

Institutionalizing Monitoring & Evaluation for Accountable Governance

As Nepal's federal system matures, provincial governments are increasingly responsible for delivering development results. In Madhesh Province, this shift brought a critical challenge: while projects were being implemented across sectors, **Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) remained fragmented, procedural, and largely activity-focused.**

Without a formal legal and institutional framework, monitoring was often treated as a reporting requirement rather than a **decision-making and accountability function.** This limited the province's ability to:

- Track whether development interventions were delivering intended outcomes
- Address local implementation challenges in a timely and systematic way

Most importantly, the absence of a structured M&E system meant that **oversight remained distant from citizens**, with limited involvement of elected representatives at the constituency level.

The intervention: Building systems, skills, and rules

To address this gap, the **Provincial and Local Governance Strengthening Programme (PLGSP)** partnered with the **Office of the Chief Minister and Council of Ministers (OCMCM)** in Madhesh Province to strengthen results-based governance from the ground up.

The process began with a **three-day Results-Based**



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Monitoring and Evaluation (RBM&E) training for officials from provincial ministries. Designed as a practical and hands-on learning space, the training went beyond tools and templates. It opened up critical conversations on a deeper question: *How can Madhesh Province institutionalize M&E as a system, not just a function?*

These discussions directly informed the drafting of a formal procedural framework. With PLGSP's end-to-end support—ranging from technical inputs, advocacy, to facilitating stakeholder consultations and guiding inter-ministerial coordination—the **Madhesh Province Development Project Monitoring and Evaluation Procedure** took shape.

A major milestone was reached when the procedure was **approved by the provincial cabinet and officially published in the Provincial Gazette on 19 Chaitra 2082**, giving it formal legal standing. To ensure effective implementation, the procedure was further disseminated through **orientation programs for provincial officials**, reinforcing roles, responsibilities, and reporting standards.

Bringing oversight closer to citizens: How the reform works

One of the most significant features of the new M&E Procedure is the establishment of a **Provincial Constituency Monitoring and Evaluation Committee**, chaired by elected **Provincial Assembly members**.

This innovation fundamentally shifts how oversight functions in the province:

- **Project selection becomes more responsive:** As elected representatives lead constituency-level oversight, project priorities are more closely informed by citizen needs, local realities, and political accountability.
- **Implementation monitoring moves closer to the ground:** Constituency-based monitoring enables field-level verification of progress, early identification of bottlenecks, and closer tracking of results that matter to citizens.
- **Local issues are addressed through systems, not shortcuts:** Citizen concerns related to delays, quality, or access can now be formally raised, documented, and followed up through institutional mechanisms—reducing reliance on ad hoc or informal channels.

By clearly defining procedures, roles, and reporting requirements, and by backing them with legal authority, the reform strengthens **transparency, consistency, and accountability** across provincial policies, programme and development projects.

Looking ahead: A foundation for sustainable governance

This achievement represents more than the adoption of a new procedure. It lays the **institutional foundation for a future comprehensive Provincial M&E Act**, ensuring that results-based, citizen-responsive oversight is embedded in law and sustained beyond project cycles or political transitions.

For Madhesh Province, the reform marks a shift from monitoring as compliance to monitoring as **a tool for learning, accountability, and citizen trust**. For PLGSP, it demonstrates how targeted capacity development, legal frameworks, and political ownership can work together to translate federalism into better governance outcomes on the ground.