Aawaz II

Programme Overview 2023



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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AAC	Aawaz Aagahi Centre
ACA	Aawaz Change Agent
CCAP	Collective Community Action Plan
CF	Community Facilitator
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DF	District Forum
DNH	Do no harm
DSP	Downstream partners
ERM	Early Response Mechanism
EWS	Early Warning System
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office
GBV	Gender-based Violence
IEC	Information, Education & Communication
KP	Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
PF	Provincial Forum
PMU	Project Management Unit
PWD	Person with Disability
RP	Resource Person
SAP	Social Action Project
SEAH	Sexual exploitation, abuse, harassment
SFP	Safeguarding Focal Person
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
V/NF	Village/Neighbourhood Forum

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Programme Overview

Aawaz II works with local communities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Punjab to promote the rights of women, youth, children, and other marginalised groups, to facilitate and strengthen their development and contribute to the overall programme impact of a more inclusive Pakistan. British Council is leading on the delivery of the community engagement component, relating to community dialogue, awareness, voice, social cohesion, and tolerance, that is being implemented through district and provincial partner organisations.

The community engagement component focuses on developing sustainable community fora that help augment and strengthen the voice of the marginalised. The communities are provided access to referrals and information through Aawaz Aagahi Centres (AACs), and Village and District Forums. The transformative effect of increased awareness and information, and the provision of training, support and linkages facilitates a sustainable change within communities. Strong engagement of community volunteers and young people, driving this change through their collective social action and direct support of community forums, ensures long-term ownership and sustainability of behaviour change.

Aawaz II has reached over 34 million individuals with its interventions and communication campaigns on behaviour change during Jan.2020 – Dec.2022.

During the same period, the programme facilitated a critical mass of **16,236 active members** (Punjab: 10,109, KP: 6,126) in over 900 community-based structures and **16,878 trained youth change-agents** (Punjab: 10,118, KP: 6,760) in villages and tehsils across the 22 districts of KP and Punjab.

1.2 Change Pathways

The Aawaz II theory of change posits that issues faced in target communities stem from the limited voice and choice of the marginalised groups, such as women, youth, children, religious minorities, persons with disabilities (PWDs), and transgender persons. This increases their vulnerability to discrimination and exploitation while systemic inequalities and harmful socio-cultural practices perpetuate intolerance.

The programme has two interlinked change pathways, i.e., behaviour change and citizen-state engagement. Increased awareness, changed attitudes and behaviours supported under the first pathway create conditions for more effective citizen-state interaction under the second.

Increased referrals and services arising from the second pathway grant legitimacy to forums and support changing attitudes and behaviours under the first change pathway. This is 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.

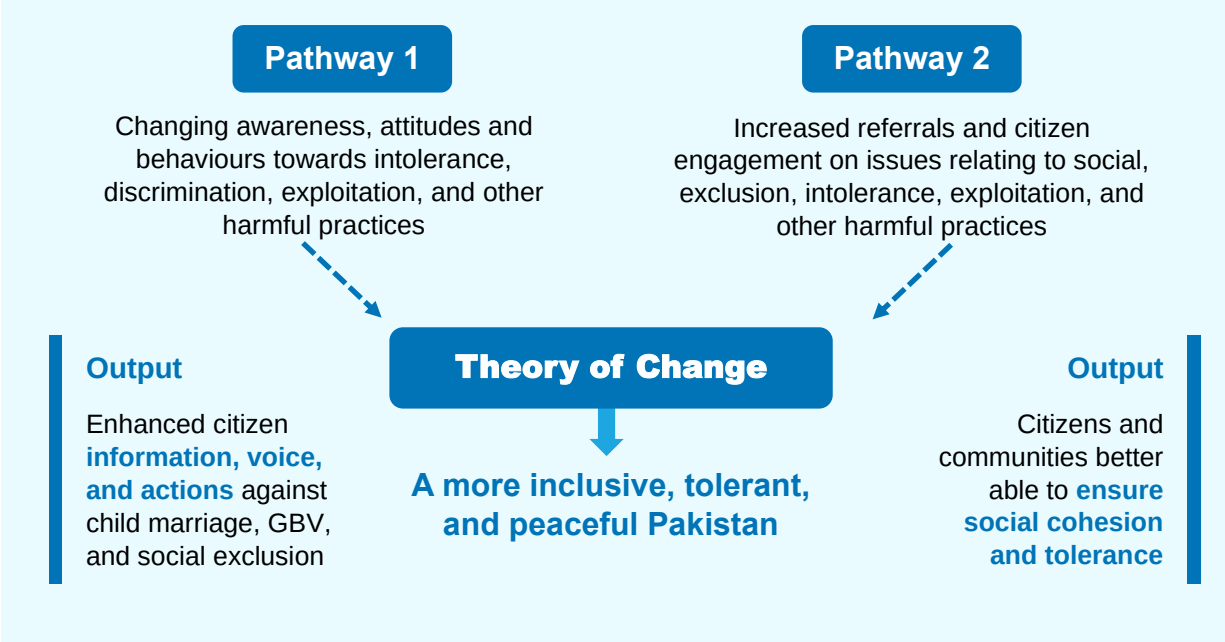


Figure 1 Aawaz II Change Pathways

There are two outputs of the programme i.e., 'Enhanced citizen information, voice and actions for child marriage, gender-based violence (GBV) and intolerance' and 'citizens and communities better able to ensure social cohesion and tolerance'.

1.3 Programme Thematic Focus and Priority Groups

The programme focuses on women, youth and religious minorities and promotes inclusion of PWDs, especially women with disabilities, and transgender persons through its emphasis on advocacy for the rights of all these vulnerable groups. Aawaz II works with communities in Punjab and KP to enhance the voice and choice of women, youth, religious minorities, and those at risk of child marriage, GBV and intolerance.

The thematic areas and priority groups are noted in Figure 2.[1]

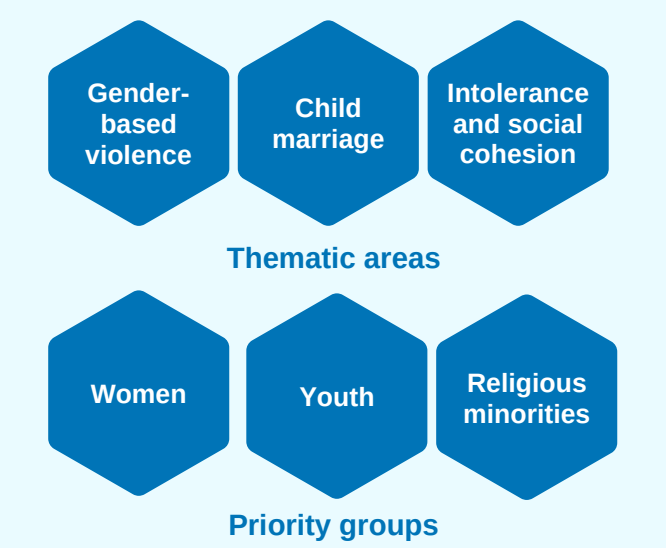


Figure 2 Thematic Areas and Priority Groups

[1] Aawaz II does not work directly with children. Instead, it works with other intersecting groups such as families and community members, and with government stakeholders (child protection) and relevant CSOs, teachers etc.

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; 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, religious minorities, PWDs, 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.



Figure 3 Aawaz II Programme Principles

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, and 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.

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.

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 DNH principle is also recognised by the programme as an important principle for social cohesion and tolerance.

2.4 Safeguarding

Safeguarding is the protection of individuals 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.

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; and

iii. Investing in upskilling local partners, community-based organisations, advocacy groups and forums to continue utilising and facilitating linkages developed between citizen and government and other programmes.

3. PROGRAMME APPROACH

The programme has adopted an ecosystem approach, creating an enabling environment for change by establishing community platforms and networks and strengthening citizen engagement. This means working simultaneously at different levels and with different stakeholders including government, policy makers and influential while focusing on change in community behaviours and attitudes towards harmful practices and intolerance. The ecosystem in Aawaz II districts includes social norms, stakeholders, institutions, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) networks and government and non-government programmes.

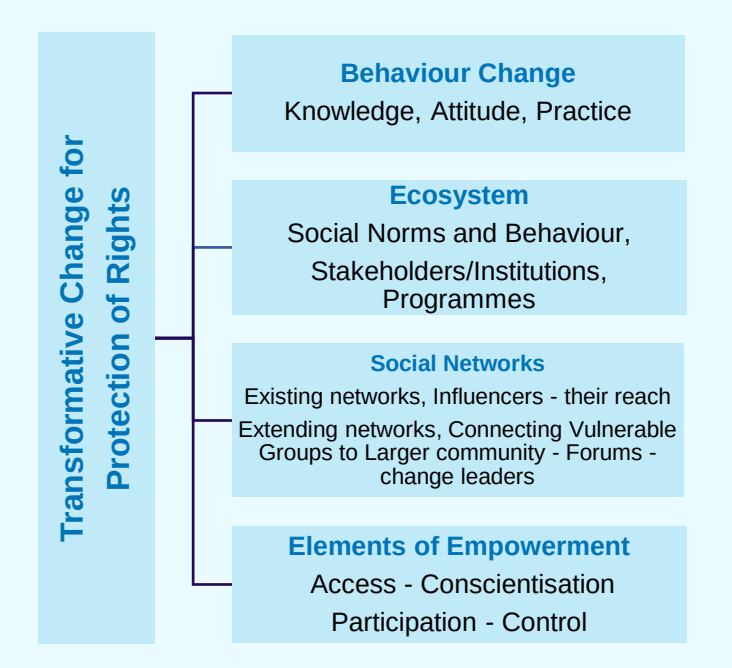


Figure 4 Approach

3.1 Behaviour Change

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 marriage, GBV, social exclusion, and intolerance which are the priority themes for the programme.

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.



Figure 5 Stages of Behaviour Change

Aawaz II strategy for behaviour change identifies possible stakeholders and provides a range of actions to facilitate behaviour change associated with each stage. The goal is to shift social norms and for the new attitudes and changed behaviours to be applied to encourage inclusion, tolerance and access to services and productive engagement with stakeholders.

These stages map the progress of individuals and communities along the different stages of behaviour change as follows:

- Informed and Sensitised – know about the practices (knowledge)
- Aware and Conscious - have the knowledge and understanding to act
- Commit to Act and Influence – willing to act and sometimes do (skills and attitudes)
- Taking Actions for Change – act regularly and systematically (behaviour)
- Social Transformation – act sustainably and adaptively

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.



Figure 6 Elements of Empowerment

- 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**.

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 and CSOs working on Aawaz II themes; and
- ❑ Government initiatives for social protection (BISP/Ehsaas) and donor supported initiatives including the Aawaz II UN Joint Programme (UNFPA and UNICEF) and relevant FCDO funded programmes such as SNG II.

4. AAWAZ II DELIVERY MODEL

The Aawaz II Programme Management Unit (PMU) has responsibility for the design, delivery, and management of the programme.

The Provincial Partners provide technical backstopping and programme delivery oversight to the district partners in their respective provinces. They liaise closely with the district partners, District Forums (DFs), and Village Forums (VFs) to facilitate effective linkages between the different tiers.

The downstream partners (DSPs) are responsible for community mobilisation, behaviour change and citizen-state engagement, supporting the community forums (VFs/DFs) and the community based AACs for change in Aawaz II thematic areas. Figure 7 shows how the different programme partners and components come together in the delivery of the programme.

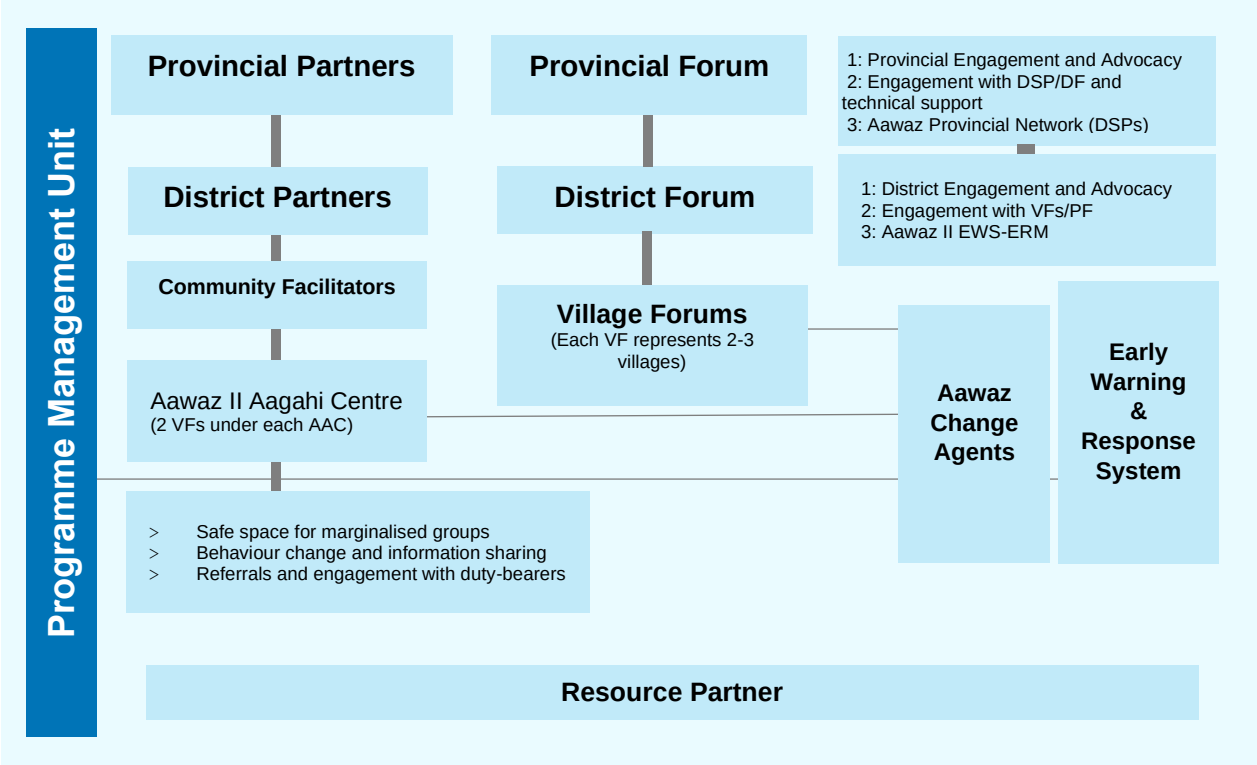


Figure 7 Programme Delivery Model

The focus of behaviour changes around harmful practices and gender discriminatory norms requires social inclusion as a cornerstone, embedded throughout Aawaz II structures and interventions. Thus, equitable membership of women and men is mandated in community forums as well as in staffing. Representation of religious minorities, PWDs, and transgender persons is also ensured.

4.1 Village/ Neighbourhood Forums (V/NFs)

The V/NF comprise of community members and advocate for the rights and social inclusion of vulnerable groups. One of the key objectives of village forums is to promote and steer behaviour change among local communities on Aawaz II thematic issues. Community based forums discuss and take actions to address GBV and exclusion of vulnerable groups.

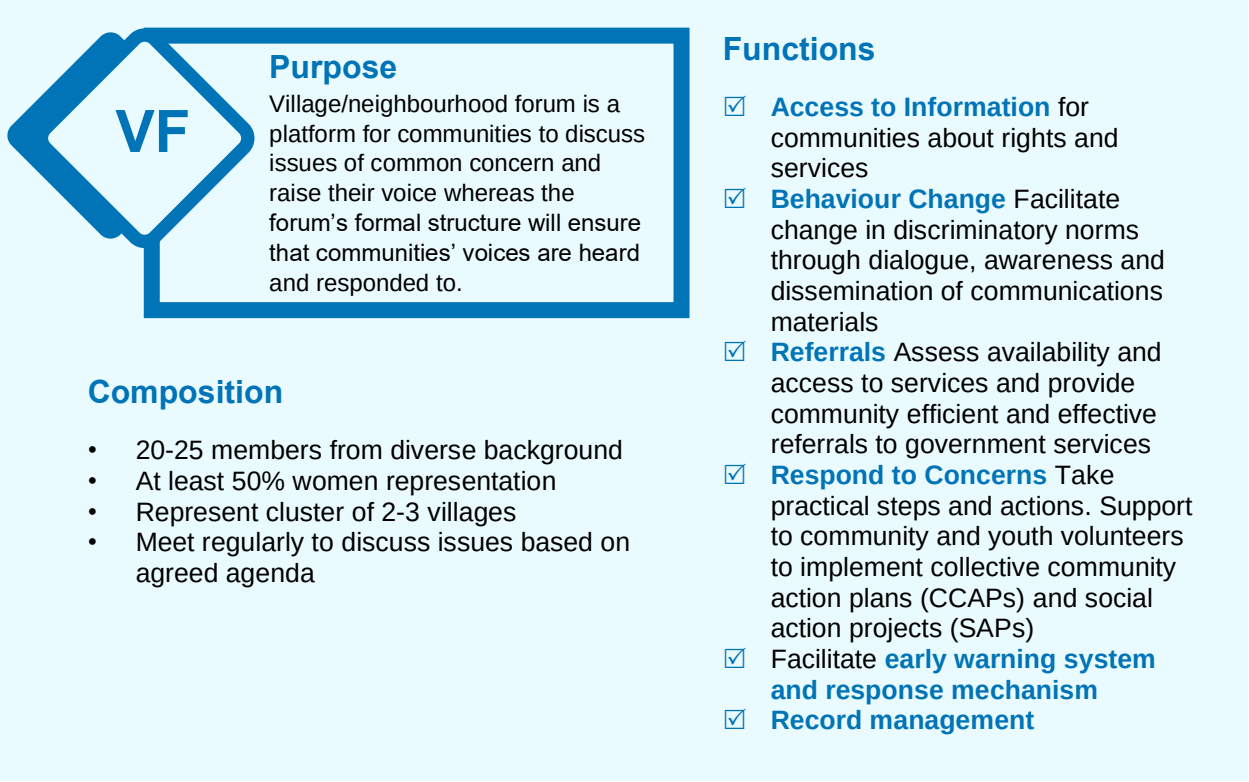


Figure 8 Village / Neighbourhood Forum (V/NF)

4.2 Aawaz Aagahi Centres (AACs)

AACs serve as information and referral hubs in the Aawaz II communities, 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 AACs are located close to the cluster of villages that comprise the catchment area of two contiguous V/NFs. It comprises a two-member team (one woman and one man) who function as ***resource persons*** moving through the villages/neighbourhoods of the two V/NFs, holding regular meetings with community members and V/NF members, providing information and resource material, facilitating linkages with duty bearers, support for the early warning and response mechanism (EWS/ERM) and other activities. They are key to mobilising communities for behaviour change working closely with the V/NF to ensure inclusion and address community concerns. Together with the **community facilitators** (part of the DSP team), the AAC will enhance understanding and capacities of community members to act against discriminatory norms and practices.

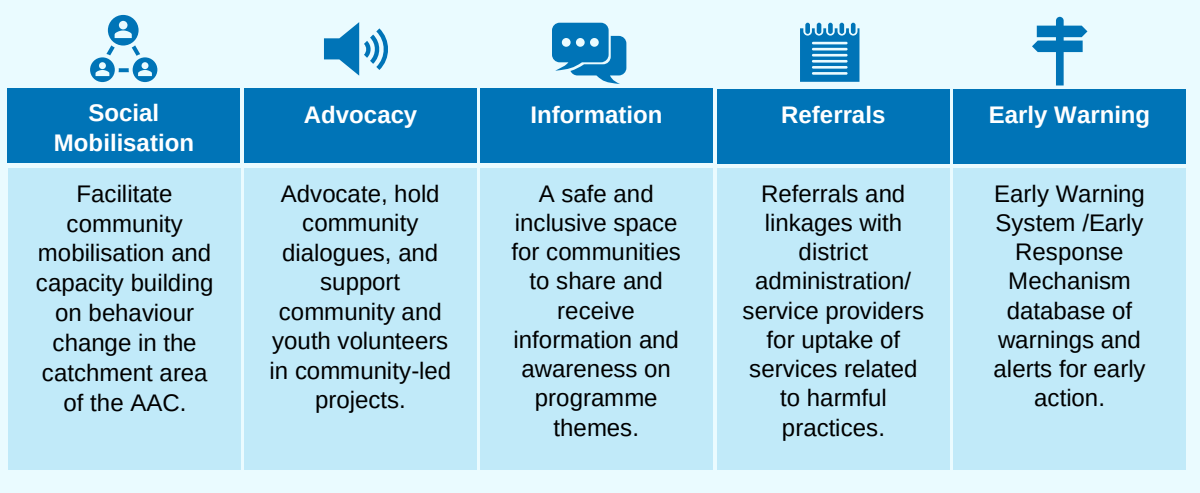


Figure 9 Aawaz Aagahi Centre (AAC)

4.3 District Forums (DFs)

The DFs have membership of relevant government departments, civil society organisations and professionals/experts, VFs, and representatives of minority communities, PWDs and transgender persons. The DFs will raise, discuss, and advocate for the concerns of community, especially vulnerable groups, on the Aawaz thematic areas and facilitate respective solutions and actions that otherwise cannot be addressed at sub-district levels.

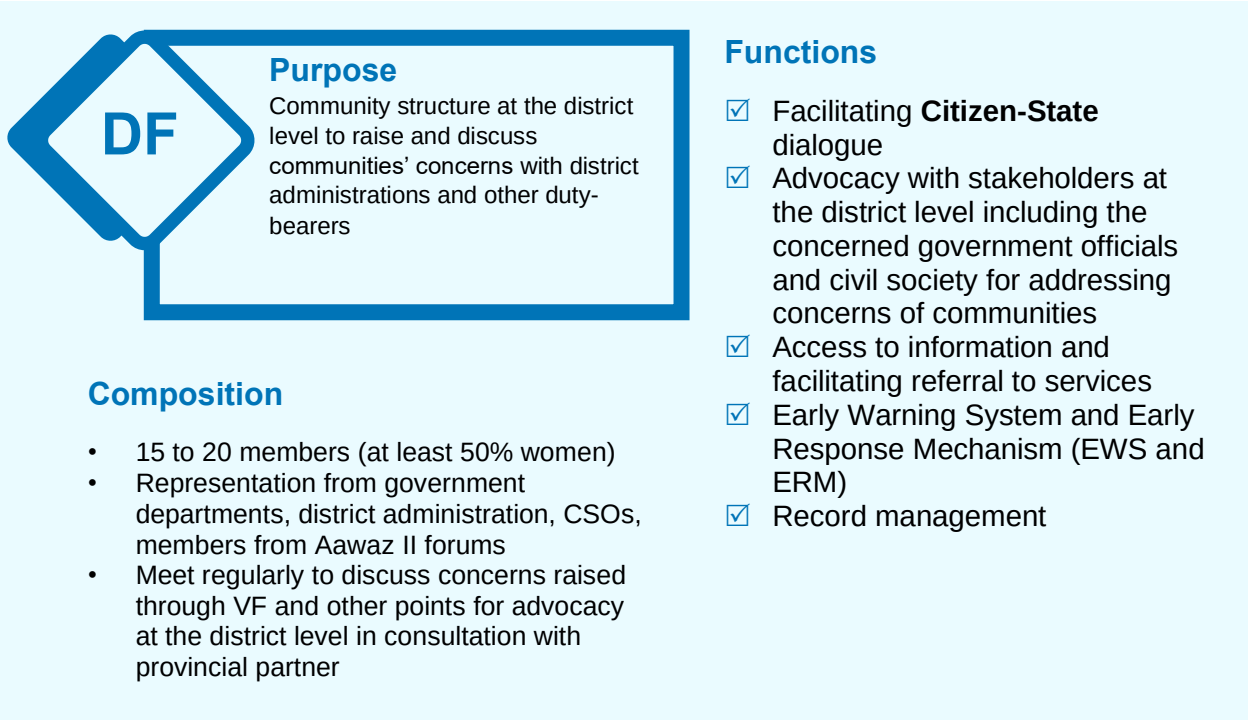


Figure 10 District Forum (DF)

4.4 Provincial Forums (PFs)

The PF seeks to raise community concerns with key provincial decision-making authorities and duty-bearers and support dialogue on community issues that require a system and policy-level response. The PF includes members of civil society organisations and alliances, experts on the Aawaz II thematic areas, relevant government departments and the UN partners of Aawaz II.[2] The Provincial Forums, one each in KP and Punjab, promote improved and inclusive response to the issues of the marginalised communities highlighted by Aawaz II community forums.

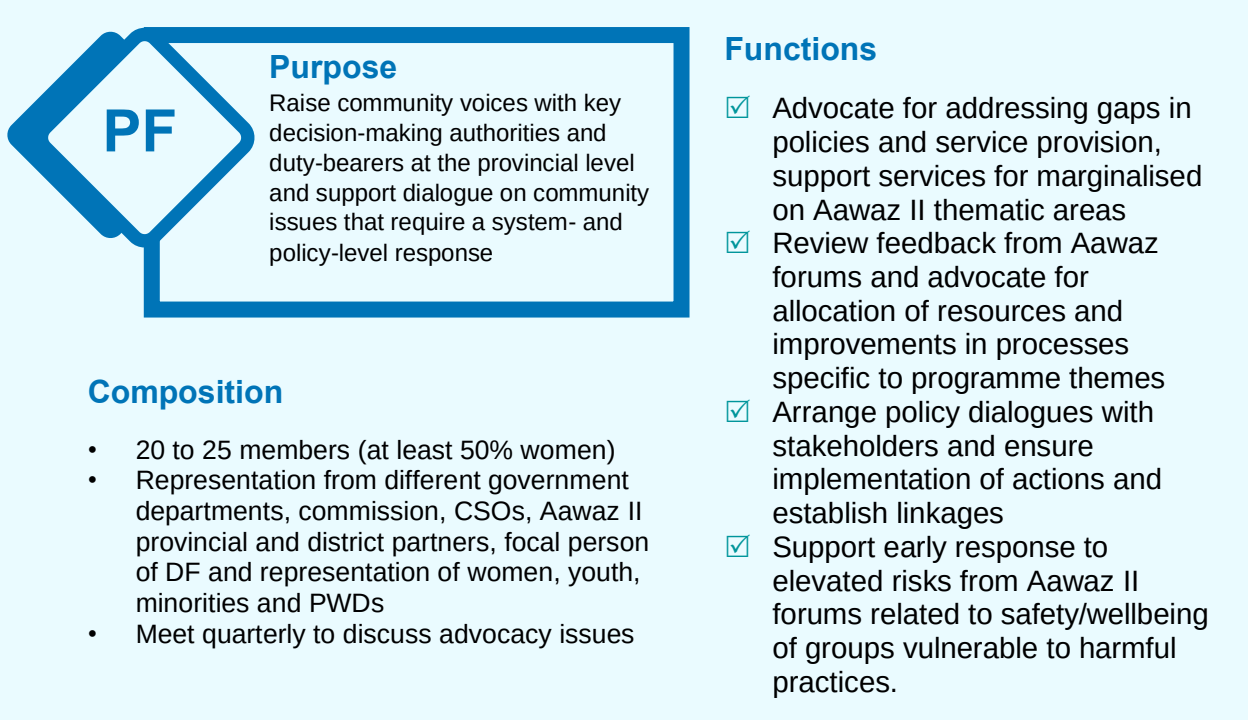


Figure 11 Provincial Forum (PF)

[2] The PF collaborate closely with UNJP, developing a joint advocacy agenda for areas of overlap between the community led programme and the UN partners.

5. PROGRAMME COMPONENTS AND KEY INTERVENTIONS

The main components of the programme in support of behaviour change around discriminatory and norms and practices, are convening and awareness raising of communities through Village/ Neighbourhood Forums and Aawaz Aagahi Centres, capacity building of volunteers and Aawaz Change Agents, citizen engagement and referrals, and early warning systems and early response mechanisms to mitigate intolerance.

5.1 Strengthening Voices and Actions for Reducing Exploitation and Intolerance

Community engagement activities include advocacy and participation of community members and representatives to promote inclusion, tolerance, and access to referrals. Women, youth and marginalised are facilitated as decision makers and leaders in the Aawaz II forums (VFs, AACs, DFs, PFs) as well as in their community and in mandated government structures such as committees.

5.2 Integrated Capacity Building for Behaviour Change

The goal of the integrated capacity building in Aawaz II is to support attitudinal and behaviour change in local communities towards exploitation, discrimination, and exclusion. This is achieved by raising awareness, access to information and services, social inclusion, and opportunities to work together in the community for local solutions to local problems whether it is child marriage, GBV or exclusion and intolerance against minorities or other vulnerable groups. A set of capacity enhancement sessions are delivered to DSP staff and active community members such as the core and thematic trainings, social cohesion, safeguarding and other relevant issues. Training and learning methodology is experiential, sensitive to local needs, and adaptive. It identifies and addresses specific learning needs of local communities on the Aawaz II themes, through a continuous learning process.

Activities for **experiential capacity building include** collective community action plans (CCAPs) implemented by community members, social action projects (SAPs) implemented by Aawaz Change Agents (ACAs), community dialogues, citizen engagement and exchange visits. All learning and exchange opportunities promote gender equality, inclusion, and social cohesion.

Safe programming is an integral element in all trainings. The programme works with the implementing partners to ensure quality assurance and supervision, assess training utilisation and capture lessons learnt.

Aawaz II Provincial Network brings together district partners in 37 districts of KP and Punjab as Aawaz II Network to continue their advocacy on specific actions concerning programme thematic areas. The network supports other civil society forums working on the rights of women, youth, and religious minorities.

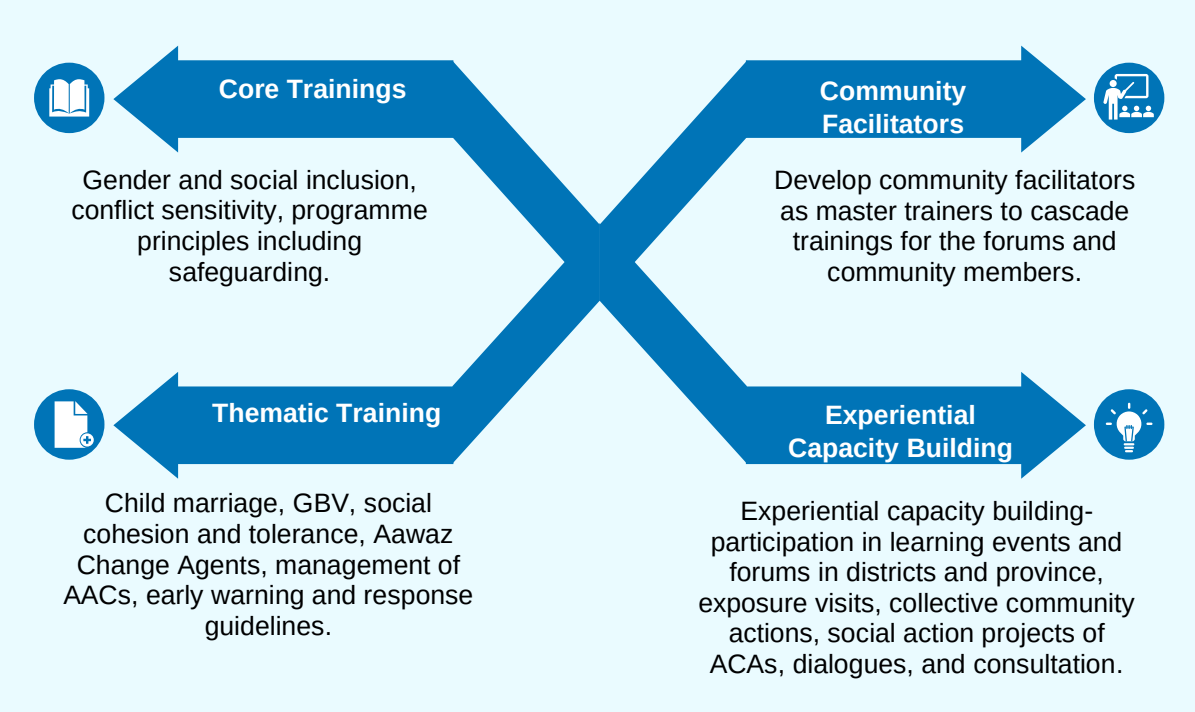


Figure 12 Integrated Capacity Building

5.3 Promoting Social Cohesion and Tolerance

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 manage differences and divisions to ensure equity, equality, and social justice. Aawaz II promotes tolerance and social cohesion among local communities with a robust process that includes reporting of risks, identifying spoilers and influencers, and consideration for sensitive environment in which Aawaz II will be implemented. The community led, gender inclusive, conflict sensitive early warning and response mechanism in the community forums has been successful in addressing and mitigating risks to social cohesion and pre-empting intolerance.

Early Warning Systems (EWS) and Early Response Mechanisms (ERM) is established and functional at the VFs and Aagahi Centres as well as at the 15 District Forums, guided by EWS-ERM SoPs. Communities report early warnings and their associate triggers to the VFs and AACs on low-profile community issues, child marriage, GBV (domestic and sexual violence) and intolerance against vulnerable groups. Information from the EWS-ERM is addressed by the community, helps the forums to advocate for rights and redressals and engagement with duty bearers and policy makers.

The district team and the focal persons at each V/NF and DF are trained on the EWS-ERM guidelines that include the step-by-step procedures and instructions for implementing the early warning and response mechanism.

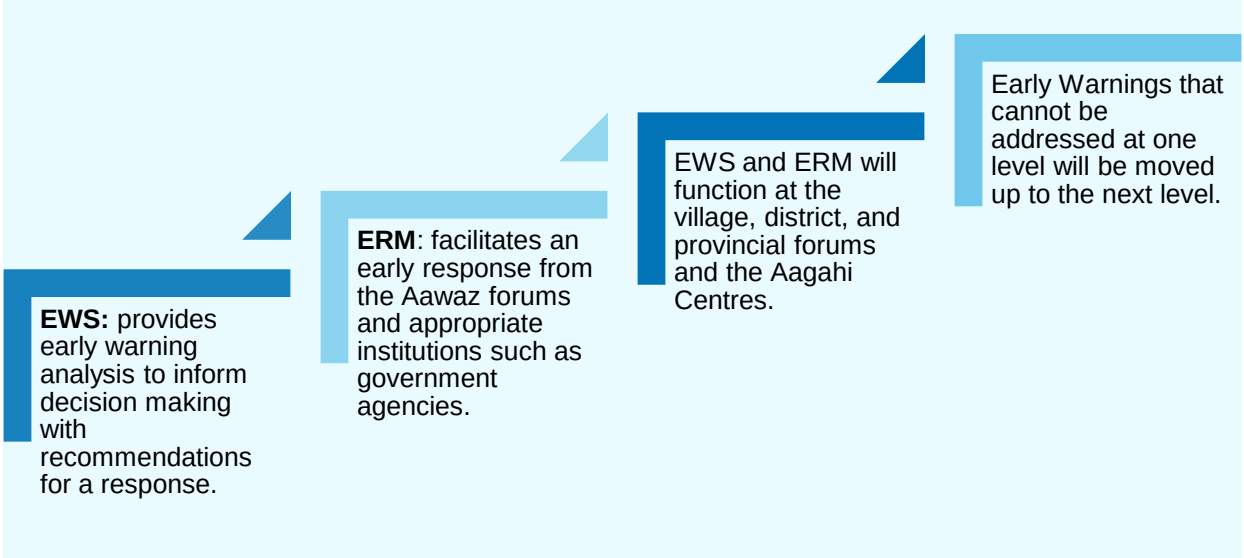


Figure 13 Early Warning System and Early Response Mechanism

The district partners, AACs, VFs and DFs develop linkages of EWS-ERM with mandated structures. Early warnings are addressed at the appropriate level, facilitated by the trained focal persons in the VFs and DFs. However, these can be escalated to the DF if action is required by district administration or departments. Similarly, the DF can escalate warnings to the PF, if advocacy with provincial government and departments is required.

Facilitating Inclusion and Social Cohesion: Social cohesion is a process and not just an action. Building tolerance leads to social cohesion, facilitating safe spaces for dialogues and experience sharing among diverse groups, creating opportunities for collective actions etc. The District and V/NF interfaith dialogues, exposure visits and cultural events foster participation of the communities from different faiths and social strata, especially from disadvantaged groups, build synergies between religiously diverse communities, promoting understanding and acceptance to support **inclusion and integration.**

5.4 Aawaz Change Agents

Aawaz II programming follows an integrated ecosystem approach which keeps young people at the heart of the change itself. Young change agents undergo a capacity building process that enables them to become change-makers in their communities. Youth volunteers liaise with V/NFs and AACs to promote behaviour change through community engagement and awareness raising activities.

Aawaz II firmly believes in the potential of young women and men to be the change in their communities. Interested youth volunteers, ages 18-25 years, 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 marriage, GBV and behaviour change.

After their training, these ACAs 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 are introduced to e-learning and periodic exchanges that provide an opportunity for learning, develop connections and networks with other volunteers and partners to learn innovative ways to address harmful practices. The ACAs work closely with the community forums, to support the community dialogues, campaigns, and civil documentation drives—birth registration, national identity cards (NICs), etc.—and in facilitating citizen-state engagement.

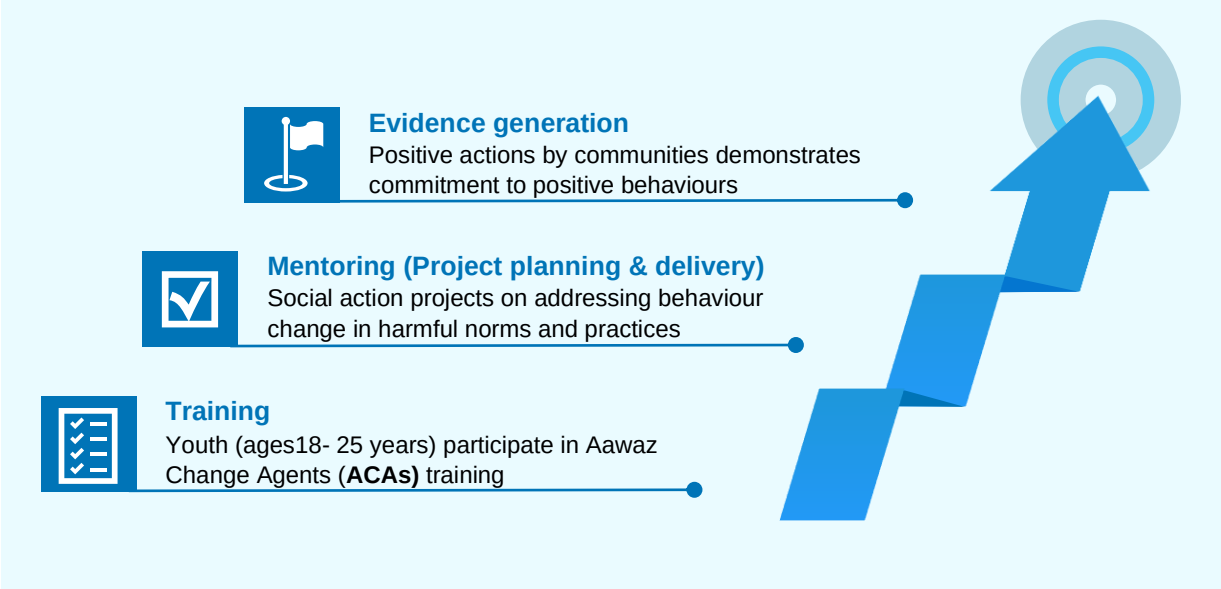


Figure 14 Aawaz Change Agents

- Identify active, interested young women and men from diverse communities to develop a cadre of ACAs
- Receive ACA training integrating core and thematic modules to identify, plan and execute social action projects
- Execute social action projects addressing issues related to programme themes to facilitate change in attitude and behaviour
- Receive skills, mentoring and project support from DSPs

5.5 Safeguarding

Safeguarding means protecting people from harm, focusing on preventing and responding to harm caused by sexual exploitation, abuse, harassment (SEAH) or bullying. The primary purpose of safeguarding is to minimise the likelihood and impact of abuse and exploitation towards people involved in the programme.

Aawaz II engages with vulnerable and marginalised segments of society, especially those who lack exposure and experience in interacting with diverse groups outside their environment. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the district partner and the field team to create a safe and secure environment so that these groups feel comfortable and secure while interacting with them.

Aawaz II ensures 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 is developed, reviewed regularly, and updated annually. Safeguarding risk assessments and plans are developed by each implementing partner and reviewed by the PMU.

Under Aawaz II, a safeguarding focal person is responsible for ensuring the implementation of safeguarding principles. DSP and field teams receive orientation and comprehensive training on safeguarding principles and implementation.

5.5.1 Safeguarding Principles

The safeguarding principles are:[3]

- 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 and 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.

5.5.2 Induction, Awareness Raising and Training of Staff and Partners

To support all programme teams, partners, external contacts, and beneficiaries to understand the Aawaz II safeguarding commitments and the process for effectively raising a concern or a complaint, the following steps are taken:

- Disseminate information about how to raise concerns with Aawaz II team members and implementation partners
- Safeguarding orientation in all trainings, including those of new staff and volunteer induction

[3] 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 the code of conduct and ensure compliance with code values, what concerns/incidents to report and how
- Safeguarding measures are a feature of all planning events, activities etc.

5.5.3 Safeguarding Reporting Mechanism

Aawaz II has a safeguarding reporting mechanism. Safeguarding concerns are channelled through a clear, accessible, and confidential reporting process such as email, telephone, in person to the programme Safeguarding Focal Person (SFP), through a designated email or phone number.

Further the safeguarding action plans for Aawaz partners will include safeguarding reporting mechanisms, to be shared with all concerned community forums, and in each Aawaz II intervention and activity. The process and procedures for handling the safeguarding concerns will be explained in detail to all the partners.

5.6 Behaviour Change Communications

The communications strategy of Aawaz II aligns with the behaviour change strategy of the programme, to facilitate the intended audience through the four stages of behaviour change enabling social transformation. Using a blend of the cognitive-emotional appeal, the Aawaz II behaviour change communication products are designed to attract attention and highlight the consequences of existing behaviour as well as positive desired behaviours and possible actions. Customised messages to align with the age, gender, location, education, and socioeconomic status of the audience for whom the messages are intended. The programme uses diverse media for effective communications in partnership with the district and provincial partners. These include radio, social media, interpersonal communication, print media and audio-visual media.



Aawaz II

Inclusion. Rights. Reducing Exploitation