

**Terms of Reference**

**Study on Engaging Religious Leaders for Improving Health Outcomes**

The proposed study is an assessment of level of engagement with the religious leaders and organizations under a DFID-funded initiative called “Empowerment, Voice and Accountability for Better Health and Nutrition” (EVA-BHN). The study will also guide the programme through further exploration of religious institutions, structures and networks in major schools of thought in Pakistan for enhancing their role in improving reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health (RMNCH) and nutrition outcomes in Pakistan.

1. **Background Information**

**1.1 About the Center for Communication Programs Pakistan**

The Center for Communication Programs Pakistan (hereafter Center) is a sister organisation of Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Programs (CCP) based in Baltimore, United States. Center is dedicated exclusively to the study and practice of development communication. A non-governmental organisation since 2011, Center has a rich heritage of over 30 years of dedicated experience in providing technical leadership in strategic social and behaviour change communication design, programming, research, and capacity strengthening. Center seeks to use communication to save and improve lives in Pakistan.

**1.2 About Empowerment, Voice and Accountability for Better Health and Nutrition**

Under the broader framework of Provincial Health and Nutrition Programme (PHNP) supported by UK government, a four-year project (2014-2018) on Empowerment, Voice and Accountability for Better Health and Nutrition (EVA-BHN) was launched to primarily focus on the ‘demand side’ of reproductive, maternal, newborn and child heath (RMNCH) and nutrition services. It has the objectives of:

* Enhancing communities’ understanding of their health rights, entitlements and engagement in monitoring the planning and delivery of services; and
* Organising communities at all levels to catalyst the precipitation of desired policy changes at the local, provincial and national level.

Working with Palladium, Center is responsible for designing and managing all media and communication activities. These activities are specifically using communication to increase demand and strengthen mechanisms for greater and effective citizen participation and monitoring of health services. In particular, with an aim to prioritise women, girls and children from underserved backgrounds, Center has been working with key influencers. One of these is the network of religious leaders, with whom Center is working to improve the lives of mothers and children in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces.

Within the predominantly religious context of Pakistan, including Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, religious leaders and their traditions are a highly influential group that local communities look up to for guidance. Religious leaders are uniquely placed to mitigate dissonance between established tradition and new norms being introduced by an outside intervention i.e. they are often trusted as the vital communicators and mediators for change. Under EVA-BHN, Center is accordingly enlisting the support of religious leaders to address the RMNCH and nutrition issues through community- and facility-based interventions, particularly through male community members to improve health-seeking behaviours at household level. Center is specifically mobilizing and technically supporting the religious leaders to deliver sermons to their local communities. This activity includes the formation of district-level and national-level ‘councils’ where religious leaders convene on a regular basis to ensure the sermons are effectively understood and delivered. EVA is renewing its efforts in the next phase of implementation with the focus on institutionalisation of its existing engagements as well as cultivating seeds for broader individual- and social-level change for increased male participation, improved care seeking behaviour, increased demand for health services and better fulfilment of rights and entitlements through voice and accountability. Center, in partnership with Palladium International, wishes to undertake an assessment study for stocktaking of it existing engagement with religious leaders and organizations as well as inform planning for renewed initiatives under EVA, please see annexed brief describing the Component in detail.

1. **Summary of this Requirement**

**2.1 About the Research**

Center seeks to commission a consultant or a team of consultants to undertake a research project that will assess the level of on-going engagement under EVA with religious leaders through a set of qualitative tools. This assessment should specifically:

* Map the successfulness of the component of engaging religious leaders and organization under EVA at the individual/household, community, organization and institutional levels;
* Assess the extent to which the institutional structures of religious schools are engaged, i.e. whether effective entry points or ‘loci’ under EVA-BHN have been optimally accessed to influence religious schools within the context of improving care-seeking behaviour; and
* Evaluate whether the epistemological standpoints of religious schools engaged by EVA-BHN been used for the approved sets of technical content of RMNCH and nutrition, under EVA-BHN.

By carrying out the abovementioned research objectives, this research should be able offer key lessons and findings from the on-going efforts under EVA-BHN.

**2.2 Key Research Questions**

The following are the main questions that this research will address, in no order of priority:

* Have existing engagements (using ecological approach) with religious leaders increased male participation in improving women health seeking behaviour and household decision-making?
* Has EVA been successful in developing religious leaders into allies for citizens in holding the government to account for the provision of RMNCH-N services?
* Has EVA been able to capitalize religious institutional structures – including religious authority –around key issues of RMNCH and nutrition?
* Has EVA used contemporary scholastic positions (including juristic ones) that the main religious traditions in Pakistan hold around notified technical contents of RMNCH and nutrition for engaging religious leaders? Has EVA been cognizant to varying positions within the individual traditions and their communities in terms of geography, ethnicity, and language?
* Are the existing practices of religious traditions been optimally engaged to address key issues of RMNCH and nutrition for broader and grassroots reach?
* Is the relationship between religious traditions and the existing development practice prevalent in Pakistan been successfully approached under EVA?

**2.2 Suggested approach**

Where applicable, the indicative methodology for the research includes: literature review within the perspective of EVA and its planned initiatives, secondary data analysis, key informant interviews, participatory assessments, and stakeholder analysis (sampling for stakeholder analysis may include approaches such as snowball sampling). It is important to note that the research questions and methodology shall be refined in the inception phase. They are provided only to highlight a suggested approach to this research project.

As emphasised above, the research project will frame its findings within the context of existing interventions, including EVA-BHN’s intervention package with religious leaders, in order to consolidate and use lessons learned for identifying the most effective and contextually suitable intervention for future engagements.

**2.3 Outputs**

We expect the consultant to produce:

* Inception report: This should include a detailed plan of action and data collection tools.
* Draft report, covering all three areas of research
* The final report, including synthesis of main findings.
* A policy brief, focused towards development community at large and public sector decision makers
* A PowerPoint presentation based on the findings of the final report.

1. **Instructions for Responding**

**3.1 The Submission Process**

Application should contain two separate technical and financial proposals Application should be marked as Research on “Engaging Religion Leaders for Improving Health Outcomes” and submitted by 13, December, 2016 through courier at:

Center for Communication Programs Pakistan

Plot # 23 St # 39 I&T Center Sector G 10/4,

Islamabad

051 8735502

Application must include:

1. A cover letter introducing the consultant or a team of consultants, and how the capacities and expertise stated above are met with concrete examples.
2. Any CVs of any attached key team members and any experts for developing the technical and research content on religious thought and practices in Pakistan, particularly within the proposed context of RMNCH and nutrition;
3. The proposed research plan and methodology; and
4. The proposed budget for the research plan.

* 1. **Clarification Questions**

Any questions should be submitted via email, no later than December 5, 2016 to at: info@ccp-pakistan.org.pk

1. **Evaluation Criteria**

Applicant responses will be assessed using the following criteria and weightings. A score will be given for each part of the information submitted that is to be assessed. The qualitative aspects of your response will be evaluated entirely on your response submitted.

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| **Criteria** | **Weighting** |
| Knowledge and experience | 30% |
| Methodology and approach | 30% |
| Work plan | 20% |
| Costing and value for money | 20% |

Contract finalization and execution is expected to take place by the third week of December 2016. Only short-listed applicants will be contacted. Center reserves the right to reject any or all the proposals without assigning any reason thereof.

1. **Statement of Requirements**
   1. **Expertise Required**

We are seeking a national-level consultant, or a team of consultants, that will have the following capacities:

* Demonstrable expertise on the thematic areas identified, particularly working with religious leaders, and their institutions and traditions.
* Demonstrable experience in developing technical and/or research content on religious thought and practices in Pakistan, preferably within the context of development and/or RMNCH and nutrition.
* Demonstrable experience of working with government, international donors, and international non-governmental organisations.
* Familiarity with the development and/or RMNCH and nutrition context of Pakistan; and
* Experience and technical knowhow in carrying out qualitative research through dialogical approaches.
  1. **Reporting and Management**

The consultant will work closely with EVA team at Center’s Islamabad office. EVA-BHN’s larger programme team will review the materials developed for technical content and accuracy, and an editor will edit the draft for clarity, language, and uniformity between the various materials.

Payments will be made on the basis of payment scheduled, subject to satisfactory deliverables as per payment schedule, and the submission of a valid invoice.

* 1. **Travel Requirements**

The appointed consultant is expected to travel to the relevant Center and/or EVA offices in Islamabad, Lahore or Peshawar, and to focus districts as required in the delivery of the services. Activity may also take place at other locations in Pakistan, i.e. to solicit inputs from national-level religious authorities.

* 1. **Timeline**

The contract awarded will be for duration of three months. The deliverables will be completed and submitted on an on-going basis, subsequent to the day of the signing of the contract between the consultant and the organisation. This includes time for the review and feedback by EVA-BHN’s larger programme team.