing strategy, supplementing market borrowings through State Development Loans.

Loans and advances extended by the state government itself are budgeted at Rs 500 crore for 2026-27, a 150% increase over the 2025-26 revised estimate (CG Competition Point, 2026), a relatively small figure in absolute terms but one that reflects continued state-level lending to public sector undertakings and cooperative institutions. Public account receipts, including small savings, provident funds, and net PSU share sale proceeds, are estimated at Rs 1,000 crore for 2026-27, unchanged from the 2025-26 revised estimate (CG Competition Point, 2026).

Off-budget liabilities and guarantees extended to state public sector undertakings and corporations represent a recurring area of national concern flagged by the RBI's annual State Finances studies, since such liabilities, while not always captured in headline fiscal deficit figures, ultimately constitute contingent claims on the state exchequer. This Framework recommends that subsequent fiscal transparency assessments for Chhattisgarh specifically track the stock of state guarantees relative to GSDP, a metric not consistently disclosed in the budget summaries reviewed for this chapter.

2.6 Finance Commission Awards: Allocation and Utilisation

Tax devolution to Chhattisgarh from the divisible pool follows the horizontal distribution formula recommended by successive Finance Commissions, which weighs factors including population, income distance, area, forest cover, and demographic performance. Given Chhattisgarh's large forest cover, exceeding 40% of geographical area, the forest-cover weightage introduced from the Fourteenth Finance Commission onward has generally worked in the state's favor relative to states with lower forest endowments, partially offsetting

its comparatively lower per capita income ranking in the devolution formula (PRS India, 2026, referencing Fourteenth, Fifteenth, and Sixteenth Finance Commission reports).

The Sixteenth Finance Commission's award, applicable from 2026-27 through 2030-31, sets the fiscal deficit ceiling at 3% of GSDP for the award period (PRS India, 2026), a continuation of the norm applied under the Fifteenth Finance Commission. Grants-in-aid recommended by the Finance Commission, covering local body grants, disaster management, and sector-specific grants, supplement tax devolution and are typically tied to specific utilization conditions and reporting requirements, an area where utilization efficiency, particularly for local body and health-sector grants, has been a recurring theme in Comptroller and Auditor General reports on the state.

2.7 GST Implementation: Revenue Impact and Compensation Status

State GST has become the anchor of Chhattisgarh's own tax revenue, contributing approximately 34% of the state's own tax collections as of 2025-26, with year-on-year growth of around 10% (PRS India, 2025). This reflects both the underlying formalization of the state's industrial and trading economy, concentrated in the Raipur-Bhilai-Durg-Raigarh-Korba industrial belt, and the broader nationwide stabilization of GST collections nearly a decade after the tax's 2017 introduction.

The GST compensation mechanism that guaranteed states a 14% annual revenue growth rate over the 2015-16 base year expired at the end of the original five-year compensation period, and the compensation cess collection period was subsequently extended primarily to service past compensation-related borrowings rather than to fund fresh compensation payouts. For a resource-and-industry-dependent state like Chhattisgarh, the post-compensation-era fiscal environment has placed a greater premium on organic State GST buoyancy and non-tax mining revenue to sustain revenue growth, a dynamic reflected in the state's active focus, evident in the 2026-27 budget's own revenue growth target to approximately Rs 77,000 crore, on strengthening its indigenous tax base (CG Competition Point, 2026).

2.8 Public Financial Management Reforms and Audit Compliance

Public financial management reform in Chhattisgarh operates within the broader national push toward integrated financial management information systems, treasury computerization, and direct benefit transfer architecture for welfare scheme disbursement. The state's welfare delivery systems, including its public distribution system, have drawn national attention for relatively strong last-mile delivery performance, a reform legacy dating to the state's early adoption of biometric and technology-enabled ration card systems in the 2010s.

Audit compliance, assessed through Comptroller and Auditor General reports, has periodically flagged concerns specific to Chhattisgarh's health and social sector spending, including a 2017 CAG assessment characterizing the state's health indices as poor despite budgetary allocation, pointing to implementation and monitoring gaps rather than purely resource constraints (The Pioneer, cited in Wikipedia, 2026). Strengthening real-time

expenditure tracking, particularly for capital projects where the 2025-26 budget cycle showed a 38% shortfall in capex realization against the budget estimate (PRS India, 2026), remains an identified priority for improving public financial management quality in the state.

2.9 Centre-State Fiscal Relations: Trends and Themes

Centre-state fiscal relations for Chhattisgarh are shaped by three recurring themes: the state's dependence on central tax devolution and centrally sponsored scheme funding given its moderate own-tax base, its particular stake in forest-cover and mining-royalty-related fiscal formulas given its resource endowment, and its status as a security-sensitive state given the continued, though declining, Left-Wing Extremism presence in Bastar division, which attracts specific central security-related grants and infrastructure funding, including central assistance for road connectivity and mobile network expansion in previously inaccessible blocks.

The Sixteenth Finance Commission's 2026-31 award period will be the central determinant of the state's revenue devolution trajectory over the coming five years, and its treatment of forest cover, tribal population share, and backwardness indicators in the horizontal distribution formula will materially affect Chhattisgarh's fiscal capacity relative to more industrially diversified peer states. The state government's continued emphasis, evident in its Sankalp 2026-27 budget theme, on infrastructure-led growth financed partly through Special Central Assistance and interest-free capex loans, suggests a fiscal strategy oriented toward leveraging central capital transfers to compensate for a comparatively narrow own-revenue base, a strategy that will require sustained central cooperation to remain viable through the medium term.

Chapter 3: Economic Structure, Growth and Sectoral Performance

3.1 Gross State Domestic Product: Trends, Growth Rate and Sectoral Share

Chhattisgarh's Gross State Domestic Product at current prices rose from approximately Rs 5.65 lakh crore in 2024-25 to around Rs 6.31 lakh crore in 2025-26, reflecting nominal growth of 11.57%, and is budgeted to reach Rs 7,09,553 crore in 2026-27, a further 12.3% increase (Chhattisgarh Economic Survey 2025-26, cited in The Hans India, 2026; CG Competition Point, 2026). In real terms, using the 2011-12 base year, GSDP grew from Rs 3.31 lakh crore in 2024-25 to a projected Rs 3.58 lakh crore in 2025-26, a real growth rate of 8.11%, comfortably outperforming the national average for that period (Economic Survey, cited in DD News, 2026).

Over the longer term, Chhattisgarh's real GSDP grew at an average annual rate of 5.5% between 2012-13 and 2021-22, close to but marginally below the all-India average of 5.6% for the same period (NITI Aayog, 2025). The state economy did contract mildly in 2020-21, by 0.14%, during the COVID-19 pandemic, a shallower decline than the national contraction that year, attributed to the continued operation of essential mining and power sector activity even during lockdown periods (Sixteenth Finance Commission evaluation study, 2025). Growth rebounded strongly thereafter, with the state economy recording 11.2% growth in 2023-24 (Wikipedia, 2026).

On sectoral composition at current prices for 2025-26, industry is the dominant contributor at 46.59% of GSDP, followed by services at 32.77% and agriculture at 20.64% (Economic Survey 2025-26, cited in DD News and The Hans India, 2026). This composition marks a structural departure from most major Indian states, where services typically dominate; Chhattisgarh's states'-average comparator for industry share stood at just 29.3% as of 2021-22, against the state's own 42.4% that year, while the states' average for services stood at 51%, nearly 16 percentage points above Chhattisgarh's 35.4% share the same year (NITI Aayog, 2025). This persistent industry-heavy, services-light structure is the single most distinctive feature of Chhattisgarh's economy relative to national peers, and reflects the state's mining and power-generation base rather than a broad-based industrial diversification.

Notably, industry's GSDP share has moderated somewhat from a historical peak of 50.99% recorded in 2018-19, with the sector's share hovering in the 42-47% range more recently, while services have shown gradual gains, growing at 13.15% in current-price terms in 2025-26, ahead of agriculture (12.53%) and industry (10.26%) that year, suggesting an early, still-tentative shift toward greater services contribution (Fincom India Sixteenth Finance Commission study, 2025; Economic Survey, cited in DD News, 2026).

3.2 Per Capita Income and Purchasing Power Analysis

Chhattisgarh's per capita income at current prices is projected to rise from Rs 1,62,848 in 2024-25 to Rs 1,79,244 in 2025-26, an increase of 10.07% (Economic Survey 2025-26, cited in The Hans India, 2026). Despite this growth, the state's per capita income remains materially below the national figure, estimated at approximately Rs 2,00,162 for 2024-25 nationally, placing Chhattisgarh's per capita income roughly 10-11% below the all-India level as of the most recent comparable year (CG Competition Point, 2026). This gap has historically been wider; as of 2021-22, the state's nominal per capita income stood approximately 20% below the national figure (NITI Aayog, 2025), suggesting some narrowing of the income gap over the subsequent three to four years, even as the absolute gap persists.

The state's share of India's nominal GDP has also declined over a longer horizon, from 2.1% in 1993-94 (as part of undivided Madhya Pradesh's successor calculations) to 1.7% by 2021-22 (NITI Aayog, 2025), indicating that despite respectable growth rates, Chhattisgarh has not kept pace with the fastest-growing state economies nationally in terms of its relative economic weight. As of 2025-26, Chhattisgarh ranked as the 17th largest state economy in India by nominal GSDP (Wikipedia, 2026), a middling rank that understates the state's per capita industrial intensity given its comparatively small population base.

3.3 Primary Sector: Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries

Agriculture and allied activities are estimated to have grown by 7.49% in real terms in 2025-26, and by 12.53% in nominal terms, contributing 20.64% of GSDP at current prices, and 16.2% of GSDP at constant prices, a figure the state's Economic Survey notes is higher than the national average agriculture share of 14.16% (Economic Survey 2025-26, cited in DD News, 2026; CG Competition Point, 2026). Over the 2013-14 to 2022-23 period, the agriculture sector grew at an average annual rate of 4.9% (NITI Aayog, 2025), a slower pace than the more recent 2025-26 figures suggest, indicating some acceleration in agricultural performance in the most recent year, attributed by state officials to higher production, expanded irrigation support, and technology adoption (Drishti IAS, 2026).

Rice cultivation dominates the state's cropping pattern, consistent with Chhattisgarh's historical identity as the "rice bowl" of central India, concentrated in the fertile Chhattisgarh Plain around Raipur, Durg, and Bilaspur. Rice also features among the state's principal merchandise export products, alongside iron ore, electronic goods, and engineering goods, with total merchandise exports from the state reaching Rs 19,421 crore in FY25 (IBEF, 2025).

3.4 Secondary Sector: Industry, Manufacturing and Mining

Industry, comprising mining and quarrying, manufacturing, construction, and electricity and water supply, remains Chhattisgarh's largest GSVA contributor. As of 2021-22, within the industry sector, manufacturing contributed 14.3 percentage points and construction 11.8

percentage points to overall GSVA, with mining and quarrying contributing a further 8.9 percentage points (NITI Aayog, 2025). Manufacturing specifically grew at an average annual rate of 9.4% over the 2013-14 to 2022-23 period, the fastest-growing of the three broad sectors tracked over that decade (NITI Aayog, 2025).

Chhattisgarh's mineral endowment underpins this industrial structure: the state possesses 28 varieties of major minerals, including diamonds, and accounted for 13.1% of India's total value of mineral production in the April-August 2025 period of FY26 (IBEF, 2025). The state holds a substantial share of India's coal reserves and is a leading national producer of iron ore, tin, and dolomite (Ministry of Mines, 2025). Korba district, home to major thermal power generation capacity, is widely referred to as the "power capital of India" (IBEF, 2025).

3.5 Tertiary Sector: Trade, Finance, Real Estate and Services

Services contributed 32.77% of GSDP at current prices in 2025-26 and grew at 13.15% in nominal terms that year, the fastest-growing of the three broad sectors (Economic Survey 2025-26, cited in DD News, 2026). At constant prices, however, the services sector's GSDP share stood at only 35% as of 2025-26, compared to a national average of 54.62%, underscoring that Chhattisgarh's services sector remains structurally underdeveloped relative to the broader Indian economy, even as it is now the fastest-growing sector on a year-on-year basis (CG Competition Point, 2026).

Within services, real estate, ownership of dwellings, and business services formed the largest sub-component at 8.5% of GSVA as of 2021-22, followed by other miscellaneous services at 7.8%, with trade, hotels, and restaurants also contributing meaningfully (NITI Aayog, 2025). The state's credit-deposit ratio and credit-to-GSDP ratio both remain below the all-India average, by roughly 10 and over 20 percentage points respectively as of 2021, indicating comparatively shallow financial sector penetration, though both indicators have shown improvement over the preceding decade (NITI Aayog, 2025).

3.6 Informal Economy: Size, Significance and Integration Challenges

Given that agriculture and allied activities engage a large share of the state's predominantly rural workforce, and that roughly 77% of the population resides in rural areas as per the 2011 Census, the informal economy, spanning daily agricultural labor, small-scale forest produce collection, and unorganized construction and services work, constitutes a substantial share of total employment even as it contributes disproportionately less to measured GSDP. Agriculture and daily labor were identified as the chief sources of household income during COVID-19-period research in the state, with heavy dependence on the public distribution system and government-run Anganwadi nutrition centers among low-income and tribal households (NCBI, 2022). Formalization efforts, principally through GST registration expansion and financial inclusion schemes, remain an ongoing policy priority, though the credit-deposit and credit-to-GSDP gaps noted above suggest continued limits to formal financial sector integration, particularly outside the state's urban industrial corridor.

3.7 Labour Market: Employment, Unemployment and Workforce Quality

Chhattisgarh's workforce remains concentrated in agriculture and allied activities, with a substantial secondary concentration in mining, manufacturing, and construction given the state's industrial structure. Formal labour market data for the state, drawn from Periodic Labour Force Survey rounds, generally shows workforce participation patterns consistent with a still-substantially-rural, agriculture-and-resource-dependent economy, though the state's relatively high sex ratio, at 991 per the 2011 Census, is a demographically favorable feature relative to workforce composition compared to several northern Indian states.

Workforce quality concerns center on the gap between the state's strong industrial GSDP contribution and its comparatively modest human development indicators, particularly education index scores around 0.526, suggesting that the industrial sector's growth has drawn substantially on capital-intensive mining and power generation rather than broad-based, labour-intensive manufacturing employment generation, a pattern that limits the extent to which GSDP growth translates into widespread employment quality improvement, especially in Bastar and Surguja divisions.

3.8 Inflation, Price Stability and Consumer Welfare

State-level inflation data for Chhattisgarh generally tracks the national Consumer Price Index trend, given the integration of the state's markets, particularly for the rice-dominant food basket, with national agricultural price and procurement mechanisms including the Minimum Support Price system. The state government's continued emphasis on agricultural income support schemes such as the Krishak Unnati Yojana reflects a policy orientation toward supporting farmer incomes and consumption capacity alongside broader price stability objectives, though comprehensive, state-specific CPI disaggregation data was not available in the sources reviewed for this chapter and would need to be sourced directly from the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation's state-level CPI releases for precise figures.

3.9 Growth Corridors: Engines of Economic Expansion

The Raipur-Bhilai-Durg industrial and urban corridor functions as the state's primary growth engine, anchored by Naya Raipur (renamed Atal Nagar), the state's planned capital city, and reinforced by the October 2025 legislative approval of an integrated capital region encompassing Raipur, Naya Raipur, Bilai, and Durg, divided into nine development zones focused on education, healthcare, and information technology under the state's "Chhattisgarh Anjor 2047" vision (IBEF, 2025). The Bilaspur-Korba corridor forms a second major growth axis, anchored by power generation and coal-based industry, with Korba's status as India's power capital underscoring the region's centrality to the state's energy-industrial base.

A third, more speculative growth trajectory concerns Bastar division, where the state has secured energy sector investment proposals exceeding Rs 3 lakh crore across nuclear, thermal, solar, and pumped storage projects at the 2025 Chhattisgarh Energy Investors Summit (IBEF, 2025), alongside the proposed "Education City" initiatives for historically

inaccessible areas such as Abujhmad and Jagargunda. Whether security stabilization in Bastar can be converted into a genuine fourth growth corridor, extending the state's industrial base into its most underdeveloped division, represents one of the central open questions for Chhattisgarh's economic geography over the next decade.

Chapter 4: Investment, Industry and Private Sector Development

4.1 Investment Climate Assessment and Ease of Doing Business

Chhattisgarh's current investment framework centers on the Industrial Development Policy 2024-30, effective from November 1, 2024, through March 31, 2030, the sixth industrial policy the state has issued since 2001 (Elets eGov, 2025; Ambedkar Chamber of Commerce and Industry, 2026). The policy emphasizes a single-window clearance system integrated with the national single-window portal, aiming to streamline departmental permissions and reduce compliance burden for investors (Industries Center/Directorate of Industries, Raipur, 2024; Swarajya, 2025).

The policy's early results have been substantial in headline terms. Within six months of coming into effect, the state secured Memoranda of Understanding for investment proposals worth Rs 4.5 lakh crore, with the energy and steel sectors contributing the largest shares at approximately Rs 3 lakh crore and Rs 1 lakh crore respectively, and other sectors accounting for the remaining Rs 50,000 crore (Swarajya, 2025). At a Stakeholder Connect Workshop in Naya Raipur on December 4, 2024, the government issued "Intent to Invest" letters worth Rs 32,225 crore across sectors including IT, artificial intelligence, data centers, ethanol, electronics, and compressed bio-gas (Elets eGov, 2025). The government amended the policy further on January 12, 2025, and again through 2025-26, to enhance capital investment subsidies, interest subsidy provisions, and employment-linked incentives, with particular emphasis on MSMEs, women entrepreneurs, SC/ST entrepreneurs, and startups (TeamLease RegTech, 2026).

A notable caveat for policy analysts and this Framework's readers: MoU value and "Intent to Invest" figures represent investor interest and commitment at the announcement stage, not realized capital expenditure or completed projects, and the conversion rate from MoU to actual ground-level investment in Indian state industrial policy has historically varied widely. Tracking actual capital formation against these headline figures over the 2026-2030 policy period will be essential to assess the policy's real economic impact.

4.2 Industrial Policy Framework and MSME Development

The 2024-30 policy adopts the Government of India's 2020 amended definitions for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises, ensuring alignment with central-level classification and incentive eligibility (Elets eGov, 2025). For the first time in the state's industrial policy history, MSME service enterprises and large-scale service businesses have become eligible for dedicated incentives, covering engineering services, research and development, healthcare, tourism, and entertainment, extending beyond the traditional manufacturing-only incentive focus (Elets eGov, 2025). New MSMEs in the services sector across various development blocks are eligible for industrial investment promotion up to 150% of Fixed Capital Investment, including Net State GST reimbursement over a 10-year period from the commencement of commercial production (Industries Department, Government of Chhattisgarh, 2024).

The policy contains explicit social inclusion provisions rarely seen in comparable state industrial policies: land in industrial areas is offered at a nominal rate of Rs 1 per acre for SC/ST youth entrepreneurs, and the state extended what it describes as possibly India's first dedicated industrial incentive scheme for young Agniveers (short-service military veterans) and families affected by Left-Wing Extremism, aimed at channeling both groups into entrepreneurship (Elets eGov, 2025). Subsidy disbursement is structured by enterprise size, with micro enterprises receiving a single installment, small enterprises three annual installments, and medium enterprises five annual installments (Industries Department, Government of Chhattisgarh, 2024).

4.3 Large and Anchor Industries: Sectoral Analysis

Steel manufacturing represents one of the two largest investment verticals under the current policy cycle. Jindal Steel, led by Naveen Jindal, is expanding its Raigarh facility's manufacturing capacity from 3.6 million tonnes per annum to 9 million tonnes per annum, with completion targeted by 2027 (Swarajya, 2025). State officials have set a target of raising overall iron production from 46 million tonnes to 65 million tonnes over the coming years, reflecting the sector's centrality to the state's industrial expansion strategy (Swarajya, 2025, quoting Industries Minister Lakhan Lal Dewangan). Smaller steel investments include a Rs 1,245 crore plant proposed by Greentech Solutions, expected to generate approximately 500 jobs (Swarajya, 2025).

Energy is the other dominant anchor sector. At the Chhattisgarh Energy Investors Summit 2025 held in Raipur, the state secured investment proposals exceeding Rs 3 lakh crore spanning nuclear, thermal, solar, and pumped storage projects (IBEF, 2025). Renew Power Limited separately committed to an Rs 11,500 crore proposal for pump storage and green hydrogen projects at a December 2024 Investors Connect Meet in Delhi (Swarajya, 2025).

4.4 Special Economic Zones, Industrial Corridors and Clusters

The state's SEZ footprint remains modest relative to its industrial policy ambitions, with a notified Special Economic Zone in Rajnandgaon district and, as of the most recent comprehensive count available, two formally approved SEZs overall (IBEF, 2025). This is a comparatively thin SEZ presence relative to Chhattisgarh's industrial GSDP share, suggesting the state's industrial growth model has relied more heavily on sector-specific incentive packages and industrial parks than on the SEZ mechanism favored by some other industrially significant states.

The state has established 34 industrial parks to support incoming industry, along with industrial growth centres and three Integrated Infrastructure Development Centres developed by the Chhattisgarh State Industrial Development Corporation (CSIDC) (Swarajya, 2025; IBEF, 2025). The 2024-30 policy explicitly commits to networking all development blocks in the state through industrial areas, with the highest-potential blocks prioritized for new industrial park development, an approach intended to extend industrial opportunity beyond

the existing Raipur-Bhilai-Durg and Bilaspur-Korba corridors into currently underserved blocks (Industries Department, Government of Chhattisgarh, 2024).

4.5 Foreign Direct Investment: Inflows, Sectoral Distribution and Policy

The 2024-30 Industrial Development Policy provides explicit additional incentives for FDI investors, export-oriented entrepreneurs, and projects established using foreign technology: these categories receive a subsidy rate 10% higher than that available to general-category entrepreneurs, along with a correspondingly higher maximum subsidy ceiling and an additional year of exemption eligibility compared to general-category enterprises (Industries Department, Government of Chhattisgarh, 2024). The policy also specifically incentivizes enterprises relocating plant and machinery from foreign operations to Chhattisgarh, treating 50% of the value of imported used machinery, provided it retains at least five years of useful life, as eligible fixed capital investment for incentive calculation purposes (Industries Center/Directorate of Industries, Raipur, 2024).

Comprehensive, state-specific FDI inflow data disaggregated by source country and sector was not available in the sources reviewed for this chapter; readers requiring precise FDI equity inflow figures for Chhattisgarh should consult the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade's state-wise FDI fact sheets, published quarterly, for the most current figures.

4.6 Public Sector Undertakings: Performance and Reform Agenda

The state's public sector undertaking landscape has been contracting modestly, with the count of operational state PSUs declining from 29 in 2018-19 to 25 in 2023-24, a trend attributed to closures, mergers, or divestitures of underperforming entities (Sixteenth Finance Commission evaluation study, 2025). Paid-up capital across the state PSU portfolio remained relatively stable at approximately Rs 7,013 crore through 2021-22, before rising slightly thereafter (Sixteenth Finance Commission evaluation study, 2025). State-owned entities continue to play a foundational role in the power, mining, industry, and infrastructure sectors, consistent with the broader industrial structure of the state economy (Sixteenth Finance Commission evaluation study, 2025).

4.7 Public-Private Partnership Framework and Pipeline

Public-private partnership activity in Chhattisgarh is most visible in the infrastructure and urban development space, particularly around the integrated Raipur-Naya Raipur-Bhilai-Durg capital region initiative approved by the state legislature in its 2025 monsoon session, which envisions a nine-zone development structure spanning education, healthcare, and information technology, likely to draw on a mix of public capital expenditure and private participation given the scale of the undertaking (IBEF, 2025). The Naya Raipur Atal Nagar Vikas Pradhikaran, the planning and development authority for the new capital region, received a dedicated budget allocation of approximately Rs 947 crore in the most recent state budget cycle reviewed (IBEF, 2025).

4.8 Regional Cooperation: Shared Region and Growth

Chhattisgarh's location, bordering seven other Indian states, positions it as a natural logistics and resource-sharing hub for central and eastern India, particularly for coal, power, and steel value chains that span state boundaries with Odisha, Jharkhand, and Madhya Pradesh. The state's power capital, Korba, supplies electricity well beyond state boundaries through the regional grid, and the state's iron ore and coal reserves feed steel and power value chains in neighboring states as well as domestic industry within Chhattisgarh itself. Formal inter-state regional cooperation mechanisms specific to Chhattisgarh's economic zone, such as river basin authorities and mineral-corridor coordination bodies, are addressed further in Chapter 21's discussion of inter-state cooperation frameworks.

Chapter 5: Education — Access, Quality and Future Readiness

5.1 Elementary Education: Enrolment, Retention, Dropout and Learning Outcomes

Chhattisgarh's literacy rate stood at 70.3% at the 2011 Census, itself a substantial rise from 64.66% in 2001 and 65.18% by an earlier state-specific accounting, with male literacy at 80.27% and female literacy at 60.24%, leaving a persistent gender gap of roughly 20 percentage points (Census of India, 2011; CEIC, 2023). No decennial Census has updated this baseline since, so current literacy estimates for 2025-26 are necessarily projections rather than measurements, and this Framework treats any post-2011 literacy figure with that caveat attached.

Under the New Education Policy 2020 foundational-to-secondary phase framework, UDISE+ 2024-25 data places Chhattisgarh's Gross Enrolment Ratio at 41.4% for the Foundational stage, matching the national figure exactly at 41.4%, with Preparatory stage GER at 95.4% and Middle stage GER at 90.3%, both indicating strong retention through the upper primary years (UDISE+ 2024-25, cited in Education for All in India, 2026). Retention performance in the elementary years is therefore comparatively healthy; the more significant learning and retention challenges in the state's education system emerge later, at the secondary and higher secondary transition points.

5.2 Secondary and Senior Secondary Education: Transition and Achievement

The state's most acute structural weakness in school education is the sharp decline in enrolment and retention between the secondary and higher secondary stages. UDISE+ 2024-25 data records Secondary stage GER at 68.5%, falling further to a Higher Secondary GER in the range of 46.8% to 53.5% depending on the specific reporting cycle referenced, compared to substantially higher national figures at the equivalent stages (UDISE+ 2024-25, cited in Education for All in India, 2026). This places Chhattisgarh's Higher Secondary enrolment roughly 40 to 45 percentage points below the analogous all-India figures cited in the same report card.

Secondary-level dropout is the specific pressure point within this transition. State dropout rate estimates for the secondary stage range from approximately 9.7%, as reported in cross-state UDISE-based comparative analysis, to 15.3% in more recent UDISE+ 2024-25 report-card figures, with the rate consistently higher for girls than boys across all schooling stages in the state (Education for All in India, 2026). Recommended interventions identified in recent education-sector analysis for the state include conditional cash transfers, bridge courses, and residential schooling options specifically targeted at at-risk secondary-age youth, an approach with particular relevance to Bastar and Surguja divisions, where distance to the nearest higher secondary school remains a material barrier to continued enrolment (Education for All in India, 2026).

5.3 Higher Education: Institutional Capacity, Gross Enrolment and Quality

Comprehensive, current higher-education GER data specific to Chhattisgarh disaggregated from the national All India Survey on Higher Education was not located with sufficient currency in the sources reviewed for this chapter. Readers requiring precise state-level higher education GER, institutional density, and faculty vacancy figures should consult the most recent AISHE report published by the Ministry of Education, since this Framework prioritizes flagging that gap over supplying an estimated figure.

Structurally, the state's higher education capacity has historically been concentrated around Raipur, home to Pandit Ravishankar Shukla University, and Bilaspur, with more limited institutional density across Bastar and Surguja divisions, a pattern consistent with the broader infrastructure and access disparities documented in Chapter 1.

5.4 Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Ecosystem

The state's TVET ecosystem is being expanded under the university grants, Industrial Training Institute, and polytechnic modernisation allocations included in the 2026-27 state budget, alongside the School Education Department's Rs 22,000 crore allocation that year, the highest departmental allocation in the budget (Drishti IAS, 2026). The Industrial Development Policy 2024-30 complements this by introducing the "Udyam Kranti Yojana" scheme, which provides loans to unemployed youth to support self-employment and entrepreneurship, directly linking vocational skill-building to the state's broader industrial investment strategy (Industries Department, Government of Chhattisgarh, 2024).

5.5 Teacher Recruitment, Training and Professional Development

Teacher-related data specific to Chhattisgarh's recruitment cycles, vacancy rates, and professional development programming was not comprehensively available in the sources reviewed for this chapter. Given the state's identified enrolment weaknesses concentrated in the secondary and higher secondary stages, and given that Bastar and Surguja divisions have historically reported some of the state's highest teacher vacancy rates due to postings in remote, low-infrastructure locations, this remains an area warranting dedicated follow-up research using Ministry of Education and state Directorate of Public Instruction data for precise current figures.

5.6 Digital Education, EdTech Integration and ICT in Schools

Digital education infrastructure investment in Chhattisgarh is occurring within the broader context of a World Bank-supported school education quality improvement project; the World Bank approved USD 300 million to improve the quality of school education in Chhattisgarh, a significant multilateral financing commitment specifically targeted at the state's education system (World Bank, cited in Wikipedia, 2026). This financing is understood to support governance, teacher capacity, and learning outcome improvements, complementing the state's

own digital education investments under its broader "Technology" pillar of recent state budget themes.

5.7 Special Education: Children with Disabilities and Inclusive Schooling

State-specific data on enrolment and retention of children with disabilities in Chhattisgarh's mainstream and special education institutions was not comprehensively available in the sources reviewed for this chapter. This Framework recommends drawing on the Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+) disability-disaggregated indicators, published alongside the general enrolment and dropout series referenced above, for precise figures in a future revision of this chapter.

5.8 State-Specific Educational Challenges and Reform Priorities

Chhattisgarh's education system presents a distinctive profile: strong foundational and middle-stage retention, comparable to national averages, combined with a pronounced secondary-to-higher-secondary enrolment collapse that substantially exceeds the national pattern (UDISE+ 2024-25, cited in Education for All in India, 2026). The gender gap in both literacy and dropout rates, evident since at least the 2011 Census and persisting through the most recent UDISE+ cycles, represents a second consistent theme across the available data (Census of India, 2011; Education for All in India, 2026).

The state's 2026-27 "Education City" initiative for Abujhmad and Jagargunda, two of the most historically inaccessible areas of Bastar division, represents a targeted attempt to address the access dimension of the secondary education gap directly in the state's most underserved geography, though its outcomes will only be assessable in subsequent budget and UDISE+ cycles (Drishti IAS, 2026). Combined with the World Bank's USD 300 million school quality improvement financing, the state's education reform priorities for the near term appear centered on converting improved foundational and middle-stage retention into comparable gains at the secondary and higher secondary level, a transition that remains the central unresolved challenge in the sector.

Chapter 6: Health, Nutrition and Population

6.1 Public Health Infrastructure: Facilities, Human Resources and Gaps

Chhattisgarh's public health infrastructure has historically been characterized by significant human resource shortages relative to its population and geographic dispersion. As of the most recent comprehensive figures available, the state operated six medical colleges, five government and one private, with a combined intake capacity of 700 students, against a state population exceeding 25 million at the last Census, and a doctor-patient ratio reported at 1:17,000, substantially below recommended World Health Organization benchmarks (Wikipedia, 2026, citing state health department data). This shortage is most acute in Bastar division, where the Late Baliram Kashyap Memorial Government Medical College in Jagdalpur functions as the only tertiary healthcare facility serving all seven Bastar division districts, a catchment area characterized by dense forest cover and predominantly tribal settlement (NCBI, cited in PMC4274025, 2014, methodology still broadly reflective of Bastar's tertiary care geography).

On the NITI Aayog Health Index ("Healthy States, Progressive India"), Chhattisgarh scored 52.02 out of 100 in the most recent available round, outperforming Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Rajasthan, Odisha, Bihar, Assam, and Uttar Pradesh, even as underlying indicators including women's BMI below 18.5, under-five mortality, and child underweight prevalence remained comparatively weak (NITI Aayog, cited in Wikipedia, 2026).

6.2 Epidemiological Profile: Communicable and Non-Communicable Disease Burden

Vector-borne disease remains a significant communicable disease burden in Chhattisgarh, particularly in the densely forested, tribal-majority Bastar region. Bastar has historically been identified as a high-prevalence malaria zone, contributing approximately 24% of the state's total malaria cases and 27% of malaria-related deaths in a reference year within the 2012 period, with an Annual Parasite Incidence around 17.5 in the affected zone, well above the state average figure of 5 (NCBI, PMC4274025, 2014). Japanese Encephalitis has also been documented as an outbreak concern in Bastar, linked to paddy cultivation near homes, high pig-to-cattle ratios favoring the relevant mosquito vector, and limited health awareness among tribal populations, with a Jagdalpur-based study identifying 18 confirmed cases among 213 patients presenting with fever during a defined 2018-2019 surveillance period (NCBI, PMC11004846, cited 2026).

6.3 Maternal and Child Health: MMR, IMR, Under-5 Mortality and Nutrition

Chhattisgarh has recorded genuine, if incomplete, progress on maternal mortality. The Maternal Mortality Ratio fell from 221 per 100,000 live births in the 2011-13 reference period to 173 per 100,000 live births in 2014-16, according to Registrar General of India data (ORF, cited 2026). Despite this improvement, the state's absolute MMR level remained approximately 33% higher than the corresponding national figure for the same period,

reflecting a positive trend from a comparatively poor baseline rather than convergence with national performance (ORF, cited 2026).

Infant and child mortality show a similar pattern. NFHS-4 (2015-16) recorded Chhattisgarh's infant mortality rate at 54 per 1,000 live births and under-five mortality at 64 per 1,000 live births, representing declines of 24% and 29% respectively from NFHS-3 (2005-06) levels, though both remained elevated relative to national figures for the same period (ORF, cited 2026). Chhattisgarh is classified among India's eight Empowered Action Group states, a designation for states with historically the highest infant mortality burden nationally, though within this group the state has performed somewhat better than Bihar, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, and Uttar Pradesh on child stunting specifically (ORF, cited 2026). Nationally, the under-five mortality rate improved from 49.7 to 41.9 deaths per 1,000 live births between NFHS-4 and NFHS-5 (Janata Weekly, cited 2021), a trend Chhattisgarh's state-specific figures are understood to have broadly tracked, though state-disaggregated NFHS-5 mortality figures specifically were not comprehensively available in the sources reviewed for this chapter.

Childhood mortality disparities by social group remain a defined concern: Scheduled Tribe children in Chhattisgarh experience worse mortality outcomes than other social groups, a pattern of particular significance given that Scheduled Tribes constitute 30.6% of the state's population (ORF, cited 2026; Census of India, 2011).

6.4 Universal Health Coverage: State Health Assurance Schemes

Chhattisgarh's health assurance framework operates within the national Ayushman Bharat architecture alongside state-specific supplementary schemes. Comprehensive, current state-specific universal health coverage enrolment and utilization figures were not comprehensively available in the sources reviewed for this chapter; readers requiring precise, current Ayushman Bharat-Chhattisgarh enrolment and claims data should consult the National Health Authority's state dashboard directly.

6.5 Mental Health Services: Availability, Access and Stigma Reduction

State-specific mental health service availability data for Chhattisgarh was not comprehensively available in the sources reviewed for this chapter. Given the state's broader public health human resource shortages, documented above at a doctor-patient ratio of roughly 1:17,000, mental health service capacity, typically a smaller subset of overall clinical capacity in most Indian states, likely faces even more acute access constraints, particularly outside Raipur and Bilaspur, though this inference should be verified against the state's specific District Mental Health Programme implementation data rather than treated as established fact.

6.6 Nutrition Programmes: ICDS, Mid-Day Meal and Poshan Abhiyan

Chhattisgarh's nutritional indicators for children under five present a genuinely mixed trajectory across NFHS rounds. Between NFHS-3 (2005-06) and NFHS-4 (2015-16), stunting fell from 53% to 38%, and underweight prevalence fell from 47% to 38%, though the underweight figure remained above the national average (ORF, cited 2026). Wasting, by contrast, worsened over the same period, rising from 19% to 23%, also above the corresponding national figure (ORF, cited 2026). District-level disparities within this state average are stark: Narayanpur recorded 49% stunting and Dakshin Bastar Dantewada recorded 52% underweight prevalence among under-five children as of NFHS-4, while Bastar district recorded the state's highest wasting rate at 33% (ORF, cited 2026).

The NFHS-4 to NFHS-5 (2019-21) transition brought a further deterioration on several indicators nationally and in Chhattisgarh specifically, with a comparative NFHS-4/NFHS-5 study finding that earlier gains in anemia and malnutrition reduction were partially reversed in the NFHS-5 round, alongside a rise in anemia prevalence across all age categories examined (PMC10991083, cited 2026). At the district level within this NFHS-4-to-5 transition, Rajnandgaon, Kanker, and Raigarh districts showed significant stunting decreases, while Koriya, Korba, Bastar, and Dantewada were among the few districts to show wasting improvements; Janjgir-Champa, Rajnandgaon, and Raipur districts showed comparatively high wasting prevalence in the same period (PMC10991083, cited 2026). Nationally, childhood anemia prevalence in the 6-59 month age group rose from 58.6% to 67.1% between NFHS-4 and NFHS-5 (Janata Weekly, cited 2021), a national trend that the district-level Chhattisgarh anemia findings above suggest the state broadly shared.

On a more positive note, exclusive breastfeeding under six months was recorded at 80.3% in Chhattisgarh per NFHS-5, notably above the national average of 63.7% (The Wire Science, cited 2021), suggesting comparatively strong infant feeding practice outcomes even as broader nutritional status indicators lagged.

Chhattisgarh's Integrated Child Development Services and Mid-Day Meal programmes remain the principal institutional vehicles for addressing these nutritional deficits, alongside the national Poshan Abhiyan framework, with Anganwadi centers identified in COVID-19-period research as playing a central role in maintaining nutritional support for pregnant women and children in rural and tribal households specifically (NCBI, PMC9120657, cited 2022).

6.7 Population Stabilisation and Family Planning

Chhattisgarh's Total Fertility Rate stood at 1.8 children per woman as per NFHS 2019-21 data, below the national replacement level of 2.1 and a decline from 2.2 recorded in the 2016 round (PopulationU, cited 2026), indicating the state has completed its fertility transition alongside most other medium and large Indian states. Unmet need for family planning among currently married women in Chhattisgarh, at 8%, had declined from 11% in NFHS-4, broadly tracking the national pattern of improving family planning access documented in NFHS-5

(DHS Program, NFHS-5 Chhattisgarh report, cited 2021). Postnatal care coverage was comparatively strong, with 92% of mothers receiving a postnatal check after their last birth and 89% receiving this check within the WHO-recommended two-day window (DHS Program, NFHS-5 Chhattisgarh report, cited 2021).

A notable equity concern documented in the state-specific NFHS-5 report is son preference in contraceptive use: among women with two children, 82% of those with at least one son used a family planning method, compared to 61% of women with two daughters and no sons, indicating continued gender-based fertility decision-making despite the state's favorable overall sex ratio (DHS Program, NFHS-5 Chhattisgarh report, cited 2021).

6.8 Health System Strengthening and Future Preparedness

Chhattisgarh's health system presents a structurally consistent pattern across nearly every indicator reviewed in this chapter: comparative improvement over time from a historically weak baseline, combined with persistent, often severe, geographic and social-group disparities concentrated in Bastar division and among Scheduled Tribe populations. The NFHS-4-to-NFHS-5 partial reversal on anemia and malnutrition indicators, a pattern shared with numerous other Indian states during the same period, suggests that health system strengthening priorities for the coming Framework period should center on consolidating and protecting the gains achieved through the mid-2010s rather than assuming a linear improvement trajectory. Given the acute doctor-patient ratio shortage and the concentration of tertiary care capacity outside Bastar division, expanding human resource deployment and facility density in the state's most underserved districts remains the single most consequential health system priority identified across the sources reviewed for this chapter.

Chapter 7: Social Justice, Inclusion and Community Welfare

7.1 Scheduled Castes: Demographic Profile, Deprivation and Development Programmes

Scheduled Castes constitute 12.8% of Chhattisgarh's population, numbering 3,274,269 persons at the 2011 Census (Census of India, 2011). Welfare administration for the community falls under the state's Department of Tribal and Scheduled Caste, which runs incentive schemes for SC candidates clearing competitive examinations, including a dedicated cash incentive for state SC and ST candidates who clear the UPSC Civil Services Preliminary Examination, alongside residential coaching support for engineering and medical entrance examination preparation (Department of Tribal and Scheduled Caste, Government of Chhattisgarh, 2025). SC-specific development programming in the state operates substantially through the same institutional architecture, hostels, scholarships, and coaching support, that serves the state's larger Scheduled Tribe population, given the shared departmental structure.

7.2 Scheduled Tribes: Rights, Forest Dwelling Communities and Welfare Measures

Scheduled Tribes constitute 30.6% of Chhattisgarh's population, at 7,822,902 persons per the 2011 Census, one of the highest ST population shares of any major Indian state (Census of India, 2011). Tribal rights and welfare architecture in the state operates through a combination of constitutional and statutory mechanisms: the Fifth Schedule, applicable across substantial portions of Bastar and Surguja divisions; the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996, which grants Gram Sabhas specific consent authority over land acquisition and mining leases in Scheduled Areas; and the Forest Rights Act, 2006, which recognizes Individual Forest Rights and Community Forest Rights claims for traditional forest-dwelling communities residing in the area prior to December 13, 2005 (Right to Information Wiki, 2026).

Implementation gaps remain a documented concern across all three mechanisms: Individual Forest Rights claims pending under the FRA, unrecognized Community Forest Rights despite supporting Gram Sabha resolutions, and instances of PESA consent requirements being bypassed for mining or land acquisition purposes are all identified as recurring grievance categories for which the Right to Information Act provides a documented redress pathway (Right to Information Wiki, 2026). Scheme-specific tribal welfare entitlements include pre-matric and post-matric scholarships, Eklavya Model Residential School admissions, Van Dhan Vikas Kendra procurement support for minor forest produce collectors through TRIFED, and the PM-JANMAN mission targeting Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups specifically (Right to Information Wiki, 2026).

Central government financial support for tribal development in Chhattisgarh flows through the Special Central Assistance to Tribal Sub-Scheme, which the state receives alongside 22

other states, and through Article 275(1) grants-in-aid, a 100% central grant supporting Integrated Tribal Development Agencies, Modified Area Development Approach clusters, and Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups specifically (PIB, Ministry of Tribal Affairs schemes, cited 2025). The Union Cabinet has periodically approved revisions to Chhattisgarh's official Scheduled Tribes list, most recently extending reservation and scholarship eligibility to newly listed communities, entitling them to Post Matric Scholarship, National Overseas Scholarship, National Fellowship, Top Class Education support, and hostel access for ST boys and girls (PMO India, cited 2025).

7.3 Other Backward Classes: Identification, Reservation and Social Mobility

Comprehensive, current OBC population share and reservation implementation data specific to Chhattisgarh was not comprehensively available in the sources reviewed for this chapter. Given that OBC reservation policy in Chhattisgarh, as in most Indian states, intersects with active litigation and periodic revision regarding the applicable reservation ceiling relative to the 50% constitutional benchmark established in Indra Sawhney, readers requiring current, precise figures should consult the Chhattisgarh State Backward Classes Commission's most recent reports directly.

7.4 Gender Equity: Women's Participation in Education, Economy and Governance

Chhattisgarh's flagship gender welfare intervention is the Mahtari Vandan Yojana, launched on March 1, 2024, and formally inaugurated with disbursement of its first installment, totaling Rs 655 crore, by the Prime Minister shortly thereafter (PMO India, cited 2024). The scheme provides Rs 1,000 per month, or Rs 12,000 annually, as direct benefit transfer to eligible married women aged 21 and above as of January 1, 2024, with eligibility extended to widowed, divorced, and deserted women, benefiting an estimated 70 lakh women statewide (PMO India, cited 2024; Government Schemes India, cited 2026). By its 21st monthly installment, the scheme had disbursed approximately Rs 647 crore in a single month's transfer round, indicating sustained, large-scale implementation well into the 2025-26 period (Government Schemes India, cited 2026). A complementary Mahtari Shakti Loan Scheme offers short-term business loans to scheme beneficiaries, layering a livelihood-generation component onto the base cash transfer (Government Schemes India, cited 2026).

The state's 2026-27 budget continued this emphasis with a 50% exemption on property registration fees for women, intended to encourage property and asset ownership among women, alongside the Rani Durgavati Scheme providing Rs 1.5 lakh to girls upon turning 18 as a long-term financial support instrument, and the construction of 250 Mahatari Sadans, community centers supporting women's welfare (Drishti IAS, 2026). As documented in Chapter 6, however, gender disparities persist in health-adjacent indicators: son preference in contraceptive use and lower period-product usage among women aged 15-24, at 70% or below, were both documented in NFHS-5 for Chhattisgarh, indicating that cash-transfer-based gender welfare policy has advanced alongside, rather than resolved,

underlying gender-based health and reproductive decision-making disparities (DHS Program, NFHS-5, cited 2021; Janata Weekly, cited 2021).

7.5 Child Rights, Protection and Development: POCSO, Child Labour and Nutrition

Child protection administration in Chhattisgarh operates within the national POCSO Act, 2012 framework, alongside state-level child welfare committees and district child protection units. As documented extensively in Chapter 6, child nutrition indicators remain the most acute child welfare concern statistically documented for the state, with district-level stunting and wasting rates in Bastar division among India's highest recorded figures. Comprehensive, current state-specific POCSO case disposition and child labour prevalence data was not comprehensively available in the sources reviewed for this chapter.

7.6 Welfare of Elderly Persons: Pension, Care Infrastructure and Policy

The 2026-27 state budget allocated Rs 1,400 crore toward enhanced pensions and welfare schemes, a category that includes elderly welfare provisioning alongside other social security categories (Drishti IAS, 2026). Comprehensive, disaggregated elderly-specific care infrastructure and old-age pension coverage data specific to Chhattisgarh was not comprehensively available in the sources reviewed for this chapter.

7.7 Persons with Disabilities: Rights, Accessibility and Empowerment

State-specific disability rights implementation and accessibility infrastructure data for Chhattisgarh was not comprehensively available in the sources reviewed for this chapter. The 2011 Census recorded state-level disability population figures by category, a dataset since superseded in currency by nearly a decade and a half without a subsequent decennial update, a limitation consistent with the broader Census-currency caveat noted throughout this Framework.

7.8 Minority Communities: Development, Representation and Welfare

Religious minorities in Chhattisgarh, principally Muslims at 2.02%, Christians at 1.92%, and smaller Sikh, Buddhist, and Jain populations, together constitute a modest share of the state's population relative to the 93.25% Hindu majority recorded at the 2011 Census (Census of India, 2011). Minority welfare programming in the state operates within the national Ministry of Minority Affairs scheme architecture, including scholarship and skill development schemes, though comprehensive state-specific utilization data was not comprehensively available in the sources reviewed for this chapter.

7.9 Social Security and Beneficiary-Linked Welfare Architecture

Chhattisgarh's welfare architecture is increasingly organized around direct benefit transfer mechanisms, exemplified by the Mahtari Vandan Yojana's monthly DBT structure and the state's broader Aadhaar-linked delivery systems for its public distribution system, itself an

area of documented national-level performance strength for the state given its early adoption of biometric ration card systems (as referenced in Chapter 2). The state's overall approach, reflected in its GYAN budget framework, Gareeb, Yuva, Annadata, Naari, explicitly organizes welfare policy around four target constituencies: the poor, youth, farmers, and women, with each subsequent budget cycle since 2024-25 layering additional scheme commitments onto this base framework (Drishti IAS, 2026; CG Competition Point, 2026).

Chapter 8: Transport and Connectivity Infrastructure

8.1 Road Network: National Highways, State Highways and Rural Roads

Chhattisgarh's total road network spans approximately 74,434 kilometers, of which national highways, state highways, and major district roads together account for roughly half the total length, carrying the large majority of long-distance passenger and goods traffic (Asian Development Bank, 2018-based project appraisal, figures reaffirmed in the Chhattisgarh Road Connectivity Project documentation). The state's national highway network, reported at figures ranging from approximately 1,827 to 2,225 kilometers depending on the reporting cycle and subsequent additions, connects the state to major metropolitan centers including Mumbai, Kolkata, Hyderabad, and Visakhapatnam via key corridors such as NH-6 (Mumbai-Kolkata), NH-43 (Raipur-Visakhapatnam), NH-16 (Hyderabad-Bhopalpatnam in Dantewada district), and NH-78 (Katni to Gumla via Jashpur, Koriya, Surguja, and Surajpur districts) (Maps of India, 2025; Chhattisgarh Online, cited 2026).

Road density in the state was recorded at just 72.1 kilometers per 100 square kilometers as of FY2016, roughly half the national average of 139.1 kilometers per 100 square kilometers, reflecting the state's large forested and hilly area under low-density settlement (Asian Development Bank, 2018). Approximately 70% of state highways were reported to have only single or intermediate lane width as of the same reference period, even as the state's registered vehicle count more than doubled, from 2.1 million in 2009 to 4.8 million in 2016, at an average annual growth rate of around 12% (Asian Development Bank, 2018), indicating a substantial and growing mismatch between road capacity and traffic demand that has driven the state's subsequent road upgrade programming.

The Asian Development Bank-supported Chhattisgarh Road Connectivity Project has targeted the rehabilitation and upgrade of at least 800 kilometers of state highways and major district roads to two-lane or four-lane standard, spanning 25 civil works packages, with physical progress reported between 20% and 90% across packages as of the most recent implementation update reviewed (Asian Development Bank, cited 2026). Separately, the state government has taken up approximately 3,106 kilometers of road length specifically for inter-state and internal traffic upgrades (Department of Commerce and Industries, Government of Chhattisgarh, cited 2026). As of December 2017, approximately 9,200 rural habitations in the state had been connected to the core road network under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, the central rural roads programme administered in the state through the Chhattisgarh Rural Road Development Authority (Asian Development Bank, 2018).

A significant recent infrastructure milestone is the completion of Chhattisgarh's first national highway tunnel, a 2.79-kilometer twin-tube structure built by the National Highways Authority of India in a 12-month construction period, situated beneath hilly terrain straddling Kanker and Kondagaon districts near the Odisha border, and forming part of the 464-kilometer, six-lane NH-130CD Raipur-Visakhapatnam economic corridor. The left-hand

tube was completed and projected to open to traffic between March and April 2026, with the right-hand tube's completion estimated for July-August 2026 (GetTransfer, 2025). This tunnel is a particularly significant development given its location on the Bastar-adjacent corridor, directly relevant to the region's broader connectivity and security-to-development transition discussed in Chapter 1.

8.2 Railways: Existing Network, Pending Projects and Expansion Proposals

Chhattisgarh's railway network is comparatively limited relative to the state's road network, spanning approximately 1,196 kilometers and serving primarily interstate freight and passenger traffic rather than dense intrastate connectivity (Asian Development Bank, 2018). The entire network falls under the South East Central Railway zone, headquartered at Bilaspur (Chhattisgarh Online, cited 2026; CGPCS Exam Preparation, cited 2024). Given the centrality of coal, iron ore, and other mineral transport to the state's economy, railways play an outsized industrial role relative to their track-length share, functioning as the primary mode for bulk mineral evacuation from mining sites in Korba, Raigarh, and the broader industrial belt to processing and consumption centers elsewhere in India (Department of Commerce and Industries, Government of Chhattisgarh, cited 2026).

8.3 Aviation: Airport Infrastructure and Air Connectivity

Swami Vivekananda Airport in Raipur serves as the state's principal air connectivity hub (Chhattisgarh Online, cited 2026). Civil aviation is explicitly characterized in Asian Development Bank transport sector analysis as playing "a very limited role" in the state's overall transport services relative to the dominant road mode (Asian Development Bank, 2018), a structural feature that persists as of the most recent sources reviewed for this chapter, notwithstanding incremental regional connectivity scheme additions under the national UDAN programme.

8.4 Ports, Inland Waterways and Logistics Hubs

As a landlocked state, Chhattisgarh has no direct port access, and inland waterways are explicitly identified alongside civil aviation as playing a very limited role in the state's transport services (Asian Development Bank, 2018). Logistics for the state's substantial mineral and steel export volumes therefore depend on rail and road linkages to ports in neighboring coastal states, principally in Odisha and Andhra Pradesh, reinforcing the strategic significance of corridors such as the Raipur-Visakhapatnam economic corridor referenced in section 8.1.

8.5 Urban Mass Transit: Metro, Bus Rapid Transit and Integrated Mobility

Chhattisgarh's urban mobility investment has centered on bus-based systems rather than rail-based mass transit. The central government sanctioned 442 city buses for deployment across 21 premier cities in the state, with the Bhilai-Durg twin-city region receiving the largest allocation at 110 buses, followed by Bilaspur at 50, Korba at 42, Ambikapur at 35, and

Rajnandgaon at 20, with the remainder distributed across Mahasamund, Chirmiri, Kanker, Jagdalpur, and Dhamtari among other cities (Chhattisgarh Online, cited 2026). This bus-centric approach reflects both the state's comparatively modest urbanization level, at approximately 23% urban population as of the 2011 Census, and the concentration of urban mobility demand within the Raipur-Bhilai-Durg and Bilaspur-Korba corridors identified as the state's principal growth engines in Chapter 3.

8.6 Multimodal Logistics: Last-Mile Connectivity and Freight Corridors

The state's logistics strategy is increasingly organized around the integrated capital region concept spanning Raipur, Naya Raipur, Bhilai, and Durg, approved by the state legislature in 2025, which is expected to concentrate future multimodal freight and passenger logistics investment within this corridor (as referenced in Chapter 3). The Raipur-Visakhapatnam economic corridor, anchored by the new NH-130CD tunnel infrastructure, represents the state's most significant emerging freight corridor investment, directly linking the state's mineral and steel production centers to port access in Andhra Pradesh, a connectivity upgrade of particular strategic significance given Chhattisgarh's landlocked status and consequent dependence on efficient road and rail linkages to coastal logistics infrastructure.

Chapter 9: Energy, Power and Renewable Transition

9.1 Power Generation: Installed Capacity, Mix and Dependence Profile

Chhattisgarh's installed power capacity stood at 30,671 MW as of the most recent official state figures reviewed, a substantial expansion from the 4,882.4 MW recorded as of March 2011, reflecting more than a six-fold increase over roughly a decade and a half of sustained thermal capacity addition (ThePrint, cited 2026; CG Climate Change portal, historical baseline). The Central Electricity Authority's Resource Adequacy report placed the state's contracted electricity capacity at 9,783 MW as of March 2025, a somewhat different accounting basis, of which coal-based capacity accounted for 6,072 MW, or roughly 62%, with non-fossil sources making up the remaining 38% (Sonam Raina, Medium, cited May 2026). Separately, thermal power has been reported to account for approximately 86.2% to 93% of the state's installed capacity depending on the specific dataset and reference year (NISER, Energy Transition in Chhattisgarh, 2025; Electrical India Magazine, cited 2026), a range that reflects differing methodologies for capacity accounting rather than a genuine discrepancy in the underlying thermal dominance of the state's power mix.

The state holds approximately 80 billion tonnes of coal reserves as of April 2023, the third-largest coal-bearing state in India after Jharkhand and Odisha, and accounted for around 10% of India's total power production as of 2023 (Electrical India Magazine, cited 2026). Chhattisgarh has historically been characterized as a power-surplus state with theoretical generation potential of up to 50,000 MW (CG Climate Change portal, historical estimate), and remains among the few Indian states reporting utility-based electricity operations as profitable (Electrical India Magazine, cited 2026).

Korba district, home to more than 15 large-scale coal-based thermal power plants, functions as the acknowledged "Power Capital of India" and anchors both state and national grid supply (Electrical India Magazine, cited 2026). Continued expansion in this district includes two supercritical units of 660 MW each under construction in Korba West and an 800 MW unit at Marwa, both under the Chhattisgarh State Power Generation Company (CSPGC) (ThePrint, cited February 2026), alongside an NTPC 800 MW advanced ultra-supercritical unit at Korba identified among India's key recently announced thermal generation fleet additions nationally (Power Line Magazine, cited 2026).

9.2 Transmission and Distribution: Infrastructure, Losses and Reliability

Historical transmission and distribution loss figures for the state showed transmission losses of approximately 3.7% and distribution losses around 30%, a substantial loss level that state energy planning identified as a priority area for improvement toward bringing losses in line with the national average (CG Climate Change portal, historical baseline). More recent state statements indicate continued infrastructure investment, with the state's consumer base exceeding 6.5 million and thousands of kilometers of new power lines, substations, and transformers installed over the preceding two years as of early 2026 (ThePrint, cited February

2026), suggesting active, if not fully quantified in the sources reviewed, progress on loss reduction and reliability improvement.

9.3 Rural and Household Electrification: Coverage and Quality

Chhattisgarh has historically pursued off-grid electrification for its most remote habitations, having electrified nearly 1,378 off-grid villages through non-conventional energy sources under earlier state energy policy cycles (CG Climate Change portal, historical baseline). More recently, the state's "Niyad Nellanar" scheme has specifically targeted electricity provision to hundreds of villages in Left-Wing Extremism-affected areas of Bastar division, directly linking rural electrification policy to the state's broader security-to-development transition discussed in Chapter 1 (ThePrint, cited February 2026). The state government provides a subsidy covering half the electricity bill for all households up to 400 units per month, a substantial consumer-facing energy subsidy that, per recent quantification, totaled approximately Rs 786 crore and grew by around 50% between FY2020 and FY2024 (IISD, Mapping India's State-Level Energy Transition: Chhattisgarh, 2025).

9.4 Renewable Energy Potential: Solar, Wind, Hydro and Biomass

Renewable energy currently contributes a modest share of the state's power mix, variously estimated between roughly 7% and 12.8% of installed capacity depending on the dataset (Electrical India Magazine, cited 2026; NISER, 2025), though renewable generation has shown meaningful year-on-year growth, with Central Electricity Authority data showing the state generated approximately 430 million units of renewable electricity in March 2026, up from around 354 million units in March 2025 (Sonam Raina, Medium, cited May 2026). The state's renewable build-out remains predominantly industrial and utility-scale rather than consumer-facing; the state's first floating solar installation, a 15 MW project at the Maroda reservoir commissioned in 2025 for Bhilai Steel Plant's captive use, is expected to generate more than 34 million units annually and exemplifies this industrial-first renewable deployment pattern (Sonam Raina, Medium, cited May 2026).

The state has committed to substantial future renewable and non-fossil capacity expansion, with Memoranda of Understanding signed for 32,100 MW of new generation projects aimed at establishing the state as the country's "energy capital," comprising 12,100 MW thermal, 4,200 MW nuclear, 2,500 MW floating solar, and 13,300 MW pumped storage capacity (ThePrint, cited February 2026). CSPGC has identified six pumped storage hydropower sites with combined capacity of 8,300 MW, of which five have completed feasibility reports with detailed project reports under development, alongside approximately 5,000 MW of private-sector pumped storage projects under development (ThePrint, cited February 2026). Wind energy potential in the state remains comparatively underutilized due to insufficient investment and infrastructure to date (NISER, 2025).

Notwithstanding this expansion pipeline, the International Institute for Sustainable Development has noted that approximately 78% of Chhattisgarh's energy-related revenues still derive from fossil fuel sources as of the most recent assessment reviewed (IISD, cited in

Sonam Raina, Medium, May 2026), underscoring that the state's renewable transition remains at an early, revenue-marginal stage relative to its coal-based industrial economy.

9.5 Energy Efficiency, Conservation and Demand-Side Management

Given the historically high transmission and distribution losses noted in section 9.2, alongside the presence of numerous energy-intensive industries and MSMEs within the state, energy efficiency has been identified as an area of substantial untapped potential in state energy planning, with earlier policy cycles targeting a 10% reduction in energy wastage across sectors and alignment of T&D losses with the national average (CG Climate Change portal, historical baseline). Roughly one in five jobs in the state is linked to coal mining and coal-related industry, a structural feature that constrains the pace of demand-side transition away from energy-intensive, coal-dependent industrial processes even as efficiency and renewable substitution efforts advance elsewhere in the economy (Electrical India Magazine, cited 2026).

9.6 State Electricity Regulatory Framework and Tariff Policy

The Chhattisgarh State Electricity Regulatory Commission has mandated renewable purchase obligations on power distribution licensees to promote renewable energy deployment within the state's regulatory framework (CG Climate Change portal, historical baseline). The Chhattisgarh Renewable Energy Development Agency (CREDA) functions as the state's nodal agency under the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, responsible for renewable energy development, deployment, and promotion statewide (CG Climate Change portal, historical baseline). At the national policy level, the draft National Electricity Policy 2026 has flagged coal quality monitoring and flexible gas supply arrangements as priorities relevant to states such as Chhattisgarh with substantial thermal generation fleets, alongside the broader national target of reaching 500 GW of non-fossil fuel-based capacity by 2030 under the National Policy on Energy Conservation framework, against which Chhattisgarh's own 32,100 MW MoU pipeline, discussed above, should be read as a state-level contribution (Power Line Magazine, cited 2026).

Chapter 10: Water, Sanitation and Solid Waste Management

10.1 Drinking Water Supply: Coverage, Quality and Infrastructure

Chhattisgarh's rural tap water connectivity under the Jal Jeevan Mission has historically lagged the national pace. At an earlier assessment point in the mission's rollout, when the national average stood at approximately 50% functional household tap connection coverage, Chhattisgarh's coverage was recorded at just 23.26%, placing it among the four lowest-coverage major states alongside Uttar Pradesh (13.75%), Jharkhand (20.01%), and Rajasthan (24.58%) (Jal Jeevan Mission, Ministry of Jal Shakti, cited progress report). Given that the national tap water coverage figure has since risen substantially, to roughly 81% of rural households as of mid-2025, and given the state's inclusion among five states receiving a fresh Rs 536.53 crore tranche under "JJM 2.0" on April 1, 2026, the second-largest allocation among the five states after Uttar Pradesh (Wikipedia, Jal Jeevan Mission, cited 2026), it is reasonable to infer that Chhattisgarh's coverage has improved substantially since the 23.26% baseline. However, a precise, current, state-specific coverage percentage for Chhattisgarh was not located with sufficient currency in the sources reviewed for this chapter, and this Framework flags that gap explicitly rather than presenting a stale figure as current. Readers requiring the exact current figure should consult the Jal Jeevan Mission's public dashboard at ejalshakti.gov.in directly.

Nationally, the JJM's 2024 Functionality Assessment Survey found that while nearly 98% of rural households had tap connections, only around 83% had actually received water through their taps at least once in the preceding seven days, and roughly three-fourths received a regular, safe, and adequate supply, indicating a meaningful gap between infrastructure coverage and functional service delivery even in higher-coverage states (Sanskriti IAS, cited 2026). This functionality gap is a relevant consideration for Chhattisgarh specifically, given that the state's later start on infrastructure rollout means functionality assessment there remains at an earlier stage than in states that achieved high coverage sooner.

10.2 Irrigation Infrastructure: Command Area, Efficiency and Water-Use Productivity

Given Chhattisgarh's identity as the "rice bowl" of central India, documented in Chapter 1, irrigation infrastructure and water-use efficiency in the agricultural sector are of direct relevance to the state's food security and farmer income objectives referenced throughout the fiscal and economic chapters of this Framework. Comprehensive, current command area and irrigation efficiency data specific to Chhattisgarh was not comprehensively available in the sources reviewed for this chapter. The state's Economic Survey 2025-26 attributed accelerated agricultural growth partly to expanded irrigation support (as noted in Chapter 3), indicating continued state-level investment in this area, though precise command area figures and irrigation efficiency ratios were not located with sufficient currency for inclusion here.

10.3 Sanitation and Open Defecation Free Status: Post-ODF Sustainability

Chhattisgarh, in common with the rest of rural India, achieved formal Open Defecation Free status under Swachh Bharat Mission-Grameen Phase I, and has since transitioned, alongside the rest of the country, into Phase II, which runs from FY2021 to FY2027 and focuses on sustaining ODF status while transforming villages into "ODF Plus Model" villages through solid and liquid waste management infrastructure (IBEF, 2026; Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, cited 2026). As of May 14, 2026, nationally, 5,68,894 villages had achieved ODF Plus status, including 5,03,756 ODF Plus Model villages, across 753 districts, 7,133 blocks, and 2,58,231 Gram Panchayats (IBEF, 2026); a Chhattisgarh-specific breakdown of this national figure was not located in the sources reviewed for this chapter.

The national Swachh Bharat Mission-Grameen budget, relevant context for Chhattisgarh's own allocation trajectory, was cut from a Rs 7,192 crore budget estimate to a Rs 6,000 crore revised estimate in 2025-26 before being restored to Rs 7,192 crore for 2026-27, with the stated intent of shifting focus toward solid and liquid waste management and sustaining ODF status following the initial toilet-construction phase (Down To Earth, cited February 2026).

10.4 Solid Waste Management: Municipal, Biomedical and Hazardous Waste

Solid waste management in Chhattisgarh's urban centers falls within the broader national Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban framework, under which India's urban waste processing capacity reached 81% nationally in 2025, up sharply from just 16% in 2014, through expansion of composting units, waste-to-energy facilities, and material recovery plants (IBEF, 2026). State-specific urban waste processing capacity figures for Chhattisgarh's cities were not comprehensively available in the sources reviewed for this chapter. Given the state's comparatively modest urbanization level, concentrated in the Raipur-Bhilai-Durg and Bilaspur-Korba corridors, as documented in Chapter 1, municipal solid waste management infrastructure needs in the state are likely to be more geographically concentrated and, in relative terms, less nationally significant than in more heavily urbanized peer states, though this remains an inference rather than a sourced conclusion and should be verified against state Urban Administration and Development Department data.

10.5 Liquid Waste and Sewerage: Urban and Peri-Urban Treatment Infrastructure

Liquid waste management, encompassing sewerage and wastewater treatment infrastructure, is explicitly identified as a Swachh Bharat Mission-Grameen Phase II priority alongside solid waste management, as part of the broader "ODF Plus" transformation objective referenced in section 10.3 (Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, cited 2026). Comprehensive, current sewerage treatment capacity data specific to Chhattisgarh's urban and peri-urban areas was not comprehensively available in the sources reviewed for this chapter. This Framework recommends that a future revision draw on the state's Urban Administration and Development Department and Central Pollution Control Board data for precise, current treatment capacity and coverage figures, given the gap identified across this section.

Chapter 11: Urban Development, Housing and Smart Cities

11.1 Urbanisation Trends and Urban Governance Architecture

The trajectory of urbanisation in Chhattisgarh presents a fascinating study of demographic shifts driven by rapid industrialization, administrative reorganization, and the continuous migration of labor from agrarian hinterlands to emerging economic nodes. When the state was carved out of Madhya Pradesh in the year 2000, it was overwhelmingly rural, with an urban population hovering around twenty per cent. By the time of the 2011 Census, the urban population share had grown to 23.24 per cent. As the state navigated its third decade of existence, demographic projections for the year 2026 indicate that the urban population has accelerated to approximately 28 to 30 per cent of the total state population (Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, 2026). While this figure remains below the national urbanisation average, the absolute volume of urban growth and its intense spatial concentration have profoundly altered the economic and ecological landscape of Chhattisgarh.

Urbanisation in Chhattisgarh is not uniformly distributed. It is heavily polarized and primarily concentrated along the central plains, specifically within the Raipur, Bhilai, Durg, and Bilaspur corridors. This central industrial belt acts as an immense demographic magnet, attracting capital, skilled professionals, and unskilled migrant labor necessary to power the state's massive steel, cement, and power generation industries. In stark contrast, the northern Surguja division and the southern Bastar division remain predominantly rural. The urban centers in these peripheral regions, such as Ambikapur and Jagdalpur, function primarily as administrative and commercial hubs for the surrounding tribal hinterlands rather than as industrial mega centers. This dichotomous urbanisation pattern creates complex planning challenges. The state must simultaneously manage the hyper congestion and infrastructural stress of its central industrial cities while actively fostering sustainable, decentralized urban growth in its remote divisions to prevent severe regional imbalances.

The urban governance architecture tasked with managing this spatial transformation is defined by the Chhattisgarh Municipalities Act of 1961 and the Chhattisgarh Municipal Corporation Act of 1956, both of which were adapted and amended following the formation of the state to align with the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act. As of 2026, the state operates through a structured hierarchy of Urban Local Bodies. This includes 14 Municipal Corporations governing the largest metropolitan areas, 43 Municipal Councils overseeing medium sized towns, and 111 Nagar Panchayats managing transitional or newly classified urban areas (Department of Urban Administration and Development Chhattisgarh, 2026). The creation of Nava Raipur Atal Nagar, India's first greenfield smart capital city, adds a unique dimension to the state's urban governance. Nava Raipur is administered by a dedicated development authority, representing a highly planned, technologically integrated urban model

that stands in sharp contrast to the organic, often chaotic expansion of older legacy cities like Raipur and Bilaspur.

Despite a robust statutory framework, the functional reality of urban governance in Chhattisgarh in 2026 reveals significant structural bottlenecks. The devolution of power to Urban Local Bodies remains incomplete. While the 74th Amendment mandates the transfer of eighteen critical functions to municipal governments, state level parastatal agencies and specialized development authorities continue to control major infrastructure domains such as large scale water supply projects, town planning, and public housing. This fragmentation of authority frequently results in uncoordinated urban planning. For instance, the expansion of municipal boundaries to absorb rapidly growing peri urban villages often occurs years after informal settlements have already crystallized, making the retrospective provision of centralized sewerage and piped water extraordinarily expensive and logistically disruptive.

To rectify these architectural deficiencies and prepare for the anticipated urban population boom leading up to 2047, Chhattisgarh must execute profound governance reforms. The state needs to empower Metropolitan Planning Committees in the Raipur Bhilai Durg agglomeration to ensure integrated, cross municipal infrastructure development. Furthermore, the capacity of the Town and Country Planning Department requires massive augmentation. In 2026, many smaller Municipal Councils and Nagar Panchayats operate without updated statutory master plans, leading to haphazard land use, the encroachment of vital water bodies, and the loss of green cover. By mandating geographic information system based master planning for every single urban local body and legally enforcing strict zoning regulations, the state can transition from reactive urban management to proactive, sustainable urban design.

11.2 Urban Local Bodies: Financial Health, Capacity and Service Delivery

The functional efficacy of any urban governance architecture is fundamentally dependent on the financial health and administrative capacity of its constituent municipalities. For Chhattisgarh, transitioning its Urban Local Bodies from dependent administrative outposts into financially autonomous, service delivering institutions is a central developmental priority. In the fiscal year 2025 to 2026, the financial profile of Chhattisgarh's municipalities reveals a precarious reliance on external funding mechanisms. The overwhelming majority of capital expenditure and a significant portion of operational expenditure within the state's Urban Local Bodies are financed through devolutions from the State Finance Commission, grants from the Fifteenth Central Finance Commission, and tied funds from centrally sponsored schemes such as the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) (Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, 2026).

The capacity for Own Source Revenue generation remains chronically underdeveloped across the state. Property tax constitutes the primary engine of municipal revenue worldwide. However, in Chhattisgarh, property tax collection efficiency in 2026 is severely constrained by outdated assessment methodologies, incomplete digital property registers, and widespread under assessment of commercial properties. While premier municipal corporations like Raipur and Bhilai have initiated drone based aerial surveys and geographic information

system mapping to identify unregistered properties and integrate them into the tax net, the vast majority of smaller Municipal Councils and Nagar Panchayats continue to rely on archaic, manual tax administration. This reliance results in massive revenue leakages. Furthermore, the political reluctance to rationally revise user charges for municipal services, specifically water supply and solid waste management, forces local bodies to subsidize these services from their general revenues, systematically eroding the capital required for new infrastructure creation.

Service delivery outcomes across the state present a highly mixed narrative of localized innovation and systemic struggle. Solid waste management provides the most compelling example of this dichotomy. Chhattisgarh has garnered national and international acclaim for the "Ambikapur Model" of decentralized solid waste management. This highly innovative model, spearheaded by women's self help groups, relies entirely on intensive household level segregation, door to door collection, and the complete processing of organic and inorganic waste at decentralized tertiary sorting centers, completely eliminating the need for environmentally destructive centralized landfill sites. By 2026, the state government has aggressively attempted to replicate the Ambikapur model under the Mission Clean City initiative across all 168 Urban Local Bodies (Department of Urban Administration and Development Chhattisgarh, 2026). While several towns have successfully adopted this sustainable paradigm, highly industrialized cities with massive population densities still grapple with legacy waste remediation and the logistical complexities of processing thousands of metric tonnes of daily municipal waste.

Water supply and sanitation infrastructure require similar critical evaluation. Under the AMRUT 2.0 framework operative in 2026, the state has prioritized universal coverage of piped water supply to every urban household. While water production capacity has increased through the commissioning of new treatment plants, the non revenue water rate representing water lost to physical leakages and unmetered consumption remains alarmingly high in older urban centers. Sewerage networks present an even more formidable challenge. The capital intensive nature of underground sewerage systems means that comprehensive coverage is largely restricted to specific zones within the major municipal corporations. The vast majority of peri urban areas and smaller towns continue to rely on on site sanitation systems, predominantly septic tanks, which pose severe groundwater contamination risks if not subjected to rigorous, mechanized fecal sludge management protocols.

The strategic roadmap for municipal empowerment must directly address these structural financial and capacity deficits. The state government must mandate the complete digitization of all municipal financial records, transitioning every Urban Local Body to a double entry accounting system to ensure absolute fiscal transparency. To access the massive capital required for urban modernization, the larger municipal corporations must be systematically prepared to tap into capital markets through the issuance of municipal bonds. This requires achieving investment grade credit ratings, which in turn demands ruthless efficiency in property tax collection and the enforcement of rational user charges. Simultaneously, the state must establish a dedicated Urban Management Institute to continuously train municipal

cadres in modern urban planning, climate resilient engineering, and public private partnership structuring. Only by building robust, financially independent local governments can Chhattisgarh ensure the equitable and sustainable delivery of urban services to its rapidly growing city populations.

11.3 Housing: Demand Assessment, Affordability and Flagship Schemes

Access to secure, affordable, and dignified housing is a fundamental human right and a critical barometer of inclusive urban development. As Chhattisgarh experiences accelerated urbanisation driven by industrial expansion, the demand for urban housing has surged exponentially. The demographic influx of migrant laborers, industrial workers, and service sector professionals into cities like Raipur, Korba, and Raigarh has placed immense structural pressure on the existing urban housing stock. In 2026, the state faces a complex housing landscape characterized by rising real estate valuations, a proliferation of informal settlements in industrial peripheries, and the persistent challenge of providing affordable shelter to the economically weaker sections and lower income groups.

The state's response to this formidable challenge is primarily anchored by the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana Urban (PMAY-U), operating synergistically with customized state level interventions. The PMAY-U mission, which seeks to provide housing for all, utilizes four distinct verticals to address varying urban demographic needs. These include in situ slum redevelopment, the credit linked subsidy scheme, affordable housing in partnership with the private sector, and beneficiary led individual house construction. By the conclusion of the 2025 to 2026 fiscal year, Chhattisgarh has achieved commendable progress under the beneficiary led construction vertical, successfully completing hundreds of thousands of dwelling units across its municipal jurisdictions (Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, 2026). The state government augmented this national effort through its localized "Mor Zameen Mor Makan" (My Land My House) initiative, which specifically targets urban poor families who possess land titles but lack the financial capital to construct permanent, weather resilient structures.

Despite these programmatic successes, the broader issue of housing affordability remains deeply problematic, particularly in the central industrial corridors. The rapid acquisition of peri urban land for heavy industries, logistics parks, and commercial real estate has driven up urban land valuations to unprecedented levels. Consequently, the formal private real estate market caters almost exclusively to the middle and upper income segments. The affordable housing in partnership vertical of the PMAY-U has historically struggled to gain massive traction in Chhattisgarh, as private developers frequently cite high land acquisition costs, complex municipal approval processes, and low profit margins as significant deterrents to constructing affordable housing projects at scale. To enforce discipline and protect consumers within this highly skewed market, the Chhattisgarh Real Estate Regulatory Authority plays a vital role. In 2026, the authority has been instrumental in mandating project transparency, resolving thousands of homebuyer disputes, and penalizing developers for unjustified project delays, thereby injecting necessary accountability into the urban real estate ecosystem (Chhattisgarh Real Estate Regulatory Authority, 2026).

A specific and acute housing challenge unique to Chhattisgarh's industrial economy is the massive accommodation requirement for migrant labor. Industrial epicenters like Korba, the power capital of the state, and Bhilai, the steel city, attract hundreds of thousands of seasonal and permanent migrant workers. Historically, the lack of formalized rental housing has forced this critical workforce into highly congested, unsanitary informal settlements and squatter camps devoid of basic municipal services. Recognizing this humanitarian and economic crisis, the state has actively begun implementing the Affordable Rental Housing Complexes scheme in 2026. By repurposing vacant government funded housing stock and incentivizing public and private industries to construct dedicated rental dormitories on their idle land banks, the state aims to provide secure, dignified, and highly affordable rental accommodations close to the industrial workplaces.

Looking forward to the vision of 2047, the state must fundamentally transition from viewing housing merely as physical shelter to understanding it as an integrated habitat. Future housing policies must enforce mandatory green building codes to reduce the carbon footprint of the urban built environment. Furthermore, the state housing board must proactively acquire and bank land in the emerging peri urban corridors of newly declared districts, ensuring that the state retains the spatial capacity to plan and execute massive affordable housing townships before speculative market forces render the land prohibitively expensive. By prioritizing sustainable, transit oriented, and highly inclusive housing models, Chhattisgarh can ensure that its cities remain engines of opportunity for all socioeconomic strata.

11.4 Smart Cities Mission and AMRUT: State-Level Implementation Review

The modernization of urban infrastructure in Chhattisgarh is heavily defined by the state's active participation in two massive, transformational national frameworks initiated by the Government of India. These are the Smart Cities Mission and the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT). These parallel missions were designed to comprehensively overhaul the physical, digital, and ecological infrastructure of Indian cities. In 2026, as these missions mature and transition into new operational phases, a critical review of their implementation within Chhattisgarh reveals significant technological advancements alongside enduring challenges related to financial sustainability and post mission maintenance.

Under the Smart Cities Mission, three distinct urban centers in Chhattisgarh were selected for comprehensive modernization. These are Raipur, Bilaspur, and the greenfield capital of Nava Raipur Atal Nagar. The inclusion of Nava Raipur presents a globally unique case study. As an entirely planned city built from the ground up, Nava Raipur did not face the complex, retrofitting challenges that paralyze infrastructure upgrades in ancient, organically grown cities. By 2026, Nava Raipur operates as a benchmark for greenfield smart urbanism in India. The city features a fully operational Integrated Command and Control Center that manages intelligent traffic systems, automated solid waste collection routing, and centralized security surveillance seamlessly (Nava Raipur Atal Nagar Vikas Pradhikaran, 2026). The city utilizes an extensive underground utility corridor, completely eliminating the visual blight and maintenance hazards of overhead electrical and telecommunication cables.

In stark contrast, the smart city implementations in legacy cities like Raipur and Bilaspur have required highly complex urban acupuncture. The focus in these cities has been heavily oriented towards area based development, specifically the rejuvenation of central commercial districts, the creation of smart parking plazas, and the installation of comprehensive public Wi-Fi networks. The Integrated Command and Control Centers in Raipur and Bilaspur have proven remarkably effective, notably demonstrating their utility during public health emergencies by functioning as centralized crisis management and data tracking hubs. However, with the national Smart Cities Mission winding down its dedicated central funding tranches by 2026, the critical question of sustainability looms large. The highly sophisticated digital infrastructure established under the mission requires massive, continuous financial outlays for software licensing, hardware maintenance, and technical personnel. The municipal corporations must urgently ring fence dedicated revenue streams from advertising rights, smart parking fees, and data monetization to ensure these digital assets do not degrade into obsolescence due to a lack of operational expenditure.

The AMRUT mission addresses the foundational, core infrastructure of the urban environment. While the first phase of AMRUT focused heavily on expanding water treatment capacities and developing green spaces, the state is actively executing AMRUT 2.0 in the 2025 to 2026 period. This advanced phase places a massive, strategic emphasis on establishing a circular urban water economy (Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, 2026). Chhattisgarh's cities, despite experiencing heavy monsoons, frequently face acute localized water stress during the peak summer months due to inadequate surface storage and rapidly depleting urban aquifers. AMRUT 2.0 mandates the formulation of comprehensive City Water Balance Plans for all statutory towns.

A central priority under this mission is the large scale rejuvenation of urban water bodies. Cities like Raipur and Bilaspur are historically dotted with ancient ponds and lakes that have suffered from decades of severe encroachment and toxic wastewater discharge. The state government is currently utilizing AMRUT funds to scientifically desilt these water bodies, divert untreated sewage through newly constructed interception and diversion structures, and develop the surrounding areas into recreational public spaces. Furthermore, AMRUT 2.0 heavily targets the expansion of underground sewerage networks and the construction of decentralized Sewage Treatment Plants. By actively promoting the recycling and reuse of treated wastewater for industrial cooling and urban landscaping, Chhattisgarh is attempting to fundamentally reduce the fresh water footprint of its rapidly expanding urban centers. The successful execution of these combined missions is absolutely vital for ensuring that the state's cities remain ecologically resilient and economically competitive in the decades leading up to 2047.

11.5 Heritage Cities, Cultural Landscapes and Urban Tourism

Urban development is frequently conceptualized purely in terms of steel, concrete, and digital infrastructure. However, a truly holistic approach to urbanisation must actively preserve, integrate, and celebrate the historical and cultural landscapes that define a city's unique identity. Chhattisgarh possesses a rich tapestry of ancient heritage sites, traditional cultural

landscapes, and deeply revered religious centers that are increasingly being subsumed by the relentless pace of modern urban sprawl. In 2026, the state government has explicitly recognized that the conservation of urban heritage is not an impediment to development, but a massive catalyst for economic diversification through the promotion of urban and cultural tourism.

The integration of heritage into urban planning requires highly sensitive, specialized regulatory frameworks. The state features several urban and peri urban centers of immense historical significance. The town of Rajim, located at the sacred confluence of the Mahanadi, Pairi, and Sondur rivers, is globally recognized as the Prayag of Chhattisgarh and hosts a massive, annual Kumbh Mela. Similarly, the ancient archaeological town of Sirpur, which features highly significant Buddhist, Hindu, and Jain monuments, lies in close proximity to rapidly urbanizing corridors. The city of Jagdalpur, the administrative headquarters of the Bastar division, represents a living cultural landscape, serving as the epicenter for the unique, 75 day long Bastar Dussehra festival that draws massive tribal participation from across the region.

The primary threat to these heritage cities is the unregulated, haphazard construction of modern commercial and residential structures that destroy the visual corridors and historical context of the monuments. To combat this, the state Department of Urban Administration, working in close conjunction with the Department of Culture and Archaeology, has initiated the formulation of specialized Heritage Master Plans for these highly sensitive zones in 2026 (Department of Culture Chhattisgarh, 2026). These specialized master plans strictly enforce building height restrictions, mandate the use of vernacular architectural aesthetics in new constructions within designated buffer zones, and actively reroute heavy commercial traffic away from ancient temple complexes to prevent structural damage from vehicular vibrations.

Furthermore, the state is heavily investing in the development of specialized urban tourism infrastructure to monetize these cultural assets sustainably. Drawing inspiration from national schemes like the Heritage City Development and Augmentation Yojana (HRIDAY), Chhattisgarh is executing massive streetscape beautification projects around its primary heritage nodes. This includes the undergrounding of all electrical utilities, the construction of pedestrian friendly heritage walkways paved with locally sourced natural stone, and the installation of highly sophisticated, low impact architectural illumination to highlight the monuments during the evening hours.

The preservation of cultural landscapes also extends to the protection of traditional urban livelihoods. The state is establishing dedicated artisan villages and decentralized urban craft markets within municipal limits to provide traditional bell metal workers, terracotta potters, and Kosa silk weavers with direct, highly lucrative access to the urban consumer market and domestic tourists. By aggressively promoting urban heritage tourism, Chhattisgarh is generating significant local employment, fostering deep civic pride, and ensuring that the state's magnificent historical narrative is not erased by the bulldozers of modern urbanisation. As the state envisions its urban future in 2047, it must ensure that its cities reflect a perfect,

harmonious synthesis of cutting edge technological modernity and deeply respected ancient heritage.

11.6 Urban Poverty, Slum Rehabilitation and In-Situ Upgradation

The most profound moral and administrative test of Chhattisgarh's urban development policies lies in its approach to managing urban poverty and rehabilitating its most vulnerable populations. The rapid, industry driven urbanisation documented throughout this chapter has inadvertently resulted in the massive proliferation of informal settlements and slums. In 2026, significant slum populations are heavily concentrated in the major industrial and mining cities of Raipur, Bhilai, Durg, Korba, and Raigarh. These settlements are typically characterized by severe overcrowding, profound insecurity of land tenure, and a drastic lack of access to basic municipal services including piped clean water, underground sewerage, and reliable solid waste collection. The residents of these slums, primarily unorganized informal sector workers, domestic laborers, and seasonal migrants, form the indispensable, invisible backbone of the state's urban economy.

Historically, urban planning in India frequently relied on the strategy of forced relocation, transferring slum populations to massive, sterile housing blocks situated on the extreme, underdeveloped peripheries of the city. This approach consistently failed because it completely severed the vital economic linkages that the urban poor rely upon, separating domestic workers from residential neighborhoods and daily wage laborers from industrial zones. Recognizing the devastating socioeconomic impact of forced relocation, Chhattisgarh has fundamentally shifted its policy paradigm towards in situ slum upgradation and the comprehensive integration of informal settlements into the formal municipal fabric.

This progressive approach is operationally anchored by the state's execution of the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana National Urban Livelihoods Mission (DAY NULM). The mission explicitly recognizes that physical housing must be accompanied by aggressive economic empowerment. In 2026, the state government is utilizing NULM funds to organize the urban poor, particularly women, into highly structured Self Help Groups, providing them with critical access to subsidized institutional credit to initiate micro enterprises (Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, 2026). Furthermore, the mission focuses heavily on providing market relevant skill training to the urban youth, drastically improving their employability in the formal manufacturing and retail sectors.

The physical rehabilitation of slums in Chhattisgarh is largely driven by the in situ redevelopment vertical of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, supplemented by targeted state capital funds. The state's policy prioritizes granting formal land rights or long term leasehold security to slum dwellers occupying non hazardous public lands. Once tenure security is legally established, the municipal corporations intervene to provide localized, high quality basic infrastructure, including paved internal access roads, decentralized community water purification plants, and connected community toilet blocks managed directly by local resident welfare associations.

However, the intersection of urban poverty and profound climate vulnerability presents a massive, compounding challenge. Many informal settlements in cities like Bilaspur and Raipur are situated on low lying floodplains or encroached upon the natural drainage basins of the city. As extreme weather events and high intensity monsoon downpours become increasingly frequent, these slum populations suffer devastating, recurring losses from acute urban flooding. For these highly vulnerable populations residing in ecologically hazardous zones, in situ upgradation is not physically viable. In such specific instances, the state is executing highly sensitive, community consulted relocation programs. These programs ensure that the new housing sites are located within a highly viable radius of employment centers and are fully integrated with public transportation networks. By aggressively pursuing inclusive urban planning, securing land tenure for the marginalized, and systematically attacking the root causes of urban economic deprivation, Chhattisgarh is laying the foundational groundwork to ensure that the monumental prosperity envisioned for 2047 is equitably shared by every single citizen residing within its cities.

Chapter 12: Rural Development and Decentralised Governance

12.1 Panchayati Raj Institutions: Structure, Devolution and Capacity

The decentralised governance architecture of Chhattisgarh forms the primary mechanism for public service delivery, social justice, and rural infrastructure development. Established under the framework of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act and operationalized through the Chhattisgarh Panchayati Raj Act of 1993, the state operates a structured three-tier system of local self-governance. In 2026, this system comprises 33 Zila Panchayats at the district level, 146 Janpad Panchayats at the intermediate block level, and over 11,660 Gram Panchayats at the village cluster level (Ministry of Panchayati Raj, 2026). This extensive administrative grid directly governs a rural population that constitutes over seventy per cent of the state's total demographic base, making the functional efficiency of Panchayati Raj Institutions a decisive factor in Chhattisgarh's overall human development trajectory.

A defining characteristic of Chhattisgarh's rural governance framework is the extensive presence of Scheduled Areas governed by the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act of 1996, commonly known as PESA. With 85 out of the 146 development blocks classified as Fifth Schedule areas, covering the entire Bastar and Surguja divisions alongside parts of the central belt, the state's legal framework grants extraordinary statutory authority to the Gram Sabha. Following the formal notification and subsequent operationalization of the Chhattisgarh PESA Rules, the statutory power of tribal Gram Sabhas has been significantly fortified (Government of Chhattisgarh, 2026). In these designated regions, the Gram Sabha possesses non-negotiable rights over the management of natural resources, the protection of traditional community customs, mandatory prior consultation for land acquisition, the regulation of local markets, and the complete control over minor forest produce procurement and pricing. This dual governance framework, balancing general Panchayati Raj norms in the central plains with PESA provisions in the tribal belts, requires a highly adaptable administrative approach to ensure local self-governance is genuinely realized.

Fiscal and functional devolution to local self-governments in Chhattisgarh presents a complex structural picture. Under the recommendations of successive State Finance Commissions and the Fifteenth Central Finance Commission, untied and performance-linked grants are transferred directly to the bank accounts of Gram Panchayats, Janpad Panchayats, and Zila Panchayats. In the 2025 to 2026 financial year, total Finance Commission transfers to Chhattisgarh's rural local bodies exceeded ₹2,400 crore, with eighty per cent allocated directly to Gram Panchayats to support basic water supply, sanitation, and solid waste management infrastructure (Ministry of Finance, 2026). Furthermore, administrative functions across twenty-nine subjects listed in the Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution have been formally devolved to local bodies. However, the practical exercise of these devolved powers remains constrained by bureaucratic centralization. Line departments routinely retain control over major capital outlays and technical approvals, leaving local elected representatives to function primarily as execution agents for central and state sponsored schemes rather than autonomous local policy planners.

The capacity for Own Source Revenue generation among Chhattisgarh's rural local bodies remains critically low, representing a major vulnerability in the decentralization model. The overwhelming majority of Gram Panchayats generate negligible internal revenue, relying almost entirely on fiscal transfers from higher tiers of government (State Planning Commission Chhattisgarh, 2026). While statutory provisions permit Gram Panchayats to levy property taxes, lighting rates, market fees, and user charges on water supply, administrative reluctance, lack of digital tax collection infrastructure, and local political resistance impede effective collection. This fiscal dependency severely limits the financial autonomy of Panchayati Raj Institutions, hindering their ability to design and execute hyper-local development initiatives independent of government grant guidelines.

Capacity building and institutional strengthening are actively driven through the Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan, coordinated by the State Institute of Rural Development at Nimora in Nava Raipur. In the 2025 to 2026 academic and training cycle, the State Institute of Rural Development executed comprehensive capacity building modules for over 150,000 newly elected panchayat representatives, with specialized leadership tracks designed for female panchayat leaders and tribal Gram Sabha elders (Department of Panchayat and Rural Development Chhattisgarh, 2026). These training programs focus heavily on digital literacy, e-GramSwaraj portal navigation, public financial management, climate-resilient village development planning, and the legal mandates of PESA. To sustain this institutional momentum leading towards 2047, Chhattisgarh must establish dedicated Panchayat Learning Centers at the block level, mandate full double-entry accounting across all Gram Panchayats, and create specialized municipal-grade technical engineering cadres directly attached to Janpad Panchayats to fast-track rural infrastructure clearance.

12.2 VB G-Ram-G (MGNREGA): Coverage, Wage Trends and Livelihood Outcomes

The implementation of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, integrated within the state's broader rural employment and asset creation framework, serves as the economic bedrock for the vulnerable and landless rural population of Chhattisgarh. Operating as a statutory demand-driven employment guarantee, the scheme acts as a critical safety net against seasonal unemployment, agricultural volatility, and rural distress migration. In the 2025 to 2026 financial year, the state generated over 135 million person-days of employment, providing gainful work to approximately 2.8 million rural households across all 33 districts (Ministry of Rural Development, 2026).

The demographic profile of employment generation under the scheme demonstrates an exceptional record of social inclusion. Women consistently account for over 54 per cent of the total person-days generated in Chhattisgarh, reflecting the state's egalitarian social fabric and the high participation of female workers in labor-intensive public works (Department of Panchayat and Rural Development Chhattisgarh, 2026). Furthermore, the combined participation rate of Scheduled Tribe and Scheduled Caste households exceeds 58 per cent of the total workforce, underscoring the scheme's precise targeting of historically marginalized

communities residing in the peripheral forested districts. In the conflict-affected blocks of the Bastar division, the demand for employment guarantee work remains exceptionally high during the agricultural lean season, functioning as a stabilizing economic force in isolated rural hamlets.

Wage trends under the employment guarantee framework have experienced steady upward adjustments to cushion rural households against inflationary pressures. For the 2025 to 2026 fiscal cycle, the daily wage rate in Chhattisgarh was revised to ₹243 per person-day (Ministry of Rural Development, 2026). While this increment represents a positive trend, the statutory wage rate continues to hover below the prevailing market wage rates for private agricultural and construction labor in the central plains. To ensure absolute transparency and eliminate systemic leakages, 100 per cent of wage disbursements are executed through the National Electronic Fund Management System directly into the Aadhaar-seeded bank and post office accounts of individual workers. The integration of the Aadhaar Enabled Payment System and mobile-based micro-ATMs managed by local Bank Sakhis has significantly reduced the transaction costs and physical travel distances required for rural laborers to collect their hard-earned wages.

A major qualitative transformation in the state's rural employment execution is the strategic focus on durable asset creation, shifting away from superficial earthworks towards long-term natural resource management. Under the national mandate requiring at least sixty per cent of total expenditure to be directed towards agriculture and allied activities, Chhattisgarh has prioritized water conservation and harvesting assets. Through the systematic construction of farm ponds (locally termed Dabris), earthen check dams, gully plugs, and contour trenches, the state has brought thousands of hectares of rainfed agricultural land under protective micro-irrigation (State Planning Commission Chhattisgarh, 2026). Furthermore, the scheme has been successfully converged with state flagship programs. Under the Narwa Development Component of the Suraji Gaon scheme, thousands of degraded rivulets and natural drainage channels have been scientifically rejuvenated using geo-spatial mapping, resulting in measurable groundwater recharge across rainfed blocks.

Despite these significant achievements, the operational execution of rural employment guarantee programs faces persistent administrative challenges. Delays in the release of the central material component frequently lead to bottlenecks in completing complex, engineering-heavy infrastructure works such as concrete culverts and Anganwadi buildings. Furthermore, the mandatory implementation of the National Mobile Monitoring System for real-time digital attendance marking at work sites faces severe technical resistance in interior tribal blocks due to persistent mobile network shadow zones and power outages. To overcome these operational hurdles by 2047, Chhattisgarh must secure dedicated satellite-enabled connectivity for remote work sites, expand the statutory employment guarantee beyond 100 days to 150 days in drought-prone and Fifth Schedule blocks, and establish a permanent, well-funded State Employment Guarantee Fund to seamlessly bridge temporary central fund release delays.

12.3 Rural Housing: PMAY-Gramin and State Schemes

The provision of durable, weather-resilient, and dignified housing forms a central pillar of Chhattisgarh's rural development and poverty eradication agenda. Operating within the framework of the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G) alongside complementary state-level interventions, the government has undertaken a massive infrastructure drive to replace temporary, vulnerable rural dwellings with permanent pucca houses equipped with modern basic amenities. By mid-2026, the cumulative target of rural houses sanctioned under PMAY-G in Chhattisgarh reached over 1.8 million units, with an overall completion rate exceeding eighty-eight per cent across the state (Ministry of Rural Development, 2026).

To resolve historical beneficiary selection bottlenecks and address families excluded from the baseline Socio-Economic Caste Census of 2011, the state government launched the Mukhyamantri Gramin Awas Nyay Yojana, supported by the state-funded "Mor Awas Mor Adhikar" campaign. This state scheme provides direct financial construction assistance, structured in phased installments linked to physical construction milestones verified through geo-tagged photographic evidence, to homeless and Kutcha-house-dwelling rural households left out of central schemes (Department of Panchayat and Rural Development Chhattisgarh, 2026). The financial assistance, amounting to ₹120,000 per unit in plain areas and ₹130,000 in hilly, forested, and Fifth Schedule areas, is directly transferred into the beneficiary's bank account, completely eliminating middleman interference.

A defining feature of the rural housing program in Chhattisgarh is the systematic convergence with other major social sector initiatives to deliver a holistic living habitat. A PMAY-G house in Chhattisgarh is constructed with an integrated individual household latrine funded through the Swachh Bharat Mission-Grameen. Electricity access is guaranteed via the Saubhagya scheme, while clean cooking gas connections are provided under the PM Ujjwala Yojana. Crucially, the piped drinking water tap connection is delivered to the doorsteps of newly constructed rural homes through the Jal Jeevan Mission, ensuring that housing infrastructure directly improves public health and reduces the domestic burden on rural women (Ministry of Jal Shakti, 2026). Furthermore, beneficiaries are entitled to 90 to 95 person-days of unskilled manual labor under MGNREGA to assist in the construction of their own homes, effectively augmenting the total financial assistance provided for house building.

The architecture and material composition of rural housing in Chhattisgarh have increasingly adapted to local agro-climatic conditions and disaster resilience requirements. The State Institute of Rural Development, in collaboration with technical institutions, has developed regional housing typologies that utilize locally available, sustainable building materials alongside modern engineering practices. In the earthquake-prone and heavy-rainfall zones of the northern hills and southern plateau, houses are designed with elevated plinths, bamboo-reinforced roofs, and stabilized mud-brick masonry that offer superior thermal comfort and structural longevity compared to standard, high-carbon concrete structures. For landless rural laborers, the state government executes a dedicated land allotment program, granting small residential plots in Gram Panchayat common lands to ensure that lack of land ownership does not act as a barrier to accessing housing subsidies.

Despite rapid progress, the scaling of rural housing encounters significant field-level obstacles. The steep rise in the prices of critical construction materials, particularly cement, structural steel, and river sand, has inflated construction costs, forcing low-income beneficiaries to incur personal debt to complete their homes according to prescribed structural standards. In the interior forested tracts of Sukma, Bijapur, and Narayanpur, the transportation of building materials across difficult terrain and unbridged rivers during the monsoon season severely delays construction timelines. To secure universal housing coverage by the end of the decade, the state must establish village-level building material banks managed by local cooperatives, subsidize green building materials, and implement a dynamic inflation-indexed adjustment to the unit assistance financial allocation.

12.4 Livelihood Promotion: SHGs, Cooperatives and Rural Enterprise

Economic empowerment and the structural transformation of Chhattisgarh's rural landscape are driven by the systematic promotion of women-led community institutions, cooperative federations, and decentralized rural enterprises. Anchored by the Chhattisgarh State Rural Livelihood Mission, locally known as "Bihan," the state has built an expansive social infrastructure that transitions rural households from subsistence-level agricultural dependency into diversified, market-linked micro-enterprises. By 2026, the Bihan network has successfully organized over 2.9 million rural women into more than 280,000 Self-Help Groups (SHGs), federated into 13,000 Village Organizations and nearly 800 Cluster Level Federations across all 146 development blocks (Department of Panchayat and Rural Development Chhattisgarh, 2026).

Financial inclusion and capital mobilization serve as the core catalysts for this group-led economic expansion. The State Rural Livelihood Mission provides Revolving Funds and Community Investment Funds directly to SHG federations, establishing a self-sustaining community micro-finance system. This internal capital is augmented through aggressive SHG-Bank Credit Linkage programs. In the 2025 to 2026 financial year, commercial banks, regional rural banks, and cooperative institutions in Chhattisgarh disbursed over ₹3,200 crore in subsidized credit to women's SHGs, maintaining an exemplary portfolio repayment rate with non-performing assets remaining under two per cent (Reserve Bank of India, 2026). This access to formal credit has effectively liberated millions of rural families from the clutches of predatory informal money lenders, enabling them to invest in productive assets, livestock, and small commercial ventures.

A distinctive, policy-driven evolution in Chhattisgarh's rural enterprise ecosystem is the development of Rural Industrial Parks, conceptualized as localized manufacturing and processing hubs established at the Gram Panchayat level. Utilizing the spatial infrastructure of village Gauthans, these industrial parks provide plug-and-play production sheds, three-phase electrical power, high-speed internet, and shared machinery to women's SHGs and local youth entrepreneurs. In 2026, over 300 Rural Industrial Parks are fully operational across the state, engaging in diverse commercial production including the manufacturing of eco-friendly paints from cow dung, organic vermicompost, packaged herbal teas, bio-pesticides, handloom textiles, and processed food products (State Planning Commission

Chhattisgarh, 2026). To secure institutional market access for these rural producers, the state government has mandated that public departments, social welfare institutions, and Anganwadi centers procure uniforms, supplementary nutrition, and office supplies directly from these SHG-run industrial collectives.

The cooperative sector represents another foundational pillar of rural wealth generation in Chhattisgarh. The state's network of over 2,058 Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) has undergone a comprehensive digital transformation, functioning as multi-service centers that deliver short-term agricultural credit, high-quality seeds, fertilizers, and consumer goods directly to smallholders (Ministry of Cooperation, 2026). In the allied sector, cooperative federations such as the Chhattisgarh State Cooperative Milk Producers' Federation (Devbhog) and the Chhattisgarh State Minor Forest Produce Cooperative Federation provide assured procurement, quality control, and profit-sharing mechanisms for thousands of dairy farmers and tribal forest gatherers. The commercial success of the "Chhattisgarh Herbs" brand, managed entirely through primary forest produce cooperative societies, exemplifies how cooperative aggregation can capture high-value market margins for grassroots indigenous producers.

To transition these nascent rural enterprises into globally competitive, high-value business entities leading up to 2047, Chhattisgarh must resolve critical structural vulnerabilities. Many SHG enterprises continue to operate at a basic primary-processing stage, lacking advanced technical machinery, standardized quality certification, and modern branding. The state must establish specialized technical support cells at every district headquarters, partner with premier design and management institutions, and integrate rural producers directly with national e-commerce platforms. Furthermore, establishing dedicated Rural Business Incubation Centers will be essential to foster technical innovation, expand cold-chain logistics, and transition informal self-help groups into professionally managed, shareholder-owned Farmer Producer Companies and Rural Producer Enterprises.

12.5 Rural Infrastructure: PMGSY, Connectivity and Market Linkages

Physical connectivity and logistics infrastructure are the primary determinants of rural economic integration, transforming isolated agrarian villages into dynamic, market-linked economic clusters. In Chhattisgarh, a state featuring vast distances, undulating topography, and dense forest reserves, establishing an all-weather road network is essential for guaranteeing access to healthcare, education, emergency services, and formal agricultural markets. The primary vehicle for this physical transformation is the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), operating across its successive phases alongside specialized state-funded connectivity schemes.

By the midpoint of 2026, Chhattisgarh has constructed over 42,000 kilometers of high-quality rural roads under PMGSY, successfully connecting more than 10,500 rural habitations with population thresholds of 500 in plain areas and 250 in desert, hill, and tribal regions (Ministry of Rural Development, 2026). Under the ongoing PMGSY-III phase, the policy focus has strategically shifted from providing basic first-mile connectivity to upgrading key rural

arterial routes and major rural links. In the 2025 to 2026 construction cycle, over 3,500 kilometers of core rural roads were widened and strengthened, directly linking remote farming clusters to higher-level economic nodes, including major district roads, state highways, national highways, hospitals, and secondary educational institutions (Department of Panchayat and Rural Development Chhattisgarh, 2026).

Bridging the physical connectivity deficit in the conflict-affected and topographically challenging regions of the Bastar and Surguja divisions has required specialized, high-security infrastructure initiatives. Projects executed under the Road Connectivity Project for Left Wing Extremism Affected Areas (RCPLWEA) and the Road Requirement Plan have completed critical linear corridors and massive bridge structures across major rivers such as the Indravati, Sabari, and Mahanadi. The completion of these strategically vital bridges has permanently eliminated the seasonal isolation of hundreds of interior tribal hamlets during the monsoon season, facilitating the rapid movement of public transport, mobile medical clinics, and agricultural freight. Furthermore, the integration of green technologies in rural road construction has been widely institutionalized, with over thirty per cent of new road lengths in 2025 constructed using waste plastic, cold-mix asphalt, and fly ash derived from the state's thermal power plants, significantly reducing the carbon footprint of rural infrastructure development.

The economic multiplier of improved road connectivity is most visibly expressed in the modernization of rural market linkages and trade corridors. Reliable roads have drastically compressed transit times and reduced post-harvest transportation losses for perishable horticultural produce, dairy, and inland fish. To maximize this connectivity advantage, the state government has undertaken the systematic upgradation of traditional rural weekly markets, known as Rural Haats. Under the Chief Minister Rural Haat Bazaar Development Scheme, hundreds of informal open-air markets across Fifth Schedule areas have been transformed into structured, covered commercial plazas equipped with concrete platforms, solar lighting, clean drinking water facilities, and hygienic sanitary blocks (State Planning Commission Chhattisgarh, 2026). These modernized haats function not only as primary commercial trading points for local agricultural and forest produce but also as centralized service delivery hubs where mobile health units conduct health screenings and digital banking correspondents provide financial services.

Despite these achievements, maintaining the vast rural road network against extreme monsoon rainfall, heavy mineral-freight traffic, and terrain erosion poses a continuing fiscal and administrative challenge. Many completed rural roads face rapid degradation due to inadequate post-construction maintenance funding and delayed routine repairs by local contractors. To guarantee the long-term durability of its rural infrastructure assets heading towards 2047, Chhattisgarh must establish a dedicated, ring-fenced State Rural Road Maintenance Fund, integrate satellite-based automated pavement condition monitoring systems, and empower Janpad and Zila Panchayats to conduct mandatory, community-led road safety and quality audits. Expanding cold-chain logistics hubs and mini-godowns at key

rural road intersections will complete the last-mile integration required to link Chhattisgarh's rural hinterlands seamlessly with national and global value chains.

12.6 Community-Based Development Institutions and Participatory Planning

The philosophy of decentralised governance reaches its ultimate operational expression when local communities are directly empowered to diagnose their own developmental deficits, prioritize public expenditure, and execute micro-level development plans. In Chhattisgarh, participatory planning is structurally institutionalized through the Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) process, executed annually under the national "Sabki Yojana, Sabka Vikas" campaign. This framework mandates that every Gram Panchayat formulates a comprehensive, scientifically grounded annual development plan that integrates human development, social welfare, ecological conservation, and economic infrastructure priorities through direct citizen deliberation.

The GPDP formulation process in Chhattisgarh begins every year with the systematic convening of special Ward Sabhas and Gram Sabhas across all 11,660 Gram Panchayats. In the 2025 to 2026 planning cycle, the state achieved an unprecedented level of public participation by deploying trained community facilitators, active SHG members from the Bihan network, and youth volunteers from Rajiv Yuva Mitan Clubs to mobilize historically underrepresented groups, particularly women, landless laborers, and persons with disabilities (Department of Panchayat and Rural Development Chhattisgarh, 2026). The planning process is supported by the participatory identification of local poverty and infrastructure gaps utilizing the Poverty Reduction Plan compiled independently by Cluster Level Federations of women's SHGs, ensuring that the final approved GPDP directly addresses the articulated needs of the poorest households in the village.

Digital technology has been aggressively leveraged to introduce absolute transparency, spatial accuracy, and administrative accountability into the participatory planning architecture. Chhattisgarh has achieved near-total integration of its rural planning with the central e-GramSwaraj digital portal. Every approved GPDP project, ranging from a village drainage channel to an Anganwadi repair, is digitally uploaded onto the portal, complete with activity codes, estimated physical costs, and targeted execution timelines (Ministry of Panchayati Raj, 2026). Furthermore, the physical execution of works is monitored in real-time through the mActionSoft mobile application, which mandates the geotagging of physical assets across three distinct stages of construction: before commencement, during progress, and upon final completion. This digital trail is directly linked to the online Public Financial Management System, ensuring that financial payments are disbursed only after verifying geotagged physical progress, thereby significantly curtailing ghost assets and financial misappropriation.

In the Fifth Schedule areas, the legal mandate of the PESA Gram Sabha elevates participatory planning from a administrative process to an exercise of sovereign community rights. Under the Chhattisgarh PESA Rules, the Gram Sabha possesses exclusive authority to approve or reject any developmental plan proposed within its geographical boundary, manage

community natural resources, and issue mandatory prior consent for any infrastructure project or mineral exploration (Government of Chhattisgarh, 2026). The PESA Gram Sabha also manages the allocation and utilization of the Tribal Sub-Plan funds at the village level, ensuring that developmental capital spent in tribal hamlets strictly preserves indigenous culture, protects community forest rights under the Forest Rights Act of 2006, and supports sustainable non-timber forest produce collection.

Social audits represent the ultimate accountability mechanism governing community-based development institutions in Chhattisgarh. The Chhattisgarh Social Audit Unit, an autonomous statutory entity, routinely conducts independent, community-led social audits of all major rural development schemes, including MGNREGA, PMAY-G, the Public Distribution System, and Mid-Day Meal schemes. In the 2025 to 2026 financial year, social audits were successfully completed across thousands of Gram Panchayats, with public social audit Gram Sabhas organized to openly read out financial records, verify asset existence, and register public grievances in the presence of designated district administrative observers (Department of Panchayat and Rural Development Chhattisgarh, 2026).

However, the ideal of participatory planning in Chhattisgarh continues to battle deep-seated structural challenges. In many Gram Panchayats, Gram Sabha attendance can be low, with meetings occasionally reduced to ritualistic paper exercises dominated by local political elites or traditional village leaders. Proxy participation of women, where elected female representatives are sidelined by male family members, remains a persistent social issue requiring continuous vigilance. Furthermore, the technical capacity of Gram Panchayats to convert community aspirations into engineering-sound, financially viable project proposals remains limited by the acute shortage of trained technical assistants and Panchayat Secretaries at the ground level.

To build a truly resilient, inclusive, and future-ready participatory governance ecosystem by 2047, Chhattisgarh must implement radical institutional reforms. The state must mandate the integration of high-resolution satellite imagery and geographic information systems into the GPDP formulation process, enabling Gram Sabhas to visually map their natural resources, water bodies, and infrastructure assets on dynamic digital maps. The statutory enforcement of social audit findings must be strengthened, establishing specialized fast-track administrative tribunals to immediately penalize officials and contractors found guilty of financial irregularities during public audits. By continuously building the technical capacity of local communities, enforcing gender parity in decision-making, and respecting the sovereign statutory authority of tribal Gram Sabhas, Chhattisgarh can establish a globally recognized benchmark for radical participatory democracy and decentralized rural prosperity.

Chapter 13: Environment and Natural Resource Governance

13.1 Forest Cover, Biodiversity and Wildlife Conservation

Chhattisgarh is fundamentally defined by its profound ecological wealth and its vast expanses of primeval forest cover. The environmental governance of the state is not a marginal administrative subject but the central axis around which its economic, cultural, and developmental policies must continuously revolve. According to the highly detailed spatial assessments conducted for the India State of Forest Report in 2025 and 2026, the recorded forest area in Chhattisgarh stands at approximately 59,772 square kilometers. This massive ecological footprint constitutes roughly 44.21 per cent of the state's total geographical area, firmly establishing Chhattisgarh as one of the most critical carbon sinks and ecological anchors within the Indian subcontinent (Forest Survey of India, 2026). The forest categorization reveals a highly structured management regime. Reserved Forests account for approximately 43.1 per cent of the forested area, Protected Forests cover 40.2 per cent, and Unclassed Forests make up the remaining 16.7 per cent.

The biodiversity housed within these forests is globally significant. The state is divided into distinct eco-regions, predominantly featuring tropical moist deciduous forests characterized by the majestic Sal (*Shorea robusta*) and tropical dry deciduous forests dominated by Teak (*Tectona grandis*). This complex habitat matrix supports an extraordinary array of endemic flora and fauna. The state's protected area network is expansive, comprising three major National Parks and eleven Wildlife Sanctuaries. The Guru Ghasidas National Park in the northern Surguja division, the Indravati National Park in the southern Bijapur district, and the Kanger Valley National Park in Bastar serve as the primary bastions for megafauna conservation. In the fiscal year 2025 to 2026, the state government reported robust populations of critical species, including leopards, sloth bears, wild water buffaloes (the state animal), and a highly sensitive, geographically isolated population of tigers in the Achanakmar Tiger Reserve and the Indravati basin (Wildlife Institute of India, 2026).

However, wildlife conservation in Chhattisgarh is currently navigating a period of intense crisis, primarily characterized by escalating human-wildlife conflict. The most pressing challenge involves the rapid expansion and altered migration routes of wild elephant herds in the northern and central districts, including Surguja, Korba, Raigarh, and Mahasamund. As natural forest corridors are progressively fragmented by aggressive mining operations, linear infrastructure projects, and expanding agricultural frontiers, elephant herds are increasingly forced into densely populated human settlements. In 2025 and early 2026, the state recorded a disturbing surge in human fatalities, severe crop depredation, and retaliatory killings of elephants by distressed farmers (Department of Forest and Climate Change Chhattisgarh, 2026).

To mitigate this severe ecological and humanitarian crisis, the state government formally operationalized the Lemru Elephant Reserve in 2026. Spanning over 1,995 square kilometers across the Korba, Surguja, and Raigarh districts, this dedicated reserve is specifically

designed to provide a secure, contiguous habitat for the elephant population, actively preventing their migration into human-dominated landscapes. The notification of this reserve represents a monumental environmental policy decision, as it explicitly prohibits the auction and operationalization of highly lucrative coal blocks situated within its boundaries. This decision underscores a deliberate prioritization of biodiversity conservation over short-term mineral revenue extraction (Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, 2026).

Furthermore, the governance of forest resources in Chhattisgarh uniquely intersects with the socioeconomic survival of indigenous populations. Over thirty per cent of the state's population comprises Scheduled Tribes who depend entirely on the forest ecosystem for their livelihood, nutritional security, and cultural identity. The state has actively deployed Joint Forest Management Committees, involving thousands of local villagers in the protection and regeneration of degraded forest patches. In 2026, the management of Minor Forest Produce, including tendu leaves, sal seeds, and mahua, has been heavily integrated with biodiversity conservation. By granting indigenous communities the legal right and commercial incentive to sustainably harvest these resources under the Forest Rights Act of 2006, the state successfully transforms forest-dwelling populations from perceived encroachers into the primary custodians and active protectors of the state's immense biodiversity.

13.2 Land Use Change, Soil Degradation and Land Resource Management

The management of land resources in Chhattisgarh presents a highly complex challenge characterized by competing demands for agricultural expansion, rapid industrialization, and essential ecological preservation. Over the past two decades, and particularly accelerating between 2021 and 2026, the state has witnessed profound land-use changes that carry severe implications for soil health and long-term agrarian sustainability. The central plains of Chhattisgarh, which serve as the agricultural heartland, are increasingly subjected to intense land-use conversion. Highly fertile, multi-cropped agricultural lands are being systematically acquired and permanently converted for the establishment of heavy industries, expansive logistical parks, and sprawling peri-urban residential developments surrounding the Raipur, Bilai, and Bilaspur corridors (Department of Revenue Chhattisgarh, 2026).

This unregulated conversion of prime agricultural land creates a cascading ecological deficit. As agricultural operations are pushed outwards towards the undulating, less fertile peripheral regions of the state, farmers are forced to cultivate marginal lands and clear local vegetation. This shifting agricultural frontier heavily accelerates soil erosion, particularly in the northern hills of the Surguja division and the southern Dandakaranya plateau. The topography of these regions, combined with intense monsoon rainfall patterns, makes the exposed topsoil highly susceptible to aggressive runoff. In 2026, detailed geographic information system mapping conducted by the State Planning Commission revealed that over twenty-five per cent of the state's total geographical area is currently suffering from various stages of soil degradation, primarily driven by water erosion and the loss of vegetative cover (State Planning Commission Chhattisgarh, 2026).

Soil degradation in Chhattisgarh is further exacerbated by historically poor agricultural practices in the central plains. The intense, continuous monocropping of water-guzzling paddy, heavily supported by the state's procurement system, has led to a severe depletion of essential soil micronutrients. The excessive and unbalanced application of urea and synthetic fertilizers, coupled with a drastic reduction in the use of organic farmyard manure, has significantly reduced the soil organic carbon content across thousands of hectares. To combat this hidden crisis, the state government aggressively expanded its Soil Health Card scheme in 2025 and 2026. By systematically testing millions of soil samples and providing farmers with customized, plot-specific nutrient recommendations, the state aims to restore the chemical balance and biological vitality of its agrarian soils (Department of Agriculture Chhattisgarh, 2026).

The most visible and dramatic driver of land-use change and soil degradation, however, is the state's massive open-cast mining sector. The extraction of coal, iron ore, and bauxite inherently requires the complete removal of the forest canopy, topsoil, and overburden, fundamentally and permanently altering the geological landscape. In the mining corridors of Korba, Dantewada, and Raigarh, thousands of hectares of land have been transformed into massive craters and hazardous overburden dumps. The reclamation of this mined-out land remains a severe regulatory failure. While mining corporations are statutorily mandated to implement progressive mine closure plans and execute comprehensive ecological restoration, compliance in 2026 remains extremely poor. Restored lands frequently suffer from severe soil compaction, heavy metal contamination, and a complete inability to support complex native vegetation (Indian Bureau of Mines, 2026).

To address the broader challenge of land degradation, the state government heavily relies on the Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA). In the 2025 to 2026 financial cycle, Chhattisgarh utilized substantial CAMPA funds generated from the diversion of forest lands for industrial projects to execute massive artificial regeneration and soil conservation works. These interventions include the construction of extensive contour trenches, check dams, and massive plantation drives on degraded revenue lands and completely barren hillsides (Department of Forest and Climate Change Chhattisgarh, 2026). However, the long-term success of these plantations requires rigorous monitoring. Artificial afforestation cannot seamlessly replicate the complex ecological functions of the ancient, old-growth forests that are frequently sacrificed for industrial development. Therefore, a strict, scientifically grounded land-use policy that legally ring-fences prime agricultural land and mandates net-zero land degradation must become the absolute cornerstone of Chhattisgarh's environmental governance leading up to 2047.

13.3 Water Bodies, Wetlands and River Ecosystem Health

The hydrological architecture of Chhattisgarh is defined by its strategic position as a massive catchment zone that feeds some of the most critical river basins in peninsular India. The state is primarily drained by the Mahanadi river system in the central and eastern regions, the Godavari river system (principally through the Indravati river) in the southern Bastar division, and the Ganga basin (through the Son river tributaries) in the northern hills. The

health, seasonal flow, and ecological integrity of these riverine ecosystems are absolutely vital not only for the agrarian economy of Chhattisgarh but for the water security of multiple downstream states. In 2026, the governance of these water bodies reveals a highly strained ecological baseline, heavily impacted by industrial pollution, unscientific sand mining, and severe structural alterations (Water Resources Department Chhattisgarh, 2026).

The Mahanadi River, the absolute lifeline of the Chhattisgarh plains, is currently facing a multidimensional ecological crisis. The river's natural flow regime has been heavily altered by the construction of massive multi-purpose dams, such as the Gangrel and the Hasdeo Bango reservoirs, alongside hundreds of smaller barrages designed to capture water for intensive agricultural irrigation and the cooling requirements of massive thermal power plants. While these structures are necessary for economic productivity, they have severely curtailed the environmental flow required to sustain the river's complex downstream aquatic biodiversity. In 2026, several stretches of the Mahanadi and its primary tributaries, including the Shivnath and the Hasdeo, experience severely diminished flows during the pre-monsoon summer months. This stagnation drastically reduces the river's natural assimilative capacity, causing industrial effluents and untreated municipal sewage to accumulate at highly toxic concentrations (Central Water Commission, 2026).

Industrial pollution poses the most severe, immediate threat to river ecosystem health. The concentration of integrated steel plants, massive coal washeries, and sponge iron units along the river corridors heavily contaminates surface water resources. Despite stringent regulations, incidents of unauthorized discharge of heavy metals, toxic fly ash slurry, and high-temperature effluents into the river systems are routinely documented. The Chhattisgarh Environment Conservation Board has deployed continuous online effluent monitoring systems across major red-category industries in 2025 and 2026 (Chhattisgarh Environment Conservation Board, 2026). However, the cumulative impact of non-point source pollution, particularly the massive agricultural runoff heavily laden with synthetic fertilizers and chemical pesticides, continues to induce severe eutrophication in the state's rivers and rural reservoirs.

Wetlands and natural urban lakes, which traditionally functioned as critical groundwater recharge zones and natural flood control buffers, are rapidly disappearing. In major urban centers like Raipur, Bilaspur, and Durg, ancient ponds and sprawling wetland ecosystems have been systematically filled in and permanently converted for commercial real estate and unregulated residential development. Recognizing this critical loss, the state government formulated specialized Wetland Conservation Rules and established the State Wetland Authority in 2026. This authority is tasked with identifying, strictly demarcating, and legally protecting all major wetlands exceeding a specific geographical threshold. Concurrently, the state launched the "Narwa" (Rivulet) development component under its flagship Suraji Gaon scheme. This program focuses entirely on the scientific rejuvenation of thousands of dead and dying natural drainage channels across the state through localized watershed management, the construction of loose boulder checks, and massive vegetative plantation along the river banks (Department of Panchayat and Rural Development Chhattisgarh, 2026).

Furthermore, the ecological health of the state's aquatic ecosystems is severely compromised by rampant, largely unregulated riverbed sand mining. The aggressive mechanical extraction of sand heavily disrupts the natural breeding grounds of endemic fish species, alters the river's natural morphological course, and triggers severe, localized bank erosion. While the state government implemented a new, centralized digital sand mining policy in 2025 to curb illegal extraction and streamline revenue collection (Department of Mineral Resources Chhattisgarh, 2026), the ecological enforcement on the ground remains deeply challenging. Securing the future of Chhattisgarh's water bodies requires transitioning from a purely exploitative, extraction-oriented water management paradigm to a holistic, basin-wide ecological approach. By mandating strict environmental flows, upgrading all municipal sewage treatment infrastructure, and ruthlessly penalizing industrial polluters, the state must ensure that its magnificent river systems remain biologically vibrant and capable of sustaining future generations.

13.4 Mining and Mineral Resource Governance

Chhattisgarh is globally recognized as an undisputed powerhouse of mineral wealth. The state sits atop massive, world-class geological reserves, accounting for approximately sixteen per cent of India's total coal deposits, nearly twenty per cent of its iron ore reserves, and serving as the exclusive, sole domestic producer of tin ore in the entire country. The state is also richly endowed with immense quantities of bauxite, limestone, and dolomite. The extraction, processing, and transportation of these minerals constitute the absolute core of the state's macroeconomic framework. In the 2025 to 2026 fiscal year, the mining sector contributed thousands of crores directly to the state exchequer through royalties, premiums, and dead rent, forming the primary financial engine that underwrites the state's massive infrastructural and social welfare expenditures (Department of Mineral Resources Chhattisgarh, 2026).

However, the governance of this immense mineral wealth represents the most profound and volatile developmental conflict in Chhattisgarh. The richest mineral deposits, particularly high-grade coal and iron ore, are geographically located directly beneath the state's most ancient, dense forests and within the constitutionally protected Fifth Schedule areas inhabited by marginalized indigenous tribal communities. The extraction of these resources inherently necessitates massive deforestation, the permanent displacement of tribal settlements, and the severe disruption of local hydrological cycles. In 2026, the governance of the mining sector is defined by intense, highly polarized friction between the mandates of rapid national industrial growth and the absolute necessity of ecological and social preservation (Ministry of Mines, 2026).

The situation in the Hasdeo Arand forest region perfectly exemplifies this structural conflict. Hasdeo Arand is one of the largest, most pristine contiguous tracts of dense forest in central India, serving as the primary catchment area for the Hasdeo river and a critical habitat for elephants and leopards. The allocation of multiple massive coal blocks within this specific ecological hotspot has generated intense, sustained resistance from local indigenous communities and national environmental organizations. In response to this escalating conflict

and recognizing the irreversible ecological costs, the state government, utilizing its statutory regulatory powers, passed explicit resolutions in 2025 and 2026 to formally request the central government to permanently cancel the allocation of all remaining unoperational coal blocks within the core Hasdeo Arand region (Government of Chhattisgarh, 2026). This policy posture represents a highly significant, precedent-setting shift, indicating a newly emerging political willingness to prioritize intergenerational ecological security over immediate mineral revenue extraction.

To manage the massive socio-environmental impacts in areas where mining is actively permitted, the state relies entirely on the District Mineral Foundation (DMF) framework. Instituted under national legislation, the DMF requires mining companies to contribute a mandated percentage of their royalty payments into a dedicated district-level trust fund. In Chhattisgarh, the DMF has amassed massive financial resources, running into thousands of crores annually. The statutory mandate dictates that these funds must be exclusively utilized for the welfare of the individuals and the specific geographical areas directly affected by mining operations. In the 2025 to 2026 period, DMF funds were heavily deployed across the Korba, Dantewada, and Raigarh districts to construct multi-specialty hospitals, establish modern residential schools for tribal children, and build critical rural drinking water infrastructure (Department of Mineral Resources Chhattisgarh, 2026).

Despite this massive financial infusion, the operational governance of the DMF is frequently criticized for severe administrative opacity and political diversion. Civil society audits in 2026 have repeatedly highlighted that DMF funds are occasionally diverted to execute generic, state-level infrastructure projects in urban centers, entirely bypassing the highly polluted, deeply displaced rural communities located at the actual mining sites. Furthermore, the mandatory representation of the local Gram Sabhas in the precise allocation and auditing of DMF funds is often bypassed by the district administration. Reforming mineral resource governance requires strict, unyielding adherence to the principles of free, prior, and informed consent from local tribal communities. The state must enforce highly rigorous, technologically monitored mine closure plans, ensuring that vast, exhausted open-cast pits are safely reclaimed, scientifically re-vegetated, and permanently returned to the original community.

13.5 Pollution: Air, Water, Noise and Soil - Status and Regulatory Response

The rapid, aggressive industrialization that characterizes Chhattisgarh's economic trajectory has generated a highly complex and deeply alarming pollution profile. The state's heavy reliance on massive coal-fired thermal power plants, integrated steel manufacturing, and cement production makes it one of the most emissions-intensive geographies in the nation. The management, mitigation, and strict regulation of this pollution burden is the primary statutory responsibility of the Chhattisgarh Environment Conservation Board (CECB). In 2026, the status of pollution across the state's major industrial corridors requires urgent, transformative regulatory interventions to prevent irreversible public health catastrophes and systemic ecological collapse (Chhattisgarh Environment Conservation Board, 2026).

Air quality in the central and northern industrial belts constitutes a severe public health emergency. The district of Korba, globally recognized as the power capital of central India, hosts an immense concentration of massive thermal power generation units and extensive open-cast coal mines. According to the Comprehensive Environmental Pollution Index (CEPI), Korba is consistently categorized as a "Critically Polluted Area". In 2025 and 2026, ambient air quality monitoring stations in Korba, Raigarh, and the Siltara industrial estate in Raipur routinely recorded dangerously high levels of Particulate Matter 10 and Particulate Matter 2.5, significantly exceeding national safety standards. The primary culprits are the massive fugitive dust emissions from unregulated coal transportation, the severe lack of operational flue-gas desulfurization units in older thermal power plants, and the unregulated emissions from hundreds of highly polluting, localized sponge iron plants (Central Pollution Control Board, 2026).

The generation and disposal of industrial solid waste, specifically toxic fly ash, represents an equally monumental environmental crisis. Thermal power plants in Chhattisgarh generate millions of metric tonnes of fly ash annually. The historical regulatory response mandated that power plants safely store this ash in massive, engineered slurry dykes and actively promote its 100 per cent utilization in cement manufacturing and road construction. However, compliance remains structurally weak. In 2026, the state witnessed several highly destructive incidents where aging, poorly maintained fly ash dykes breached during the monsoon, releasing millions of tonnes of toxic, heavy-metal-laden slurry into adjacent agricultural lands, human settlements, and critical river systems (Department of Environment and Climate Change Chhattisgarh, 2026). This severe soil and water contamination permanently destroys agricultural productivity and severely compromises local drinking water aquifers.

Water pollution from industrial sources compounds the state's hydrological vulnerability. Despite strict zero-liquid-discharge mandates for heavy industries, the CECB consistently struggles with the clandestine, illegal discharge of highly toxic, untreated industrial effluents into major rivers like the Hasdeo and Shivnath. Furthermore, the rapid expansion of tier-two cities without commensurate investments in underground sewerage networks has resulted in massive quantities of raw, untreated municipal sewage flowing directly into the state's primary river systems. Noise pollution, largely an urban and industrial phenomenon, is increasingly becoming a severe quality-of-life issue. The unregulated use of heavy explosives in mining operations and the relentless, round-the-clock movement of heavy multi-axle freight vehicles through densely populated residential corridors generate profound, chronic noise disturbances.

The regulatory response by the CECB in 2026 is undergoing a necessary, technology-driven modernization. The board has mandated the installation of Continuous Emission Monitoring Systems (CEMS) directly on the smokestacks and effluent discharge points of all major, red-category industries. This digital infrastructure transmits real-time pollution data directly to the central servers in Nava Raipur, theoretically allowing for immediate, automated regulatory penalties for emissions violations (Chhattisgarh Environment Conservation Board, 2026). However, the actual enforcement of these penalties remains highly inconsistent. The

CECB suffers from a chronic, severe shortage of specialized environmental engineers and field inspectors, crippling its capacity to conduct rigorous, unannounced physical inspections. To secure the state's environmental future leading up to 2047, the CECB must be granted absolute functional independence, shielded entirely from political interference, and adequately staffed. The state must aggressively implement regional carrying-capacity studies, strictly prohibiting the establishment of any new polluting industries in already saturated, critically polluted corridors like Korba and Raipur.

13.6 Catchment and Aquatic Resource Management (Not Applicable)

The standard environmental governance frameworks frequently include comprehensive policies for the management of coastal zones, marine biodiversity, and oceanic resources. However, it must be explicitly and clearly stated that the state of Chhattisgarh is a completely landlocked geographical entity, positioned firmly within the deep interior of the central Indian plateau. The state is surrounded by land borders shared with Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, and Jharkhand. Consequently, Chhattisgarh possesses absolutely no coastline, no access to the open ocean, and zero marine territorial jurisdiction. Therefore, the specialized national and international policy frameworks, environmental regulations, and specific developmental mandates pertaining to coastal and marine resource management, such as the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) notifications or deep-sea marine fisheries policies, are entirely and completely inapplicable to the state of Chhattisgarh.

Because coastal management is irrelevant, the state's entire aquatic resource governance apparatus is exclusively and heavily concentrated on the management of its massive internal freshwater networks. As detailed extensively in the preceding sections, particularly in section 13.3, Chhattisgarh's aquatic environmental policies are ruthlessly focused on the preservation of its massive river basins, the rejuvenation of its critical groundwater aquifers, and the strict protection of its inland natural wetlands and man-made irrigation reservoirs. The state channels all of its hydrological conservation funding, technical expertise, and regulatory enforcement capacity towards maintaining the ecological integrity and the seasonal flow regimes of the Mahanadi, Godavari, and Ganga basin tributaries that originate or flow through its territory. By focusing entirely on internal freshwater ecosystem health, the state ensures the aquatic security required to support its immense agricultural base and its rapidly expanding industrial economy.

Chapter 14: Climate Change and Ecological Security

14.1 State Climate Vulnerability and Risk Profile

The state of Chhattisgarh is positioned at the intersection of immense natural resource wealth and severe climate vulnerability. Characterized by a predominantly agrarian economy, a massive tribal population heavily dependent on forest resources, and a concentrated heavy industrial and mining sector, the state's exposure to climate-induced disruptions is exceptionally high. According to the comprehensive Climate Vulnerability Assessment for the Indian Himalayan Region and Central India published in 2026, Chhattisgarh ranks among the most highly vulnerable states in the country, driven by a combination of low adaptive capacity and high exposure to extreme weather events (Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, 2026). The state's fundamental reliance on the southwest monsoon for both its agricultural output and its hydrological security makes it acutely sensitive to subtle shifts in global and regional climate patterns.

The most visible and economically devastating manifestation of climate change in Chhattisgarh is the increasing erraticism of the monsoon. Meteorological data from the period between 2016 and 2026 illustrates a profound shift in rainfall distribution. While the aggregate annual rainfall has remained marginally stable, the number of rainy days has significantly decreased, replaced by highly intense, short-duration precipitation events (Indian Meteorological Department, 2026). This specific pattern results in a dual crisis. The rapid, high-intensity rainfall overwhelms the natural absorption capacity of the soil and the artificial drainage infrastructure of urban centers, leading to severe flash floods. Conversely, the prolonged dry spells between these intense rain events induce acute agricultural droughts, particularly in the rainfed districts of the central plains and the northern Surguja division. For a state affectionately known as the "Rice Bowl of India", where paddy cultivation constitutes over sixty-seven per cent of the gross cropped area, this erraticism threatens the very foundation of its agrarian economy and food security (Department of Agriculture Chhattisgarh, 2026).

Temperature rise is another critical component of the state's risk profile. Predictive climate models for Chhattisgarh, updated in early 2026, forecast an increase in the mean maximum temperature by 1.5 to 2.0 degrees Celsius by the year 2050 under business-as-usual emission scenarios (State Centre on Climate Change Chhattisgarh, 2026). This localized warming trend has profound implications for public health, agricultural yields, and energy consumption. The state has already recorded a dramatic increase in the frequency and duration of severe heatwaves during the pre-monsoon months of April and May. In 2025, several districts, particularly the industrial belts of Bilaspur, Raigarh, and Janjgir-Champa, recorded sustained maximum temperatures exceeding 45 degrees Celsius, severely impacting labor productivity in open-cast mines and construction sites while escalating the incidence of heat-related morbidities among the rural poor (Department of Health and Family Welfare Chhattisgarh, 2026).

The state's vast forest ecosystems, which cover approximately 44.21 per cent of its geographical area, are highly vulnerable to these changing climatic variables. The rising temperatures combined with prolonged dry spells have drastically increased the flammability of the dense deciduous forests in the Bastar and Surguja divisions. Data from the Forest Survey of India in 2026 indicates a thirty-two per cent increase in the incidence of uncontrolled forest fires compared to the previous decade (Forest Survey of India, 2026). These fires not only destroy critical biodiversity habitats and massive carbon sinks but also obliterate the Minor Forest Produce that forms the primary livelihood source for millions of indigenous tribal households. Furthermore, shifting temperature and humidity zones threaten the endemic flora and fauna of the region, accelerating the spread of invasive alien species and altering the phenology of economically vital trees like the Mahua and Sal. Therefore, addressing climate vulnerability in Chhattisgarh requires acknowledging that ecological security is inextricably linked to the economic survival of its most marginalized populations.

14.2 State Action Plan on Climate Change: Review and Second Generation Reforms

The initial Chhattisgarh State Action Plan on Climate Change, formulated in 2014, provided the foundational framework for recognizing climate risks across key economic sectors including agriculture, water resources, forests, and human health. However, as the state navigates the complexities of the year 2026, the original plan has proven structurally inadequate to address the accelerating pace of climate disruptions and the contemporary demands of a low-carbon economic transition. Recognizing this policy gap, the state government, in coordination with the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, initiated a comprehensive revision to formulate a Second Generation State Action Plan on Climate Change in 2025, formally adopting it for execution in the 2026 to 2030 planning cycle (Department of Environment and Climate Change Chhattisgarh, 2026).

This second-generation framework represents a massive conceptual evolution. The most significant reform is the transition from a purely adaptive approach to a dual mandate that strictly incorporates climate mitigation and greenhouse gas emission reductions. As one of India's premier coal-producing and thermal power-generating states, Chhattisgarh accounts for a disproportionately large share of the national carbon footprint. The revised action plan explicitly aligns state-level industrial policies with India's nationally determined contributions and the ultimate goal of achieving net-zero emissions by 2070. To operationalize this, the state has mandated rigorous carbon accounting across all major public sector undertakings and heavy industries located in the Korba and Raigarh districts (Chhattisgarh Environment Conservation Board, 2026). The plan outlines aggressive, time-bound targets for improving energy efficiency in thermal plants, expanding the share of renewable energy in the state grid to thirty-five per cent by 2030, and incentivizing the adoption of circular economy principles in the cement and steel manufacturing sectors.

Another critical second-generation reform is the institutionalization of Green Budgeting. Historical climate action in the state suffered from chronic underfunding because climate

interventions were treated as isolated, department-specific projects. The new framework mandates that every state government department must systematically evaluate and quantify the climate mitigation and adaptation impact of its annual budgetary allocations. In the 2026 to 2027 state budget, departments are required to tag specific expenditures as climate-positive, neutral, or negative, ensuring that public finance is intentionally directed away from carbon-intensive projects towards sustainable, climate-resilient infrastructure (Finance Department Chhattisgarh, 2026). This systemic financial integration ensures that climate action is no longer an auxiliary administrative burden but a core component of the state's macroeconomic planning.

Furthermore, the revised action plan aggressively pushes for the decentralization of climate governance. Climate impacts are hyper-local, and generic, state-level interventions frequently fail to address the specific vulnerabilities of diverse topographies. The government has mandated the formulation of District and Panchayat Level Action Plans on Climate Change. Utilizing the strong decentralized governance architecture discussed in Chapter 12, the state is empowering local Gram Sabhas in the Fifth Schedule areas to integrate traditional indigenous ecological knowledge with modern climate science. By 2026, over 1,500 Gram Panchayats have formulated local climate resilience plans, utilizing funds from the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme to construct localized water harvesting structures, establish community seed banks for drought-resistant indigenous crops, and execute massive afforestation drives using endemic species (Department of Panchayat and Rural Development Chhattisgarh, 2026). This bottom-up approach ensures that adaptation strategies are culturally acceptable, ecologically appropriate, and directly managed by the communities bearing the brunt of the climate crisis.

14.3 Disaster Risk Profile: Hazard, Exposure and Vulnerability Mapping

The disaster risk profile of Chhattisgarh is multifaceted, driven by a combination of natural hydro-meteorological hazards and massive human-induced industrial vulnerabilities. Comprehensive hazard, exposure, and vulnerability mapping conducted by the State Disaster Management Authority in early 2026 has identified several critical threat vectors that demand immediate, highly coordinated institutional responses (State Disaster Management Authority Chhattisgarh, 2026). The state's disaster landscape requires transitioning from a reactive, relief-centric paradigm towards a proactive strategy based on risk mitigation and systemic preparedness.

Drought remains the most pervasive and economically debilitating natural hazard in Chhattisgarh. Despite the presence of major river systems, the lack of extensive canal irrigation networks in the northern and southern peripheral districts renders the agrarian economy highly exposed to rainfall deficits. The hazard mapping designates extensive blocks within the Rajnandgaon, Mahasamund, Koriya, and Surguja districts as chronically drought-prone (Department of Revenue and Disaster Management Chhattisgarh, 2026). A meteorological drought in these regions rapidly translates into a severe agricultural drought, triggering crop failures, acute drinking water scarcity, and subsequent distress migration of landless laborers to neighboring states. The vulnerability is compounded by the depletion of

shallow groundwater aquifers due to unregulated extraction for summer paddy cultivation in the central plains.

Floods represent a localized but highly destructive hazard, primarily affecting the Mahanadi basin and the catchment areas of the Indravati and Shivenath rivers. The increasing frequency of high-intensity rainfall events, as documented in section 14.1, has exacerbated the flood risk. In 2025, severe riverine flooding inundated thousands of hectares of standing crops in the Janjgir-Champa and Raigarh districts, displacing numerous riverine communities. Furthermore, urban flooding has emerged as a critical, entirely human-induced disaster vector. Cities like Raipur, Bilaspur, and Durg experience severe waterlogging during the monsoon season. This urban vulnerability is directly attributable to the reckless encroachment of natural drainage channels, the destruction of urban wetlands for real estate development, and the inadequacy of municipal storm-water drainage infrastructure to handle contemporary rainfall volumes (Department of Urban Administration and Development Chhattisgarh, 2026).

Lightning strikes have alarmingly emerged as the leading cause of natural disaster-related human mortality in the state. The geographical positioning of Chhattisgarh, combined with rising surface temperatures and pre-monsoon atmospheric instability, makes the state a global hotspot for lightning activity. In the 2025 to 2026 period, the state recorded hundreds of fatalities attributed to lightning, predominantly affecting farmers, agricultural laborers, and tribal communities working in open fields or dense forests without access to safe shelters (National Crime Records Bureau, 2026). The exceptionally high casualty rate underscores a severe deficit in early warning dissemination to the last mile and a critical lack of public awareness regarding protective measures during severe thunderstorms.

Beyond natural hazards, Chhattisgarh faces an immense and persistent threat from industrial and chemical disasters. The state is the industrial heartland of central India, hosting massive concentrations of thermal power plants, integrated steel mills, open-cast coal mines, and explosive manufacturing units, particularly in the Korba, Raigarh, and Bhilai corridors. The exposure to industrial hazards is exceptionally high due to the proximity of dense residential settlements and informal labor camps to these hazardous installations. Accidental toxic gas leaks, catastrophic failures of fly ash dykes, and fires in massive coal stockyards represent persistent threats that can trigger mass casualty events and severe, long-lasting environmental contamination. The disaster risk mapping explicitly categorizes the Korba industrial cluster as an area of critical concern, requiring continuous, rigorous safety audits and massive investments in localized specialized emergency response infrastructure (Directorate of Industrial Health and Safety Chhattisgarh, 2026).

14.4 Disaster Risk Reduction: Institutional Mechanisms and Preparedness

The efficacy of disaster management relies entirely on the strength, agility, and technical capacity of the state's institutional mechanisms. In Chhattisgarh, the disaster risk reduction architecture operates under the statutory framework of the Disaster Management Act of 2005. The system is vertically integrated, comprising the State Disaster Management Authority

chaired by the Chief Minister, and District Disaster Management Authorities headed by the respective District Collectors. By 2026, the state has actively shifted its institutional focus from managing post-disaster relief logistics to heavily prioritizing pre-disaster risk mitigation and capacity building (State Disaster Management Authority Chhattisgarh, 2026).

A fundamental pillar of this preparedness strategy is the modernization of Early Warning Systems. The ability to predict a hazard and rapidly communicate actionable information to vulnerable populations is the absolute minimum requirement for saving lives. The state government has forged deep collaborative partnerships with the Indian Meteorological Department and the Indian Space Research Organisation to deploy a dense network of automated weather stations, Doppler weather radars, and localized hydrological sensors across the major river basins. In 2026, the state launched a highly integrated, multi-hazard early warning dissemination platform. This system utilizes geographic information systems to overlay real-time weather alerts onto localized population data. When a severe thunderstorm or flood event is predicted, the system automatically bypasses traditional bureaucratic channels to trigger localized warnings via SMS broadcasts, community radio networks, and siren systems installed in vulnerable gram panchayats (Department of Revenue and Disaster Management Chhattisgarh, 2026).

However, the technological generation of an early warning is entirely useless if the recipient community does not possess the capacity to interpret and react to it effectively. Therefore, Community Based Disaster Management forms the core of the state's preparedness philosophy. The government recognizes that local communities are always the first responders in any crisis, long before the arrival of specialized state rescue teams. In 2025 and 2026, the state aggressively expanded its Aapda Mitra scheme, heavily recruiting and training young volunteers from the Rajiv Yuva Mitra Clubs across all 33 districts (Department of Sports and Youth Welfare Chhattisgarh, 2026). These volunteers are provided with specialized training in basic search and rescue, first aid, flood evacuation protocols, and emergency communication. By embedding a cadre of highly trained, fully equipped disaster response volunteers within every high-risk community, the state has drastically reduced the initial response time and significantly enhanced grassroots resilience.

The preparedness framework for industrial hazards requires a fundamentally different regulatory and institutional approach. To manage the immense risks posed by the heavy industrial clusters in Korba and Raigarh, the state has established dedicated Off-Site Emergency Response Centers fully equipped with specialized chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear response gear. The Directorate of Industrial Health and Safety has mandated that all Major Accident Hazard units conduct comprehensive, externally audited mock drills twice a year in coordination with the district administration and local communities. Furthermore, the state has implemented a strict zoning policy prohibiting the expansion of unauthorized residential settlements within the designated vulnerability zones of major chemical and power plants (Chhattisgarh Environment Conservation Board, 2026). By enforcing rigorous industrial safety compliance and ensuring absolute coordination between

private industrial operators and state emergency services, Chhattisgarh aims to preemptively neutralize the threat of catastrophic industrial failures.

14.5 Post-Disaster Response, Relief and Reconstruction Framework

When prevention and mitigation measures are overwhelmed by the sheer magnitude of an extreme event, the state's post-disaster response and reconstruction framework must operate with flawless precision, empathy, and speed. The financial architecture for immediate response in Chhattisgarh is heavily anchored by the State Disaster Response Fund and augmented during severe crises by the National Disaster Response Fund. In the 2025 to 2026 fiscal cycle, the state government undertook comprehensive reforms to completely digitize the damage assessment and relief disbursement processes. The deployment of drone surveys and satellite imagery allows revenue officials to rapidly and accurately quantify agricultural crop loss and infrastructural damage over vast areas within days of a disaster event. Consequently, financial compensation is now routed seamlessly through the Direct Benefit Transfer system straight into the Aadhaar-linked bank accounts of the affected citizens, completely eliminating the delays, corruption, and bureaucratic friction that historically plagued relief distribution (Finance Department Chhattisgarh, 2026).

The specialized physical response relies heavily on the deployment of the State Disaster Response Force. Modeled on the national apparatus, the state force consists of highly trained personnel drawn from the state armed police, equipped with advanced rescue boats, earth-moving equipment, and medical stabilization gear. To ensure rapid deployment across the geographically expansive state, the government established decentralized regional hubs for the disaster response force in 2026, locating fully equipped battalions in Bilaspur, Jagdalpur, and Ambikapur to ensure that highly specialized rescue teams can reach any disaster epicenter within a maximum of three hours (Home Department Chhattisgarh, 2026).

However, the ultimate test of a disaster management system lies in the quality of its long-term reconstruction framework. Chhattisgarh has aggressively adopted the global principle of "Build Back Better". The state explicitly recognizes that post-disaster reconstruction is not merely about restoring the status quo, which was demonstrably vulnerable, but about utilizing the recovery phase to systematically upgrade infrastructure to withstand future climatic extremes. Following localized flood events in 2025, the reconstruction of rural roads and bridges under state schemes mandated the use of elevated alignments, high-capacity drainage culverts, and resilient engineering materials explicitly designed to survive severe inundation (Public Works Department Chhattisgarh, 2026).

This reconstruction philosophy extends deeply into the restoration of rural livelihoods. The state has seamlessly integrated its post-disaster recovery operations with the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme. When agricultural lands are devastated by drought or flood, the employment guarantee scheme is immediately leveraged to provide alternative wage employment to affected farmers. Crucially, the labor generated under this scheme is strictly directed towards constructing community assets that actively reduce future disaster risk. This includes the massive excavation of water conservation

structures to combat future droughts, the strengthening of river embankments to prevent flooding, and the planting of extensive shelterbelts to reduce soil erosion (Department of Panchayat and Rural Development Chhattisgarh, 2026). By fusing immediate financial relief with long-term ecological restoration and resilient infrastructure design, Chhattisgarh ensures that its recovery processes actively and permanently reduce the state's systemic vulnerability to future climate shocks.

14.6 Green Economy Transition: Opportunities and Structural Challenges

The transition towards a green, low-carbon economy represents the most profound and complex structural shift envisioned in Chhattisgarh's long-term development roadmap leading up to 2047. As one of the primary energy and mineral capitals of India, the state's entire macroeconomic foundation, government revenue structure, and formal employment market are inextricably linked to the extraction of coal and the generation of thermal power. Consequently, decarbonizing the economy is not a simple environmental policy adjustment; it is a monumental macroeconomic and social challenge that must be navigated with extreme precision to prevent severe economic dislocation. The transition presents unparalleled opportunities for sustainable innovation, but it is heavily burdened by deeply entrenched structural rigidities.

The central, unavoidable challenge defining Chhattisgarh's climate policy is the absolute necessity of orchestrating a "Just Transition" for its vast coal-dependent regions. Districts such as Korba, Raigarh, Koriya, and Surajpur possess economies entirely synchronized with the coal value chain. Hundreds of thousands of individuals, including formal miners, informal transport laborers, contract workers, and local tertiary businesses, depend entirely on the fossil fuel ecosystem for their survival. As national and global mandates progressively force the phasing down of coal extraction over the coming decades, these districts face the terrifying prospect of becoming massive, stranded economic wastelands. A comprehensive Just Transition strategy requires planning decades in advance. In 2026, the state government initiated highly structured dialogues with central ministries, public sector mining corporations, and labor unions to draft a comprehensive economic diversification plan for the coal belt (Department of Mineral Resources Chhattisgarh, 2026). This plan mandates the aggressive re-skilling of the existing mining workforce, specifically training them for employment in the rapidly expanding renewable energy installation and heavy machinery manufacturing sectors. Furthermore, the state is actively exploring the conversion of massive, exhausted open-cast coal mines into utility-scale solar parks and pumped-storage hydroelectric facilities, thereby transforming stranded, degraded liabilities into productive green energy assets.

The opportunities for building a robust green economy in Chhattisgarh are immense, primarily leveraging the state's vast agricultural and forest resources. The state possesses enormous, largely untapped potential for generating renewable energy from agricultural biomass. The millions of tonnes of surplus paddy straw generated annually in the central plains, which previously contributed to localized air pollution through unregulated stubble burning, are now being systematically commodified. In 2025 and 2026, the state incentivized

the establishment of multiple large-scale compressed biogas plants and biomass-based power generation units. By establishing a formalized supply chain where rural cooperatives procure and supply agricultural residue to these energy plants, the state is successfully creating a highly lucrative circular economy that simultaneously reduces greenhouse gas emissions, provides a supplementary income stream for farmers, and generates decentralized clean energy (Chhattisgarh State Renewable Energy Development Agency, 2026).

Furthermore, the green economy transition relies heavily on modernizing and monetizing the state's massive forestry sector. As detailed throughout this document, Chhattisgarh controls vast repositories of valuable Minor Forest Produce. The historical model involved the extraction and export of raw, unprocessed materials. The transition to a green economy mandates that the state becomes a global hub for the sustainable processing and high-value manufacturing of these botanical resources. The aggressive promotion of the "Chhattisgarh Herbals" brand and the establishment of sophisticated rural processing centers empower indigenous communities to produce high-value Ayurvedic pharmaceuticals, organic cosmetics, and eco-friendly consumer goods (Chhattisgarh State Minor Forest Produce Cooperative Federation, 2026). This transition ensures that the economic premium of sustainability is captured directly by the forest-dwelling populations rather than urban conglomerates.

The successful implementation of this green transition requires massive infusions of patient, long-term capital and the complete restructuring of the state's industrial policy. The government must aggressively court global climate finance, structure innovative green bonds, and leverage international carbon credit markets to fund the immense infrastructure upgrades required. The state's Industrial Policy of 2024 to 2030 has already taken decisive steps by explicitly categorizing green hydrogen production, electric vehicle manufacturing, and solar panel fabrication as high-priority sectors eligible for maximum capital subsidies and complete tax exemptions (Department of Industries Chhattisgarh, 2026). By systematically dismantling its historical reliance on fossil fuels, aggressively re-skilling its workforce, and aggressively leveraging its immense natural capital, Chhattisgarh will not only survive the global climate transition but will emerge as a resilient, prosperous, and highly sustainable powerhouse by the year 2047.

Chapter 15: Administrative Governance Reform

15.1 Structure of State Administration and Inter-Departmental Coordination

The administrative architecture of Chhattisgarh has evolved significantly since the state was carved out of Madhya Pradesh in November 2000. As the state navigates its third decade of existence in 2026, the governance apparatus has transitioned from a rudimentary setup to a highly centralized administrative complex located in the new capital city of Nava Raipur. The state secretariat, housed in the Mahanadi Bhawan, and the directorates, located in the adjacent Indravati Bhawan, form the epicenter of policy formulation and executive action. This physical consolidation was strategically designed to foster seamless communication and unified planning across various arms of the government. However, physical proximity has not automatically translated into functional synergy. The structure of the state administration in 2026 remains heavily siloed, reflecting a classical bureaucratic hierarchy that frequently struggles to respond with the agility required for modern developmental challenges.

Chhattisgarh is currently divided into five revenue divisions and 33 districts. This represents a significant expansion from the original 16 districts present at the time of statehood. This district reorganization, which culminated in the creation of several new districts between 2021 and 2026, was explicitly aimed at bringing administration closer to the citizens. This was particularly necessary in the sprawling and topographically difficult regions of the Bastar and Surguja divisions (Government of Chhattisgarh, 2026). While this decentralization of revenue and police administration has improved access to basic government services, it has concurrently stretched the state's administrative capacity to its limits. Many newly formed districts continue to operate with skeletal staff and lack permanent infrastructure, forcing district collectors to manage multiple portfolios simultaneously. This administrative overreach often dilutes the intended benefits of administrative proximity and slows down the execution of critical state policies at the grassroots level.

Inter-departmental coordination remains one of the most persistent bottlenecks in Chhattisgarh's governance delivery. The state's unique economic and demographic profile necessitates intense collaboration between the Department of Forest and Climate Change, the Department of Mineral Resources, and the Department of Tribal and Scheduled Caste Development. However, policy execution frequently stalls at the exact intersection of these departments. For instance, the clearance of rural infrastructure projects in the Bastar division routinely faces severe delays due to uncoordinated interpretations of the Forest Conservation Act and the Panchayats Extension to Scheduled Areas Act of 1996 (Ministry of Panchayati Raj, 2026). To address this, the state government introduced the e-Samiksha portal in 2025 to digitally track inter-departmental files and monitor flagship projects. While this digital tracking has improved visibility, it has not fundamentally altered the risk-averse culture of the traditional bureaucracy.

A comprehensive reform of inter-departmental coordination must move beyond digital tracking towards institutionalized convergence. Chhattisgarh must establish empowered

inter-departmental task forces equipped with unified budgets for complex developmental challenges. The state currently operates the Unified Command structure exclusively for anti-Naxal operations, successfully integrating state police, central armed police forces, and civil administration. A similar empowered committee model, chaired by the Chief Secretary and equipped with binding decision-making authority, must be replicated for key developmental priorities. These priorities include industrial corridor development, tribal health outcomes, and climate change adaptation. Furthermore, the delegation of financial powers down the administrative hierarchy is absolutely essential. In 2026, minor financial approvals still routinely escalate to the secretariat level, creating severe bottlenecks in project execution at the district and panchayat levels. By shifting financial autonomy downward and enforcing strict time-bound clearance protocols across departments, the state can transform its administrative structure from a rigid hierarchy into an agile and responsive delivery mechanism.

15.2 Anti-Corruption Framework: Lokayukta, Vigilance and Enforcement

The integrity of public administration is the absolute cornerstone of effective governance and sustainable economic development. In Chhattisgarh, the anti-corruption framework is primarily anchored by the State Economic Offences Investigation Bureau, the Anti-Corruption Bureau, and the Chhattisgarh Lok Aayog. The Lok Aayog, established under the Chhattisgarh Lok Aayog Act of 2002, is mandated to investigate grievances and allegations against public servants, including political executives. However, the operational efficacy of this framework in 2026 presents a highly complex picture of robust statutory design paired with significant enforcement challenges on the ground.

According to the latest available data from the National Crime Records Bureau for the year 2026, Chhattisgarh has witnessed a moderate increase in the registration of cases under the Prevention of Corruption Act (National Crime Records Bureau, 2026). These cases primarily involve lower and middle-tier bureaucratic functionaries operating in the revenue, police, and forest departments. The Anti-Corruption Bureau has successfully executed numerous trap cases in recent years, signaling a proactive approach to combating petty bribery at the citizen interface level. Yet, the investigation and successful prosecution of high-level corruption involving complex public procurement networks and large-scale resource allocation remain sluggish. The conviction rate in major corruption cases hovered around 34 per cent in 2025, constrained by prolonged trial durations, witness hostility, and a severe shortage of specialized forensic and financial investigators within the prosecuting agencies (Transparency International India, 2026).

A critical vulnerability in Chhattisgarh's governance landscape stems directly from its heavy reliance on primary resource extraction and massive public works projects. The mining sector, infrastructure construction, and the expansive public distribution system represent significant avenues for potential rent-seeking and leakage. To mitigate this risk, the state has aggressively expanded the end-to-end computerization of the Public Distribution System, linking beneficiary data directly with biometric authentication. This technological intervention has dramatically reduced inclusion errors and virtually eliminated the large-scale

diversion of food grains. Similarly, the implementation of mandatory e-tendering for all public procurement above specific financial thresholds has introduced a necessary degree of transparency in the awarding of government contracts.

However, technological fixes alone are insufficient without a robust institutional support system. The current framework suffers from a glaring lack of comprehensive whistleblower protection mechanisms. Citizens and subordinate officials who attempt to expose systemic graft frequently face administrative harassment or physical threats, particularly in remote resource-rich districts where monitoring is sparse. To build a truly resilient anti-corruption ecosystem by 2047, Chhattisgarh must enact a state-specific Whistleblower Protection Act modeled on international best practices. Additionally, the Lok Aayog must be granted independent financial autonomy and dedicated investigative cadres. This reform would sever its reliance on deputed police personnel who often face profound conflicts of interest when investigating their parent departments. The integration of artificial intelligence and advanced data analytics into the vigilance architecture, allowing for the automated flagging of disproportionate asset accumulation and irregular procurement patterns, will represent the next necessary frontier in proactive corruption prevention.

15.3 Legal and Judicial Administration: Pendency, Access and Reform

The justice delivery system in Chhattisgarh, centered around the High Court in Bilaspur and a widespread network of district and subordinate courts, is tasked with managing an increasingly complex and voluminous caseload. As the state economy has expanded and legal literacy has gradually improved among the rural population, the demand for judicial resolution has surged. However, the supply-side constraints of the judicial administration have led to a severe and compounding crisis of pendency. As of mid-2026, comprehensive data from the National Judicial Data Grid indicates that over 380,000 cases are pending across subordinate courts in Chhattisgarh, with a substantial proportion pending for more than five years (National Judicial Data Grid, 2026).

The composition of this pendency is particularly revealing of the state's socio-economic landscape. A massive volume of litigation involves local land disputes, petty criminal offenses, and cases under the Negotiable Instruments Act. In the heavily tribal districts of the Bastar and Surguja divisions, judicial access is hampered not only by severe infrastructural deficits but by profound socio-linguistic barriers. The formal legal system operates predominantly in Hindi and English. These languages remain alien to a significant segment of the interior indigenous population. Consequently, tribal populations frequently find themselves entangled in prolonged legal battles over forest rights, minor criminal charges, and land alienation, suffering from inadequate legal representation and an intimidating, culturally distant judicial environment.

To bridge this critical access gap, the Chhattisgarh State Legal Services Authority has expanded its grassroots outreach through paralegal volunteers and legal literacy camps heavily concentrated in the Fifth Schedule areas (Government of Chhattisgarh, 2026). The regular operation of Lok Adalats has also provided vital relief, successfully disposing of

thousands of pre-litigation and compoundable cases through amicable settlement mechanisms. Yet, the underlying structural capacity of the judiciary requires urgent and massive augmentation. The judge-to-population ratio in Chhattisgarh remains well below the recommendations previously established by the Law Commission of India. Vacancies in the subordinate judiciary, exacerbated by delays in recruitment cycles and inadequate courtroom infrastructure in newly created districts, continue to paralyze the daily functioning of the courts and delay the delivery of justice.

Judicial modernization must be pursued with aggressive intent over the next decade. The implementation of the e-Courts Project Phase III in 2026 has facilitated the initial digitization of case records, the normalization of virtual hearings, and the introduction of electronic filing systems in the High Court and major district courts. However, extending this digital infrastructure to remote taluka courts remains a formidable challenge due to highly erratic internet connectivity in the forested hinterlands. Furthermore, the state must establish dedicated commercial courts in rapidly growing industrial hubs like Raipur, Bhilai, and Raigarh to fast-track corporate and contractual disputes. This specific reform will dramatically improve the enforcement of contracts and bolster the state's overall investment climate. Expanding the jurisdiction and physical capacity of Gram Nyayalayas at the panchayat level will also be absolutely crucial in providing accessible, speedy, and culturally sensitive dispute resolution for the rural populace without forcing them into the overwhelmed district court system.

15.4 Police Modernisation and Internal Security Management

Internal security management in Chhattisgarh is overwhelmingly defined by the persistent and complex challenge of Left Wing Extremism in the southern Bastar division and the adjoining border regions of Maharashtra, Telangana, and Odisha. Over the past two decades, the state has been the epicenter of this insurgency, which has exacted a heavy toll on civilian lives, security personnel, and critical developmental infrastructure. By 2026, sustained and highly coordinated operations by the state police, the District Reserve Guard, and Central Armed Police Forces have significantly constricted the geographical footprint of the extremists, effectively pushing them into isolated and shrinking pockets (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2026).

The cornerstone of Chhattisgarh's recent internal security strategy has been the deliberate localization of the counter-insurgency apparatus. The expansion of the District Reserve Guard, comprising local tribal youth and surrendered insurgents, has provided the security forces with unparalleled intelligence networks, intimate terrain familiarity, and operational endurance in dense jungle environments. The state government's strategic decision in 2025 to raise specialized battalions known as the 'Bastar Fighters', which specifically recruit men, women, and transgender individuals directly from the core conflict zones, represents a massive paradigm shift in community-integrated policing (Government of Chhattisgarh, 2026). This highly progressive approach not only generates critical local employment in economically depressed areas but also actively bridges the historical trust deficit between the indigenous tribal populace and the uniformed state apparatus.

Despite these significant tactical successes, the broader modernization of the Chhattisgarh police force requires immediate and sustained capital investment. The police-to-population ratio, while artificially high in the conflict zones due to massive central paramilitary deployments, remains grossly inadequate in the rapidly urbanizing central plains. The fundamental nature of crime in the state is undergoing a rapid and dangerous transformation. With the proliferation of digital payment systems and widespread smartphone penetration, organized cybercrime, financial fraud, and online extortion have surged exponentially, particularly in major urban centers like Raipur and Bilaspur. The state police infrastructure, traditionally oriented towards conventional law and order and anti-guerrilla warfare tactics, is currently ill-equipped to combat these sophisticated transnational cyber networks.

In 2026, the state government initiated the critical upgrading of the State Forensic Science Laboratory and mandated the establishment of dedicated cyber police stations in all revenue divisions. However, the seamless integration of the Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and Systems remains suboptimal, hindered by data entry backlogs and the highly limited analytical utilization of the gathered intelligence (Bureau of Police Research and Development, 2026). Looking towards the 2047 vision, police modernization must ruthlessly prioritize specialized capacity building. This includes the urgent creation of dedicated economic offense wings, elite cyber forensics teams, and specialized investigative cadres completely separated from routine law and order and VIP security duties. Furthermore, the physical infrastructure of police stations in rural areas must be comprehensively upgraded to make them citizen-friendly and legally accessible, moving away from the fortress-like architecture necessitated by the height of the insurgency era.

15.5 Regulatory Governance: Quality, Consistency and Independence

As Chhattisgarh seeks to rapidly transition from a primary resource extraction economy to a highly diversified industrial and modern services hub, the fundamental quality of its regulatory governance has emerged as a critical determinant of its economic competitiveness. The state's regulatory architecture is currently dominated by key institutions such as the Chhattisgarh State Electricity Regulatory Commission, the Chhattisgarh Real Estate Regulatory Authority, and the Chhattisgarh Environment Conservation Board. These bodies are tasked with the extraordinarily difficult mandate of balancing the imperatives of rapid capital accumulation with strict consumer protection and long-term ecological sustainability.

In 2026, the performance of these regulatory bodies reveals profound structural inconsistencies that severely hamper the state's investment climate. The Chhattisgarh Environment Conservation Board, for instance, operates precisely at the center of the state's most pressing developmental conflict. This conflict pits the necessary expansion of coal mining and heavy industries against the absolute requirement to preserve pristine forest ecosystems and tribal homelands. The Board is frequently and heavily criticized for lacking adequate technical capacity, suffering from chronic and unaddressed shortages of environmental engineers, toxicologists, and specialized research scientists. Consequently, environmental impact assessments and ongoing compliance monitoring are often relegated to basic procedural formalities rather than subjected to rigorous scientific scrutiny (Ministry of

Environment, Forest and Climate Change, 2026). This regulatory deficit not only leads to severe, localized ecological degradation but also creates massive legal uncertainties for major industrial projects, which are routinely stalled by judicial interventions following public interest litigations.

The true independence of regulatory institutions is another area of profound and ongoing concern. While statutory provisions nominally guarantee operational autonomy, the strict financial and administrative dependence of these bodies on their respective parent departments severely limits their functional independence. Appointments to key regulatory commissions are frequently viewed by civil society and industry groups as post-retirement parking slots for senior bureaucrats, rather than highly specialized positions requiring deep domain expertise. This traditional staffing approach fundamentally compromises the innovative capacity of the regulators to adapt to rapidly emerging market dynamics, such as the integration of decentralized renewable energy grids or the regulation of complex, modern real estate financial instruments.

To build a genuinely world-class regulatory environment, Chhattisgarh must immediately implement a comprehensive regulatory reform agenda. First, a strict statutory cooling-off period must be mandated for bureaucrats transitioning to regulatory roles to completely eliminate potential conflicts of interest. Second, regulatory bodies must be granted total financial autonomy, securely funded through industry levies and user charges rather than relying on discretionary and unpredictable state budget allocations. Third, the state must institutionalize regular Regulatory Impact Assessments before the formal notification of any new commercial or industrial regulation. This rigorous process will ensure that compliance burdens are accurately quantified and minimized, fostering a predictable, consistent, and highly professional policy environment that provides long-term certainty to both domestic and global investors.

15.6 Reduction of Red-tapism: Simplification and Way Forward

Bureaucratic red-tapism has long been recognized as a formidable and deeply entrenched barrier to both economic growth and citizen welfare in Chhattisgarh. Complex procedural requirements, highly opaque approval processes, and the vast discretionary power vested in lower-level functionaries have historically created a fertile ground for inefficiency, delay, and rent-seeking. In response to these challenges, the state has undertaken a series of ambitious administrative simplification measures aimed at minimizing direct human interface and ensuring the timely delivery of public services to all citizens.

The absolute cornerstone of this ongoing effort is the Chhattisgarh Right to Public Services Guarantee Act, which mandates the delivery of notified services within strictly stipulated time limits and legally penalizes designated officers for unjustified delays. By 2026, the state has successfully integrated over 350 services spanning revenue, transport, health, and urban administration directly into the CG e-District portal (Government of Chhattisgarh, 2026). This comprehensive digital platform has fundamentally altered the citizen-state interface, allowing for the remote online submission of applications, real-time digital tracking of file

movement, and the secure issuance of digitally signed certificates. For the industrial sector, the state has completely revamped its single-window clearance system under the mandate of the Business Reforms Action Plan, aiming to aggressively compress the timeline required for establishing new manufacturing units and commercial enterprises.

Despite these highly visible digital advancements, significant challenges remain in the underlying process of structural re-engineering. Digitization in Chhattisgarh has far too often meant merely superimposing new technology onto archaic and redundant administrative processes, rather than comprehensively redesigning the processes themselves to be lean and efficient. For instance, the issuance of a simple municipal trade license or a routine land diversion certificate still requires multiple physical no-objection certificates from disparate, siloed departments, which frequently operate on entirely incompatible legacy software systems. Furthermore, the burden of regulatory compliance for micro, small, and medium enterprises remains disproportionately high. Small local entrepreneurs are forced to navigate a massive labyrinth of labor, environmental, and municipal regulations, diverting their highly limited capital and human resources away from productive, job-creating activities.

The way forward necessitates a radical and permanent shift from a control-based bureaucratic mindset to a facilitation-based approach. The state must urgently undertake the statutory decriminalization of minor, non-malafide business offenses, replacing outdated imprisonment provisions with compounding financial penalties. A comprehensive review and immediate repeal of obsolete state laws and contradictory administrative circulars must be executed through a dedicated, empowered law reform commission. Furthermore, the state should adopt the aggressive principle of "deemed approval" across all non-hazardous industrial and commercial clearances, where the failure of a government department to respond within the statutory timeframe automatically translates into legal authorization for the applicant. This crucial reform will permanently shift the burden of delay from the citizen or the investor directly onto the bureaucracy, forcing deep institutional accountability and accelerating economic activity across the state.

15.7 Civil Service Strength: Vacancy Rates and Training Institutions

The overall efficacy of the administrative and governance reforms outlined in the preceding sections is ultimately and entirely contingent upon the strength, technical capability, and motivation of the state's civil service personnel. In 2026, Chhattisgarh's administrative machinery faces an acute and highly visible crisis of human capital, characterized by alarming vacancy rates across nearly all critical frontline departments. While the upper echelons of the state bureaucracy, manned by the elite All India Services, are relatively well-staffed, the state civil services, technical engineering cadres, and essential subordinate staff face massive, crippling shortfalls.

Detailed data from the state finance and general administration departments indicates that vacancy rates in key developmental sectors such as rural healthcare, primary education, veterinary services, and public works routinely hover between 25 to 40 per cent (Government of Chhattisgarh, 2026). The situation is most critical in the tribal-dominated districts of the

state, where chronic absenteeism and a deep reluctance among officials to serve in remote areas severely compound the absolute numerical shortage of staff. The recruitment cycles managed by the Chhattisgarh Public Service Commission have historically been plagued by administrative delays, persistent litigation, and recurring allegations of procedural irregularities. This has led to multi-year gaps in the necessary infusion of fresh, capable talent into the state machinery.

Training and modern capacity building represent another significant institutional vulnerability. The Chhattisgarh Academy of Administration in Nimora is tasked with the foundational and continuous in-service training of all state civil servants. However, the curriculum and pedagogical approaches remain largely rooted in archaic administrative paradigms. Training modules continue to heavily emphasize traditional revenue administration, manual office procedures, and conventional law and order management. In the context of a rapidly digitalizing global economy, there is a glaring deficit in the training provided on advanced data analytics, cyber security protocols, climate change adaptation strategies, and complex public-private partnership structuring.

To definitively overcome these profound institutional weaknesses, the state government must ruthlessly prioritize the stabilization and acceleration of the annual recruitment calendar. The Chhattisgarh Public Service Commission must transition immediately to a fully digitized, entirely transparent, and legally insulated examination process, ensuring that annual recruitment cycles are completed on schedule without disruptive judicial stay orders. To explicitly address the reluctance of personnel to serve in the challenging Bastar and Surguja divisions, the state must design and implement a highly incentivized rural posting policy. This comprehensive policy should include substantial financial hardship allowances, fast-tracked career progression metrics, and guaranteed subsequent postings in prime urban locations for officers who successfully complete challenging tenures in conflict-affected or remote districts.

Finally, the state's training infrastructure must undergo a complete and total overhaul. The Academy of Administration must partner actively with premier national and international institutions, such as the Indian Institutes of Management and the National Law Universities, to deliver cutting-edge mid-career training programs. The civil service of 2047 will require administrators who are not mere generalists, but agile domain specialists capable of navigating highly complex technological and economic landscapes. The strict integration of continuous, mandatory, and highly specialized capacity building into the career progression matrix of every single state government employee is an absolute prerequisite for transforming Chhattisgarh into a modern, responsive, and truly developed state.

Chapter 16: Technology-Enabled Service Delivery

16.1 Digital Infrastructure: Broadband, Optical Fibre and Connectivity Coverage

The foundation of any modern knowledge economy rests upon the depth, reliability, and accessibility of its digital infrastructure. For Chhattisgarh, a state characterized by expansive geographical spread, dense forest cover, and a highly dispersed rural population, establishing a robust digital backbone is not merely a technological upgrade but a fundamental prerequisite for equitable development. In 2026, the digital infrastructure landscape of Chhattisgarh presents a compelling narrative of aggressive state-led expansion actively combating profound topographical and socio-economic barriers. The state's digital connectivity is primarily driven by the deployment of Optical Fibre Cable networks, the expansion of mobile broadband, and targeted interventions in areas historically isolated from telecommunications grids.

The BharatNet project, executed in coordination with the central government, serves as the primary vehicle for rural broadband penetration. By the midpoint of 2026, Chhattisgarh has made significant strides in connecting its Gram Panchayats through the BharatNet Phase II and Phase III rollouts. Official estimates indicate that over 8,500 Gram Panchayats have been successfully linked to the optical fibre network, providing institutional broadband access to village secretariats, schools, and primary health centers (Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, 2026). This represents a monumental logistical achievement, particularly in the central plains of the Raipur, Durg, and Bilaspur divisions where the terrain is conducive to rapid trenching and cable laying. However, the operational capacity of this network frequently faces challenges related to maintenance, power supply stability, and last-mile connectivity. The presence of the fibre optic cable at the Gram Panchayat building does not automatically translate into household broadband access, creating a persistent gap between institutional connectivity and individual digital empowerment.

The most formidable connectivity challenges remain firmly concentrated in the southern Bastar division and the northern Surguja division. These regions feature highly undulating topography, dense and ecologically sensitive forest reserves, and historical security concerns related to Left Wing Extremism. Private telecommunication operators have historically demonstrated a profound reluctance to invest in these remote geographies due to high capital expenditure requirements and low anticipated average revenue per user. To rectify this market failure, the state government championed the Bastar Net project, a visionary initiative designed to build a dedicated 836-kilometer optical fibre ring network across the tribal districts of Bastar, Bijapur, Dantewada, Kanker, Kondagaon, Narayanpur, and Sukma (Chhattisgarh infotech Promotion Society, 2026). By 2026, this network has become operational, fundamentally altering the administrative and economic landscape of the region. Bastar Net provides a highly secure and reliable communication channel for government departments, security forces, and increasingly, local entrepreneurs seeking to integrate into the formal digital economy.

Despite these dedicated infrastructure projects, the digital divide between the urbanized central corridors and the rural periphery remains a critical policy concern. Mobile broadband penetration, while expanding rapidly, exhibits significant spatial disparity. Urban centers such as Raipur and Bhilai have witnessed the rapid deployment and saturation of 5G networks, facilitating high-speed data consumption, advanced industrial automation, and seamless digital service delivery (Telecom Regulatory Authority of India, 2026). Conversely, large tracts of the Bastar and Surguja divisions still struggle with inconsistent 4G coverage and frequent network blind spots. The state government, utilizing the Universal Service Obligation Fund, has actively commissioned the installation of new mobile towers in these shadow zones. However, the pace of installation is frequently constrained by delays in forest clearances, the logistical difficulties of transporting heavy equipment into remote terrains, and the necessity of securing these installations in conflict-prone areas.

To achieve comprehensive digital inclusion by the target year of 2047, Chhattisgarh must pivot towards a multimodal connectivity strategy. Relying solely on underground optical fibre is insufficient given the state's ecological and topographical realities. The state must aggressively explore alternative and complementary technologies, including aerial optical fibre deployment along existing power transmission lines, high-throughput satellite broadband for the most inaccessible tribal hamlets, and the promotion of decentralized community networks. Furthermore, the state must incentivize private sector participation in the rural digital ecosystem by offering targeted subsidies, streamlined right-of-way clearances, and subsidized power tariffs for telecom infrastructure located in designated backward blocks. A truly resilient digital infrastructure must be universally accessible, permanently reliable, and capable of supporting the exponentially growing data demands of a modernizing state.

16.2 e-Governance Architecture and Digital Public Infrastructure

The transition from traditional, paper-based bureaucratic processes to a streamlined e-Governance architecture represents one of the most critical administrative transformations in Chhattisgarh's history. The state's digital governance framework is spearheaded by the Chhattisgarh infotech Promotion Society (CHiPS), which acts as the nodal agency for conceptualizing, executing, and monitoring all major technological initiatives. By 2026, Chhattisgarh has successfully established a highly sophisticated digital public infrastructure that fundamentally alters the citizen-state interface, reducing administrative opacity and accelerating the delivery of public goods.

At the core of this e-Governance architecture is the State Wide Area Network (CG-SWAN), which provides secure, high-speed connectivity seamlessly linking the state headquarters at Mahanadi Bhawan in Nava Raipur down to the district, sub-divisional, and block block headquarters (Department of Information Technology, 2026). This horizontal and vertical integration is essential for real-time data transmission, video conferencing, and the centralized management of state resources. Complementing the network infrastructure is the Chhattisgarh State Data Centre (SDC), a highly secure, centrally hosted facility that consolidates the IT operations and data storage for all government departments. In 2026, the

SDC has undergone a massive capacity augmentation, transitioning towards a hybrid cloud architecture. This shift allows departments to flexibly scale their computing resources based on demand, drastically reducing the need for disjointed, department-specific server procurements that historically plagued the state's IT budget (Chhattisgarh infotech Promotion Society, 2026).

Chhattisgarh has actively embraced the principles of India's broader Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI), integrating foundational identity, payment, and data exchange layers into its state-specific applications. The ubiquitous adoption of Aadhaar for biometric authentication has enabled the state to clean its beneficiary databases, eliminating duplicate identities and ensuring that welfare subsidies reach their intended recipients. This is most visibly demonstrated in the state's massive Public Distribution System, where end-to-end computerization and point-of-sale biometric authentication have eradicated vast quantities of leakage and corruption. Furthermore, the integration of the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) into the state's financial portals has facilitated instantaneous, cashless transactions for everything from electricity bill payments to agricultural procurement transfers.

Despite these impressive architectural achievements, the state's e-Governance ecosystem in 2026 continues to face structural challenges related to legacy software and departmental silos. Many critical government departments operate highly customized, monolithic software applications that were developed over a decade ago. These legacy systems are frequently incompatible with modern application programming interfaces (APIs), making inter-departmental data sharing exceedingly difficult. For example, seamlessly sharing real-time data between the Department of Revenue, the Department of Agriculture, and the Department of Food and Civil Supplies remains a complex technical hurdle due to these siloed architectures.

The strategic roadmap for the next decade must focus ruthlessly on enterprise architecture reform. Chhattisgarh must transition completely away from fragmented, monolithic applications towards a microservices-based architecture. This involves breaking down complex applications into smaller, independent, and highly interoperable services that communicate through standardized APIs. The state must mandate the adoption of the Chhattisgarh Enterprise Architecture framework across all departments, ensuring that any new software procurement strictly adheres to principles of interoperability, open standards, and cloud-native design. Furthermore, establishing a unified state API gateway will allow authorized departments to securely access and exchange data, effectively eliminating the need for citizens to submit the same documentary evidence multiple times across different government offices. By building a unified, frictionless, and highly interoperable digital ecosystem, Chhattisgarh can maximize the return on its technological investments and deliver a truly seamless governance experience.

16.3 Citizen Service Delivery: CSCs, Service Portals and Mobile Governance

The ultimate metric of success for any e-Governance initiative is the tangible improvement it delivers to the everyday lives of citizens. In Chhattisgarh, the modernization of citizen

service delivery has been a central policy objective, aimed at reducing bureaucratic red tape, minimizing the necessity for physical visits to government offices, and eliminating the rent-seeking behavior of intermediaries. By 2026, the state has deployed a highly diversified service delivery strategy that combines physical access points with expansive digital and mobile platforms, ensuring that government services reach both the urban elite and the rural marginalized.

The Common Service Centres, locally known as Lok Seva Kendras, remain the backbone of assisted digital service delivery in rural Chhattisgarh. With thousands of centers operational across the state, these local hubs provide a critical bridge for citizens who lack digital literacy, reliable internet access, or personal computing devices. Local entrepreneurs operate these centers, offering access to over a hundred vital services including the issuance of caste certificates, income certificates, land record extracts, and utility payments (Ministry of Panchayati Raj, 2026). In 2026, the state government aggressively expanded the service portfolio of the Lok Seva Kendras to include tele-medicine consultations, basic financial services, and agricultural advisory services, transforming them into comprehensive village-level institutional hubs. However, the consistent quality of service at these centers varies significantly, and ensuring the technical training and financial viability of the village-level entrepreneurs remains a continuing administrative challenge.

To cater to the rapidly growing digitally literate population, the state heavily promotes the CG e-District portal. This unified online platform serves as a single digital window for citizens to apply for statutory certificates and track the real-time status of their applications. The backend integration of the e-District portal with departmental databases ensures that processing timelines are strictly monitored, and unwarranted delays trigger automatic escalations to higher authorities under the Right to Public Services Guarantee Act.

Perhaps the most revolutionary intervention in citizen service delivery has been the implementation and scaling of the Mukhyamantri Mitan Yojana. Launched to completely eliminate the need for citizens to visit government offices for routine services, this scheme provides the doorstep delivery of essential government documents. Citizens simply call a toll-free number to schedule an appointment, and a designated representative, known as a Mitan, visits their home to collect the required documents, process the application digitally on a tablet, and subsequently deliver the finalized certificate back to the citizen's doorstep (Government of Chhattisgarh, 2026). By 2026, this scheme has been expanded to cover all municipal corporations and major municipalities, delivering millions of certificates with unprecedented convenience. The Mitan scheme not only enhances citizen satisfaction but also generates significant local employment, creating a highly structured and formalized gig economy for service delivery agents.

Looking forward, the state must pivot decisively towards mobile governance, or m-Governance. With smartphone penetration in Chhattisgarh projected to exceed eighty percent by the late 2020s, the mobile device must become the primary interface for all citizen-state interactions. The state must develop a unified, super-app ecosystem that consolidates all departmental services into a single, highly intuitive mobile application. This

application must feature multi-lingual support, incorporating Chhattisgarhi, Gondi, and Halbi voice interfaces to ensure accessibility for tribal and rural populations who may struggle with text-based navigation. Furthermore, integrating artificial intelligence-driven chatbots into this mobile ecosystem will provide citizens with instant, 24-hour assistance, guiding them through complex application processes and instantly resolving routine queries. By prioritizing mobile-first design and voice-assisted technologies, Chhattisgarh can achieve true universal access to public services.

16.4 Data Governance, Open Data Policy and Privacy Framework

As Chhattisgarh rapidly digitizes its administrative functions, the state government has become the custodian of an unprecedented volume of data. Every day, millions of digital transactions are processed across the public distribution system, healthcare networks, land registries, and educational portals. This massive accumulation of data represents a highly valuable strategic asset. When analyzed effectively, it can inform evidence-based policymaking, optimize resource allocation, and predict emerging developmental challenges. However, in 2026, the state's data governance framework is still maturing, grappling with the dual challenges of breaking down departmental data silos and ensuring the absolute privacy and security of citizen information.

Historically, data in Chhattisgarh has been treated as the exclusive property of individual departments. The Department of Health maintains health records, the Department of Revenue holds land records, and the Department of School Education manages student data. These datasets exist in isolated environments, making it incredibly difficult to generate comprehensive, cross-sectoral insights. For example, correlating nutritional data from the Women and Child Development Department with academic performance data from the Education Department to measure the true impact of the Mid-Day Meal scheme requires highly complex and time-consuming manual data reconciliation. To resolve this, the state government is establishing a comprehensive State Data Governance Framework. This framework aims to mandate the creation of a Chief Data Officer post within every major department, tasked specifically with standardizing data formats, ensuring data quality, and facilitating secure inter-departmental data exchange (Department of Information Technology, 2026).

A critical component of this modern data strategy is the implementation of an expansive Open Data Policy. While sensitive personal data must be strictly protected, the state possesses vast amounts of anonymized, non-personal data regarding agricultural yields, weather patterns, traffic flows, and public spending. In 2026, the state launched the Chhattisgarh Open Data Portal, designed to make these non-personal datasets freely available to the public in machine-readable formats. By opening this data to academic researchers, civil society organizations, and private sector startups, the state intends to catalyze a new wave of local innovation. Agricultural tech startups, for instance, can utilize open soil and weather data to develop highly localized crop advisory applications, directly benefiting the state's farming community.

However, the pursuit of data-driven governance must be rigorously balanced with the fundamental right to privacy. The enactment of the national Digital Personal Data Protection Act of 2023 has imposed strict legal obligations on all data fiduciaries, including state governments. In 2026, Chhattisgarh is engaged in a massive compliance exercise to align its entire e-Governance architecture with these new privacy mandates. This involves conducting comprehensive data audits across all departments to identify exactly what personal data is collected, where it is stored, and who has access to it. The state is implementing strict consent management protocols, ensuring that citizens are explicitly informed about how their data will be utilized and granting them the ability to revoke consent. Furthermore, rigorous data anonymization techniques are being deployed before any dataset is released for research or analytical purposes. Building a robust privacy framework is not merely a compliance exercise; it is an absolute necessity for maintaining public trust in the state's digital infrastructure. Without the unwavering confidence of the citizens that their data is secure, the entire e-Governance ecosystem risks severe pushback and diminished utilization.

16.5 Cybersecurity: State-Level Institutional Mechanisms

The exponential growth of digital infrastructure and e-Governance platforms in Chhattisgarh brings with it a corresponding and severe escalation in cybersecurity risks. As the state economy digitizes, malicious actors increasingly target government networks, critical industrial infrastructure, and citizen financial data. In 2026, the threat landscape is highly complex, featuring sophisticated ransomware attacks, state-sponsored cyber espionage, and organized financial fraud. A successful cyberattack on the state's power grid, the centralized public distribution system, or the state data center could trigger catastrophic disruptions to daily life and economic activity. Consequently, building a highly resilient and proactive cybersecurity architecture is a paramount national security and developmental imperative for Chhattisgarh.

The institutional spearhead for this defense is the Chhattisgarh Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-CG). Established to serve as the nodal agency for all cybersecurity incidents, CERT-CG monitors network traffic, issues timely threat advisories to government departments, and coordinates rapid incident response when breaches occur. By 2026, CERT-CG has significantly expanded its technical capacity, establishing a state-of-the-art Security Operations Centre that provides 24-hour real-time monitoring of the State Wide Area Network and the State Data Centre (Chhattisgarh infotech Promotion Society, 2026). The agency routinely conducts rigorous vulnerability assessments and penetration testing on all government applications before they are permitted to go live, ensuring that security flaws are identified and patched during the development phase.

However, the protection of the state's digital assets requires continuous vigilance beyond the centralized data center. Chhattisgarh's heavy industrial base, particularly the massive mining and power generation sectors, relies increasingly on interconnected Industrial Control Systems and Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) networks. These operational technology networks, historically isolated from the public internet, are now heavily integrated for remote monitoring and efficiency, exposing them to potentially

devastating cyber-physical attacks. The state government, in coordination with central agencies, has mandated strict cybersecurity audits for all critical information infrastructure operators in the mining and energy sectors. Furthermore, the digital transit pass system, utilized heavily by the Department of Mineral Resources to track ore movement and prevent illegal mining, represents a highly sensitive target. Ensuring the cryptographic integrity of these digital passes is vital to protecting the state's massive mineral revenue streams.

Beyond defending state infrastructure, the government faces the escalating challenge of protecting its citizens from cybercrime. The rapid adoption of digital payments in urban and rural areas has led to a surge in financial fraud, phishing scams, and identity theft. The state police force, as discussed in Chapter 15, is actively undergoing capacity building to meet this challenge. By 2026, dedicated Cyber Police Stations have been operationalized in every revenue division, staffed with specially trained digital forensic investigators (National Crime Records Bureau, 2026). However, reactive policing is insufficient. The state must aggressively pursue a strategy of proactive cyber hygiene. This involves launching massive, vernacular language digital literacy campaigns designed to educate citizens on safe online practices, password security, and the identification of fraudulent communications. For the long-term vision of 2047, Chhattisgarh must mandate a "Zero Trust" architecture across all government networks, where no user or device is trusted by default, and continuous verification is required for access. Investing heavily in cybersecurity is the non-negotiable insurance policy required to protect the state's massive digital investments.

16.6 Emerging Technologies: AI, Geospatial Systems and Smart Governance

To transcend historical developmental bottlenecks and leapfrog into a highly advanced administrative future, Chhattisgarh is actively exploring the integration of frontier technologies into its core governance frameworks. By 2026, technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, high-resolution geospatial mapping, drone surveillance, and blockchain are moving out of the pilot phase and into systemic deployment across various state departments. These emerging technologies offer unprecedented capabilities to enhance resource optimization, improve predictive planning, and enforce regulatory compliance in ways that traditional administrative tools cannot achieve.

Geospatial technology forms the bedrock of spatial governance in the state. The Bhuiyan project, Chhattisgarh's flagship land records computerization program, has digitized millions of property records, making them accessible online and drastically reducing land-related disputes (Department of Revenue, 2026). Building upon this, the state is currently undertaking a massive, high-resolution drone mapping exercise across rural and urban landscapes. This geospatial data is critical for accurate property tax assessment in municipal areas, precision crop monitoring in the agricultural plains, and the rigorous tracking of forest cover changes in the tribal districts. By integrating satellite imagery with ground-level cadastral maps, the state government can actively monitor illegal encroachments on forest land and track the exact expansion parameters of open-cast mines in real-time, greatly enhancing environmental regulatory enforcement.

Artificial Intelligence is poised to revolutionize the state's approach to predictive governance. The state holds vast repositories of historical data that AI algorithms can analyze to forecast future trends and optimize interventions. In the agricultural sector, the government is collaborating with research institutions to deploy AI models that analyze historical weather patterns, soil health data, and market pricing to provide farmers with hyper-local, predictive crop advisories, directly aiming to maximize yield and minimize climate-related losses. In the public health domain, machine learning algorithms are being trained on data from the Family Health Centers to predict potential outbreaks of communicable diseases like malaria and dengue, allowing the health department to pre-position resources and deploy targeted vector-control measures weeks before an outbreak peaks. Furthermore, AI-driven natural language processing tools are being integrated into the state's grievance redressal portal, Nidaan, to automatically categorize complaints, route them to the correct department, and identify recurring systemic issues that require policy-level intervention.

Blockchain technology is being cautiously but deliberately explored to introduce absolute transparency and immutability into highly sensitive government transactions. The Department of Mineral Resources is piloting blockchain-based digital ledgers to track the movement of minerals from the extraction point to the final consumer. Because blockchain records cannot be retroactively altered, this system ensures that the weight, grade, and royalty payments associated with every truckload of coal or iron ore are permanently and transparently recorded, virtually eliminating the possibility of data tampering and illegal transport (Department of Mineral Resources, 2026). Similarly, exploring blockchain for the secure issuance of academic degrees and caste certificates will eradicate the pervasive issue of document forgery.

As Chhattisgarh looks toward the vision of 2047, the strategic imperative is to ensure that these emerging technologies are deployed ethically and equitably. The deployment of AI in public administration must be accompanied by strict algorithmic auditing to ensure that automated decisions do not inadvertently perpetuate historical biases against marginalized communities. The smart city initiatives in Nava Raipur, featuring intelligent traffic management systems and automated utility monitoring, must serve as testing grounds for scalable solutions that can eventually be adapted for the state's smaller, resource-constrained municipalities. By embracing these frontier technologies with rigorous ethical oversight, Chhattisgarh can fundamentally redefine the efficiency, transparency, and responsiveness of its administrative governance.

Chapter 17: Innovation, Research and Knowledge Economy

17.1 State Innovation Ecosystem: Startups and Accelerators

Chhattisgarh is rapidly positioning itself as a highly promising frontier for startup development and entrepreneurial growth in central India. Recognizing that traditional industrial policies were insufficient to capture the agility of modern technology ventures, the state government formulated a targeted strategy to incubate early stage enterprises. On February 4, 2026, the Council of Ministers approved the landmark Chhattisgarh Innovation and Startup Promotion Policy 2025 to 2030. This policy was specifically designed to align with the objectives of "Amrit Kaal: Chhattisgarh Vision @2047" by filling previous policy gaps where startup provisions were merely appended to broader industrial frameworks. The dedicated policy directly addresses historical limitations in the pace of incubation, investment, and innovation that previously hindered the state in national startup rankings.

As of 2025, Chhattisgarh successfully hosts over 1,850 startups recognized by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, alongside an expanding network of 20 active incubators. These enterprises demonstrate strong representation across diverse and critical sectors including food processing, construction, agricultural technology, health and wellness, and advanced manufacturing. To catalyze this ecosystem, the new startup policy established a robust ₹100 crore Chhattisgarh Startup Capital Fund aimed at enhancing investment availability across the state.

Financial and non financial incentives form the bedrock of this ecosystem support. Under the Industrial Development Policy 2024 to 2030, early stage Proof of Concept based startups are eligible for seed funding up to ₹10 lakh to develop a Minimum Viable Product. The comprehensive Startup Package provides seed funding support tiers of ₹5 lakh, ₹3 lakh, and ₹3 lakh depending on the startup's maturity, backed by a ₹50 crore Credit Risk Fund. Operational burdens are mitigated through a rent subsidy covering up to 40 per cent of costs or a maximum of ₹15,000 per month for three years, combined with a 100 per cent exemption on stamp duty. Startups falling under special categories receive a 10 per cent additional subsidy and a one year extension on exemptions.

Incubator infrastructure is similarly incentivized to create fertile grounds for young enterprises. New incubators receive financial assistance of up to 40 per cent, capped at ₹40 lakh, for their establishment expenses. Incubators located at divisional headquarters benefit from an operational expense grant of ₹5 lakh per year for up to five years, while those in other districts receive a maximum of ₹3 lakh per year for the same duration. Non financial incentives, such as self certification for state labor law regulations and the permit to operate in three shifts, further reduce bureaucratic friction. The state government launched the Chhattisgarh Startup Portal to streamline registration and certification, ensuring entrepreneurs can seamlessly access these subsidies and net SGST reimbursements.

17.2 Research and Development: Academic Industry Linkages

The transition towards a knowledge based economy requires deep integration between academic research and industrial application. Chhattisgarh benefits from a formidable and expanding educational ecosystem anchored by premier institutions such as the Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Raipur, the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bhilai, the International Institute of Information Technology (IIIT) Naya Raipur, the National Institute of Technology (NIT) Raipur, the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Raipur, and the Hidayatullah National Law University (HNLU) Raipur.

These institutions act as the primary engines for research and development within the state. Recent admission cycles for doctoral and post graduate programs in 2025 and 2026 underscore a massive push towards advanced research. For instance, IIT Bhilai and NIT Raipur expanded their PhD admissions and research associate positions in highly specialized technical fields throughout 2025 and early 2026. State universities, including Pt. Ravishankar Shukla University and Shaheed Nandkumar Patel Vishwavidyalaya, similarly increased their research intakes, creating a broad base of academic inquiry across both central and state institutions.

Despite this academic density, the linkage between laboratory research and industrial deployment remains a structural challenge. The state's legacy industrial base is heavily concentrated in resource extraction, steel production, and power generation. Aligning the cutting edge research outputs of IIT Bhilai or NIT Raipur with the operational needs of heavy industries requires deliberate policy intervention. Collaborative research models are gradually emerging, visible in initiatives like NIT Raipur's Junior Research Fellow positions tied to sponsored projects by the Anusandhan National Research Foundation. Fostering joint laboratories, industry sponsored doctoral fellowships, and technology transfer offices within state universities is absolutely essential to translate academic research into commercial industrial processes.

17.3 Intellectual Property: Awareness, Registration and Commercialisation

Intellectual Property generation is a definitive metric of a state's innovative capacity. At the national level, India witnessed a historic surge in patent filings during the 2025 to 2026 financial year. Applications rose to an unprecedented 1,43,729, marking a 30.2 per cent increase over the previous year and establishing India as the sixth largest patent filer globally. Domestic applicants drove this momentum, accounting for approximately 69 per cent of the total patents filed. However, this innovation surge is heavily concentrated in industrial and technology centric states, with Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Maharashtra leading the national rankings.

For Chhattisgarh to capture a larger share of this intellectual property growth, aggressive and targeted interventions are necessary. The state has already introduced substantial financial mechanisms to lower the barrier to entry for patent registration. Under the Industrial Development Policy 2024 to 2030, startups can avail a technical patent subsidy covering up

to 50 per cent of costs, up to a maximum of ₹10 lakh. Furthermore, recognized startups in Chhattisgarh benefit from national incentive structures, paying only 20 per cent of regular patent fees. This reduces the provisional application cost to just ₹1,600 compared to ₹8,000 for large corporate entities.

While financial subsidies exist, intellectual property awareness remains low among small enterprises and grassroots innovators. The state must launch extensive sensitization campaigns across industrial clusters and academic campuses to educate creators on the commercial benefits of patents, including 20 year legal monopolies, market exclusivity, and revenue generation through licensing. A dedicated state Intellectual Property Facilitation Center should be established to guide local inventors through the complex, seven step registration process, from prior art search to final patent grant. Ensuring rapid technology transfer and the commercialization of registered patents will transform passive academic knowledge into active economic assets.

17.4 Knowledge Institutions as Engines of Development

The paradigm of higher education in Chhattisgarh is evolving from passive instructional delivery to active civic and economic engagement. Knowledge institutions are increasingly expected to function as direct contributors to the state's governance and developmental trajectory. The most striking example of this integration is the Chief Minister IT Fellowship Program launched in 2026 at IIIT Naya Raipur.

The program offers an M.Tech degree in Data Science and Artificial Intelligence specifically targeted at domiciled candidates, thereby nurturing local talent for state development. The Fellowship provides a stipend of ₹50,000 per month and covers tuition fees up to ₹2 lakh, alongside providing necessary computing hardware. What makes this initiative groundbreaking is its blended learning approach. The curriculum mandates real world governance experience, placing students directly into key administrative offices and state departments. By integrating classroom instruction with live software driven analysis of public policy issues, the state ensures that its brightest technical minds are actively deployed to solve localized administrative bottlenecks.

This model of institutional engagement must be replicated across other disciplines. Agricultural universities like Indira Gandhi Krishi Vishwavidyalaya, which expanded its PhD admissions in 2025, must deepen their extension services to translate climate resilient farming research directly to rural cooperatives. Similarly, legal and medical institutions such as HNLU and AIIMS Raipur must continuously feed data driven policy recommendations into the state's legislative and public health frameworks. Positioning these institutions as active developmental engines ensures a high return on the massive public capital invested in their establishment.

17.5 Building a Youth Innovation and Research Ecosystem

Chhattisgarh's demographic dividend is one of its most potent assets, requiring a deliberate and sustained effort to cultivate a culture of innovation from a young age. The state's approach must bridge the gap between secondary education and advanced technical entrepreneurship. The overarching goal is to transition the youth from being job seekers in the informal economy or traditional public sector to becoming active job creators in the knowledge economy.

The state's Startup Package provides project report subsidies up to 1 per cent or a maximum of ₹5 lakh, and quality certification subsidies up to 80 per cent or a maximum of ₹10 lakh. These grants lower the risk for young innovators attempting to formalize their business concepts. However, a robust youth innovation ecosystem requires early stage intervention. Establishing tinkering laboratories in government higher secondary schools and integrating design thinking into the standard curriculum are necessary first steps.

Furthermore, the state must host regular ideation hackathons, pitching platforms, and district level innovation fairs to identify grassroots talent. By providing immediate financial and mentorship support to promising ideas originating from remote districts, the government can democratize access to the innovation economy. The ₹100 crore Startup Capital Fund must feature dedicated tranches for student led enterprises and ventures founded by youth from marginalized tribal communities. This targeted financial support, combined with the incubator network expanding into divisional headquarters, will create a seamless pipeline guiding young talent from raw ideation to successful commercial deployment.

17.6 Skill Development, Employability and Workforce Alignment

The structural transformation of the Chhattisgarh economy is entirely dependent on the quality, adaptability, and relevance of its workforce. While higher education institutions cater to advanced research and technology sectors, the vast majority of the state's youth require rapid, industry aligned vocational training. The Chhattisgarh State Skill Development Authority operates as the nodal agency, registering Vocational Training Providers to deliver certified courses across diverse sectors.

Government Industrial Training Institutes play a vital and historical role in equipping the state's youth with technical skills, specifically targeting students from rural and underprivileged backgrounds. Following the formation of the state in 2000, skill development was prioritized as a key strategy for employment generation. For the 2026 to 2027 academic session, the state directorate initiated massive registration drives and counseling phases throughout July 2026 to maximize enrollment in these critical technical programs.

Workforce alignment requires synchronizing training outputs with actual market demand. In the healthcare sector, the National Health Mission conducted extensive recruitment drives in 2025 and 2026 across districts like Raipur, drawing heavily on the pool of locally trained medical and paramedical staff. Similar alignment must be rigorously enforced in emerging

sectors. As the state attracts investments in food processing, logistics, and renewable energy, the State Skill Development Authority must proactively redesign curricula to meet the specific technical requirements of these incoming industries.

To ensure long term employability, vocational training must transcend narrow technical skills and incorporate digital literacy, financial management, and basic entrepreneurial training. Integrating apprenticeship programs directly with local manufacturing and service industries will provide crucial on the job experience, bridging the persistent gap between classroom theory and workplace reality. By forging strong partnerships with industry councils and continuously updating its skill matrices, Chhattisgarh can ensure that its demographic expansion translates directly into a highly productive and globally competitive workforce.

Chapter 18: Agriculture, Allied Sectors and Food Security

18.1 Cropping Pattern, Agricultural Productivity and Input Use

Agriculture forms the fundamental backbone of Chhattisgarh's rural economy and social fabric. Historically celebrated as the "Rice Bowl of India" due to its extensive cultivation of paddy in the central plains, the state's agricultural sector remains the primary source of livelihood for approximately seventy per cent of its rural population (Directorate of Economics and Statistics Chhattisgarh, 2026). In the financial year 2025 to 2026, the primary sector, heavily dominated by agriculture and allied activities, contributed approximately 27.5 per cent to the Gross State Value Added at constant prices, underscoring its indispensable role in the macroeconomic stability of the state (Government of Chhattisgarh, 2026). However, the structural composition of this sector reveals a profound lack of diversification that presents significant long term economic and ecological risks.

The cropping pattern in Chhattisgarh is overwhelmingly skewed towards the Kharif season, which coincides with the southwest monsoon. Paddy is the principal crop, occupying roughly 3.8 million hectares, which translates to nearly sixty seven per cent of the total gross cropped area of 5.7 million hectares in the state (Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, 2026). This intense monocropping of paddy is heavily incentivized by the state's highly effective procurement system and the provision of input subsidies through flagship schemes such as the Rajiv Gandhi Kisan Nyay Yojana, which provided direct benefit transfers to over 2.6 million farmers in 2025 (Department of Agriculture Chhattisgarh, 2026). While this policy framework has successfully ensured basic food security and stable incomes for paddy farmers, it has simultaneously discouraged the cultivation of pulses, oilseeds, and coarse cereals, leading to a stagnation in crop diversification. The Rabi season, characterized by limited irrigation access, sees a drastic reduction in cultivated area, with crops like gram, lathyrus, mustard, and wheat occupying significantly smaller acreages.

Agricultural productivity in Chhattisgarh presents a mixed narrative of localized success against a backdrop of broad systemic constraints. The average yield of paddy in the central plains of the Raipur and Durg divisions routinely exceeds 3,500 kilograms per hectare, aided by assured canal irrigation and high fertilizer application (Chhattisgarh State Planning Commission, 2026). In stark contrast, the productivity in the tribal dominated northern hills of Surguja and the southern plateau of Bastar remains chronically low, often hovering below 1,800 kilograms per hectare (Department of Agriculture Chhattisgarh, 2026). This disparity is directly linked to the reliance on traditional, low yielding farming practices, poor soil health, and a profound dependence on erratic rainfall in these peripheral regions.

The application of agricultural inputs reflects this spatial inequality. Seed replacement rates for paddy have improved significantly, reaching approximately forty five per cent globally across the state in 2025, largely due to the proactive distribution networks of the Chhattisgarh State Seed and Agriculture Development Corporation (Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, 2026). However, the seed replacement rates for pulses and oilseeds remain

alarmingly low at under twenty per cent. Fertilizer consumption is heavily skewed towards urea, leading to severe imbalances in the Nitrogen, Phosphorus, and Potassium ratio in the soil. To combat this, the state has distributed over 4.5 million Soil Health Cards by the end of 2025 to promote balanced nutrient management (Department of Agriculture Chhattisgarh, 2026).

A critical forward looking intervention has been the Chhattisgarh Millet Mission. Recognizing the nutritional value and climate resilience of traditional millets like Kodo, Kutki, and Ragi, the state government aggressively promoted their cultivation in the tribal districts. By 2026, the area under millet cultivation expanded to over 160,000 hectares, supported by an assured procurement mechanism at a Minimum Support Price of ₹3,200 per quintal (Chhattisgarh State Minor Forest Produce Cooperative Federation, 2026). This strategic pivot not only addresses nutritional security but also represents a vital step towards climate resilient agriculture in regions where water intensive paddy cultivation is ecologically unsustainable.

18.2 Irrigation and Water Use Efficiency in Agriculture

The fundamental constraint to agricultural expansion and crop diversification in Chhattisgarh is the severe limitation in assured irrigation. Despite being endowed with major river basins including the Mahanadi, Godavari, and Ganga, the state's irrigation infrastructure remains historically underdeveloped. As of 2026, the net irrigated area stands at approximately 1.85 million hectares, which accounts for only about thirty five per cent of the net sown area (Water Resources Department Chhattisgarh, 2026). This figure sits substantially below the national average of nearly fifty per cent, leaving the vast majority of the state's agriculture entirely at the mercy of the southwest monsoon.

The spatial distribution of this irrigation infrastructure exacerbates intra state inequalities. The central plains benefit heavily from major legacy surface water projects such as the Mahanadi Reservoir Project, the Hasdeo Bango project, and the Tandula reservoir complex. Consequently, districts like Dhamtari, Janjgir Champa, and Raipur enjoy irrigation coverage exceeding sixty per cent (Chhattisgarh State Planning Commission, 2026). Conversely, the Bastar and Surguja divisions rely almost entirely on rainfed agriculture, with irrigation coverage languishing below fifteen per cent in several blocks. The undulating topography and dense forest cover in these regions render the construction of large scale canal networks economically unviable and ecologically destructive.

Groundwater development in Chhattisgarh presents a paradoxical situation. The state is categorized as a "safe" state in terms of overall groundwater extraction, with the current stage of groundwater development at merely forty six per cent of the net annual extractable resource (Central Ground Water Board, 2026). However, this aggregate figure masks severe localized stress. In the heavily cultivated central plains, indiscriminate groundwater extraction for summer paddy cultivation has led to alarming declines in the water table, prompting the categorization of several blocks in Durg and Raipur as semi critical. In the tribal hinterlands, despite abundant groundwater potential, the lack of electrical infrastructure

and the high cost of borewell drilling prevent smallholder farmers from accessing this vital resource.

To bridge this specific energy water nexus, the state government launched the Saur Sujala Yojana, a highly successful initiative aimed at providing solar powered irrigation pumps to farmers in off grid and underserved areas. By 2026, the state has installed over 150,000 solar agricultural pumps, significantly enhancing the irrigation capacity of small and marginal farmers in the Bastar and Surguja divisions without placing additional burdens on the state's electrical grid (Chhattisgarh State Renewable Energy Development Agency, 2026).

Water use efficiency in Chhattisgarh's agriculture remains sub optimal. The predominant method of irrigation is conventional flood irrigation, which results in massive conveyance and application losses. To address this, the state is aggressively implementing the Per Drop More Crop component of the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana. In the 2025 to 2026 fiscal year, over 65,000 hectares were brought under micro irrigation systems, specifically drip and sprinkler technologies, with a strong focus on horticultural clusters (Department of Horticulture Chhattisgarh, 2026). The transition towards micro irrigation is an absolute policy imperative not only to expand the total irrigated area but also to facilitate the shift away from water intensive paddy towards high value, less water demanding crops.

18.3 Agricultural Marketing, Price Realisation and Farmer Income

The agricultural marketing architecture in Chhattisgarh is deeply intertwined with the state's expansive public procurement system. The state government operates a highly centralized and remarkably efficient paddy procurement mechanism through a network of over 2,500 Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS). In the Kharif marketing season of 2025 to 2026, Chhattisgarh procured a record breaking 14.5 million metric tonnes of paddy directly from farmers, cementing its position as the second largest contributor of rice to the central pool in the country (Department of Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Protection Chhattisgarh, 2026).

This procurement is supported by a robust digital infrastructure. The integration of farmer registration with land records through the Bhuiyan portal ensures transparency and prevents the leakage of subsidies to intermediaries. The Minimum Support Price (MSP) regime is further augmented by state specific input assistance schemes. The Rajiv Gandhi Kisan Nyay Yojana provides direct cash transfers of up to ₹10,000 per acre to paddy farmers, and specifically incentivizes crop diversification by offering higher acreage based subsidies for farmers who shift from paddy to pulses, oilseeds, or tree plantation (Department of Agriculture Chhattisgarh, 2026). This combination of assured procurement and direct financial assistance has fundamentally stabilized farmer incomes across the state, drastically reducing incidences of distress sales and rural indebtedness in the paddy growing belts.

However, outside the protective umbrella of paddy procurement, agricultural marketing remains highly fragmented and exploitative. Farmers cultivating vegetables, fruits, pulses, and oilseeds rely entirely on the traditional Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC)

mandis. While the state has 69 principal APMC markets and 118 sub market yards, infrastructure deficits such as inadequate cold storage, lack of grading and assaying facilities, and cartelization by local traders severely depress price realization for the primary producer (Chhattisgarh State Agricultural Marketing Board, 2026).

To modernize this ecosystem, the state is actively integrating its principal mandis with the National Agriculture Market (e-NAM) platform. By 2026, 45 mandis have been onboarded to facilitate transparent, pan India electronic trading (Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, 2026). Yet, the actual volume of trade executed through the e-NAM platform remains a small fraction of the total agricultural output, constrained by poor digital literacy among farmers and the resistance of entrenched local trading networks.

The most promising structural reform in agricultural marketing is the promotion of Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs). The state aims to organize small and marginal farmers, who hold less than two hectares of land and constitute over seventy six per cent of the farming community, into robust collectives. By aggregating produce, FPOs can bypass local intermediaries, negotiate better prices with institutional buyers, and invest in shared primary processing infrastructure. As of 2026, over 450 FPOs have been registered in Chhattisgarh, supported by matching equity grants and credit guarantee schemes provided by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD, 2026). Strengthening the managerial capacity and financial viability of these FPOs is the cornerstone of transitioning Chhattisgarh's farmers from passive price takers to active market participants.

18.4 Food Processing Industry and Value Chain Development

Despite its immense agricultural and horticultural output, Chhattisgarh historically captured a disproportionately small share of value addition, exporting the vast majority of its produce in raw, unprocessed forms. The food processing sector in 2026 is still predominantly characterized by primary processing, heavily concentrated in rice milling. The state boasts over 2,200 registered rice mills, which form a highly organized and politically influential industrial bloc (Department of Industries Chhattisgarh, 2026). However, the secondary and tertiary processing of agricultural commodities to create high value branded consumer goods remains severely underdeveloped.

Recognizing this critical gap, the state government notified the comprehensive Chhattisgarh Food Processing Mission Policy 2025 to 2030. This policy provides massive capital investment subsidies, interest subvention, and complete exemptions on electricity duties for new food processing units. A central pillar of this strategy is the development of dedicated infrastructure. The Indus Best Mega Food Park in Raipur, fully operationalized by 2026, provides plug and play infrastructure, centralized cold chain facilities, and effluent treatment plants for over fifty processing units (Ministry of Food Processing Industries, 2026). The state is also developing specialized agro processing clusters in Bilaspur for non timber forest produce and in Jagdalpur for spice processing.

The integration of Minor Forest Produce (MFP) into the formal food processing value chain is a unique and highly successful feature of Chhattisgarh's agrarian strategy. The state accounts for roughly seventy four per cent of the total minor forest produce gathered nationally (Ministry of Tribal Affairs, 2026). Commodities such as tamarind, mahua, chironji, and sal seeds are crucial to tribal livelihoods. The Chhattisgarh State Minor Forest Produce Cooperative Federation has established over 139 Van Dhan Vikas Kendras. These centers empower tribal women's self help groups to undertake the primary processing, grading, and packaging of forest produce. Products are subsequently marketed under the state owned "Chhattisgarh Herbals" brand, which achieved a retail turnover of ₹65 crore in 2025, ensuring that the profit margins of value addition are retained directly by the indigenous communities rather than extracted by urban middlemen (Chhattisgarh State Minor Forest Produce Cooperative Federation, 2026).

The millet value chain represents another major processing frontier. With the expansion of millet cultivation under the Millet Mission, the state has actively subsidized the establishment of millet processing units. By 2026, several mid sized processing facilities have been established in the Kanker and Kondagaon districts, converting raw millets into ready to eat snacks, fortified flours, and nutritional supplements that are subsequently procured by the state for distribution through the Anganwadi network under the supplementary nutrition programs (Department of Women and Child Development Chhattisgarh, 2026).

Despite these policy interventions, the food processing industry faces persistent logistical bottlenecks. The lack of a seamless, temperature controlled logistics network from the farm gate to the processing facility results in devastating post harvest losses, particularly for highly perishable horticultural crops like tomatoes and papayas. Bridging this specific infrastructure gap requires aggressive private sector investment in pack houses, reefer transport, and ripening chambers, which the state must actively solicit through targeted public private partnership frameworks.

18.5 Animal Husbandry, Dairy and Poultry: Economic Contribution

Animal husbandry and livestock rearing serve as a vital economic buffer for rural households in Chhattisgarh, providing nutritional security, draught power, and supplementary income that acts as an insurance mechanism against crop failures. According to the most recent livestock census data extrapolated for 2026, the state supports a massive livestock population exceeding 16 million, comprising predominantly indigenous cattle, buffaloes, goats, and backyard poultry (Department of Animal Husbandry Chhattisgarh, 2026).

The most transformative and nationally recognized intervention in this sector has been the Godhan Nyay Yojana, launched by the state government to integrate livestock management with organic agriculture and rural livelihood generation. Under this scheme, the state government procures cow dung directly from livestock owners at a fixed rate of ₹2 per kilogram. This procured dung is processed by women's self help groups at designated Gauthans (village day care centers for cattle) into high quality vermicompost and super compost. By 2026, the state has established over 10,500 active Gauthans and produced over

3.5 million quintals of vermicompost, which is subsequently sold to farmers through cooperative societies (Department of Agriculture Chhattisgarh, 2026).

The economic and ecological impacts of the Godhan Nyay Yojana are profound. It has provided a massive supplementary income stream for landless laborers and marginalized livestock owners. Ecologically, the widespread availability of affordable vermicompost has drastically reduced the state's reliance on chemical fertilizers, improving soil organic carbon levels and actively promoting organic farming corridors along the Mahanadi river basin. Furthermore, the Gauthans are rapidly evolving into comprehensive rural industrial parks, where women's groups engage in allied activities such as poultry farming, mushroom cultivation, and the manufacturing of eco friendly paints derived from cow dung.

The dairy sector in Chhattisgarh, however, remains structurally underdeveloped compared to the cooperative giants of western India. Milk production in the state reached approximately 2.1 million tonnes in 2025 to 2026, resulting in a per capita availability of just 175 grams per day, which is significantly below the national average of 459 grams per day (Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, 2026). The cooperative dairy network, operating under the Devbhog brand, captures only a small fraction of the total marketable surplus. The vast majority of milk is traded through unorganized vendors, leading to poor price realization and hygiene concerns. To elevate this sector, the state must aggressively invest in genetic upgradation programs through artificial insemination, expand the network of bulk milk coolers at the village level, and strengthen the managerial capacity of primary dairy cooperative societies.

Conversely, the poultry sector has witnessed explosive, privately driven growth, particularly in the central plains around Raipur, Durg, and Rajnandgaon. Commercial broiler farming operates predominantly on a contract farming model integrated with large national hatcheries and feed manufacturers. Egg production reached 2.4 billion units in 2025 (Directorate of Economics and Statistics Chhattisgarh, 2026). While commercial poultry is highly organized, the state government specifically promotes backyard poultry rearing among tribal households in Bastar and Surguja, distributing resilient indigenous breeds like Kadaknath to combat rural protein deficiency and generate decentralized income.

18.6 Fisheries: Inland, Marine and Aquaculture

Given its landlocked geographical positioning in central India, marine fisheries and coastal aquaculture are entirely inapplicable to the state of Chhattisgarh. Consequently, the state's entire policy focus, infrastructure development, and economic output in this sector are exclusively dedicated to inland fisheries and freshwater aquaculture.

Inland fisheries represent one of the fastest growing and most lucrative sub sectors of Chhattisgarh's agrarian economy. The state possesses a massive and highly productive aquatic resource base, comprising over 190,000 hectares of rural ponds and tanks, and approximately 120,000 hectares of sprawling irrigation reservoirs (Department of Fisheries Chhattisgarh, 2026). By systematically leveraging these resources, Chhattisgarh has elevated itself to the

ranks of the top six inland fish producing states in India. Total fish production in the state reached a historic milestone of 720,000 metric tonnes in the 2025 to 2026 fiscal year (Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, 2026).

The governance of these water bodies is heavily oriented towards social justice and community empowerment. The state government enforces a strict leasing policy that prioritizes traditional fishing communities, primarily the Nishad and Kewat communities, and organized primary fishermen cooperative societies for the allocation of village ponds and irrigation reservoirs. As of 2026, over 95 per cent of the available water area has been brought under organized fish culture, supported by a network of more than 1,600 active fishermen cooperatives (Department of Fisheries Chhattisgarh, 2026).

Chhattisgarh has achieved complete self sufficiency in fish seed production, a critical bottleneck that frequently hampers aquaculture in other states. Through the establishment of state of the art circular hatcheries and the aggressive promotion of private sector seed rearing, the state produced over 3.5 billion fish fries in 2025 (Directorate of Economics and Statistics Chhattisgarh, 2026). This robust seed infrastructure ensures that fish farmers have timely access to high quality fingerlings, dramatically improving survival rates and overall yield.

The most significant technological leap in the sector has been the rapid expansion of cage culture technology in the state's deep water reservoirs, such as the Hasdeo Bango and Gangrel dams. Cage culture allows for intensive, high density rearing of fast growing species like *Pangasius* and Genetically Improved Farmed Tilapia in enclosed floating structures. By 2026, the state government, utilizing funding from the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana, has successfully installed over 4,500 cages across major reservoirs (Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, 2026). This intervention has transformed subsistence fishermen into commercial aquaculture entrepreneurs, exponentially increasing fish yield per cubic meter of water and generating substantial exportable surplus to neighboring states like Odisha and Maharashtra.

18.7 Horticulture, Floriculture and Medicinal Plants

The diversification of Chhattisgarh's agricultural landscape is heavily dependent on the aggressive expansion of the horticulture sector. The state's diverse agro climatic zones provide a natural comparative advantage for cultivating a wide array of fruits, vegetables, spices, and floriculture crops. By the end of 2025, the total area under horticultural crops expanded to approximately 910,000 hectares, producing over 12.5 million metric tonnes of produce (Department of Horticulture Chhattisgarh, 2026).

The spatial strategy for horticultural development is highly regionalized. The northern hills of the Surguja division, characterized by cooler temperatures and well drained lateritic soils, are being aggressively developed as a major hub for sub tropical and temperate fruits, notably litchi, pear, and high density mango plantations. The central plains remain the powerhouse of vegetable production, particularly tomatoes, potatoes, and cucurbits, serving the heavy urban consumption demands of Raipur and Bhilai. The southern Bastar division, with its humid

climate and extensive forest cover, is historically suited for the cultivation of high value spices, including turmeric, ginger, and black pepper, often grown organically as an understory crop within existing tree plantations.

Floriculture is an emerging, high margin sector, primarily concentrated around the urban peripheries of Raipur and Durg. The cultivation of cut flowers such as marigolds, roses, and tuberose is heavily supported by state subsidies for the construction of polyhouses and shade net structures under the National Horticulture Mission. However, the sector is currently constrained by the absence of an organized floral auction market and inadequate air cargo logistics for export outside the state.

Chhattisgarh's most unique botanical asset is its vast repository of medicinal and aromatic plants, naturally occurring within its massive forest reserves. The state is frequently referred to as the "Herbal State of India." The cultivation and systematic harvesting of species such as Ashwagandha, Safed Musli, Satawari, and Lemongrass present a massive economic opportunity. The integration of this sector with the Ministry of Ayush at the central level and the global resurgence of interest in traditional herbal medicine has created robust demand. The state government's strategy focuses on transitioning tribal populations from the destructive wild harvesting of endangered medicinal herbs towards the systematic, nursery based commercial cultivation of these plants on private degraded lands, ensuring both ecological conservation and sustained economic returns.

18.8 Agricultural Credit, Insurance and Risk Management

Access to timely, adequate, and affordable agricultural credit is the primary determinant of a farmer's ability to procure quality inputs, invest in modern technology, and absorb post harvest price shocks. In Chhattisgarh, the institutional credit delivery system is overwhelmingly anchored by the cooperative banking sector. The Chhattisgarh State Cooperative Bank (Apex Bank), operating through a vast network of District Central Cooperative Banks and over 2,058 Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS), commands a massive market share in short term crop loan disbursements (Chhattisgarh State Cooperative Bank, 2026).

During the 2025 to 2026 financial year, the cooperative sector disbursed short term agricultural loans exceeding ₹7,500 crore to over 1.8 million farmers, fundamentally operating at a zero per cent effective interest rate due to aggressive state government interest subvention schemes (Department of Agriculture Chhattisgarh, 2026). The reach of the Kisan Credit Card (KCC) scheme is nearly universal among registered paddy farmers. However, credit penetration among landless tenant farmers, sharecroppers, and pastoralists remains abysmally low, as formal lending continues to demand clear land titles as collateral.

To enhance the efficiency of the credit delivery mechanism, the state undertook a massive drive to fully computerize all 2,058 PACS by 2026, integrating them with the core banking solutions of the District Central Cooperative Banks (Ministry of Cooperation, 2026). This digital transformation drastically reduces the turnaround time for loan processing, minimizes

accounting fraud, and allows PACS to function as multi service centers providing agricultural inputs, micro ATM services, and procurement logistics.

Agricultural risk management in Chhattisgarh is primarily addressed through the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY). Given the state's extreme dependence on the southwest monsoon and the rising frequency of localized droughts and unseasonal cyclonic rainfall, comprehensive crop insurance is a critical safety net. In the Kharif season of 2025, over 1.4 million farmers were enrolled under the scheme, covering an insured area of approximately 2.9 million hectares (Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, 2026).

Despite this extensive coverage, the operational efficacy of crop insurance remains a subject of intense political and administrative friction. The assessment of crop loss relies heavily on the complex and often delayed Crop Cutting Experiments (CCEs). The state government has rapidly integrated satellite imagery, drone based surveillance, and smartphone based data collection to expedite the yield estimation process. While the claim settlement ratio improved to eighty two per cent in 2025, delays in the payment of state premium subsidies to insurance companies occasionally stall the final disbursement of claims to distressed farmers (Department of Agriculture Chhattisgarh, 2026).

Furthermore, historical interventions such as mass agricultural loan waivers, while providing immediate political dividends and short term relief to indebted households, severely distort the long term credit culture. Such measures invariably penalize honest borrowers and make commercial banks highly risk averse in subsequent lending cycles. The strategic imperative for Chhattisgarh's agricultural risk management framework is to transition away from reactive, post-disaster financial bailouts towards proactive, structural resilience. This involves aggressive investments in the micro irrigation networks discussed in section 18.2, the promotion of climate resilient millet varieties detailed in section 18.1, and the deployment of hyper local, AI driven weather advisory services to farmers.

By integrating sustainable agricultural practices, modernizing the food processing value chain, and strengthening decentralized cooperative institutions, Chhattisgarh can successfully transition its agrarian economy from a state of subsistence survival to a model of globally competitive, climate resilient prosperity by the targeted milestone of 2047.

Chapter 19: Tourism, Culture and Creative Economy

19.1 Tourism Asset Inventory: Natural, Heritage, Religious and Adventure

Chhattisgarh possesses a remarkably diverse and historically rich inventory of tourism assets that remains vastly underexplored on the national and global stages. Unlike heavily commercialized tourist circuits in northern and western India, the state offers a pristine, authentic, and ecologically immersive experience. The state government recognized this immense potential in its comprehensive assessment for the 2025 to 2026 fiscal year, highlighting tourism as a non polluting economic driver capable of generating massive local employment while preserving the state's natural and cultural heritage (Department of Tourism Chhattisgarh, 2026). The tourism asset inventory of Chhattisgarh is systematically categorized into natural, heritage, religious, and adventure domains, each presenting unique opportunities for sustainable economic capitalization.

The natural tourism assets of Chhattisgarh are anchored by its massive forest cover and extraordinary topographical features. The Bastar division, often referred to as the ecological heartland of the state, hosts the globally renowned Chitrakote Waterfalls. Situated on the Indravati River, this horseshoe shaped waterfall is famously dubbed the Niagara of India and represents the state's most iconic natural landmark. Adjacent to this is the Kanger Valley National Park, a biodiversity hotspot that features deep gorges, dense canopy forests, and the spectacular Tirathgarh Waterfalls. The Kanger Valley is also famous for its subterranean limestone cave systems, including the Kutumsar, Kailash, and Dandak caves, which contain unique stalactite and stalagmite formations along with endemic blind fish species. In the northern Surguja division, the hill station of Mainpat, frequently called the Shimla of Chhattisgarh, offers a completely different ecological experience with its temperate climate, bauxite rich plateaus, and deep wooded valleys (Chhattisgarh Tourism Board, 2026). The central region features the Barnawapara Wildlife Sanctuary and the Achanakmar Tiger Reserve, providing excellent opportunities for eco tourism and wildlife safaris.

In terms of heritage tourism, Chhattisgarh is home to some of the most significant yet underappreciated archaeological sites in central India. The ancient town of Sirpur, located along the banks of the Mahanadi River, is an archaeological treasure trove demonstrating a unique confluence of Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain traditions. Excavations at Sirpur have revealed sprawling Buddhist monasteries (Viharas), the iconic brick built Lakshmana Temple dating back to the seventh century, and extensive market complexes indicating a once thriving international trade center (Archaeological Survey of India, 2026). Similarly, the Bhoramdeo Temple complex in the Kabirdham district, built between the seventh and twelfth centuries, is celebrated for its exquisite Nagara style architecture and intricate stone carvings. This complex is frequently compared to the Khajuraho monuments for its architectural brilliance and represents a massive draw for heritage enthusiasts. The state also features the ancient twin temples of Tala, the rock paintings of Singhanpur and Kabra Pahad, and the megalithic sites scattered across the Bastar plateau, all of which require meticulous conservation and systematic integration into global heritage circuits.

Religious tourism constitutes the largest segment of domestic tourist footfall in the state. Chhattisgarh is deeply embedded in the cultural geography of the Ramayana epic. The state government has capitalized on this by launching the ambitious Ram Van Gaman Tourism Circuit, a flagship project aimed at developing and connecting seventy five locations where Lord Ram is believed to have spent time during his exile (Department of Tourism Chhattisgarh, 2026). Sites like Chandkhuri, the birthplace of Mata Kaushalya, and Shivrinarayan are being developed with world class visitor amenities to attract millions of pilgrims annually. Rajim, situated at the confluence of the Mahanadi, Pairi, and Sondur rivers, is recognized as the Prayag of Chhattisgarh and hosts a massive annual Kumbh Mela that draws immense crowds. The hilltop Bambleshwari Temple in Dongargarh and the revered Danteshwari Temple in Dantewada, one of the fifty two Shakti Peethas in India, are critical anchors of the state's religious tourism economy.

Adventure tourism is a rapidly emerging sector that perfectly aligns with the state's rugged topography. The extensive river networks, particularly the Hasdeo River and the massive Hasdeo Bango reservoir, offer immense potential for water sports, kayaking, and white water rafting. The dense forests of Bastar and the hills of Surguja provide excellent terrains for trekking, rock climbing, and mountain biking. The state tourism board has actively begun identifying specific adventure trails and partnering with national adventure sports associations to certify local guides and ensure strict safety compliance (Ministry of Tourism, 2026). By aggressively cataloging and strategically marketing this diverse asset inventory, Chhattisgarh is laying the foundational groundwork to transition from a transit state into a premier, standalone tourism destination by 2047.

19.2 Tourism Infrastructure: Hotels, Connectivity and Facilitation

The successful monetization of Chhattisgarh's vast tourism asset inventory is fundamentally dependent on the quality, capacity, and reliability of its supporting infrastructure. While the state boasts world class natural and heritage sites, the physical and hospitality infrastructure required to host high spending domestic and international tourists remains in a phase of necessary transition. An extensive infrastructure gap analysis conducted in 2025 revealed that while the capital city of Raipur and the industrial hub of Bhilai possess a robust inventory of premium and mid scale branded hotels, the availability of quality accommodation in the peripheral tourism nodes of Bastar, Surguja, and Kabirdham is severely limited (Chhattisgarh State Planning Commission, 2026).

The hospitality sector in Chhattisgarh currently features a stark rural urban divide. Raipur acts as the primary gateway and MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) destination, hosting several international hotel chains. However, as tourists move towards the prime eco tourism zones like the Kanger Valley or the heritage sites of Sirpur, the accommodation options are largely restricted to state run motels and basic guest houses. To address this critical bottleneck, the Chhattisgarh Tourism Policy 2020 to 2025, with strategic amendments introduced in early 2026, designated tourism as a priority industry (Department of Tourism Chhattisgarh, 2026). This policy extends massive capital investment subsidies, interest subventions, and electricity duty exemptions to private developers establishing eco

resorts, heritage hotels, and wellness retreats in designated tourism circuits. Furthermore, the state has aggressively promoted the Homestay Policy to generate decentralized rural income and provide tourists with authentic cultural immersion, successfully registering over 500 rural homestays across the tribal districts by mid 2026.

Connectivity remains the most critical determinant of tourism growth. Chhattisgarh's aviation infrastructure has witnessed significant enhancements under the national Regional Connectivity Scheme (UDAN). The Swami Vivekananda Airport in Raipur serves as the primary international standard aviation hub, witnessing a steady increase in passenger traffic and direct connections to all major Indian metropolitan centers. Crucially, the operationalization and upgrading of regional airports in Jagdalpur (Bastar) and Bilaspur, alongside the upcoming airstrip in Ambikapur (Surguja), have drastically reduced travel times to the state's most remote tourism assets (Airports Authority of India, 2026). Previously, a journey from Raipur to the Chitrakote waterfalls required a grueling seven hour road trip. With regular commercial flights now landing in Jagdalpur, the Bastar region is finally accessible to weekend travelers and high value corporate tourists.

Surface connectivity is concurrently undergoing a massive transformation. The state's road network, historically hampered by forest clearances and difficult terrain, is being rapidly upgraded through national highway expansion projects. However, the last mile connectivity from the arterial highways to the specific tourist sites often remains inadequate, characterized by narrow, poorly maintained roads lacking adequate signage and wayside amenities. The state government's Tourism Development Board has initiated a dedicated fund for the construction of last mile access roads, tourist reception centers, hygienic public conveniences, and secure parking facilities at all major destinations (Chhattisgarh Tourism Board, 2026).

Tourist facilitation and safety are equally paramount. Recognizing the historical perception challenges associated with the state's southern districts, the government has heavily invested in the deployment of a dedicated Tourist Police force trained in hospitality, crisis management, and foreign languages. The complete digitization of the tourism interface is another major facilitation reform. The launch of the unified "Explore Chhattisgarh" mobile application in 2026 integrates virtual tours, verified homestay bookings, registered guide services, and emergency SOS features into a single digital platform (Department of Information Technology, 2026). By systematically closing these critical infrastructure and facilitation gaps through public private partnerships and targeted state funding, Chhattisgarh is actively building the carrying capacity required to support a modern, high volume tourism economy.

19.3 Domestic and International Tourist Flows: Trends and Targets

The statistical profile of tourist flows into Chhattisgarh provides a clear diagnostic of the state's current market positioning and the massive structural headroom available for future growth. According to the comprehensive tourism statistics compiled for the 2025 to 2026 fiscal year, Chhattisgarh experiences a highly skewed visitor demographic, characterized by overwhelming domestic footfall and negligible international arrivals (Ministry of Tourism,

2026). This disparity highlights both the strength of the state's internal and regional appeal and the urgent need for a sophisticated, globally oriented marketing strategy.

Domestic tourism in Chhattisgarh is robust and growing at a steady annual rate. In 2025, the state recorded approximately 18 million domestic tourist visits (Department of Tourism Chhattisgarh, 2026). However, a granular analysis of this data reveals that the vast majority of these visits are intra state, driven primarily by religious pilgrimages to sites like Dongargarh and Rajim, and weekend leisure travel by the urban populations of Raipur and Bilaspur to nearby nature reserves. Inter state domestic tourism is largely comprised of visitors from the immediately neighboring states of Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Odisha. The challenge for the state tourism apparatus is to convert these high volume, low spending transit and religious visitors into long stay, high value tourists by extending the length of their itineraries and offering premium experiential tourism products.

Conversely, international tourist arrivals remain a fraction of a percent of the total tourist footfall. In 2025, Chhattisgarh received fewer than 15,000 foreign tourists, placing it near the bottom of national rankings for international tourism receipts (Ministry of Tourism, 2026). Foreign visitors are predominantly researchers, anthropologists, and niche adventure travelers attracted to the untouched tribal culture of Bastar. The broader international leisure market remains completely unaware of Chhattisgarh's assets. This is primarily due to a historical lack of international marketing, the lingering and outdated global perception of internal security conflicts, and the absence of direct international flight connectivity.

To rectify this imbalance, the State Vision 2047 roadmap sets highly ambitious, data driven targets for tourist flows. The medium term target (2025 to 2030) aims to double inter state domestic arrivals and increase foreign tourist arrivals to 100,000 annually. The strategy to achieve this relies heavily on targeted thematic marketing. For the international market, the state is aggressively positioning the Sirpur archaeological site as a critical node in the global Buddhist circuit. By participating in international travel marts in South East Asia and collaborating with national tour operators, Chhattisgarh aims to capture a significant share of the lucrative Buddhist pilgrimage market originating from Japan, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and South Korea (Chhattisgarh Tourism Board, 2026).

For the domestic market, the marketing pivot is focused on rebranding Chhattisgarh from a resource rich industrial state to India's premier eco tourism and tribal heritage destination. The "Unexplored Chhattisgarh" marketing campaign, launched across digital platforms and national media in 2026, utilizes high quality video production and influencer partnerships to showcase the state's pristine waterfalls, dense forests, and vibrant tribal festivals (Department of Public Relations Chhattisgarh, 2026). Furthermore, the state is targeting the booming Indian wellness and corporate retreat market by promoting the cool climates of Mainpat and the tranquil forest resorts of Kabirdham. By aligning its marketing spend with these specific, high yield target demographics, Chhattisgarh is systematically re engineering its tourist flows to maximize economic impact, foreign exchange earnings, and global brand visibility.

19.4 Cultural Heritage Preservation and Institutional Framework

The cultural heritage of Chhattisgarh is one of its most profound and irreplaceable assets, encompassing millennia of archaeological history and the living, dynamic traditions of its indigenous populations. The preservation of this heritage is not merely an academic exercise but a critical developmental imperative that ensures social cohesion and provides the authentic foundational material for the state's cultural tourism economy. In 2026, the institutional framework governing cultural preservation in the state is spearheaded by the Directorate of Culture and Archaeology, supported by various specialized academic and community institutions (Department of Culture Chhattisgarh, 2026).

The archaeological preservation mandate is vast. Chhattisgarh hosts hundreds of state protected monuments and sites, many of which are located in remote, forested terrains. The Directorate has prioritized the scientific conservation of major structural complexes, utilizing non invasive geo spatial technologies and ground penetrating radar to map unexcavated ruins in the Sirpur and Boramdeo regions. However, the conservation architecture faces persistent challenges. Chronic shortages of trained conservation architects, specialized archaeologists, and chemical preservation experts severely hamper the pace and quality of restoration work (Archaeological Survey of India, 2026). To combat this, the state government initiated partnerships with premier national institutions like the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) in 2025, aiming to build local capacity and ensure that restoration interventions adhere to the highest global standards of material authenticity.

Beyond monumental archaeology, the preservation of Chhattisgarh's intangible cultural heritage specifically the language, music, dance, and social structures of its diverse tribal communities represents a far more complex challenge. Rapid urbanization, the penetration of digital media, and mainstream educational systems place immense assimilative pressure on indigenous cultures. Unique social institutions, such as the Ghotul system among the Muria tribes of Bastar which serves as a traditional center for youth education, social integration, and cultural transmission are increasingly vulnerable to external misinterpretation and modernization pressures (Tribal Research and Training Institute, 2026).

To safeguard these living traditions, the state established the Tribal Research and Training Institute (TRTI) in Raipur, which serves as the nodal academic body for documenting tribal folklore, linguistics, and ethno medicine. The state government has aggressively promoted the documentation of endangered tribal dialects and the publication of literature in languages such as Gondi, Halbi, and Kurukh. Furthermore, the establishment of interactive tribal museums, most notably the Anthropological Museum in Jagdalpur and the Purkhauti Mukangan in Nava Raipur, provides curated spaces where tribal architecture, artifacts, and art forms are preserved and respectfully showcased to the public (Department of Culture Chhattisgarh, 2026).

A critical tension exists within the cultural institutional framework regarding the commercialization of tribal heritage. As tourism expands into indigenous territories, there is a profound risk of cultural commodification, where sacred rituals and traditional dances are

reduced to mere spectacles for tourist consumption. The state's cultural policy explicitly addresses this by mandating community led tourism models. Tribal festivals such as Bastar Dussehra, Madai, and Hareli are supported with state grants, but their organization and execution remain strictly under the control of traditional community leaders and local panchayats. By ensuring that the economic benefits of cultural tourism flow directly to the indigenous custodians of that culture, and by enforcing strict guidelines on tourist behavior in ecologically and culturally sensitive zones, Chhattisgarh aims to achieve a delicate and sustainable balance between heritage preservation and economic capitalization.

19.5 Creative Industries: Handicrafts, Performing Arts and Cultural Economy

The creative economy of Chhattisgarh, rooted in centuries of indigenous craftsmanship and vibrant performing arts, represents a massive and largely untapped reservoir of rural employment, women's empowerment, and export potential. The state's creative industries are not merely auxiliary economic activities but are central to the cultural identity and livelihood security of millions of artisans, weavers, and performers. In 2026, the state government has placed an unprecedented policy focus on organizing, funding, and globally integrating this decentralized creative sector (Department of Rural Industries Chhattisgarh, 2026).

The handicraft sector is the most visible and economically significant pillar of Chhattisgarh's creative economy. The state is globally renowned for its Bastar Dhokra, an ancient and highly intricate method of lost wax metal casting using bell metal (a brass and bronze alloy) to create stunning figurines, deities, and functional art. Similarly, the wrought iron craft of Kondagaon, which utilizes recycled scrap iron to forge elegant, minimalist sculptures, and the terracotta pottery of Rajnandgaon demonstrate exceptional artisanal skill. The handloom sector is anchored by the exquisite Kosa silk, produced primarily in the districts of Raigarh, Champa, and Janjgir. Kosa silk, derived from the Indian tasar silkworm reared on local forest trees, is highly prized for its unique texture and durability (Ministry of Textiles, 2026).

Despite this immense talent, the artisanal economy faces severe structural bottlenecks. Artisans historically suffer from exploitative middlemen, a lack of access to formal credit, fluctuating raw material prices, and a profound disconnect from modern urban consumer preferences. To dismantle these barriers, the state government revamped the Chhattisgarh Handicrafts Development Board and the Shabari Emporium network. By 2026, the state has facilitated the formation of thousands of artisan self help groups, integrating them directly with the massive Kudumbashree equivalent network in the state (Department of Rural Industries Chhattisgarh, 2026).

A major strategic intervention has been the aggressive pursuit of Geographical Indication (GI) tags to protect and brand local intellectual property. The successful securing of GI tags for Bastar Dhokra, Bastar Iron Craft, and Champa Silk has provided legal protection against counterfeit production and significantly elevated the premium brand value of these products in international markets. Furthermore, the state has invested heavily in design intervention. By collaborating with the National Institute of Design and establishing common facility centers equipped with modern tools, the state is helping traditional artisans adapt their ancient

techniques to create contemporary lifestyle products, corporate gifting items, and modern apparel that appeal to global sensibilities without compromising their authentic cultural essence.

The performing arts constitute the second critical pillar of the cultural economy. Chhattisgarh possesses a rich tapestry of folk music and dance, including the Pandavani (a traditional storytelling form famously popularized globally by Padma Vibhushan Teejan Bai), the energetic Panthi dance of the Satnami community, and the rhythmic Raut Nacha. The economic sustenance of these folk artists is a major policy priority. The government has institutionalized cultural pensions for veteran artists and integrated folk performances into all state sponsored tourism and corporate events. By leveraging digital platforms, e commerce integration for handicrafts, and the aggressive global branding of its unique cultural intellectual property, Chhattisgarh is transforming its traditional creative practices into a robust, formalized, and highly lucrative cultural economy.

19.6 Film, Media and Content Industries as Economic Drivers

The media, film, and digital content creation industries represent the newest and most dynamic frontier of Chhattisgarh's creative economy. Historically overshadowed by the massive production hubs of Mumbai and Hyderabad, the local media industry in Chhattisgarh is currently experiencing a rapid, localized renaissance, driven by rising regional pride, massive smartphone penetration, and targeted state policy support. The state government, recognizing the massive economic multiplier effect of media production spanning job creation for local technicians, hospitality revenue, and destination branding explicitly identified the film and content industry as a strategic growth sector in 2026 (Department of Public Relations Chhattisgarh, 2026).

The cornerstone of this sector is "Chollywood," the vibrant and rapidly growing Chhattisgarhi language film industry. Producing dozens of feature films annually, Chollywood enjoys immense popularity within the state, deeply resonating with the local populace through culturally specific narratives, regional humor, and indigenous music. The industry operates on highly efficient, low budget models, often turning significant profits purely through local single screen theatrical releases and regional satellite television rights. However, to scale this industry and improve production values, the state government introduced the highly progressive Chhattisgarh Film Policy. Upgraded in 2026, this policy offers massive financial subsidies for films shot extensively within the state, provided they utilize a mandated percentage of local technicians and actors (Chhattisgarh Film Development Corporation, 2026).

To attract national and international production houses, the policy provides a single window clearance mechanism for shooting permissions across all state jurisdictions, completely eliminating the bureaucratic friction that previously deterred filmmakers. The state's diverse topography featuring virgin forests, massive waterfalls, and historical ruins provides highly cost effective and visually spectacular alternatives to traditional, overexposed shooting locations in India. Furthermore, the state government has laid the foundational plans for a

massive, state of the art Film City in Nava Raipur. This proposed facility aims to provide world class sound stages, post production laboratories, and animation studios, ensuring that the entire value chain of film production can be executed within the state's borders (Department of Industries Chhattisgarh, 2026).

Beyond traditional cinema, the digital content economy is exploding across Chhattisgarh. A new generation of highly successful YouTubers, social media influencers, and digital musicians from smaller towns like Bhilai, Bilaspur, and Rajnandgaon are amassing millions of followers nationwide. These digital creators are aggressively promoting local dialects, street food, and regional comedy, inadvertently serving as the most effective cultural ambassadors for the state. The state government has actively begun recognizing and integrating these digital creators into its official public relations and tourism marketing campaigns.

The economic implications of this media boom are profound. Film and digital production are highly labor intensive, requiring vast networks of lightmen, sound engineers, set designers, makeup artists, and logistics managers. By subsidizing formal training programs in these specific technical crafts through the State Skill Development Authority, Chhattisgarh is creating a massive new pipeline of high paying, creative sector employment for its youth (Chhattisgarh State Skill Development Authority, 2026). As the media and content industries continue to formalize and expand, they will not only diversify the state's economic base but also project a modern, culturally vibrant, and dynamic image of Chhattisgarh to the world, perfectly aligning with the ambitious goals of the Vision 2047 roadmap.

Chapter 20: Cross-Cutting Themes and Integrated Policy Imperatives

20.1 Sustainable Development Goals of the state

The Sustainable Development Goals adopted by the United Nations in 2015 serve as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030. For the state of Chhattisgarh, aligning its vast administrative machinery with these global goals represents a monumental shift from traditional, siloed governance towards integrated, outcome oriented planning. The performance of Chhattisgarh on the National Institution for Transforming India (NITI) Aayog's SDG India Index provides a critical diagnostic tool to evaluate the state's developmental trajectory. According to the comprehensive SDG India Index for 2023 to 2024, the state has demonstrated commendable progress, reflecting a broader national trend where the composite score for India improved significantly to 71 (NITI Aayog, 2024).

Chhattisgarh's journey towards achieving the SDGs is characterized by remarkable successes in specific environmental and social parameters alongside persistent challenges in industrial and health infrastructure. The state has emerged as a distinct leader in Goal 15 (Life on Land) and Goal 13 (Climate Action). With nearly 44.21 per cent of its geographical area under forest and tree cover, the state's aggressive afforestation drives, rigorous protection of wildlife sanctuaries, and sustainable forest management practices have yielded substantial environmental dividends (NITI Aayog, 2024). Furthermore, the state recorded a significant increase in carbon stock within its forest cover, reinforcing its critical role as one of India's most vital ecological lungs. In the realm of energy access, Chhattisgarh has achieved near universal household electrification under the Saubhagya Scheme, contributing to an exceptionally high score in Goal 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy), which saw national improvements pushing scores towards 96 (NITI Aayog, 2024).

Equally significant is the state's performance in Goal 1 (No Poverty). The multidimensional poverty headcount ratio in Chhattisgarh, historically among the highest in the nation due to its vast tribal populations and rugged topography, has witnessed a steep and sustained decline. National multidimensional poverty nearly halved from 24.8 per cent in 2015 to 2016 down to 14.96 per cent between 2019 and 2021 (NITI Aayog, 2024). In Chhattisgarh, this reduction is directly attributable to the state's robust, near universal Public Distribution System, massive expansions in rural housing under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, and targeted livelihood interventions through the State Rural Livelihood Mission.

However, the SDG framework also exposes the critical structural gaps that must be addressed as the state looks toward its Vision 2047 goals. Chhattisgarh continues to lag in Goal 3 (Good Health and Well being) and Goal 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure). While maternal and infant mortality rates have declined, the prevalence of malnutrition among tribal children and the lack of tertiary healthcare facilities in the Bastar and Surguja divisions depress the state's overall health scores. Similarly, despite being a powerhouse of raw mineral extraction,

the state's capacity for high technology innovation, advanced manufacturing, and resilient rural infrastructure requires massive capacity augmentation.

To bridge these gaps, the state government has initiated a comprehensive localization of the SDGs. This involves disaggregating state level targets into district and block level indicators, ensuring that local administrators and Panchayati Raj Institutions are directly accountable for specific developmental outcomes. The State Planning Commission has established a dedicated SDG monitoring cell tasked with aligning every departmental budget with specific SDG targets. By institutionalizing this evidence based monitoring framework, Chhattisgarh aims to transition seamlessly into the Front Runner category across all seventeen goals by 2030, laying a resilient foundation for the advanced, equitable society envisioned for 2047.

20.2 Gender Mainstreaming Across Sectors

The pursuit of a developed and equitable Chhattisgarh is fundamentally contingent upon the comprehensive empowerment and active economic participation of its female population. Gender mainstreaming is not merely a localized welfare objective managed by a single department but a mandatory, cross cutting imperative that must dictate policy formulation, budget allocation, and administrative execution across the entire state apparatus. The Chhattisgarh Budget for 2025 to 2026 structurally acknowledges this imperative by embedding the concept of Naari (Women) within its overarching GYAN Ke Liye GATI developmental framework, which prioritizes Good Governance, the Poor, Youth, Farmers, and Women (Government of Chhattisgarh, 2026). Reflecting this prioritization, the budgetary allocation for the Department of Women and Child Development witnessed a massive 45 per cent growth, rising to ₹8,245 crore for the 2025 to 2026 fiscal year (Government of Chhattisgarh, 2026).

Despite these robust fiscal commitments, the reality of gender equality in Chhattisgarh presents a complex dichotomy. Sociologically, the state benefits from its deep tribal heritage, which historically affords women greater social autonomy, mobility, and decision making power compared to the deeply patriarchal agrarian societies of northern India. This is reflected in the state's consistently favorable sex ratio, which remains one of the highest in the country. However, this sociological advantage does not automatically translate into economic parity or freedom from vulnerability. Female labor force participation in the state, while higher than the national average due to extensive female involvement in agriculture and the collection of minor forest produce, remains heavily concentrated in the informal, low wage, and highly precarious sectors of the economy (Indiastat, 2026).

The state government has deployed a multifaceted strategy to transition women from subsistence labor into formal economic empowerment. The cornerstone of this effort is the massive expansion of the Self Help Group network under the Chhattisgarh State Rural Livelihood Mission. By 2026, millions of rural women have been organized into these collectives, gaining unprecedented access to institutional microcredit, financial literacy, and entrepreneurial training. Crucially, the state has actively linked these Self Help Groups to lucrative government procurement supply chains. Women's collectives are now the primary

manufacturers of supplementary nutrition for Anganwadi centers, the principal operators of Gauthans under the Godhan Nyay Yojana where they produce organic vermicompost, and the exclusive managers of rural industrial parks producing processed foods and artisanal goods.

Direct financial assistance is another critical lever of gender policy. Schemes providing direct benefit transfers to married women, such as the Mahtari Vandan Yojana, inject essential liquidity into rural households, enhancing female financial autonomy and improving nutritional outcomes for children. However, true gender mainstreaming requires extending these interventions into non traditional sectors. The state must actively incentivize female enrollment in advanced technical education, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics fields, and heavy industry vocational training. Furthermore, addressing gender based violence, improving the safety of public spaces, and ensuring strict enforcement of property rights for women are non negotiable prerequisites. The state's transition to a gender responsive budgeting framework, where every department must explicitly quantify the impact of its expenditure on female citizens, is a vital administrative reform required to achieve absolute gender parity by 2047.

20.3 Youth Policy and Demographic Dividend Realisation

Chhattisgarh is currently navigating a highly consequential demographic window. With a massive and expanding youth population, the state possesses a demographic dividend that, if properly harnessed, could catalyze unprecedented economic expansion and social modernization. Conversely, a failure to productively engage this youth cohort risks severe economic stagnation, rising social unrest, and the exacerbation of existing inequalities. Recognizing the critical nature of this demographic transition, the state government has explicitly prioritized youth development within its GYAN Ke Liye GATI framework, prominently featuring the Yuva (Youth) component in its long term strategic planning (Government of Chhattisgarh, 2026). To support this vision, the budget allocation for Sports and Youth Welfare witnessed a remarkable 100 per cent increase, reaching ₹168 crore in the 2025 to 2026 financial year (Government of Chhattisgarh, 2026).

The fundamental challenge confronting the youth of Chhattisgarh is the persistent mismatch between educational attainment and industrial employability. While the state has made massive strides in expanding primary and secondary school infrastructure, the quality of higher education and its relevance to the modern global economy remain inconsistent. A significant portion of the youth graduating from state universities find themselves inadequately equipped with the digital, technical, and cognitive skills demanded by the rapidly evolving job market. This structural friction results in the paradoxical situation of high unemployment rates among the educated youth existing simultaneously with a severe shortage of skilled labor reported by the industrial sector.

To bridge this chasm, the state is aggressively overhauling its skill development and vocational training architecture. The implementation of the new National Education Policy provides the structural mandate to integrate vocational training directly into the secondary school curriculum, ensuring that students acquire highly practical, industry relevant skills

alongside academic knowledge. The state has also launched extensive apprenticeship programs, partnering with leading manufacturing, logistics, and information technology firms to provide on the job training that bridges the gap between classroom theory and workplace reality.

Furthermore, the state is deeply committed to transitioning its youth from being passive job seekers to active, innovative job creators. The implementation of the Chhattisgarh Startup Policy 2.0 in 2026 represents a paradigm shift in the state's entrepreneurial ecosystem (Directorate of Economics and Statistics Chhattisgarh, 2026). This policy provides massive seed funding, rent subsidies, targeted incubation support, and simplified regulatory compliance frameworks specifically designed to empower young entrepreneurs. The establishment of dedicated innovation hubs in major academic institutions like the Indian Institute of Technology Bhilai and the International Institute of Information Technology Naya Raipur is cultivating a culture of advanced research and technological entrepreneurship among the state's brightest minds.

Beyond economic integration, the holistic development of the youth requires massive investments in sports infrastructure, mental health support, and civic engagement platforms. Initiatives like the Rajiv Yuva Mitra Club have been instrumental in organizing youth at the grassroots level, fostering leadership skills, promoting local culture, and encouraging active participation in community development projects. As Chhattisgarh marches towards 2047, the ultimate success of its developmental agenda will be determined entirely by its ability to equip its youth with the knowledge, health, and economic opportunities required to compete on a global stage.

20.4 Migration: Internal, Inter-State and International Dimensions

Migration is a complex, multifaceted phenomenon that deeply influences the socio economic fabric of Chhattisgarh. The state experiences highly dynamic and often contradictory patterns of human mobility, serving simultaneously as a major source of out migration for unskilled agricultural labor and a significant destination for highly skilled industrial professionals. Understanding and managing these complex migration flows is absolutely critical for effective urban planning, labor welfare, and inclusive economic growth. The state's migration dynamics are heavily shaped by seasonal agricultural cycles, historical intra state inequalities, and the massive labor requirements of its centralized heavy industries.

The most pressing policy challenge is the phenomenon of distress driven, seasonal out migration. Due to the historical lack of assured irrigation in vast tracts of the state, particularly in the northern Surguja division and specific blocks of Janjgir Champa, agricultural employment is severely restricted to the monsoon dependent Kharif season. Following the paddy harvest, hundreds of thousands of landless laborers and marginal farmers face acute unemployment and wage stagnation. This forces them to migrate temporarily to neighboring states like Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, and Gujarat, where they find employment in highly precarious, exploitative sectors such as brick kilns, massive construction sites, and domestic work.

This seasonal out migration exacts a devastating toll on human development outcomes. The children of migrant workers frequently drop out of the formal schooling system, falling into the trap of intergenerational poverty and child labor. Furthermore, migrant workers operating in the informal sector outside their home state are routinely excluded from critical social security nets, healthcare access, and subsidized food entitlements. To combat this, the state government has heavily prioritized the creation of localized, decentralized employment opportunities. The aggressive implementation of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, combined with innovative state level interventions like the Godhan Nyay Yojana and the development of Rural Industrial Parks, aims directly to provide remunerative, year round employment within the village ecosystem, thereby stemming the tide of distress migration.

Simultaneously, the state is actively working to protect the rights of its migrant workforce. The comprehensive digitization of the Public Distribution System and the implementation of the One Nation One Ration Card scheme have been highly critical, allowing migrant families to access their food entitlements anywhere in the country. The state labor department has established dedicated migration tracking portals and formalized registration mechanisms for outbound laborers, aiming to provide legal recourse against exploitative contractors and ensure compliance with the Inter State Migrant Workmen Act.

Conversely, the massive industrial corridors encompassing Raipur, Bhilai, Durg, and Korba attract a significant influx of highly skilled professionals, engineers, and managerial talent from across the country. This inward migration is essential for operating the state's complex steel plants, power generation facilities, and emerging technology sectors. However, this rapid influx places immense pressure on the urban infrastructure, housing markets, and municipal services of these central cities. Looking forward to 2047, Chhattisgarh must develop a highly sophisticated, data driven migration policy. This policy must seamlessly integrate the welfare and social security needs of the outbound rural poor with the advanced urban planning required to sustainably accommodate the inbound industrial workforce, ensuring that migration becomes an engine of prosperity rather than a symptom of systemic distress.

20.5 Science, Technology and Innovation for Development

The transition of Chhattisgarh from a traditional, primary resource dependent economy into a highly diversified, advanced knowledge economy is entirely contingent upon the aggressive adoption and integration of science, technology, and innovation. Historically, the state's economic growth was heavily reliant on the extraction of coal, iron ore, and the production of primary steel and electricity. While these sectors remain foundational, they are highly susceptible to global commodity price fluctuations and increasingly stringent environmental regulations. To ensure sustained, resilient growth leading up to 2047, the state must pivot decisively towards technology driven sectors, advanced manufacturing, and deep tech innovation.

The state government has explicitly recognized this imperative, placing Technology as a central, driving pillar within its GYAN Ke Liye GATI developmental framework (Government of Chhattisgarh, 2026). This commitment is reflected in the massive, 43 per cent increase in the budgetary allocation for the Department of Electronics and Information Technology, rising to ₹380 crore for the 2025 to 2026 fiscal year (Government of Chhattisgarh, 2026). This financial infusion is designed to rapidly expand the state's digital public infrastructure, enhance broadband connectivity in remote tribal districts, and facilitate the complete digital transformation of the state's administrative apparatus through initiatives like E-office and advanced data analytics (Directorate of Economics and Statistics Chhattisgarh, 2026).

A critical component of this technological transition is the deployment of frontier technologies to solve highly localized, historical governance challenges. The state is actively leveraging high resolution drone technology, geographic information systems, and satellite imagery to meticulously map land records, monitor forest cover changes, and optimize the layout of massive infrastructure projects. In the agricultural sector, the integration of artificial intelligence and machine learning algorithms is revolutionizing farming practices. By analyzing complex datasets encompassing historical weather patterns, soil health metrics, and global market trends, the state can provide farmers with highly precise, hyper local predictive advisories, thereby maximizing crop yields, optimizing fertilizer application, and mitigating the devastating impacts of climate change.

Furthermore, fostering a robust, localized culture of scientific research and deep tech innovation is an absolute necessity. Chhattisgarh hosts a highly impressive array of premier national academic institutions, including the Indian Institute of Technology Bhilai, the National Institute of Technology Raipur, and the International Institute of Information Technology Naya Raipur. However, the historical linkage between the cutting edge research conducted within these academic laboratories and its commercial application within the state's industrial sector has been tenuous. The state government is actively intervening to bridge this gap by establishing dedicated technology transfer offices, funding joint industry academia research projects, and providing massive capital subsidies for deep tech startups through the highly progressive Startup Policy 2.0 (Directorate of Economics and Statistics Chhattisgarh, 2026). By aggressively incentivizing innovation, securing intellectual property rights, and building a world class digital infrastructure, Chhattisgarh is systematically laying the groundwork to emerge as a premier technology hub in central India.

20.6 Statistical System Strengthening and Evidence-Based Policymaking

The complexity of modern governance, characterized by rapid economic shifts, climate volatility, and massive demographic transitions, demands a radical departure from intuition based decision making. In the twenty first century, public policy must be rigorously grounded in empirical evidence, real time data analysis, and sophisticated predictive modeling. For Chhattisgarh, building a world class, highly resilient statistical system is not merely an administrative upgrade but a fundamental prerequisite for achieving the ambitious developmental milestones outlined in its Vision 2047 roadmap.

The institutional architecture for data collection and economic analysis in the state is spearheaded by the Directorate of Economics and Statistics. This agency is responsible for compiling the annual Economic Survey, calculating the Gross State Domestic Product, and conducting massive, statewide sample surveys covering agriculture, employment, and industrial production. The Economic Survey for the 2025 to 2026 fiscal year serves as a highly critical, foundational policy document, providing the empirical baseline required for effective resource allocation and strategic planning (Directorate of Economics and Statistics Chhattisgarh, 2026). However, the traditional statistical apparatus often suffers from significant time lags in data publication, methodological inconsistencies, and a severe lack of granular, sub district level data, particularly concerning marginalized tribal populations in remote geographies.

To rectify these historical deficits, the state government is undertaking a massive, comprehensive modernization of its statistical infrastructure. This involves the complete digitization of the primary data collection process, replacing archaic paper based surveys with sophisticated, GPS enabled mobile applications that ensure real time data transmission, eliminate manual entry errors, and allow for the immediate spatial visualization of socioeconomic indicators. Furthermore, the state is actively working to dismantle the entrenched data silos that exist between various government departments. By mandating the creation of a unified State Data Dashboard, the government aims to seamlessly integrate massive datasets from the departments of health, education, revenue, and agriculture, allowing policymakers to run complex cross sectoral analyses and accurately measure the multidimensional impact of state interventions.

Chhattisgarh is also actively embracing advanced analytical frameworks promoted by the central government. The integration of behavioral economics into public policy design, inspired by the collaborative research initiatives undertaken by NITI Aayog and the Behavioural Insights Team, represents a highly innovative frontier (NITI Aayog, 2025). By utilizing randomized control trials and rigorous data analysis, the state can scientifically test the efficacy of various policy interventions, from public health communication strategies to tax compliance campaigns, before rolling them out on a massive, statewide scale. To sustain this evidence based paradigm, the state must aggressively invest in human capital, recruiting highly specialized data scientists, econometricians, and spatial analysts into the civil service. By transforming data from a passive historical record into an active, predictive tool, Chhattisgarh can optimize its public expenditure, eliminate administrative redundancies, and ensure that its developmental policies are precisely targeted to achieve maximum societal impact.

20.7 Public Participation: Behavioural Change and Citizen Engagement

The realization of Chhattisgarh's ambitious Vision 2047 is not a purely technocratic exercise that can be unilaterally executed from the secretariats of Nava Raipur. It is a profoundly democratic endeavor that requires the active, enthusiastic, and sustained participation of millions of citizens. True developmental transformation occurs only when government policy aligns perfectly with community aspirations, and when citizens transition from being passive

beneficiaries of state welfare to becoming active stakeholders in the governance process. The state government explicitly recognized this dynamic by placing Good Governance at the very forefront of its GYAN Ke Liye GATI strategy, defining it not merely as administrative efficiency, but as a system that relies on a citizen centric approach, enhanced transparency, and deep civic engagement (Government of Chhattisgarh, 2026).

The most potent mechanism for public participation in Chhattisgarh, particularly given its massive indigenous population, is the institution of the Gram Sabha. The rigorous implementation of the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act is an absolute, non negotiable priority for the state. This act provides tribal communities with unprecedented legal authority to manage their local resources, adjudicate minor disputes according to customary law, and directly control the harvesting and sale of minor forest produce. By empowering the Gram Sabhas to independently plan and execute local development projects, the state ensures that infrastructure investments are perfectly tailored to the specific ecological and cultural contexts of the tribal hinterlands, thereby preventing the imposition of highly unsuitable, urban centric development models on vulnerable indigenous populations.

Beyond structural decentralization, the state is heavily leveraging the power of behavioral science to drive large scale societal change. The most complex developmental challenges facing Chhattisgarh, such as eradicating malnutrition, eliminating open defecation, promoting female education, and ensuring the adoption of climate resilient agricultural practices, cannot be solved purely through infrastructure creation or financial subsidies. These challenges require profound shifts in deeply entrenched human behavior and social norms. Drawing upon the principles of behavioral economics emphasized in national policy frameworks (NITI Aayog, 2025), the state government is deploying highly sophisticated, culturally resonant communication campaigns designed to gently nudge citizens towards optimal, welfare maximizing choices.

The digitization of the citizen state interface is another critical frontier for public participation. The deployment of advanced e-Governance platforms, mobile applications, and highly responsive digital grievance redressal portals allows citizens to directly monitor the progress of public works, access government services instantly from their smartphones, and hold local officials highly accountable for delays or corruption. Furthermore, the state is actively fostering strong, collaborative partnerships with civil society organizations, academic institutions, and grassroots non governmental organizations. These entities act as vital intermediaries, amplifying the voices of the most marginalized communities, conducting independent social audits of massive government programs, and providing critical, ground level feedback to state planners. By deeply embedding the principles of participatory democracy, radical transparency, and continuous civic dialogue into its administrative DNA, Chhattisgarh is building a highly resilient, socially cohesive foundation capable of sustaining its rapid trajectory towards becoming a fully developed state by 2047.

Chapter 21: State Vision 2047 Strategic Priorities and Development Roadmap

21.1 Long-Term Vision and Flagship Missions

As the Republic of India approaches the centenary of its independence in the year 2047, the state of Chhattisgarh will concurrently complete forty seven years of its own existence as an independent administrative entity. The long term vision for Chhattisgarh in 2047 is anchored in a profound structural transformation that seeks to elevate the state from a traditional, resource dependent agrarian and mining economy into a diversified, globally competitive, and technologically advanced powerhouse. The foundational premise of this strategic roadmap is that economic growth must be absolutely decoupled from ecological degradation. In the year 2026, the Gross State Domestic Product of Chhattisgarh is projected to grow at a robust rate of 8.11 per cent (Government of Chhattisgarh, 2026). However, sustaining this momentum over the next two decades requires a radical departure from the status quo. The overarching vision for 2047 imagines a state where multidimensional poverty is entirely eradicated, where every citizen has access to world class healthcare and education, and where the rich indigenous heritage of the tribal populations is preserved and celebrated as a central pillar of the state's global identity.

To operationalize this highly ambitious vision, the state government must launch and sustain four comprehensive Flagship Missions. The first is the Green Industrialization and Advanced Manufacturing Mission. Chhattisgarh currently produces massive volumes of raw steel, cement, and thermal power, which are highly carbon intensive sectors. By 2047, the state aims to become a national leader in green steel production, utilizing green hydrogen technology and renewable energy grids. This mission includes a specific target to establish advanced manufacturing hubs for electric vehicles, semiconductor components, and aerospace parts in the central corridors of Raipur and Durg, thereby creating hundreds of thousands of high paying, formal sector jobs for the state's youth. The second flagship initiative is the Tribal Empowerment and Forest Economy Mission. Recognizing that the Scheduled Tribe population constitutes a massive demographic segment, this mission seeks to transform the forestry sector into a primary engine of wealth creation. By leveraging the Panchayats Extension to Scheduled Areas Act, the state will empower local indigenous communities to manage and commercialize non timber forest produce through high value processing, ensuring that the profit margins of global herbal and pharmaceutical supply chains are retained directly by the forest dwelling populations.

The third flagship initiative is the Digital Chhattisgarh and Knowledge Economy Mission. Building upon the foundational broadband infrastructure laid down by the BharatNet and Bastar Net projects in 2026 (Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, 2026), this mission aims to achieve complete digital ubiquity by 2047. The state envisions a future where artificial intelligence, blockchain, and quantum computing are deeply integrated into public administration, agriculture, and healthcare. This requires transforming higher educational institutions into global research hubs that generate patentable intellectual property and

incubate deep tech startups. The fourth and final initiative is the Climate Resilience and Water Security Mission. Given the state's heavy reliance on the monsoon and its vulnerability to climate change, this mission focuses on building massive decentralized water storage infrastructure, reviving traditional water bodies, and promoting climate resilient agricultural practices. By executing these four interconnected missions, Chhattisgarh will build a highly resilient, equitable, and prosperous society capable of leading India's developmental narrative in the twenty first century.

21.2 Medium-Term Priority Action Plan (2025-2030)

While the Vision 2047 provides the ultimate destination, the journey must be carefully mapped through actionable, time bound milestones. The Medium Term Priority Action Plan spanning the critical period from 2025 to 2030 serves as the vital bridge linking current baseline realities to the state's long term aspirations. This five year window is absolutely critical for resolving the lingering structural bottlenecks that continue to impede optimal service delivery and economic expansion. The primary objective of this medium term plan is to significantly accelerate the state's progress on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, specifically targeting a composite score that places Chhattisgarh firmly within the "Front Runner" category across all metrics by the end of 2030 (NITI Aayog, 2026).

The first pillar of the medium term action plan focuses relentlessly on human capital formation, specifically addressing the nutritional and educational deficits in the peripheral districts. Despite massive improvements up to the year 2026, the prevalence of stunting and wasting among children in the Bastar and Surguja divisions remains a profound public health emergency (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, 2026). The action plan mandates a hyper localized, data driven intervention strategy to completely eradicate severe acute malnutrition by 2030. This involves scaling up the distribution of fortified rice, expanding the cultivation of highly nutritious traditional millets under the Millet Mission, and deploying mobile medical units equipped with advanced diagnostic tools to the most inaccessible tribal hamlets. Concurrently, the state will focus on arresting the secondary school dropout rate, particularly among young women. By 2030, the government aims to establish fully equipped residential schools modeled on the Eklavya Model Residential Schools in every single development block, ensuring that geographic isolation no longer serves as a barrier to quality education.

The second pillar of the medium term plan targets the rapid completion and operationalization of critical physical infrastructure. The state has initiated numerous massive capital projects leading up to 2026, including expanding regional airports, constructing multi specialty hospitals, and laying down extensive irrigation canal networks (Government of Chhattisgarh, 2026). The priority between 2025 and 2030 is to avoid the historical trap of cost overruns and infinite project delays. The state government will institute a rigorous, centrally monitored project management framework to ensure that all pending irrigation projects in the Mahanadi basin and the major highway expansion projects connecting the northern mining belts to the central logistics hubs are completed exactly on schedule. Furthermore, the medium term plan includes a definitive mandate to transition thirty per cent

of the state's total energy consumption to renewable sources by 2030, primarily through the aggressive deployment of utility scale solar parks and decentralized rooftop solar installations across all government buildings.

The third pillar of the action plan is dedicated to the complete eradication of Left Wing Extremism and the subsequent economic integration of the affected regions. Security operations up to the year 2026 have successfully contained the extremist footprint (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2026). The strategy for the 2025 to 2030 period shifts decisively from military containment to massive socio economic saturation. The government will flood the previously inaccessible zones with banking correspondents, agricultural extension officers, and telecommunication infrastructure. By establishing specialized rural industrial parks and providing heavily subsidized credit to local tribal entrepreneurs, the state aims to create a thriving legitimate economy that fundamentally permanently displaces the insurgent ecosystem, thereby securing lasting peace and prosperity in the southern districts by the close of the decade.

21.3 Financing Strategy: Resource Mobilisation, Revenue Enhancement and Expenditure Rationalisation

The realization of the ambitious targets outlined in the Medium Term Action Plan and the long term Vision 2047 requires an unprecedented mobilization of financial resources. Chhattisgarh has historically maintained a relatively prudent fiscal profile, keeping its fiscal deficit within the limits prescribed by the Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act. For the fiscal year 2025 to 2026, the state's total budget expenditure is targeted at approximately ₹1,72,000 crore, supported by strong revenue receipts (PRS Legislative Research, 2026). However, to fund the massive infrastructural and social sector investments required over the next two decades, the state cannot rely solely on incremental revenue growth. It must execute a highly sophisticated, multi pronged financing strategy that maximizes revenue generation while enforcing rigorous expenditure rationalization.

The cornerstone of the resource mobilization strategy is the aggressive expansion and modernization of the state's Own Tax Revenue base. Currently, a significant portion of the state's non tax revenue is derived from mining royalties and premiums. While this provides substantial liquidity in the short term, global shifts away from fossil fuels pose a severe long term risk to coal revenues, which constitute a massive portion of the state's income in 2026 (Ministry of Coal, 2026). Therefore, the state must urgently diversify its revenue streams. The primary mechanism for this is enhancing the collection efficiency of the State Goods and Services Tax. By deploying advanced artificial intelligence algorithms and massive data analytics to cross reference e way bills with income tax filings, the state commercial tax department can identify and plug revenue leakages, significantly broadening the active tax base. Furthermore, the state must undertake a comprehensive modernization of its property tax assessment and collection mechanisms in urban areas, moving away from archaic manual assessments towards geographic information system based property mapping to accurately capture the appreciation of urban real estate values.

In addition to enhancing tax revenues, the state must actively explore innovative financing instruments to fund capital intensive infrastructure projects. The traditional reliance on direct budgetary allocations is insufficient to meet the trillion rupee infrastructure deficit. The state government must establish a dedicated infrastructure financing institution capable of floating municipal bonds and raising capital from domestic and international debt markets. By structuring robust public private partnership models, particularly for the development of the Nava Raipur Film City, specialized logistics parks, and green energy corridors, the state can leverage private sector capital and operational efficiency while minimizing the direct burden on the state exchequer. The monetization of idle state owned assets, including surplus government land and operational toll roads, will provide a massive influx of capital that can be directly ring fenced and reinvested into new asset creation.

Expenditure rationalization is the critical counterpart to revenue enhancement. The state budget in 2026 remains heavily burdened by committed expenditures, including massive outlays for government salaries, pensions, and interest payments (Reserve Bank of India, 2026). To create fiscal space for developmental capital expenditure, the state must implement stringent zero based budgeting protocols across all departments. This requires a rigorous, annual evaluation of every single ongoing scheme to determine its actual economic and social utility. Welfare subsidies, while absolutely necessary, must be meticulously targeted using the centralized digital public infrastructure to ensure that financial assistance reaches only the genuinely vulnerable households, completely eliminating duplicate beneficiaries and systemic leakages. By systematically reforming the public sector undertakings that currently operate at a loss and strictly controlling administrative overheads, Chhattisgarh will secure the financial resilience required to underwrite its visionary developmental agenda.

21.4 Centre-State Partnership: Centrally Sponsored Schemes and Special Grants

The constitutional architecture of Indian federalism dictates that state level developmental success is intricately linked to the quality and efficiency of the partnership between the state government and the central government in New Delhi. For Chhattisgarh, a state that relies significantly on central tax devolutions and grant funding to support its extensive welfare and infrastructure programs, optimizing this Centre State dynamic is an absolute strategic imperative. In the fiscal landscape of 2026, Centrally Sponsored Schemes constitute a massive proportion of the state's developmental expenditure, particularly in critical sectors such as rural housing, drinking water supply, and national highway construction (Ministry of Finance, 2026). The overarching objective for the Vision 2047 roadmap is to maximize the drawdown of central funds while ensuring that these national schemes are intelligently adapted to suit the unique topographical, demographic, and cultural realities of Chhattisgarh.

The most immediate priority is improving the absorption capacity and fund utilization efficiency of the state administrative apparatus. Historically, states have frequently struggled with unspent balances and delayed submission of utilization certificates, which in turn delays the release of subsequent central funding tranches. To permanently resolve this administrative bottleneck, Chhattisgarh has aggressively implemented the Single Nodal Agency framework across all government departments in 2026, integrating it seamlessly with the Public

Financial Management System (Ministry of Finance, 2026). This integration provides real time, granular visibility into the flow of funds from the state treasury down to the specific implementing agency at the village level. By instituting rigid, time bound protocols for the execution of central schemes such as the Jal Jeevan Mission and the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, the state government will ensure that central capital allocations are converted into tangible public assets without any bureaucratic delay.

Beyond standard statutory devolutions and regular scheme funding, Chhattisgarh must proactively advocate for customized Special Central Assistance packages tailored to its specific historical and geographical challenges. The state bears a disproportionate national burden in combating Left Wing Extremism, acting as the primary buffer that secures the internal stability of central India. Therefore, the state government must continuously engage with the Ministry of Home Affairs and the NITI Aayog to secure enhanced, uninterrupted funding under the Security Related Expenditure scheme and the Special Central Assistance for Left Wing Extremism Affected Districts scheme (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2026). These vital funds are necessary not only for modernizing the state police force but also for aggressively building critical civilian infrastructure, such as secure telecommunication towers and all weather roads, in the most highly volatile conflict zones.

Furthermore, Chhattisgarh plays a uniquely critical role in India's national ecological strategy. By preserving its massive, dense forest cover, which spans nearly half of its total geographical area, the state provides an invaluable carbon sequestration service that benefits the entire nation and the global climate. However, this strict adherence to forest conservation significantly curtails the state's ability to clear land for lucrative industrial and commercial development. Consequently, the state government must vigorously champion the concept of ecological compensation at the national level. Working closely with successive Finance Commissions, Chhattisgarh must successfully argue for a significantly higher weightage for forest cover and ecological conservation in the horizontal distribution formula for central tax revenues. By securing enhanced financial compensation for its environmental stewardship, the state will align the national imperative of climate change mitigation with its own localized requirements for economic growth and infrastructure development.

21.5 Inter-State Cooperation: Regional Development Councils and River Boards

The geographical positioning of Chhattisgarh, completely landlocked and sharing borders with seven different states, dictates that its economic prosperity and ecological security are deeply intertwined with the policies and actions of its immediate neighbors. The vision for 2047 recognizes that isolated, inward looking state planning is fundamentally insufficient to address complex, transnational challenges such as river basin management, regional logistics connectivity, and internal security. Therefore, Chhattisgarh must actively champion and participate in robust frameworks for inter state cooperation, transitioning from a stance of periodic boundary disputes to one of continuous, institutionalized regional synergy.

The most pressing domain for inter state cooperation revolves around the equitable management and sharing of interstate river waters. Chhattisgarh forms the upper catchment

area for the massive Mahanadi river basin, which subsequently flows into the state of Odisha. The escalating industrial and agricultural water demands in both states have historically led to significant friction and protracted legal disputes regarding the construction of barrages and the allocation of water flow during the critical dry season. In 2026, the resolution of these disputes relies heavily on the adjudicatory process of the Mahanadi Water Disputes Tribunal (Ministry of Jal Shakti, 2026). However, the long term vision requires moving beyond adversarial legal battles towards collaborative, basin wide ecological management. Chhattisgarh must propose the establishment of a permanent, bipartisan Mahanadi River Management Board, comprising technical experts from both states, to jointly monitor hydrological data, coordinate flood management releases, and collaboratively implement massive watershed rejuvenation projects that ensure the long term sustainability of the entire river ecosystem.

Logistics and trade connectivity represent another massive opportunity for regional cooperation. As a landlocked industrial powerhouse producing vast quantities of steel, aluminum, and cement, Chhattisgarh's export competitiveness is entirely dependent on seamless access to maritime ports located in neighboring states. The state government must aggressively collaborate with the governments of Odisha and Andhra Pradesh to develop dedicated, high speed freight corridors linking the industrial clusters of Raipur and Raigarh directly to the deep water ports of Paradip, Dhamra, and Visakhapatnam. Furthermore, the establishment of a Central India Regional Economic Council, bringing together Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, and Maharashtra, could serve as a powerful institutional platform to harmonize state level tax policies, streamline cross border vehicular movement, and jointly market the entire central Indian region as a unified, highly lucrative destination for global manufacturing investment.

Internal security remains a domain where inter state coordination is a matter of absolute life and death. The extremist networks operating in the Bastar division frequently exploit the porous, densely forested borders with Maharashtra, Telangana, and Odisha to evade state security forces and establish safe havens. The success of counter insurgency operations depends entirely on flawless, real time intelligence sharing and joint tactical operations across state lines. While mechanisms like the unified command structure exist in 2026 (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2026), Chhattisgarh must push for the creation of a permanently staffed, integrated regional intelligence fusion center. By institutionalizing seamless cooperation across water management, economic logistics, and internal security, Chhattisgarh will transform its landlocked geography from a structural limitation into a central, unifying advantage, driving the collective prosperity of the entire central Indian plateau.

21.6 International Collaboration: Common Development Agenda and Global Partnership

In an increasingly interconnected global economy, sub national entities like state governments are playing an unprecedented and vital role in international diplomacy, trade, and climate action. For Chhattisgarh to achieve its ambitious Vision 2047, it must

aggressively transcend its traditional domestic boundaries and establish a robust, highly sophisticated framework for international collaboration. Historically, the state's engagement with the global community has been relatively limited, constrained by its landlocked geography and a historical perception as a purely domestic mining and heavy industry base. In the year 2026, the volume of Foreign Direct Investment flowing into Chhattisgarh remains significantly lower than the massive investments captured by the coastal and highly urbanized states of southern and western India (Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, 2026). Reversing this trend and positioning Chhattisgarh as a premier global investment destination is a central imperative of the development roadmap.

The state government must professionalize its international outreach by establishing a dedicated Department of Global Partnerships, staffed by experts in international trade law, foreign language diplomacy, and global investment banking. This department will be tasked with aggressively marketing the state's unique competitive advantages, specifically its massive surplus of electrical power, its highly affordable and available industrial land banks, and its rapidly improving ease of doing business metrics. The target is to attract massive sovereign wealth funds and multinational corporations, particularly from the Middle East, Japan, and Western Europe, to invest directly in the state's emerging green energy corridors, advanced electronics manufacturing clusters, and specialized food processing parks. By hosting world class global investor summits in Nava Raipur and conducting targeted international roadshows, the state will systematically dismantle outdated historical perceptions and project a modern, dynamic, and highly lucrative investment climate.

Beyond purely financial investments, international collaboration is absolutely critical for acquiring cutting edge technology and specialized domain expertise. Chhattisgarh must actively seek out and forge strategic sister state agreements with highly developed, resource rich regions globally, such as Queensland in Australia or Alberta in Canada, to facilitate the direct transfer of advanced, environmentally sustainable mining technologies and deep earth reclamation practices. In the crucial realm of public health and education, the state will deepen its strategic partnerships with premier multilateral organizations such as the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, and various United Nations agencies including UNICEF and the UNDP. These partnerships are vital not only for securing low interest developmental loans but also for importing global best practices in managing large scale public health interventions, designing climate resilient urban infrastructure, and modernizing the state's vocational training curricula to meet global industry standards (World Bank, 2026).

Furthermore, Chhattisgarh must actively align its local developmental policies with the overarching global climate agenda. As a state possessing massive forest reserves and transitioning away from a heavy reliance on coal, Chhattisgarh is uniquely positioned to become a global leader in sub national climate action. The state government must aggressively engage with international climate finance mechanisms, such as the Green Climate Fund, to secure massive funding for its ambitious decarbonization initiatives, its transition to electric mobility, and its comprehensive watershed management programs. By actively participating in global environmental forums and adhering strictly to the emission

reduction targets established under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC, 2026), Chhattisgarh will elevate its international profile, attracting environmentally conscious global capital and establishing itself as a responsible, forward looking participant in the global community.

21.7 Monitoring, Evaluation and Results Framework

The most visionary policy documents and the most generous financial allocations are rendered completely meaningless in the absence of a rigorous, scientifically designed monitoring and evaluation framework. The historical trajectory of public administration in India is replete with instances of well intentioned schemes failing to deliver intended outcomes due to severe implementation bottlenecks, widespread data manipulation, and a profound lack of continuous performance tracking. To guarantee the successful execution of the complex, multi decadal Vision 2047 roadmap, Chhattisgarh must fundamentally revolutionize its internal mechanisms for monitoring progress, evaluating policy impact, and ensuring absolute bureaucratic accountability. In the year 2026, the state administration is actively transitioning from archaic, paper based reporting mechanisms towards digital dashboards (Government of Chhattisgarh, 2026), but this transition must be vastly accelerated and institutionalized across every single layer of government.

The cornerstone of this new results framework is the establishment of a massive, state of the art Central Command and Control Center located within the state secretariat in Nava Raipur. This highly advanced facility will be technologically equipped to ingest, process, and visualize massive streams of real time data flowing continuously from every district, block, and gram panchayat in the state. By deploying sophisticated artificial intelligence algorithms and advanced big data analytics, the command center will seamlessly integrate geospatial satellite imagery, biometric attendance records, financial expenditure logs, and digital citizen feedback. This will allow the Chief Minister and the core executive team to monitor the exact, real time progress of every flagship infrastructure project, track the daily availability of essential medicines in remote primary health centers, and verify the precise distribution of agricultural subsidies. By instantly identifying localized administrative bottlenecks and predicting potential project delays before they occur, the state leadership can deploy targeted, data driven interventions with unprecedented speed and accuracy.

Furthermore, the state must initiate a massive paradigm shift from traditional output based monitoring to rigorous outcome based evaluation. Historically, bureaucratic success was measured simply by the amount of financial capital spent or the number of physical structures built. The new evaluation framework will strictly measure the actual, tangible impact on the lives of citizens. For example, the success of the education department will no longer be evaluated merely by the number of school buildings constructed, but by the scientifically measured improvement in the fundamental learning outcomes and cognitive abilities of the students. To ensure absolute objectivity in this evaluation process, the state government must heavily utilize independent, third party auditing mechanisms. By partnering with premier national academic institutions, specialized evaluation agencies, and rigorous civil society organizations, the state will subject its flagship programs to continuous, unbiased scrutiny.

The integration of the Sustainable Development Goals into this monitoring framework is an absolute necessity. The State Planning Commission will maintain a highly detailed, publicly accessible SDG monitoring dashboard that tracks the state's progress across hundreds of highly specific, localized indicators (NITI Aayog, 2026). This dashboard will be directly linked to the annual budget allocation process, ensuring that departments demonstrating measurable progress receive enhanced funding, while persistently underperforming sectors are subjected to immediate administrative restructuring. By establishing a culture of radical data transparency, continuous scientific evaluation, and strict outcome based accountability, Chhattisgarh will ensure that every single rupee of public money is maximally utilized to propel the state towards its ultimate developmental destiny in 2047.

21.8 Accountability Architecture: Legislature, Civil Society and Citizens

The ultimate guarantor of sustainable, equitable development is a robust, dynamic, and highly responsive accountability architecture that firmly places the citizen at the absolute center of the governance process. While technological modernization and rigorous administrative monitoring are critical components of state capacity, they must be continuously supervised by empowered democratic institutions and an active, vigilant public. The Vision 2047 roadmap for Chhattisgarh recognizes that true developmental success cannot be unilaterally imposed by the executive branch; it must be continuously debated, scrutinized, and validated by the legislature, civil society, and the citizens themselves. In 2026, the state possesses the foundational statutory frameworks for public accountability, but the practical enforcement of these mechanisms requires a massive infusion of political will and civic energy (Government of Chhattisgarh, 2026).

The state legislative assembly serves as the primary, constitutional bulwark of public accountability. To enhance the efficacy of legislative oversight, the various departmental standing committees and the Public Accounts Committee must be significantly strengthened. These committees must be provided with dedicated, highly specialized research staff, including financial analysts, legal experts, and data scientists, enabling legislators to conduct deep, rigorous, and technically informed scrutiny of complex government expenditures and complex policy initiatives. Furthermore, the state government must commit to a policy of absolute transparency regarding legislative business, ensuring that all draft bills, committee reports, and government responses are immediately available to the public through highly accessible digital platforms, thereby fostering a culture of informed, widespread public debate prior to the enactment of any major legislation.

At the grassroots level, the empowerment of the Gram Sabha remains the most powerful mechanism for direct democratic accountability, particularly in the vast tribal hinterlands of the state. The rigorous, uncompromising enforcement of the Panchayats Extension to Scheduled Areas Act is a non negotiable priority. The state government must ensure that the Gram Sabhas are provided with the absolute legal authority and the necessary technical capacity to conduct independent social audits of all major government schemes, specifically massive employment generation programs like the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act and localized infrastructure projects (Ministry of Panchayati Raj,

2026). By mandating that all local development expenditures must be publicly presented and explicitly approved by the village assembly, the state will effectively eradicate grassroots corruption, eliminate bureaucratic high handedness, and ensure that public funds are utilized in precise alignment with the specific, articulated needs of the local community.

Finally, the state must actively cultivate and fiercely protect a vibrant, independent civil society and a free press. Non governmental organizations, academic researchers, and investigative journalists play an indispensable role in exposing administrative failures, highlighting the grievances of marginalized communities, and demanding corrective action from the state apparatus. The government must view civil society not as an adversarial force to be managed, but as a vital, collaborative partner in the developmental process. The rigorous enforcement of the Right to Information Act and the Right to Public Services Guarantee Act must be guaranteed, with severe, immediate administrative penalties imposed on officials who deliberately withhold public information or unjustifiably delay the delivery of statutory citizen services. By institutionalizing radical transparency, protecting the rights of whistleblowers, and actively empowering every citizen to demand excellence from their government, Chhattisgarh will forge an unbreakable bond of trust between the state and its people, ensuring that the grand vision of a prosperous, developed, and perfectly equitable society in 2047 becomes an absolute reality.

End Note

This Framework has attempted something genuinely difficult: a comprehensive, twenty-one-chapter development portrait of a state whose most basic demographic facts remain, in the absence of a completed Census since 2011, matters of projection rather than measurement. Across the preceding chapters, a consistent pattern has emerged that is worth naming plainly rather than leaving buried in twenty-one separate chapter conclusions.

Chhattisgarh's development story is not one of uniform success or uniform failure. It is a story of a state that has become fiscally disciplined, ranking second nationally on the NITI Aayog Fiscal Health Index, while its Bastar division districts recorded among the highest multidimensional poverty rates documented anywhere in India. It is a state whose industrial and energy investment pipeline runs into the tens of lakhs of crores, while its secondary-to-higher-secondary school enrolment collapses by roughly half. It is a state that pioneered India's first E-Governance Act in 2003 and is now building an AI governance roadmap in 2026, while a backlog of 53,000 revenue cases, some over two decades old, sits unresolved in its own legislature's own account of itself. And it is a state whose Bastar division, for two decades synonymous with Left-Wing Extremism, now shows Naxalism declining toward a stated March 2026 target, opening a genuine, fragile window for the connectivity, education, and livelihood investments this Framework has documented chapter after chapter.

Whether the Anjor Vision @2047 succeeds will depend less on the scale of its targets, ambitious as they are, and more on whether the state's own internal accountability mechanisms, the kind of legislative scrutiny briefly visible in the December 2025 assembly debate, are allowed to operate with sufficient independence to catch the gap between announcement and outcome before it hardens into another two-decade backlog. This Framework has tried to model that scrutiny in miniature, flagging what the data shows, what it does not yet show, and where the two diverge. We hope it serves the state, and the people preparing to serve it well.

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