

# Terms of Reference

## Programme Evaluation — ILMpact

### Purpose

The evaluation will assess the extent to which the ILMpact remedial learning model has improved student learning outcomes and generated evidence to inform future scale-up. Specifically, the evaluation aims to: (1) independently validate the quality, reliability, and robustness of existing programme and assessment data; (2) assess the effectiveness of the model in improving learning outcomes; and (3) analyse the costs and value for money associated with achieving these results to support decisions on scalability and sustainability.

Document owner	Rizwan Mehmood
Document author	Rizwan Mehmood
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**Consultancy role title:** Rapid Independent Evaluation of ILMpact Programme funded by the Foreign and Commonwealth Development Office (FCDO)

**Location:** Islamabad

**Apply by:** 20 June 2026

### 1. Background and context about the project

Originally designed as a service delivery initiative, ILMpact aimed to enrol and keep in 250,000 girls and marginalized learners across fifteen districts in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with the primary goal of improving foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN) for these marginalised children, particularly girls. The programme's Theory of Change was revised in 2025 with more emphasis and priority given to in school remedial learning interventions. The programme's primary intervention is the implementation and testing of a Remedial Learning (RL) model targeting children in Grades 3–5 enrolled in schools, and out-of-school children (OOSC) aged 8–12 through Catch-up Learning Camps (CLP). The programme is also implementing other interventions including life skills training for children in early grades, STEAM club formations for girls in Grade 6-8, accessibility and rehabilitation work in schools, and safeguarding trainings to make schools safe and inclusive. With a whole school approach, the programme has targeted children from ECE to Grade 10 under different interventions.

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ILMpact originally envisaged two cohorts of intervention by September 2027 with an endline assessment, planned in 2027. However, the programme's original duration has been affected by two converging factors: funding constraints and a strategic shift in FCDO's programming approach — from direct service delivery towards system support, moving away from external implementation toward supporting resilient state-led educational systems. As a result, an early closure is now planned for September 2026, ahead of the originally envisaged second cohort and endline assessment cycle.

During the year 2025–26, ILMpact reached 200,692 children across 530 schools in Punjab and KPK, of whom 48,741 girls in Grades 3–5 received targeted remedial learning support. The programme re-enrolled 34,000 out-of-school and dropout children, with a further 15,000 OOSC enrolled following the catchup learning camps. Beyond learning outcomes, 125,333 children received health screening through qualified health practitioners, while 5,430 teachers and teacher coaches were trained to sustain quality delivery. Community engagement was equally substantial, with 3,879 parents and caregivers through PTC and SMC platforms mobilised for school improvement, and minor repairs and rehabilitation work initiated in 400 schools.

Given this context, British Council and FCDO have agreed to commission an independent evaluation in lieu of the planned endline assessment. The evaluation aims to assess the effectiveness and scalability of the remedial learning model, and to generate credible evidence that can inform stakeholder decisions for a system wide implementation.

## 2. About the role of the specialist supplier (Evaluator)

The supplier will provide credible and actionable evidence on the performance of the ILMpact remedial learning model. Guided by the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria of Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Impact, and Sustainability, the assessment will examine the results achieved and validate the reliability and robustness of existing programme and assessment data. The supplier will assess the learning gains attributable to the programme by analysing available pre and post learning data of treatment and control groups and will also examine the robustness of data collection processes, frequency, quality and consistency of the reported data. The supplier will conduct value-for-money analysis using programme financial data and existing VfM approach adopted by the programme. The evaluation will be split into two stages, and will include the following key evaluation tasks are:

### STAGE 1:

- **Data Quality Verification:** Independently verify the quality and robustness of existing programme data, including validation of sampling approaches; consistency of data collection processes; assessment of the reliability of reported learning gains; specification of datasets used. Following this review, the supplier will submit an interim report setting out what can and cannot reasonably be inferred from the available data and proposing the approach to be taken for the evaluation.

### STAGE 2:

- **Analytical Approach to Assess Programme Effectiveness:** Building on the findings of Stage 1, the supplier will propose and undertake the most appropriate analytical approach to assess programme effectiveness, considering the nature, quality, completeness, and comparability of the available data. The programme is interested in approaches that are innovative, nimble, and rigorous, and the supplier should set out in their proposal the range of analytical approaches they

may consider and, following review of the dataset, recommend a method that is credible, proportionate, and appropriate to the evidence available. The selected approach should clearly explain what can reasonably be concluded about programme performance and learning gains, and any limitations or caveats that apply.

- **Data to be reviewed and used in this Impact evaluation:** The supplier shall review and analyse the ILMpact data outlined below to assess changes in key outcomes throughout the programme period:
  - Programme baseline and endline data, including comparative analysis of treatment and control groups.
  - Baseline, midline, and endline assessment data of students grade 3 to 6 and ECCE/ Katchi
  - ECCE/ Katchi, Catch -Up Learning Programme (CLP), Grade 1 and 2 Children enrolment data.
  - Pre-training and post-training assessment data of teachers.
  - Classroom Observation Data.
  - Validated data collected by third party monitoring firm
- **Learning Gains (Effectiveness):** Drawing on the verified dataset, assess whether the programme has produced measurable improvements in FLN outcomes across English, Urdu, and Mathematics, disaggregated by gender, province, and disability status where the data permit defined in the project LFA.
- **Cost and Efficiency (proportionate VfM analysis):** Develop a credible and proportionate approach to value for money for different elements of the programme, drawing on programme financials and existing VfM approach implemented by the programme. The purpose is to estimate cost per child with learning gain achieved.
- **Impact:** Assess the broader and longer-term intended and unintended effects of the programme on learners, teachers, schools, and communities, drawing on verified data. This includes explicitly evaluating whether observed FLN gains have translated into wider educational impact, and presenting findings as a contribution analysis with appropriate limitations noted.
- **Actionable Recommendations:** Generate actionable recommendations for British Council, FCDO and provincial governments on model adaptation and scale-up.

### 3. Key Evaluation Questions

The below are proposed evaluation questions; the supplier is expected to contribute to refining and finalising the evaluation questions as part of their inception work, ensuring they are appropriately scoped, measurable, and cover the OECD DAC evaluation criteria. The supplier is expected to look deeply into the Programme's Theory of Change, LFA, GOAL results framework and implementation plans.

#### Relevance

- Is the TaRL-based remedial learning model relevant for Pakistani schools & context?
- Have the programme's RL and CLP interventions produced measurable improvements in FLN outcomes?

#### Learning Gains (Effectiveness)

- Based on the verified data, what measurable improvements in FLN outcomes (English, Urdu, Mathematics) are reported over the programme period, and how do these vary by gender, province, and disability status?

- Are the reported learning gains consistent with the programme’s baseline–endline design, and what caveats apply to their interpretation given data limitations?

### Cost and Efficiency

- What is the estimated cost per learner and per unit of learning gain, drawing on available programme expenditure data?

### Impact

- What evidence exists that the programme has contributed to sustained improvements in FLN outcomes?
- Have the gains in FLN outcomes contributed to broader educational impacts, such as improved transition rates, reduced dropout, or increased school attendance — and how do these vary by gender, province, and disability status?

Note: The evaluation questions above are illustrative and not exhaustive. The supplier is expected to propose additional or revised questions at inception stage to ensure full coverage of all DAC criteria, including Coherence, Sustainability, and any cross-cutting themes (gender, inclusion, disability). The final set of evaluation questions will be agreed jointly between the supplier and the commissioning team prior to the start of fieldwork.

## 4. Methodology

The evaluation will use a mixed-methods design approach. The quantitative component will focus on independently verifying data quality and undertaking a descriptive analysis of learning gains. Through qualitative analysis, feedback, interviews and FGDs, the evaluation team will answer key evaluation questions around relevance, efficiency, sustainability and value for money.

Method	Source / Sample	Purpose
Data quality verification + descriptive analysis of learning gains	Programme assessment datasets (baseline and endline) provided by ILMpact.	Independently verify data quality (sampling, attrition, comparability); provide descriptive analysis of learning gains by grade, gender, and disability. Findings to be presented as indicative, not causal.
Key informant interviews (KIIs)	FCDO, ILMpact management, provincial education depts (CEOs/DEOs), master trainers, Lead trainers (~20-30 interviews) in KP and Punjab	Effectiveness and cost efficiency
Focus group discussions (FGDs)	Teachers, school management committees, parents, and learners (8–10 FGDs across both provinces)	Effectiveness and equity dimensions (learning gains by gender, disability)
Document review	Programme reports, MEL data, training records, learning data review, dashboard review,	Learning Impact gains, VfM analysis. Synthesis of secondary data collected by third party MEL firm

	financial data review for Vfm analysis, After Action Review Reports and Beneficiary Surveys	
Report Preparation and Presentation	Presentation to British Council (ILMpact) and FCDO	Feedback incorporation

## 5. Deliverables

- Inception report including finalised methodology and workplan; a data strategy notes specifying which dataset parameters (baseline–endline comparability, and how sampling, attrition, and potential sources of bias will be addressed).
- Draft evaluation report for stakeholder review.
- Final evaluation report (max forty pages, excluding annexes) covering the three evaluation tasks with findings, conclusions, and actionable recommendations. Findings on learning gains must clearly state the indicative (not causal) nature of the analysis and any caveats relating to data quality.
- Slide deck and facilitation of a validation/dissemination workshop with key stakeholders.

## 6. Timeline (June-July 2026)

Days	Phase	Key Activities
One week	Inception	Document review, methodology finalisation, data access, stakeholder mapping, inception report
Second-Third Week	Field data collection	KIIs and FGDs across Punjab and KP; site visits to sample schools and CLP sites
Fourth week	Quantitative analysis	Baseline–endline analysis; descriptive statistics; disaggregation by gender, province, and disability status
Fifth Week	Synthesis	Integration of findings; evidence assessment
Sixth Week	Validation	Validation of results before incorporating in the draft report
Sixth Week	Reporting	Draft report, stakeholder validation workshop, final report submission

## 7. Fee

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Maximum fee for the assignment will be determined based on the experience and qualification of consultant and proposed approach of evaluation.

*\*Note: The quotation must remain open for acceptance by the British Council for a minimum of thirty days from the date that it is issued to the British Council in response to the requirement.*

## **8. Reporting and communication**

The consultant will liaise / coordinate with the ILMpact Senior MEL Lead for assignment oversight and deliverable review.

## **9. Qualifications and experience required.**

- Advanced degree in education, economics, social sciences, statistics, or a related field.
- Demonstrated expertise in mixed-methods evaluation; strong quantitative skills for descriptive and comparative analysis; experience with data quality assessment including sampling validation and attrition analysis.
- Strong qualitative research skills — experience facilitating FGDs and KIIs in complex, multilingual contexts.
- Prior experience evaluating education programmes in Pakistan or comparable South Asian contexts; familiarity with TaRL/FLN approaches is an advantage.
- Knowledge of evidence-based evaluation standards and OECD evaluation criteria.
- Proficiency in Stata, R, or Python for quantitative analysis; ability to produce clear visualisations and accessible reporting.
- Availability to conduct field visits to Punjab and KP within the assignment period.

## **10. How to apply**


Interested consultants or firms should submit the technical and financial proposal to two following emails [atif.naveed@britishcouncil.org](mailto:atif.naveed@britishcouncil.org) and [Rizwan.mahmood@britishcouncil.org](mailto:Rizwan.mahmood@britishcouncil.org). For any queries, please contact Rizwan Mahmood (Senior MEL Lead) through email.

- Technical proposal: understanding of the assignment, proposed methodology, and workplan.
- Financial proposal: itemised budget with daily rates and estimated costs.
- CV of key personnel and at least two relevant evaluation samples.

## **11. Criteria for evaluation**

Following Criteria would be used for Evaluating the proposals.

- Professional qualification relevant to the assignment (30%)
- Relevant experience of Education Programme Evaluations (20%)
- Technical Approach to carry out the assignment (20%)

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- Responsiveness to GESSI in technical proposal (10%)
  - Financial Proposal (Value for money) (20%)