AAWAZ II: PROMOTING INCLUSION and SOCIAL COHESION

Programme Overview
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Programme Overview

Aawaz II is a DFID funded, five-year long programme which will work with local communities in 45 districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Punjab to promote the rights of children, women, youth, and other marginalised groups, to strengthen their control over their own development.

The AAWAZ II Programme has four pillars and the British Council is leading on the delivery of the community pillars relating to community dialogue, awareness and voice, and social cohesion. As part of the delivery of these pillars, AAWAZ II will provide information referrals, facilitate citizen-state engagement for uptake of services and enhance capacities of local communities. In Phase I (Jan 2020- Dec. 2021) Aawaz II will work with civil society organisations to implement the community-based interventions in 22 selected districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab.

Through these downstream partners, Aawaz II will be developing sustainable community fora that help augment and strengthen the voice of the marginalised. The communities will be provided access to referrals and information through Aawaz Aagahi Centres (AACs), Village and District Forums. The transformative effect of increased awareness and information, and the provision of training, support and linkages will result in a sustainable change within communities. Strong engagement with young people driving this change through their collective social action and direct support of community fora will ensure long-term ownership and sustainability of the behaviour change.

1.1 Change Pathways

Aawaz II is focusing on two interlinked change pathways to deliver the community-based interventions and contribute to the overall programme impact of a more inclusive Pakistan for women, youth and marginalised populations. The pathways focus on changing awareness, attitudes and behaviours and increasing referrals and citizen engagement on issues of child labour, early marriage, community conflict, gender-based violence, discrimination, exploitation and other harmful practices. This will be achieved by building capacities of communities, amplifying voices for change, shifting attitudes, providing information referrals and encouraging communities and duty bearers to work together to improve access to services.

The programme is committed to a transformative change in the lives of vulnerable populations. It defines vulnerable populations to include women, youth, minorities, persons with disabilities (PWDs), transgender persons and other marginalised groups across different socio-economic categories.
1.2 Key Programme Principles

Aawaz II is committed to reducing vulnerabilities of marginalised groups, who experience social exclusion and are unable to participate in social, political, economic and cultural life of the society. They are denied access to decision making processes and institutions and have limited access to equal opportunities and resources, and hence no voice, influence and control over their own development. Inequalities and social exclusion adversely impact the exercise of fundamental human rights by women, girls, youth, minorities, persons with disabilities, transgender persons and other marginalised populations. The following programme principles emphasise inclusion, diversity, equality, responsiveness to interests of vulnerable populations, do no harm, safeguarding and sustainability.

1.2.1 Non-discrimination

The commitment to non-discrimination and ensuring equal participation of all segments of community in programme activities irrespective of any class, gender, caste, religion, ethnicity, location, physical and social identity distinctions. The principle implies that the programme delivery teams to consider the barriers to the participation of the most marginalised groups in Aawaz forums and find ways of involving them in community dialogue, capacity building and demand generation processes.

It is important to understand and identify varying interests, influence, resistance and support from different types of community stakeholders. Recognition of types and patterns of discrimination will help the programme to take measures to integrate the interests of marginalised groups and enable them to benefit from the interventions equally.
1.2.2 Leave-no-one-behind
A second principle prioritises the most vulnerable and marginalised individuals and groups to address their needs and interest. The delivery team will ensure that the programme reaches all social groups affected by exclusion, exploitation and harmful practices, and are active participants and beneficiaries of the interventions.

1.2.3 Do No Harm (DNH)
This principle calls for understanding the programme environment, analysing varying behaviours and interests within communities, and aligning interventions to maximise positive impact and minimise adverse effects, including community conflicts. A lack of consideration for DNH may result in exacerbating the vulnerabilities of women and other marginalised groups.

The Do No Harm (DNH) principle is also recognised by the programme as an important principle for conflict pre-emption.

1.2.4 Safeguarding
Safeguarding is the protection of people from harm, abuse and exploitation. The aim is to minimise the likelihood and impact of abuse and exploitation towards the people involved in the programme: participants and beneficiaries (both direct and indirect), partners and suppliers, and staff and volunteers.

Through its various protection policies, compliance rules and reporting procedures, Aawaz II will prevent and respond to abusive situations and decrease the potential for harm to the vulnerable priority groups. The details of safeguarding strategy and related policies are covered in the safeguarding section of the document.

1.2.5 Sustainability
Sustainable programming ensures that programme interventions result in benefits beyond the life of the programme. Aawaz II considers sustainability at three levels by:

I) Investing in individuals’ capacity, knowledge and action through interventions aimed at long-term behaviour change;

II) Enhancing community ownership, support and commitment to continued engagement by connecting them with duty bearers in mandated and non-mandated spaces;

III) Investing in upskilling local partners, community-based organisations, advocacy groups and forums to continue utilising and facilitating linkages developed between citizens and government and other programmes.
Aawaz II Approach and Strategy

**Behaviour change and enabling environment:** The programme recognises the barriers to participation of women, youth and marginalised groups in economic, political and social spheres, and their limited entitlement to resources and rights. Transformative change is an in-depth process of change influencing negative norms and behaviours and facilitating alternate ways of doing things. Aawaz II seeks an enabling environment for the vulnerable groups and transformative change in patterns of exclusion, discrimination and exploitation related to child labour, early and forced marriage, GBV and conflict which are the priority themes for the programme.

The critical areas of programme delivery include community participation, behaviour change and capacity building, engagement with the government and wider stakeholders, partnerships, networking, advocacy, learning and evidence generation.

The programme focus is on changing community behaviours and attitudes towards harmful practices and intolerance while working simultaneously towards creating an enabling environment for change by establishing community platforms and networks and strengthening citizen engagement.

Behaviour change is about positively influencing the individual, family and community behaviour to create a supportive environment for all social groups. Aawaz II focuses on identifying existing networks and influencers within the network and their reach, to strengthen the social connectedness. It requires learning and participation through regular dialogues to promote positive social norms and behaviour. Social platforms encourage voice and capacity building to strengthen and extend the networking particularly for excluded and disadvantaged groups.

The process of empowerment includes elements of conscientisation, equality of access and opportunity, participation in decision-making processes and ability to make choices to change...
harmful social norms and patterns of inequalities and exclusion. The empowerment and behaviour change interventions focus at three levels:

- Building confidence and capacity of **individuals** to recognise their self-worth, unlearn negative norms and personal biases, seek information to engage in decision making processes and exercise voice to claim rights for themselves and others.

- Enabling **family decision makers and community influencers** to change attitudes and social norms through dialogue and highlighting positive examples of enhancing opportunities for women and vulnerable groups.

- Raising awareness for behaviour change and collective consciousness of discrimination and harmful practices to shift discriminatory norms at the **community level**.

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**Fig. 3**

**Elements of Empowerment**

- **Access** to information, training, safe spaces for voice, dialogue and action

- **Consciousness** of power and gender dynamics and resultant inequalities

- Inclusive and equal **participation** in mainstream decision making processes

- Building alliances, driving leadership for collective influence and **control** to address inequalities

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**Aawaz II: Working with different stakeholders and institutions**

- Government departments in provinces, districts and local government, mandated committees of relevant departments, commissions on status of women, human rights, child rights; elected representatives and bodies;

- Community women, men and marginalised groups, CSOs working on relevant themes;

- Employers of child labour and trade, and bar associations.

- The programme will also engage with programmes such as social protection (BISP) and donor supported initiatives including the Aawaz II UN Joint Programme and the DFID funded Sub-National Governance Programme II.
Aawaz II Delivery Model

A key feature of the delivery model is working with provincial partners and downstream district partners (DSPs) to mobilise communities, setting up Aagahi Centres and forums to provide safe and inclusive spaces for dialogue and engagement and amplify voices for change at village, tehsil, district and provincial levels.

Downstream partners will be responsible for setting up sustainable community fora including, Aawaz Aagahi Centres (AACs), Village Forums (VFs), supporting youth volunteers and social action projects and connecting these structures to the District and Provincial forums (ADFs and PFs).

**Aawaz Aagahi Centres** at select Tehsils in the Aawaz districts will serve as information and referral hubs, providing a safe space for community members to obtain information on rights and services, facilitate citizen-state engagement for uptake of public services, and promote inclusion and social cohesion.
The Tehsil AACs are physical structures located in proximity to government departments and services to facilitate access for citizens. The trained resource persons and community outreach teams of each Tehsil AAC will support communities in the formation and working of Village / Neighbourhood Forums (VFs).

The village/neighbourhood is a community-level forum to raise and discuss communities’ concerns and identify respective solutions.

**Aawaz Aagahi Centres**

- **Tehsil AACs** will serve as information hubs and encourage community members to access the centres for information.
  - Disseminate information on rights, legal provision, available services and structures related to programme themes.
  - AACs through its outreach team support the process of community mobilisation and capacity building.
  - Facilitate community dialogues with different stakeholders and lead on referrals and linkages with different range of services providers.

- **AACs** will engage in advocacy and behaviour change campaigns and support youth volunteers in implementation of social action projects.
- **AAC handbook** will provide guidelines on its management and functions to maximise the potential of AAC to function effectively.

**Village/ Neighbourhood Forum**

**Composition**
- 20-25 members from diverse background; At least 60% women representation;
- Represent cluster of 3-5 villages;
- Meet monthly to discuss issues based on agreed agenda.

**Functions**

- **Access to Information** Information to communities about rights and services
- **Response to Concerns** Taking practical steps and actions. Support to volunteers-led social action projects
- **Referrals** Efficient and effective referrals to service providers
- **Services** Assess availability and access of services.
- **Action Planning & Record Management** Quarterly action plans, record of meetings, agenda, resolutions, participation, activities and finances
Provincial partners will be setting up and managing **Aawaz District and Provincial Forums**. ADF at the district level will ensure that communities’ voices are raised and heard with district administrations and other duty-bearers.

**District Forum**

*Purpose*
- Community structure at the district level to raise and discuss communities’ concerns and ensure communities’ voices are raised and heard with district administrations and other duty-bearers

*Composition*
- 15-20 members
- Representation from government departments, district administration, CSOs, members from Aawaz forums,
- Meet quarterly to discuss concerns raised through VF and other points for advocacy at the district level in consultation with provincial partner

**Functions of District Forum**
- **Access to information**
  - Support VFs in provision of timely information on services and the process of accessing them at district level
- **Action plans**:
  - Address key concerns with identified priorities, action points, responsibilities, timelines and follow-up
- **Referrals**:
  - Efficient and effective referrals to respective service providers. Support in setting up referral mechanisms, pathways and development of a service directory
- **Monitoring of Services**
  - Advocacy with respective service providers/duty bearers for filling in gaps in the provision of respective services and their quality delivery
- **Record Management**
  - Record of all meetings, resolutions, agenda, attendance, advocacy activities

The Provincial Forum will seek to raise community concerns with key decision-making authorities and duty-bearers at the provincial level and support dialogue on community issues that require a system and policy-level response.

**Provincial Forum**

*Purpose*
- Raise community voices with key decision-making authorities and duty-bearers at the provincial level and support dialogue on community issues that require a system and policy-level response

*Composition*
- 18 - 20 members;
- Representation from different government departments, commission, CSOs, Aawaz provincial and district partners, focal person of District Forum and representation of women, youth, minorities, transgender and PWD

**Functions of Provincial Forum**
- **Review**:
  - Feedback from Aawaz forums about services and advocate for specific structures/services
- **Advocate**:
  - For addressing gaps in policies, legal provisions, support services for marginalised groups
- **Prepare**:
  - Strategic plan to inform advocacy initiatives, arrange policy dialogues and track the outcomes of policy and lobbying initiatives
- **Advocate**:
  - For the allocation of resources and improvements in processes for specific issues under programme thematic areas
- **Report**:
  - On conflict triggers to government authorities and develop effective linkages with support mechanisms to pre-empt community based conflicts
Aawaz II focuses on developing a cadre of **youth volunteers** (women and men aged 18–35 years) drawn from Aawaz communities. They will be supported with training and mentoring to work in their communities as volunteers and provided with skills and tools to identify, plan and execute social action projects aimed at addressing social and programme thematic issues. Aawaz youth volunteers will include members of diverse marginalised groups. This network of volunteers will remain connected and involved in the programme and continue to receive skills, mentoring and project support from downstream partners.
Programme Components and Key Interventions

The main components of the programme are; convening and awareness raising of Village Forums and AACs, capacity building for behaviour change, youth volunteers and social action projects, citizen engagement and referrals and early warning systems and early response mechanisms.

2.1 Convening and Awareness Raising of Village Forums and AACs

**Purpose:** safe and inclusive spaces for dialogue, awareness-raising and information dissemination.

- Downstream partners will organise initial meetings with communities to introduce the programme and explore their interest to engage with the programme. The meetings will facilitate the selection of villages, initial discussions on the role and functions of the VFs, and help identify individuals who could be potential members of the forum, AACs’ community outreach teams, resource persons and youth volunteers.

- Awareness raising around citizens’ rights, issues of equality, diversity and inclusion, exploitation and discrimination caused by child labour, early/forced marriage, GBV, other harmful practices. It is a first step in changing attitudes, practice and behaviour of communities to reduce acceptance of harmful practices and engage constructively with duty bearers for services and actions. Through a participatory process, VFs will identify their priorities for change, the stakeholders for that change, and the most effective way of bringing about that change.

- The Tehsil AACs, serving as information hubs for the community, will disseminate information on rights, legal provisions, available government services and structures related to the programme focus themes. The AACs will facilitate community dialogues with different stakeholders and lead on referrals and linkages with a range of services providers. AACs will engage in community level advocacy and behaviour change campaigns and support youth volunteers in implementation of social action projects.

2.2 Capacity Building for Behaviour Change

**Purpose:** invest in the capacity enhancement of a critical mass of community members to effect behaviour change and engage in dialogue and decision-making to reduce vulnerabilities and promote protection of rights.

- Community members from Aawaz forums, AACs resource persons, youth volunteers, local leaders, women, men, youth, minorities, PWDs, transgender, and persons from diverse marginalised groups will be trained.

- Implementing partners will be training recipients and providers. A pool of trainers will be selected from the implementing partners, British Council’s network of active citizenship facilitators and AAC teams to cascade a series of trainings for other community members.
Training and learning methodology will be experiential, sensitive to local needs, and adaptive. It will identify and address specific learning needs of local communities through a continuous learning process.

The thematic training areas include early and forced marriage, child labour including bonded labour, gender-based violence (GBV), conflict pre-emption, active citizenship, leadership and decision making, role and management of AACS and Aawaz forums. Safe programming will be integrated as a core element in trainings for all participants to ensure key programme principles are reflected in implementation.

The programme will work together with the implementing partners to ensure quality assurance and supervision, assess training utilisation and capture lessons learned.

2.2.1 Youth Volunteers and Social Action Projects

Youth Volunteers will undergo a rigorous learning and mentoring process that exposes them to self-growth, citizen rights and gender equality, community engagement and leadership skills and concepts related to child labour, early and forced marriage, gender-based violence.

After their training, youth volunteers will develop and implement social action projects with targeted actions for specific groups and audiences to facilitate change in the attitudes and behaviour of individuals, households and communities. They will have access to e-learning and periodic learning exchanges that will provide an opportunity and access to develop connections and networks with other volunteers and partners to learn innovative ways to address harmful practices.
the network of youth volunteers will support the programme in community dialogue, community campaigns and civil documentation drives—birth registration, computerised national identity cards (CNICs), etc.—and in facilitating citizen-state engagement.

2.3 Citizen Engagement and Referrals

**Purpose:** promote informed citizens engagement and provide relevant referrals for information seeking citizens

- DSPs will initiate contact and relationship building with formal and informal service providers, including duty bearers, followed by continued engagement and relationship building. They will facilitate dialogues with duty bearers and elected representatives to support communities to voice their needs for services and protection of rights through the Aawaz forums and Tehsil AACs.

- DSPs will map existing relevant services, mandated and non-mandated mechanisms/structures and relevant programmes available within local communities. The information will be used to prepare referral directories and information leaflets for dissemination through AACs and outreach teams.

- They will develop a structured plan for referrals and linkages with relevant available services and support mechanisms. Referrals can be for a variety of services—prevention, protection, prescriptions, shelters, etc. The AACs resource persons will be trained to identify the type of services needed and provide information accordingly.

- The community forums and Tehsil AACs will link with the Aawaz district and provincial forums for representation of their concerns, to strengthen the advocacy and lobbying with provincial policy makers and elected representatives.

2.4 Social Cohesion and Conflict Pre-emption

**Purpose:** facilitate a process of supporting societal change helping people and communities to become more cohesive, resilient and able to manage their conflicts, at the individual as well communal level, without resorting to violence.¹

A socially cohesive society is one where all groups have a sense of belonging, participation, inclusion, recognition and legitimacy.

Social cohesion is the capacity of a society to minimise disparities and marginalisation – to

¹ Aawaz I Output 2 Implementing Guidelines
manage differences and divisions to ensure equity, equality, and social justice.²

- Aawaz II focuses on three critical sources of conflict i.e. low-profile community conflict, violence stemming from harmful practices, including child labour and early marriage and violence against minorities.

- Community-driven analysis will support interventions and behaviour change strategies, enhance the capacity of citizens and communities, organise dialogues between groups, and establish community-based mechanisms to detect and pre-empt conflict and promote social cohesion. The assumption is that a participatory and phased approach will bring about change incrementally at different levels.

- Community-based mechanisms to identify potential disputes (early warnings) will lead to discussions and dialogues within the communities through the village forums to address the situation. The early warning system (EWS) and early response mechanism (ERM) will function at the village, district, and provincial forums and the Aagahi Centres.

- Coordination and collaboration with relevant stakeholders (government institutions), community members and Aawaz partners actors will be key in supporting the communities to pre-empt potential conflict situations and promote social cohesion.

2.5 Safeguarding

2.5.1 What is Safeguarding?

**Purpose:** protecting individuals and communities from unintended harm, preventing and responding to harm caused by, abuse, harassment, bullying or sexual exploitation.

The definition of abuse contained in the British Council’s child and adult safeguarding policies draws on the World Health Organisation’s definition:

‘abuse’ or ‘maltreatment’ constitutes all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the individual’s health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power’ (WHO)

This includes physical abuse including self-harm, sexual abuse, psychological and emotional abuse, domestic abuse, institutional abuse, neglect and modern-day slavery and unjustified discrimination

The purpose of safeguarding is to minimise the likelihood and impact of these actions on people in the Aawaz communities and those who are working with the programme.³

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² Adapted from definition contained in UN and EU documents on social cohesion.
³ This aligns with DFID’s definition of safeguarding contained in the enhanced due diligence guide, DFID and British Council Code of Conduct and UN definitions of abuse.
The Aawaz II programme will ensure a thorough risk assessment while adopting conflict and gender sensitive approaches in all its interventions as part of its safeguarding approach. A safeguarding implementation plan for the whole life cycle of the programme will be developed, reviewed regularly and updated annually.

2.5.2 Safeguarding Principles
The safeguarding principles are:

- All individuals shall be treated equally, irrespective of race, gender, religion/or none, sexual orientation or disability
- Do no harm
- Everyone has responsibility for safeguarding
- Organisations have a safeguarding duty of care to beneficiaries (including specific duty of care for child beneficiaries’ and adults at risk), staff and volunteers, including where downstream partners are part of delivery
- Always act with integrity, be transparent and accountable
- All activity is done in the best interests of the child/adult at risk
- A child is defined as someone under the age of 18
- Organisations that work with children and vulnerable adults should apply a safeguarding lens to their promotional communications and fundraising activities.

Aawaz II programme approaches complement these, through the support to improved and equitable social and gender relationships and facilitating people and communities by strengthening local approaches to safeguarding.

2.5.3 Induction, awareness raising and training of staff and partners
Aawaz II team members, partners, external contacts and beneficiaries need to understand the safeguarding commitments that Aawaz II has made, and the process for raising a concern or a complaint, in order to be effective. In order to do this Aawaz II will:

- Include information about how to raise concerns with Aawaz II team members and implementation partners in key public information material produced by the team.
- Safeguarding orientation is included in all trainings, including those of new staff and volunteers’ induction

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4 These are aligned with UN Convention on the Rights of a Child (UNCRC)
Conduct regular internal team trainings and refreshers on safeguarding to make sure that programme staff are aware of what is in the code of conduct and internalise compliance with code values, what concerns/incidents to report and how

Safeguarding measures are a feature of all planning events, activities etc.

2.5.4 Capacity Development
A more specific approach will be developed through organisational capacity assessments to come up with a more tailored approach to safeguarding as an area for capacity development and institutional strengthening. The capacity assessment will be used to develop a Safeguarding Action Plan for each partner which will be supported and monitored by the Provincial Project Manager to make sure that Aawaz partners continue to strengthen their processes.

2.5.5 Safeguarding Reporting Mechanism
A safeguarding action plan including safeguarding reporting mechanisms will be developed for Aawaz partners, to share with the concerned community forums. The process and procedures for handling the safeguarding concerns will be explained in detail to all the partners.

Safeguarding concerns will be channelled through a clear, accessible and confidential reporting process such as email, telephone, in person to the programme Safeguarding Focal Person (SFP), Provincial Project Manager or through a designated email or phone number.