Local Economic Development continues to emerge as an important and a viable tool for achieving economic growth, creating new jobs, increasing income level, and improving the quality of life in communities, in both developed and developing countries. Local Economic Development encompasses a range of discipline including physical planning, economics and marketing.

This study attempts to prepare local economic development plan for the Marakkanam block which is located in Villupuram district. Marakkanam block is selected as the study area because of its economic nature. It is located along coast of Bay of Bengal and it is around 130kms from Chennai city and 30kms from Pondicherry. It connected through ECR with Chennai and Pondicherry and through NH 132 with district headquarters. The major economic activity of the block is agriculture, fishing and salt production. Out of 82 villages in the block 10 villages are selected and grouped as a cluster based on the economic characteristics.

The primary and secondary data are collected through field survey, Questionnaire survey and from various institutions and authorities. From the collected data; the existing economic condition, local resources, land use characteristic and existing economic infrastructure was analysed. It also studies the socio – economic characters of the fishermen, Labours/workers engaged in the salt production and agriculture activity. Based on the collected data; strength, weakness, opportunities and threats of the study area is analysed. The study states the issues related to the economic condition, infrastructure, marketing system, workers etc.

The first objective of the study is ensuring the effective use of land resources which is achieved by allocating the appropriate infrastructure facilities based on the land use and locational choice of each facilities. Through this the economic development can be integrated with the spatial plan. The objective of providing physical
infrastructure is based on the existing situation and future requirement. The final objective of strengthening the economic base is through the economic development strategies.

The proposal for the study area is in the form of one Primary Economic Centers and 3 secondary Economic Centers. These economic centers include provision of infrastructure facilities which includes retail markets, cold storage facilities, processing industries etc. for enhancing fishing; Iodisation plants, salt refineries and storage facilities for improving the production of salt; Procurement centers, processing units, markets facilities for agriculture production.