

Aawaz II: Research Consultants (Short Term Technical Assistance)

Islamabad, Pakistan

Purpose

British Council seeks to recruit **three to five** short-term senior research consultants with demonstrated research expertise in the programme thematic areas of gender-based violence (GBV), child marriage, social cohesion and tolerance. The consultants will support the Aawaz II Programme Management Unit (PMU) by designing and undertaking research that advance the understanding and knowledge, by addressing gaps in the current literature on the specific topic.

The research consultants will produce evidence on the specific thematic area for programme learning, highlighting programme results especially behaviour change and citizens' engagement in line with Aawaz II theory of change and change pathways.

The British Council

The British Council is the UK's international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities. We create friendly knowledge and understanding between the people of the UK and other countries. We do this by making a positive contribution to the UK and the countries we work with – changing lives by creating opportunities, building connections, and engendering trust. Founded in 1934, we are a UK charity governed by Royal Charter and a UK public body.

Aawaz II

To achieve the stated programme impact of a more inclusive, tolerant, and peaceful Pakistan, with less exploitation and intolerance, Aawaz II is working with local communities in 15 districts of KP and Punjab to promote the rights of women, youth, persons with disabilities, religious minorities, and other excluded groups, to strengthen and facilitate their development. Aawaz II aims to achieve these objectives by creating a more protective and enabling environment for girls, boys, women, youth, religious minorities, the differently abled and those at risk of exploitation.

Currently Aawaz II works with civil society partners in 15 districts of KP and Punjab, and at the provincial level through community level forums and processes include Aawaz Aagahi Centres (AACs), community-based and led Village Forums (VFs), and District and Provincial Forums. The programme aims to **enhance capacities of local communities for behaviour change to reduce community acceptance of child marriage, gender-based violence (GBV), intolerance, exclusion, exploitation and harmful practices, promote social cohesion and tolerance**, and provide information referrals and facilitate citizen-state engagement for uptake of services. The programme interventions for behaviour change and citizen-state engagement are driven by the Forum members and the Aawaz Change Agents (ACAs - young volunteers) supported by the AAC resource persons and Community Facilitators.

Thematic Areas, Research Needs and Challenges

Aawaz II has been successful in facilitating social norm change and entrenched discriminatory behaviours. It has fostered inclusion of women, youth, persons with disabilities (PWDs), religious minorities and transgender persons, ensuring participation in activities and decision making in community forums. It has engaged diverse groups, across the age, gender, social class divides to promote awareness and prevention of GBV, child marriage and intolerance. The challenge is to amplify and sustain the momentum of change in each of these areas. The possible key questions around which the research can be designed is what works and why; what has not worked as well and why. There is a need to identify what will help amplify the change so that communities are more visible and vocal about their support for social change in terms of social inclusion, reduced acceptance of child marriage or GBV, less discrimination and more tolerance.

For example, the findings from a recent KAP survey by Aawaz II reveal that despite knowledge of rights, half the survey respondents justified domestic/intimate partner violence under certain circumstances, indicating deep-rooted normative acceptance of violence. Similarly, despite understanding the consequences of child marriage for the girl and her future, the practice persists. Research could unpack household decision-making dynamics, barriers to action, triggers that enable successful prevention, and identify behaviour change pathways that reduce social acceptance and empower communities to act. The survey findings also note that while

respondents are aware of legal and constitutional rights, discriminatory attitudes and exclusionary practices persist toward minorities, persons with disabilities and transgender persons. Research could examine every day experiences of exclusion, analyse drivers of intolerance, and identify practical strategies for strengthening cohesion, acceptance, and inclusion, to scale up the effect of community led social cohesion.

About The Role

Research Consultants are expected to design, conduct, oversee and manage research activities aligned with the themes as identified, including how the issue can be effectively approached to close the gaps in understanding and programming. S/he will be responsible for research design, developing data collection methodologies, tools, conduct the field work, data analysis, and to extract themes and generate insights/summaries, presentations. S/he will contribute to producing high quality research outputs, policy recommendations based on research evidence for a range of audiences. The research undertaken should lead to learning and knowledge products and evidence to report behaviour change as per Aawaz II theory of change and change pathways.

The consultants will engage with the MEL and Research team at the Aawaz Programme management Unit (PMU), and the Team Lead.

Scope of Work

- Design a research study (using quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods), and detailed work plan
- Conduct desk research, design appropriate tools for the research, collect primary data as required, and conduct analysis as per the plan
- Deep dive into thematic areas
- Develop a presentation on preliminary findings and draft report
- Finalise report after comments from the Aawaz II team
- Develop a policy brief or other research products based on the findings (with support from the PMU).
- Meetings with Aawaz II team as required

Deliverables

- Research design and plan
- Literature Review – Mapping and synthesize
- Presentation on preliminary findings
- Draft Report and Final Report (incorporating all feedback)
- Assets – policy briefs, key insights documents, etc (as agreed during inception meeting)

Duration

The duration will vary for each research design submitted, to be carried out over 3 months with approximately 3-to-4-week level of effort.

Experience And Qualifications

This is an expert research role, which requires master's or advanced university degree in Social Sciences, Economics, Development studies or a related field.

Key requirements

- Experience of 7 to 10 years, designing, implementing and managing research (qualitative and quantitative) on any one of these GBV, Child Marriage and Social Cohesion and Inclusion, with national / international organisations
 - Cross cutting areas can be focus on Aawaz II priority groups e.g. women, youth, religious minorities, persons with disabilities (PWDs) and transgender persons.
- Experience in research around behaviour change interventions, using qualitative or quantitative methods
- Experience of translating data and research into developing policy briefs, case studies, lesson learnt documents and other knowledge products
- Excellent communication and writing skills in English,

- Fluency in qual or quant software skills (please mention) is an asset

Other requirements: The research study must be completed within the stipulated and mutually agreed timeline.

Please share your Curriculum Vitae highlighting your relevant research experience, thematic expertise (i.e. gender-based violence, child marriage, social cohesion, intolerance), and any previous consultancy or similar assignments with Urooj.Ejaz@britishcouncil.org

Please use this subject "STTA Research Consultant - Your Name, **Area of expertise**" in the subject line of your email. Deadline to apply is by **10 December, 2025**.