

Voice and Accountability Index*

The AAWAZ Programme strives to strengthen stable, inclusive and tolerant democracy in Pakistan by following the Voice and Accountability framework (active citizenship) to bring women and socially excluded groups into leadership and decision making positions. Working under the overall theme of governance, the programme aspires for change in individual, social and politico-legal spheres (AAWAZ n.d).

The need for a Voice & Accountability (V&A) Index is subsumed in the AAWAZ Programme's 'Theory of Change' which elaborates that exclusion on the basis of gender, religion, class and caste is manifested in unequal power relations, especially between men and women. This leads to lack of voice, choice and control for women, and socially excluded groups from the household to the national level, in public and private spaces, thus increasing vulnerability to violence and limiting their freedom and opportunities as full and equal citizens of Pakistan. The V&A Index aims to present a proof of method, demonstrating how data from a perception survey on governance related issues can be used to rank districts according to the perceived quality of governance, and general attitudes towards issues of human rights, voice, choice and accountability.

This first cut on the V&A index can hopefully serve as a basis to analyse the comparative status of empowerment, social cohesion and accountability for the socially excluded across districts and provinces in Pakistan. AAWAZ would like to take this opportunity to bring it to a wider audience to get feedback from practitioners and policy makers, with a view to further refining and eventually institutionalising such a measure.

References

AAWAZ n.d. 'Voice and Accountability', Home page, <www.aawaz.org.pk>, accessed 2 September 2015.

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** The AAWAZ team will be presenting their study on the said subject and this panel is not open for further abstracts.*