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MONITORING

The Ministry of Rural Development places special emphasis on monitoring and evaluation of its programmes being implemented in rural areas all over the country. Effective monitoring of the programmes is considered very important for efficient delivery at the grass root level particularly in view of the substantial step up in the allocation of funds for rural development programmes since the Eighth Five Year Plan onwards. In order to ensure this, the Ministry has evolved a comprehensive multi-level and multi-tool system of Monitoring and Evaluation for the implementation of its programmes. Appropriate objectively verifiable performance indicators have been developed for each of the specific programme, both by the Ministry of Rural Development and the State Government for effective monitoring at the District, Block, Gram Panchayat and Village levels so that alarm signals can be captured well in advance for mid-course corrections.

The implementation of various Rural Development schemes especially the wage-employment, self-employment and rural infrastructure/amenities schemes to a great extent, has resulted in reduction of poverty in rural areas. The Government has instituted an in-built monitoring mechanism in the guidelines of each scheme so as to ensure that the objectives of the schemes are achieved by their implementation.

The important instruments of monitoring and evaluation mechanism are briefly outlined as under:-

1. Visits and Review by Union Ministers

The Minister of Rural Development and the Ministers of State for Rural Development visit States/UTs and review the performance of programmes with the Chief Ministers, Ministers and officials of the State Government concerned with the implementation of the programmes. Such review meetings provide the much needed impetus in the implementation of the programmes by energizing and motivating the Implementing Agencies. The need for ensuring better utilization of funds and effective

delivery of benefits to the targeted groups is emphasized in these review meetings. During the year under report such reviews have taken place in most of the States. These review meetings were quite useful in resolving policy issues and problems of programme implementation.

2. Periodical Progress Reports>Returns

The programmes of the Ministry are continuously monitored through periodical progress reports received from the State Governments depicting both the financial and physical progress of the programmes. The Monitoring Division has streamlined the data processing system and the Monthly Progress Report is received by the 10th of every month. These reports give the State-wise and Programme-wise performance of the schemes. District-Level information on the performance of various schemes are also being generated and disseminated to all concerned.

The Monitoring Division has developed a District wise Data Management System of the Rural Development Programmes. The system is used for data management of both State and District level regarding physical and financial progress of the schemes of the Ministry. The system, a user friendly web based application was developed and implemented for entry, validation and report generation of the District wise data. The District wise data, provided by the States/Districts is entered through the software and requisite periodical reports were generated. These Reports have been found very useful in tracking the progress of expenditure as well as physical works taken up under various Schemes. Inputs for various review meetings were also devised from these Reports.

3. On-Line Reporting of Monthly Progress Report (MPR)

The Ministry of Rural Development has been emphasizing on e-governance. Accordingly, States/DRDAs were requested to take action to ensure that MPRs compiled by the DRDAs and implementing Agencies are sent through the electronic medium. More than 590 DRDAs/Districts are submitting their progress reports of rural

development programmes of SGSY, IAY, NREGA, DRDA Administration, Integrated Wastelands Development Programme (IWMP), Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP) and Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC) through On-Line system and remaining States/Districts have been emphasized to ensure that all the DRDAs submit their return timely through On-Line. NB

4. Utilization Certificates/Audit Reports

The procedure adopted for release of funds to the States under various programmes stipulates that the State Governments should furnish Utilisation Certificates to the effect that the funds have been utilized for the purpose for which these were sanctioned and no diversion has been made. The auditing of accounts and reports thereon are a precondition for the release of the second and the subsequent instalments. State Governments have been advised to ensure the authenticity of Utilisation Certificates. The requirement of these documents also checks the diversion of funds, if any. The States/UTs have also been advised to furnish utilization certificates for each of the funds released to them under the rural development programmes, even if the expenditure during the financial year is zero. NB

5. Performance Review Committee

In pursuance of the suggestions made by the Planning Commission, the Ministry has constituted the Performance Review Committee (PRC) under the chairmanship of Secretary (RD), which comprises of State Secretaries In-charge of rural development schemes, representatives of the Planning Commission and Central Ministries i.e. Ministries of Finance, Statistics & Programme Implementation and Environment & Forests. The Committee reviewed in detail the performance of various programmes being implemented in different States and appropriate recommendations were made for corrective action wherever found necessary. The State Governments were also advised to improve the quality and pace of implementation of the programmes.

