

## **Role of Council Committees in Strengthening Monitoring System**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

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Monitoring has been built as an integral part of the devolution process. The fundamental objective of monitoring is to provide timely feedback on the progress related to the delivery of services at the grass root level. This becomes possible through a systematic collection and analysis of information that should enable the stakeholders to determine whether key activities are being carried out as planned and are achieving the desired results or not. Monitoring provides feedback so as to improve operational plans and to take corrective action.

Local Government System provides monitoring through the elected representatives. Monitoring System, as envisaged in the Local Govt. Ordinance, is based on the principles of developing mutual understanding, participation and cooperation. Main purpose of including a comprehensive system of monitoring in the Local Government Ordinance is to improve the performance of government offices along with service delivery through participatory inputs from the community and all stakeholders. A number of Monitoring committees have been identified in the Ordinance, which are to be constituted by the concerned councils. The primary role of the Monitoring committees is to identify problems at the Offices/facilities and bring these to the notice of the respective Council Nazims and the concerned administration. Monitoring Committee members of the Councils will act as a bridge between the people, elected representatives and the administration. An important role of the Monitoring committees is also to follow up on the issues and monitor their progress.

The monitoring by the Monitoring committees is independent of the management oversight, which is conducted through the management structure of the offices. The latter is limited to the offices and has a top down approach. The monitoring by the Monitoring committees is based on people's participation, and responsiveness to people through a horizontal approach.

To add on to the productivity and efficiency of the system and Monitoring committees, there are other committees, i.e. Ethics Committee, Insaf Committee, Accounts Committee, Union Public Safety Committee, Zila Sports and Culture Committee, which will compliment the functioning of the monitoring process. Every Committee is independent in functioning in their assigned sectors.

SDSSP have guided Zila Councils to constitute Monitoring committees with women representation. This condition is complied by all 23 Zila councils and Monitoring committees have been formed. Beside this all 119 TMAs have also included women representatives in their committees. This has started a new wave of acceptance of women role in development.

## 2. NEED FOR MONITORING THROUGH ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

Strong, credible and effective governing institutions that have the confidence of the citizens and the ability to deliver their mandate are the foundations of sound governance. This all is possible through effective accountability and monitoring system. Although local government institutions and offices have internal checks in the shape of inspections, audits, inquiries, complaint cells, etc. to improve efficiency and effectiveness of the offices and facilities. But the inherent problem with this kind of monitoring was the lack of involvement of the people and transparency.

Therefore, the new Local Government System provides monitoring through the elected representatives. In fact, it is the first time that the elected representatives have been assigned the responsibility of monitoring under the law. This role is also crucial for bottom up planning that is envisaged under SLGO. Under this role elected representatives identifies problems and brings them to the notice of the Councils, Nazims, and the Administration so as to assist in resolving the problems, through an interactive participatory process involving the officials and the people. They are to ensure that the feedback of people reaches the policy makers and the planners.

### ***2.1 Monitoring committees Mandate:***

*SLGO envisaged monitoring committees with the following objectives:*

The objective of monitoring is to analyze the information collected through the various channels and to assess whether the following is taking place or not:

- Judicious use of available resources;
- Implementation is as per plans;
- Targets are being met;
- Service delivery is improving;
- Administration is responsive to people's need; and
- There is transparency in functioning of Offices.

### ***2.2 Fundamental Principles of Monitoring:***

Monitoring shall primarily begin with the identification of problems. The Committees shall assess whether the people are getting satisfactory services or not, if not what are the reasons and how the problems could be resolved. It shall bring issues and problems to the notice of the respective Council members, Nazims and the Administration.

The most important prerequisites for the effective monitoring are an openness of mind and commitment to solving problems. Monitoring is not an inspection. It is neither an audit nor an inquiry. It is the identification of the problems, which must be solved in the interest of the people. Following fundamental principles needs to be opted by the committees while undertaking monitoring:

- Monitoring committees shall consider monitoring as a friendly exercise in the interest of the people and shall not become aggressive and create tensions and frictions with the service providers.
- Monitoring committees shall interact proactively with the community and people to identify critical issues/problems that need to be resolved.

- Monitoring committees shall interact with all stakeholders to stimulate the process of problem solving, instead of collection of individual complaints.
- Monitoring committees shall collect information in a simple, practical and effective manner.
- Monitoring committees shall deal with facts and not include value judgment in their quarterly reports.

### **3- ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MONITORING COMMITTEES**

SLGO provides guideline that the monitoring committees shall monitor the service delivery in their respective areas. The Monitoring committees shall focus on identifying the critical problems affecting service delivery.

#### **3.1 Union monitoring committees**

The Monitoring committees elected by Union Council shall be responsible to monitor the functioning of all offices of the District Government, Taluka Municipal Administration, Town Municipal Administration and Union Administration for the delivery of services within the Union. The Union Monitoring committees shall prepare and submit their quarterly reports to their Councils.

At least there shall be a Monitoring Committee for each of the following at the Union level:

- i. Municipal Services
- ii. Finance
- iii. Public Safety
- iv. Health
- v. Education
- vi. Literacy
- vii. Works and Services

As far as possible, the Union Nazim, the Naib Union Nazim, the monitoring committees members, and the Union Secretaries shall try to resolve the issues/problems at the Union level.

The unresolved problems shall be referred to the Zila Monitoring committees and to the Taluka/Town Monitoring committees as follows:

- i. The Union Nazim shall take up matters related to the district government offices and their service delivery facilities to the Zila Monitoring committees.
- ii. The Naib Union Nazim shall take up problems related to the Municipal Services to the Taluka/Town Monitoring committees.
- iii. The resolutions of the Union Council on the quarterly reports of the Union Monitoring Committee shall be passed to the Taluka/Town Council or Zila Council, as the case may be.

The Monitoring committees of the Zila and the Taluka/Town shall make efforts to resolve issues of Union Monitoring committees with their concerned Nazim, Council and the Administration.

The Zila Council and Taluka/Town Council shall bring forth resolutions of Union Council in their Council Meeting for solving or addressing the issues/problems of the Union Council.

### **3.2 Taluka/Town monitoring committees**

The Monitoring committees elected by the Taluka/Town Council shall be responsible for monitoring the functioning of the offices of the Taluka/Town Municipal Administration and the provision of municipal services. The Taluka/Town Monitoring committees shall prepare and submit their quarterly reports to their concerned Councils.

At least, there shall be a Monitoring Committee for each of the following at the Taluka/Town level:

- i. Municipal Regulation
- ii. Infrastructure and Services
- iii. Planning
- iv. Finance

Taluka/Town Monitoring committees shall communicate their own issues/problems along with the issues/problems of the Union Monitoring committees to their concerned Nazim, Administration and the Council.

In case of a city district, Town Monitoring committees shall refer the problems of district government offices to the Zila Monitoring committees.

### **3.3 Zila monitoring committees**

The Monitoring committees of the Zila shall be responsible for monitoring the performance of the District Government Offices in the District. The Zila Monitoring committees shall prepare and submit their quarterly reports to their Zila Councils.

The reports referred to in sub-sections (1) to (3) shall, in particular, contain evaluation of the performance of each office in relation to -

- Achievement of its targets;
- Responsiveness to citizens' difficulties;
- Efficiency in the delivery of services; and
- Transparent functioning.

At the Zila level there shall be a Monitoring Committee for each Group of Offices or for each individual Office within the Group of Offices.

Zila Monitoring committees shall communicate their own issues/problems alongwith the issues/problems of the Taluka/Town Monitoring committees and Union Monitoring committees to their concerned Nazims and Administration.

## **4- MONITORING MECHANISMS**

Based on basic monitoring framework, monitoring committees are guided to conduct monitoring through four basic methods stated as under:

### **4.1 Monitoring by obtaining feedback from the public**

This requires the members of the Monitoring committees to proactively seek opinion of the public regarding service delivery and performance of various offices.

### **4.2 Monitoring Service delivery through visits to facilities**

Field visits shall be an essential activity of the monitoring undertaken by the Monitoring committees. This provides primary information, which is essential for an effective monitoring. Therefore, the Union Council Monitoring committees have been assigned the task of monitoring the service delivery as their prime responsibility.

### **4.3 Monitoring the functioning of Offices**

Monitoring the functioning of the offices at the Taluka/Town and District level shall be the main activity of the Monitoring committees at these levels.

To assess the performance would require the analysis of the following information, which is to be provided by the concerned Offices:

- i. Available Resources:
- ii. Human & Financial
- iii. Plans: Targets, Schedules, Cost estimates, Activities, Inputs, Cost of services and Overheads
- iv. Cost effectiveness measures
- v. Progress updates
- vi. Responsiveness to people

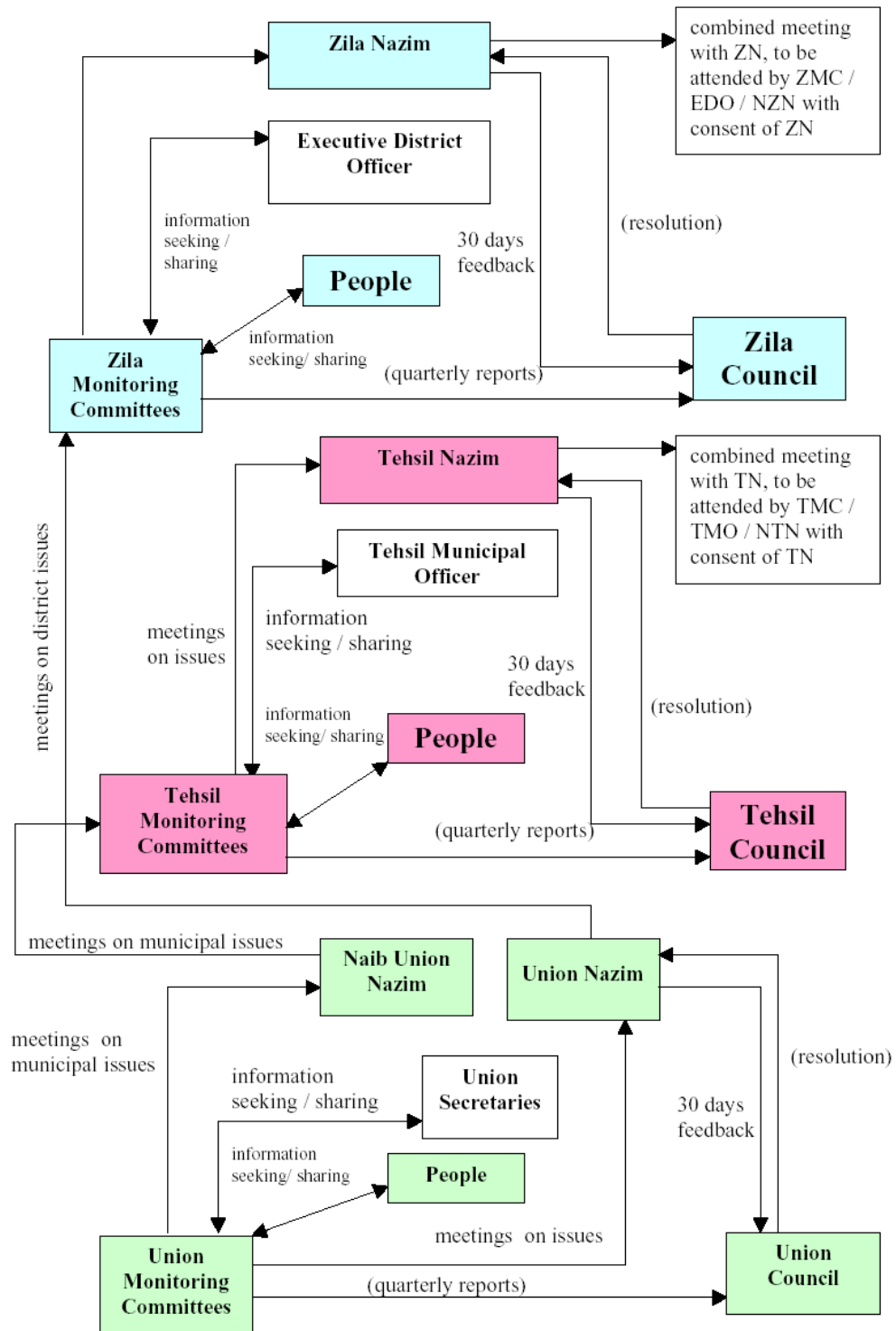
### **4.4 Monitoring of Plans, Targets, Progress through official reports /information**

This requires review of plans, activities and routine progress reports of the various Offices. The Monitoring committees may request a copy of the routine progress reports from the Offices.

### **4.5 Information Gathering: First step on the ladder of Transparency**

Transparency of governance promotes effective functioning and efficiency. The local government system is designed to ensure transparency of governance, non-intrusiveness and making information a public domain. With transparency in governance and availability of information to the people, the effectiveness of the development process will enhance in a much better way.

## BASIC FRAMEWORK FOR MONITORING



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## **5- MONITORING PROCESS OF THE MONITORING COMMITTEES**

### **5.1 Monitoring by the committees and information processing:**

The Taluka/Town and union monitoring committees shall in principle monitor the facilities and service delivery at their tier level whereas the Zila Monitoring committees shall, in principle monitor the performance of the district government offices at the Zila level. These monitoring committees shall collect information from various sources i.e. union and Taluka monitoring committees reports, community and facilities during their visits regarding the performance of services. The information thus collected shall be analyzed by the monitoring committees. The critical problems/issues will be identified based on the review of the collected information.

Monitoring committees will process information by informing the Taluka/Town Municipal Officer (TMO)/ EDOs verbally or in writing about the problems identified at the facility / office / project level visited by them or brought to their notice. Taluka Monitoring committees would also raise the issues/problems identified by the Union Monitoring committees, which were brought to their notice. Monitoring committees will seek information from TMO/EDOs on these concerns. As a result of sharing information, some issues may be resolved at that level. As far as possible, an attempt should be made to resolve the issues/problems at the TMO/EDO level. Taluka/Town Monitoring committees will inform the respective Taluka/Town/Zila Nazim verbally or in writing about the issues, which could not be resolved at this level. The monitoring process suggests that the unresolved issues related to the City District Government at the Town level will be communicated informally/formally to Zila Monitoring committees by the Town Nazim. The unresolved issues related to the Provincial Government shall be communicated informally/formally to the Provincial Government by the Zila Nazims. Zila monitoring committees will follow up on issues/problems of the Town Monitoring committees at the Zila level.

Monitoring committees will prepare their quarterly monitoring reports based on their activities during the period. Report will include the issues/problems identified by them or brought to their notice. It will also include the achievements made and the efforts made by them to resolve issues/problems. The unresolved issues requiring the Council's attention will be identified in the report. The council will deliberate upon the reports of the Monitoring committees and pass resolutions to solve the unresolved issues/problems.

## **6. FUNCTIONALISATION OF MONITORING COMMITTEES**

A technical backup support for monitoring committees functionalization is useful for the active contributions by the committees. Proper record keeping and documentation of activities are essential to prepare the quarterly reports for the Council and follow up.

### **6.1 Monitoring Reports**

These reports are stepping-stone for the monitoring committees that must be submitted to the respective Councils on agreed frequency of time. The focus of the monitoring reports should be on highlighting those issues, which require intervention of the Council and the achievements made by the Monitoring committees during the reporting period. The reports to

be presented to the Council must contain evaluation of the performance of each office/service delivery and facility in relation to:

- i. Achievement of its targets;
- ii. Responsiveness to citizens' difficulties;
- iii. Efficiency in the delivery of services; and
- iv. Transparent functioning.

## **6.2 Main steps relating to the Monitoring Reports**

- The report must include the achievements made during the last quarter.
- The report must highlight the issues/problems identified by the Monitoring committees.
- It shall also provide feedback on steps taken to resolve the issues/problems.
- The unresolved issues/problems should be listed along with recommendations.
- These reports shall be submitted to the respective councils through their conveners.
- The respective Councils shall deliberate on the quarterly reports submitted by the Monitoring committees and send the recommendations in the form of resolutions to the respective Nazims for action.
- The Nazims shall within 30 days report back to the respective councils on the progress made by him on the issues raised in the resolutions by the Council.
- All councils will prepare annual reports based on quarterly resolutions of the councils and actions taken by the Union, Taluka or Zila Nazim, as the case may be, highlighting achievements and further actions required.
- All councils, annual reports will be submitted to the Zila Council for compilation and development of database. All councils shall display information on actions taken regarding the problems highlighted in the Monitoring Reports, at the prominent places of the Council offices, for public information.


## **7. CAPACITY BUILDING OF MONITORING COMMITTEES.**

One of the challenges for the local govts. is to enhance the capacity of monitoring committees for its proper functioning. To meet this challenge many development partners have already developed training manuals and guides for effective functioning of the councils and committees. In public sector DSP is already conducting trainings for the councils. The training handouts have a much elaborative details of monitoring committees and their functioning. Other development partners like National Democratic Institute (NDI), SPO and Aurat Foundation have also developed manuals and guidelines for councils including monitoring committee functionalization details. These organizations provide trainings to the councilors in their target areas.

This available material provides an opportunity to the program for consolidation of comprehensive training material on the subject and developing synergies between the program and other development partners.

Monitoring committees with their vast experience in public dealing are conducting monitoring visits to their respective areas :

Zila Council Tando AllahYar’s Monitoring Committee for Health conducted a visit to the health facilities of the area and prepared a report based on their observations.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost of glazed tile in labor, EPI/Bath room <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Floor</li> <li>○ Wall</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Cost for colouring i/c Distemper, White wash, painting color wash</li> <li>• Cost for roof treatment i/c Bitumen for roof</li> <li>• Cost for replacement of door frame <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Only Shutter</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">OK</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OK</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OK</p> <p style="text-align: center;">No work of roof treatment has been done</p> <p style="text-align: center;">No wooden frame Shutter have been provided</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Monitoring Committee members visiting the under construction health facility</i></p>
<p>Bathroom work has been left without completion  <i>(Interview, MS, BHU Bukera Sharif, 07-08-2006)</i></p>		