

Subject:- **EVOLVING AN EFFECTIVE MONITORING AND EVALUATION (M&E) MECHANISM.**

‘Devolution of Power Plan’, apart from decentralization of administrative and financial power, at the grass-root level, signifies a major shift in the focus of infra-structure as well as socio-economic development of a given local area. Whereas, under the Punjab Local Government Ordinance, 2001, monitoring committees elected by the respective councils of the Local Governments are assigned the function of monitoring of development schemes of local governments no system exists to monitor the implementation of schemes launched and funded by the Federal/ Provincial Governments at the local level. The quantum of resources made available through these programs is quite significant and an effective monitoring system can minimize leakages, expedite implementation and hold the executing agencies accountable for results.

2. The jurisdiction of District Government and Provincial Government being co-terminus, there is an impelling need to develop a monitoring mechanism aimed at over-viewing the implementation of development schemes and evaluating the outcomes of all the investments being made by the Federal/Provincial Governments as well as donor agencies in the areas of Local Governments. Towards that end, a permanent institutional arrangement is required to be developed which should have the requisite elements and capacity to meet the requirements of Good Governance, efficient service delivery and trickle-down effect. Such a monitoring system has been put in place by the Govt. of Punjab and has begun to show some tangible results. The proposed system of Monitoring and Evaluation should consist of the following essential ingredients:-

a) **TARGET SETTING**

The concerned department should define the objectives of the program and set targets to be achieved by the field formations. Targets can be set to achieve physical progress within a stipulated time frame.

b) **BENCH MARKING**

For developing the base-line data, formal surveys can be used to collect standardized information from the stake-holders/targeted population. The surveys help the policy makers/implementors to observe changes, due to interventions made, and achieve the desired objectives.

c) **PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

Designing the performance indicators is the key to success of any program/project. They are measures of inputs, processes, outputs, outcomes and impact. The indicators can help the implementers to track progress, identify fault-lines and take remedial measures to improve service-delivery.

d) **PARTICIPATORY APPROACH**

Induction of stake-holders in the monitoring of special programmes/projects prompts them to own the undertaking. Their involvement helps identify the ground realities, public perception about a particular program enables the decision-makers to formulate policies responsive to the felt needs of the people.

e) **CASH FLOWS TRACKING SYSTEM**

A tracking system to ensure timely release of allocated amount, expenditure incurred by the concerned agencies on development works and procurement of goods and making them available to the end-users is an important component of the M&E framework. With an efficient and effective Public Expenditure Tracking System not only uninterrupted development activities are ensured but also the project can be made cost-effective. PESRP has successfully demonstrated its efficient system of cash-flows and expenditure incurred on various components of the program.

f) **IMPACT EVALUATION**

Every policy intervention of the Government has some impact; positive or negative. Impact assessment and evaluation enables the policy-makers to observe as to what extent the activities, undertaken through a program/project, have helped the targeted group or area, and how far desired results have been achieved.

3. Administrative departments do not have the requisite institutional capacity to monitor and evaluate new development portfolios and it would not be cost effective to create parallel monitoring and evaluation arrangements by each department separately. It is proposed that a Monitoring and Evaluation Unit should be set up at each district/ sub-regional level as the case may be. The M&E Unit should report to the P&D Department of the Provincial Governments for the Provincial funded projects and to the Planning Commission for the Federal funded projects.