CHAPTER-IV

MONITORING OF THE PROGRAMME

4.1 Introduction

Monitoring may be defined as the systematic process of keeping track of the performance and progress of a programme. It is a management process for a continuous review of the flow of inputs and outcome of outputs. It serves the vital function in the management and evaluation of the programme. It also helps in introducing mid-course corrections, whenever necessary. Raw data, analyzed and interpreted, is translated into information necessary for effective management and sound decision making. This information provides answers to important questions on the implementation of the programme:

1. Are desired goals being achieved?
2. Is the programme on schedule? Are objectives and target dates being met?
3. Is it within cost?
4. Are resources available when needed? Are they being used efficiently and effectively?
5. What corrective measures should be taken.

Effective monitoring consists of three parts - the monitoring of inputs (input monitoring), the monitoring of process and activities (process monitoring), and the monitoring of outputs (output monitoring).
As a matter of fact, the concept of monitoring is much wider than just progress reporting. It is a continuous two-way process with the basic objective of speedy and timely action. It includes both the quantitative appraisal of performance in relation to target and the qualitative assessment as to whether the objectives of the programmes are being fulfilled or are likely to be fulfilled. A monitoring system generally encompasses the following:

(i) Identifying the items on which information is required:

(ii) developing the reporting system and format for collecting information;

(iii) receipt of performance and progress information from operating and implementing levels;

(iv) appraisal and analyses of information received in terms of physical and financial performances as compared to targets:

(v) identification of shortfalls, bottlenecks, areas lagging behind, problem areas and reasons thereof;

(vi) examining the effects and implications of these shortfalls and bottlenecks in terms of achievements of plan objectives and implementation of inter-dependent schemes;

(vii) re-defining and re-adjusting targets, re-allocating resources and priorities and taking other appropriate actions;
transmitting decisions to the implementing levels for initiating appropriate corrective action with a view to bringing the lagging schemes back on course; and

getting the feed back on corrective action and reviewing the same.

Successful monitoring depends on identification of the critical or vulnerable points in the implementation of a programme. This may relate to obtaining timely administrative and financial sanctions, recruitment, placement and training of staff, equipment and supplies, vehicles, storage, building etc. The focus of monitoring necessarily depends upon the stage in the implementation of the scheme. In the initial or installation stage monitoring would have to lay greater emphasis on the provision of inputs in terms of man, money and material. At a later stage the emphasis would be on the delivery of services and attainment of the objectives of the scheme. Similarly, the pattern and system of monitoring will depend upon the level of implementation. Points of concern at different levels will have to be identified and the reporting system devised accordingly. Normally at the lower levels, the monitoring would be much more detailed and would cover a wider range of items of information while at the apex or top level the monitoring will relate to certain selected key items. The system of monitoring is likely to be more complex where the implementation of a scheme is an inter-department or inter-sectoral endeavour. Monitoring will encompass not
only the inclusion of such supporting facilities for a scheme in the sectors concern at the planning stage but also their implementation by the concerned departments.

4.2 Monitoring of ICDS Scheme

Keeping in view the concept of monitoring, as elaborated in the Manual on Integrated Child Development Services and discussed above in the present study, the monitoring of ICDS scheme can be discussed under four sub-heads (i) general monitoring, (ii) monitoring of supplementary nutrition, (iii) monitoring of health aspects and (iv) monitoring of training.

4.2.1 General Monitoring:

General monitoring is based on the Monthly Progress Reports (MPRs) submitted by the CDPO by the fifth day of every month and on the Annual Progress Reports (APRs) submitted by the CDPO by the fifth of April every year. CDPO is to ensure that all MPRs are sent to the department of women welfare (monitoring and evaluation unit) and to the State Govt., by the tenth of every month. Before sending the MPR, the CDPOs have to ensure that the reports have no errors such as wrong codes and that all columns have been filled in properly. But a perusal of the monthly progress report as well as annual progress report shows that this has not been the case in practice as regards to the Jhajjar Project of the ICDS scheme. It may also be mentioned here that general monitoring only includes monitoring of the Anganwadis sanctioned for a project, the appointment and training of personnel in the project and the delivery of
various services and coverage of beneficiaries under each service. General monitoring also includes monitoring of the supervision of the programme at the field level, monitoring of the nutritional status of children in the project area and monitoring of the vital statistics including births and deaths of children. The availability of supplies at the Anganwadi, at the project levels, and at the level of community participation and community education is also to be monitored. Some of these aspects are reviewed on a monthly basis; others are monitored annually.

In this way, the monitoring system involves a flow of data from the Anganwadi workers to the CDPOs and from the CDPOs to the state Government and the Department of Women's Welfare. The cycle is completed by the flow of information from the Department of Women's Welfare to the States and from the States to CDPOs for necessary action. The CDPO takes necessary action at the Anganwadi level to streamline the implementation of the programme. A diagram of the monitoring cycle is given below:

![The ICDS Monitoring Cycle Diagram](image-url)
In the present study we could easily observe that the information collected at the Anganwadi centre is not up to the mark and the main reason of this is the low educational standard of the Anganwadi workers, their poor salary structure and the working time limitations.

4.2.2 Monitoring of supplementary nutrition

Supplementary nutrition is an important service delivered to children and mothers in the ICDS scheme. The proper delivery of the service consists in delivering success of the entire programme. Ensuring the success of this scheme also depends on the impact of this service, since it accounts for more than 50% of the total cost of the ICDS scheme. Therefore, the proper monitoring of this service assumes greater importance in the management information system of the ICDS scheme.

Monitoring of supplementary nutrition is based on:

1. Anganwadi Stock Register and Monthly Report (ASRMR)
2. Distribution Point Stock Register and Monthly Report (DPSRMR)

The Anganwadi Stock Register and Monthly Report is the main input document which, when analysed, provides information essential for monitoring the Supplementary Nutrition Component of the ICDS Scheme. The other two documents help to ensure the accuracy of information and oversee the movement and storage of food commodities.
Monitoring of the Supplementary Nutrition Programme includes the monitoring of inputs, the monitoring of processes and activities, and the monitoring of the beneficiaries i.e., pregnant women and nursing mothers, children below three years of age and between three to six years of age and their eligibility; coverage of mal-nurished and severely mal-nurished children, number of feeding days at the Anganwadi level; stock supplies at various levels; availability of supplies and consumption efficiency; and the cut-off date for supply of food stocks.

In this context we could observe in the present study that to check the quality of the supplies and the proper delivery of the same a committee of 10 women in every Anganwadi stands constituted. But in practice we found that these committees are ineffective and most of the time the supplies and the quality are not upto the mark. Not to speak of the percentage of coverage which is around 50% of total eligible beneficiaries in all the categories in totality; even the actual beneficiaries and the number shown in the coverage has also wide gap.

In this context it is also note-worthy to mention that monitoring in ICDS implies an assessment of the day-to-day functioning of Anganwadis and Sub-Centres, evaluating the performance of functionaries and above all surveillance of some of the important health indices. Monthly monitoring forms have been introduced which carry the information in relation to performance of health and nutrition activities.
The guidelines for collecting the data and procedure for expediting and feed-back for an early action are given to the Anganwadis in format. These formats are to be initiated at Anganwadi workers level, then have to each the adviser via assigned ANMs, LHV, Medical Officer, Block Medical Officers on a time bound schedule. But our study shows that at each level appraisal of activities is casually done, appropriate corrective actions are seldom initiated and no close watch on important health indices is ensured for indepth study and action. We could also observe that the local community is not actively involved in the process of monitoring and review of the ICDS scheme at various levels. The community participation in all aspects of the scheme is not covered. The non-formal education covering involvement of mothers in Anganwadi or attendance in class, pre-school activities etc., are not monitored closely, effectively and correctly.

4.2.3 Monitoring of Health Aspects:

One of the most important component of the ICDS scheme is the health services for mothers and children. This includes immunisation, health check-up and referral services. It is essential that these services be closely and regularly monitored. Monitoring of health aspects includes monitoring of inputs, monitoring of processes and activities and monitoring of outputs.

Since the Anganwadi serves as the focal point for the supply of health services, the monitoring process must originate at the Anganwadi. Health monitoring is based on the Monthly Monitoring Report, the Anganwadi Level Report
on health aspects of the scheme. This report forms the basis of the sector level report, the PHC level report, the District Advisor's Report, and CMO's report. These reports are intended to initiate corrective actions at various levels of the project. But we have found that these reports are considered merely as routine paper work at least at the level of the Anganwadi. The Anganwadi workers prepare these reports on the last date of every month for which they may require the help of the ANM to complete some columns of the report by the 5th day of the following month. The ANM reviews the report, discusses them with the Anganwadi workers in her charge and delivers them to the LHV for the sector. But in our study we have found that due to the low educational qualifications, aptitude, training facilities and pre-occupations, the Anganwadi workers were not in a position to devote proper time and attention for adequate and correct informations in this regard. Neither does the ANM has sufficient time, aptitude, willingness and attitude for seeking the exact information.

The LHVs study the reports before delivering them to the Medical Officer. The Medical Officer reviews all the reports in his sector and discusses these in a meeting with all the Anganwadi workers, ANMs, LHVs and Supervisors of the centres. On the basis of these reports, health inputs, health activities and services in the sector are reviewed and priorities for the next month's programme are fixed. Health check-up and immunisation schedules are finalised.
in these meetings and schedules for meeting other requirements are arranged. Problems encountered in implementation of the programme is reviewed and plans for corrective actions is made. The Medical Officer incharge of the Sector prepares a report based on the discussions held in the meeting and sends it alongwith the monthly Monitoring Reports to the Medical Officer incharge of the PHC who prepares a monthly pre-level report. This report covers all aspects of the health programme in ICDS, viz, level of appointment and orientation of health personnel, health check-up and immunisation; visits of health staff to Anganwadis, availability of Medical supplies, and data on births and deaths. But all the respondents of our study were unanimous in saying that the health aspect of the ICDS scheme is just satisfactory and the visits of the Medical Officers are not quite frequent. Even ANMs seldom visit every household.

4.2.4 Monitoring of Training

The ICDS scheme lays great emphasis on the proper training of functionaries at all levels of the programme. For this purpose an ICDS Training Committee is set up in the Department of Women Welfare to review and guide the training programme. The National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development, Indian Council for Child Welfare and other selected training institutions, Medical Colleges and voluntary organisations are actively involved in the training programme. Detailed programmes for the training of
the various functionaries in the programme (CDPOs, Supervisors, Anganwadi workers, Medical Officers and para-medical workers) are designed. Responsibility for the training of Angwanwadi workers is entrusted to voluntary organisations such as the Indian Council for Child Welfare and its branches, Bharatiya Gramin Mahila Sangh, School for Social Work, Home Science Colleges and Institutions run by the State Governments.

Because of the crucial importance of training for successful implementation of the ICDS scheme, there is great need for the monitoring of training. The status of training of various functionaries is an important part of the work reporting in ICDS. The Monthly Progress Report prepared by the CDPO and sent to the Govt. of India and the State Govt. includes information on training of CDPOs, Supervisors and Anganwadis workers. In the annual report the CDPO sends information on the status of orientation of Medical Officers and other health staff in the project area. These reports are analysed at the project and state level and performance reports on training and orientation of ICDS functionaries are prepared. But in our study we could observe that the quality aspect of these training programmes are missing and no proper monitoring is being done. Whatever is done in the name of the monitoring is that of stereo-type work. The Anganwadi worker is the backbone of this programme who needs to be given an extensive and comprehensive training relating to various aspects of the ICDS scheme. For this the educational qualifications standard needs to be raised and proportionately their wages also.
4.3 Summing UP

To sum up, for the effective implementation of any development programme the essential requirements include, among many other things, an efficient management, effective supervision, control and follow-up of the programme. And for an effective supervision, control and follow-up the basic requirement is that of continuous monitoring of the programme. Thus, an appropriate monitoring system becomes essential to ensure full utilisation of the resources invested and to review the progress of the programme.

Monitoring can be defined as a process or part of a strategy to keep a close watch on the progress of implementation of a programme so as to ensure the timely completion of its various components within the desired framework by studying the difficulties and bottlenecks which are thrown up in the implementation and execution of the programme and by taking corrective action, wherever necessary.

It becomes pertinent to mention here that monitoring is not merely an information gathering activity. Of course, it starts from the collection of informations relating to the coverage of targets, supply of inputs, continuation of the programme, benefits of the programme as

obtained, and impediments, if any, in the implementation of the programme. Then this collected information is analysed and interpreted; and the results are supplied to the concerned organisation with suggestive corrective measures for the better implementation of the programme.

In this way, monitoring becomes a continuous process of information collection, compilation and communication to the concerned decision making authorities so that necessary corrective actions can be taken to remove the hindrances, if any, in the implementation of the programme. This makes the process of monitoring as an administrative activity and as a management tool through which administrative machinery controls the whole process of conversion of inputs into outputs, to achieve pre-determined goals and objectives of the programme within the stipulated framework.

One must recognise the fact that 'monitoring' is quite different from 'evaluation' though closely related to it. Monitoring is an organisational activity and is concerned with the collection, processing and communication of informations relating to the progress of the programme and the required follow up action. It is an executive process in which informations are collected by the administrative machinery so that, if need be, corrective measures can be taken for the proper implementation of the programme. On the other hand, evaluation is the procedure by which the programmes are studied to ascertain their
effectiveness in the fulfilment of the goals of the programme. It leads to an assessment of the results achieved and the lessons to be drawn for future improvement of the programme. Thus, evaluation is a process of assessing the results and impacts of a programme. This is a feedback information system for policy makers, and is generally undertaken by some other outside agency.

To conclude, one can say that monitoring starts from the collection of information about the implementation of a programme and goes into corrective measures. But, on the other hand, evaluation is the entire gamut of policy, planning and events; and makes recommendations for future changes in the policy framework. While evaluation is an ex-post-facto analysis, monitoring is a regular periodic assessment of progress of the programme. Evaluation helps in future plan and policy making. Monitoring provides information for decision-making and for taking corrective action by the management.