

BBC Media Action
Monitoring and Evaluation
of “Break the Chain: Fostering Healthier Information and Media Ecosystems in India”

Request for Proposal

Last date for submission of proposal: 1st September 2026 (11:59 PM)

Summary of deadlines

Release of RfP	18 th August 2026
Last date to share intent to participate and send queries ebid@in.bbcmediaaction.org	20 th August 2026 (11:59 PM)
Response to queries by BBC Media Action	21 st August 2026
Due/last date of submission of Quotes to the Ebid ID- Ebid400@in.bbcmediaaction.org	1 st September 2026 (11:59 PM)

This document is structured as follows:

Section 1. Introduction

This section contains information about the organisation background and broader programme portfolio, the project, **Break The Chain** – its context/background, objectives, components and interventions so far, and the direction going forward

Section 2. Research scope

This section contains the research purpose, objectives and questions, a discussion on the design and scope of the study in terms of geographical coverage and target audiences

Section 3. Instructions to Agencies

Section 1 – Background

About the Organisation

Established in 1998, **BBC Media Action** is the international charity of the BBC. Working with media and communication to help reduce poverty and support people in claiming their rights, our aim is to inform, connect, and empower people around the world. BBC Media Action reaches some 200 million people through local broadcast partners, BBC channels (especially the BBC World Service), online, mobile and print platforms, and through interpersonal communication.

Using a human centred design approach, BBC Media Action's work is rooted in evidence, powered by insights, and leverages impact-tested, scalable, big ideas to create social and behaviour change.

In India, over the past two decades, BBC Media Action has delivered impact in health (HIV prevention, tuberculosis diagnosis and treatment, reproductive, maternal, neonatal, and child health), sanitation, gender equity, climate change and the prevention of bonded labour.

a. About the Project

Break the Chain is a two-year (2026-27) initiative that combines demand-led capacity strengthening for media practitioners, creative and informative media content for the public, and coalition building to foster a more resilient and inclusive media ecosystem in India. Its overall objective is to support a resilient and pluralistic local information ecosystem that upholds credible information flows and promotes inclusive dialogue. Funded by the European Union, the project is implemented by a consortium comprising WAN-IFRA (World Association of News Publishers) and BBC Media Action.

b. Project Background

India's media landscape is large and diverse, with 900 private television channels, a strong public broadcaster in Doordarshan, and an estimated 140,000 registered publications¹.

India is among the most digitally connected populations in the world, yet Indian youth often lack adequate digital and media literacy (DML), leaving them vulnerable to false and misleading information. Studies using the Cognitive Media Literacy Model found that many young Indians struggle to critically evaluate media messages, often failing to identify the intent, source or reliability of the content they consume, a gap made more concerning given that youth spend over 27 hours a week on social media. Digital platforms and algorithmic distribution have created space for alternative voices and independent journalism but have also enabled the virality of mis- and disinformation and DML gaps.

c. Goal, outcomes and outputs

The overall impact Break the Chain is working towards is:

'A resilient and pluralistic media ecosystem in India that upholds credible information flows, amplifies the voices and lived experiences of marginalised communities, and promotes inclusive, rights-based dialogue.'

¹ <https://rsf.org/en/country/india>

This impact is expected to be delivered through two outcomes:

- Outcome 1: Citizens, particularly youth, demonstrate improved capacity to critically assess, verify and engage with digital content.
- Outcome 2: Media practitioners (including journalism students, content creators and media professionals) deliver accurate, balanced reporting and inclusive media content that tackles mis- and disinformation and amplifies the voices of marginalised communities.

These outcomes are in turn delivered through various outputs and will be shared with the partner agency upon selection.

d. Intervention approach

The Project's activities fall into four complementary areas. The first is a digital campaign targeting the general population, including 'Break the Chain' digital films, contributing to the goal of creating awareness and resilience towards misinformation, disinformation and mal-information through enhanced DML skills. The second area lies within the domain of capacity building of journalism students and regional content creators through training workshops and learning resources to increase knowledge and skills in fact-checking, media literacy and journalistic integrity. The third area covers capacity strengthening with journalists and media professionals from newsrooms across the country and contributes to strengthening the media ecosystem to deliver the project's intent. The fourth and the last delivers the capacity building of community radio stations (CRSs) to enhance their skills and capacity to tackle misinformation and create more trustworthy and inclusive content.

Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, and Bengaluru have been identified as the project's four anchor hubs, chosen for their high internet penetration, diverse populations, and dense networks of media and educational institutions. Each hub will also draw in media practitioners from surrounding peri-urban and rural areas, for example practitioners from Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Rajasthan converging in Delhi, and those from Maharashtra converging in Mumbai.

The target groups for the action, which also form the basis of the research population for this assignment, are:

Target group	Detail
General public / audiences	• Youth (18-24 yr olds) from urban/peri-urban, reached through the digital campaign. • Listeners of CRS
Journalism students	• 1,000 students across the four project hubs, with a minimum of 40% women.
Regional content creators / social media influencers	• 70–80 creators/influencers across the four hubs, with a minimum of 30% women.
Journalists and media professionals	• 50–60 journalists across the four hubs, one hub each, with a minimum of 30% female journalists.
Community radio stations (CRS)	• A minimum of 40 stations across the four hubs, including female-led CRS.

Please note – the detailed content and activity calendar, training curricula, and confirmed partner list (including influencer and CRS partnerships) will be shared with the shortlisted or selected agency once finalised.

To understand the target audience better, formative research has been conducted. The study drew on four complementary strands of evidence. It began with a desk review and 13 key informant

interviews (KIs) with journalists, community radio representatives, journalism faculty, an influencer-sector representative and a content creator to identify the key issues and vulnerable groups. This was followed by 16 face-to-face mini-group immersions conducted among the emerging vulnerable audience - male and female social media users aged 18-34 from NCCS B/C households in Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, and Chennai. Emerging themes of mis-disinformation from all these research strands were then explored in greater depth through the social listening component - across YouTube, Instagram and Facebook using English, Hindi, Tamil and Kannada search terms.

The key findings included:

- Research finds that India's challenge is no longer one of access to information but of navigating an environment where credible journalism, opinion, advertising, entertainment and misinformation increasingly coexist within the same spaces.
- Misinformation is ubiquitous and everyone is vulnerable to it. TV and digital are seen as key contributors to misinformation, with AI making the situation even more complex.
- Regional-language media, local creators and community radio continue to play an important role because they combine local knowledge with proximity, relatability and accountability.
- Audience understand misinformation but rarely describe it using technical terms. Mis-disinformation is well understood among practitioners, but the terminology, is not commonly used.
- Besides politics and identity, health and wellness, finance, employment and livelihoods and AI-generated content emerge as themes at high risk to misinformation
- Trust in information is strongly influenced by relevance, familiarity and perceived authenticity. Today, audience are less likely to rely solely on established institutions (legacy media) and more likely to trust information that circulates within their own information networks, that is consistent and aligns with their existing beliefs, reinforcing algorithm driven echo chambers.
- Verification of information exists but is inconsistent among both audience and practitioners. Among audience, it is triggered only when perceived risks are high, while internal and external factors determine verification levels among practitioners.
- Young adults (18-34 yrs), particularly those in the 18-24 yrs age group, emerge as the priority audience for intervention owing to their inherent vulnerabilities, their role as active change agents, and their digital fluency, which positions them as important drivers of information integrity initiatives and as information bridges between online spaces and older generations.

Engagement activities for all target audience groups are informed by insights from the formative research and are planned to begin in mid-September 2026. As part of the capacity-building component of the project, practitioner-focused training sessions will be delivered through four regional hubs. The first phase of these sessions will be implemented in the Delhi and Mumbai hubs from September to December 2026. The second phase will cover the Bengaluru and Chennai hubs from April to July 2027, ensuring a staggered and structured approach to practitioner engagement and training.

To support youth outreach and engagement, two audience-facing short films will be produced and launched across digital platforms. These films will be complemented by a series of offline activation activities, the details of which are currently being developed. The first short film is planned for release in November 2026 and will be followed by an eight-week amplification campaign designed to maximize reach, visibility, and audience engagement. The second short film will be launched in April 2027 and will similarly be supported by an eight-week amplification period.

To maintain audience interest and sustain momentum between the two film launches, as well as following the amplification phase of the first film, a steady stream of digital content will be disseminated across relevant channels. Ongoing content strategy will help keep the conversation active, reinforce key project messages, and continuously drive audiences towards the project's call to action, ensuring consistent engagement throughout the campaign period.

Section 2 – Research Scope Across the Project Cycle

The monitoring and evaluation of Break the Chain is envisaged to start in September 2026 and conclude by the end of **October/November 2027**. Across each stage, the research should provide evidence against the impact-level indicators, and should attribute change, where possible, to the project's interventions using a mixed-methods, quasi-experimental design that compares exposed and unexposed groups. The research should not only capture 'what changed' among target audiences and practitioners but also help explain 'why and how' that change came about, including the enabling factors and barriers along the way.

I. Research objectives

- To establish baseline capacities of audiences (youth/ listeners of CRS), journalists, content creators, journalism students, and community radio stations against the agreed key performance indicators.
- To track change through the project lifecycle using mixed-methods, quasi-experimental design that compares outcomes between exposed and unexposed groups, while documenting mechanisms of change and implementation processes.
- To feed real-time, actionable insights into the project's standardized monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework and dashboard, including through pulse surveys after training camps/workshops and quarterly review and reflection meetings, to enable adaptive programme management.

II. Target audience / research population

The research population mirrors the project's target groups, set out in Section 1(d) above:

Target group	Detail
General public / audiences	• Youth (18-24 yr olds) from urban/peri-urban, reached through the digital campaign. • Listeners of CRS

Target group	Detail
Journalism students	1,000 students across the four project hubs, with a minimum of 40% women.
Regional content creators / social media influencers	70–80 creators/influencers across the four hubs, with a minimum of 30% women.
Journalists and media professionals	50–60 journalists across the four hubs, one hub each, with a minimum of 30% female journalists.
Community radio stations (CRS)	A minimum of 40 stations across the four hubs, including female-led CRS.

III. Sample design and methodology

The monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) framework for the project is expected to adopt a mixed-method, quasi-experimental design that combines quantitative and qualitative approaches to assess both outcomes and processes. In addition to measuring impact, the evaluation will systematically document implementation processes, enabling factors, and challenges to generate actionable insights for adaptive management and future programming.

The research design should incorporate a comprehensive approach to tracking changes among target groups- content creators, CRS members, journalists, journalism students, urban youth audiences, and CRS listeners. The study should also explore how exposure to capacity-building initiatives, media content, and audience engagement activities influence behavioural outcomes and professional practices.

The design should recommend approaches that will help capture participants' experiences, identify mechanisms through which change occurs, and examine how different groups engage with project messaging and interventions. Attention should be paid to understanding the role of community radio, digital media, and youth-focused content in shaping awareness, fostering dialogue, and motivating positive action.

By integrating outcome measurement with process documentation, the MEL framework will not only assess whether the project has achieved its intended objectives but also generate evidence on what works, for whom and under what conditions. Monitoring and evaluation will support continuous learning, strengthen accountability to stakeholders, and contribute to the broader evidence base on effective DML interventions.

IV. Key performance indicators

The key performance indicators below are drawn from the project's key targets and are indicative; they will be reviewed, and may be refined, with the selected research partner during the inception phase. The keys targets of the project are given as follows:

Serial Number	Targets
1	5-7% audiences report improvement in digital media literacy, improved capacity to verify and engage with information responsibly online by the end of the project
2	5-7% of members of media fraternity report better capacity to verify and include inclusive content to address mis/disinformation.
3	5-7% of audiences exposed to digital content and who participate in evaluative research report improvements in DML by project end.

4	4-5% increase in exposed audiences and who participate in evaluative research reporting false/misleading information to the platforms
5	8-10% of journalism students report higher confidence and skill in identifying mis/disinformation.
6	8-10% of regional content creators report improved skills in reporting local news.
7	8-10% of the trained community radio outlet members demonstrate improved skills and resilience to deliver balanced, engaging content that amplifies marginalised voices and counters mis and disinformation.
8	5-7% of the audience of the community radio outlet report better reporting from the outlets.

V. Research partnership scope

BBC Media Action India is looking for a research partner to help design and implement a research approach that measures project impact at both a cumulative and an individual level, across all four workstreams and the full project cycle.

The research partner will:

- Support the inception phase, review key performance indicators and develop research instruments.
- Design and conduct research across all activities related to key performance indicators.
- Conduct one or more rounds of data collection to effectively monitor change over the course of the project, and generate timely, actionable insights for course-correction.
- Conduct the impact evaluation, using a rigorous, quasi-experimental approach to attribute impact to the intervention by comparing exposed and unexposed audiences.
- Support monitoring activities between formal rounds of data collection, maintain a working research document with key results over the project lifecycle, and contribute research findings to the project's Final Learning Report and Knowledge Dissemination Workshop.

VI. Scope of work – “Services”

The research agency must be GDPR/Indian Government Data storage compliant and work to BBC Media Action's safeguarding standards. Please provide information about the same in the proposal.

The specific services to be rendered by the Contractor are:

- Recommend a research approach suitable for the needs assessment, baseline and endline evaluation of Break the Chain, covering all four workstreams (the digital campaign; journalism students and content creators; journalists and media professionals; and community radio stations).
- Design and/or modify the research instruments, recruitment questionnaires, discussion and interview guides and questionnaires, in consultation with BBC Media Action and in accordance with its requirements. BBC Media Action shall have the right to approve the final research instruments prior to commencement of services. Only instruments approved by BBC Media Action are to be used during fieldwork.

- Obtain and keep on file informed consent for all respondents, to be provided immediately to BBC Media Action upon request.
- Conduct the research and store/transfer data in line with GDPR compliance and Indian data protection laws.
- Design quality control protocols for data collection and document these.
- Support the project's standardised monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework, established at the start of the action, including tools to collect data against the indicators, and an M&E workplan.
- Support data collection during training camps and capacity-strengthening workshops to capture immediate participant learning outcomes.
- Participate in review and reflection meetings, to feed research evidence into continuous learning and adaptive programme management.
- To maintain and continuously update a working research document across the project lifecycle.
- Present detailed findings from each round of data collection to BBC Media Action's research and programme teams and make amendments to the presentation based on feedback received.
- Deliver a detailed **word report of findings** from each round, incorporating BBC Media Action's feedback.
- Contribute research inputs to the project's Final Learning Report and Knowledge Dissemination Workshop.

VII. Quality assurance

The Contractor shall work closely with BBC Media Action's Research and Learning team to ensure the highest standards of data integrity and quality assurance throughout the research study.

- All research instruments will be shared with the research team for review and approval.
- The research methodology will be discussed with the team, and any deviation from the approved design should be brought to the immediate notice of BBC Media Action.
- Data protection protocols as per GDPR/Indian government must be followed during the research, for both online/remote and in-person data collection.
- The agency will indicate the percentage of backchecks/accompaniments it will undertake to validate the quality of responses.
- The agency, as data custodian, should lead the IRB (institutional/ethics review) process, with support from the BBC Media Action team.
- Continuous monitoring of the frequency and quality (accuracy, balance and inclusivity) of media outputs should be considered alongside primary research data. The project team already draws on Brandwatch (social listening and sentiment analysis), the Meta Content Library (tracking narratives on Facebook and Instagram), and MediaCloud (tracking published pieces by journalists and media professionals); the research partner should indicate how its proposed

approach will complement and help interpret findings from these tools alongside primary research.

The Contractor shall deliver the following, in accordance with the timelines set out in this agreement, for each round of research (needs assessment, baseline, and endline):

- Finalised research design, post discussion with BBC Media Action.
- Research instruments based on the agreed methodology, reviewed and agreed by BBC Media Action.
- Inception report, which will be an evolving document throughout the research.
- English transcripts of all qualitative activities, complete and detailed, for future reference (if included in the research design).
- Content analysis of all qualitative activities.
- Cleaned and finalised dataset in SPSS/STATA for the quantitative component, with complete value and variable labelling and without personal identifiers.
- Output tables of the data.
- Final word report and accompanying presentation for each round.

VIII. Evaluation criteria

All proposals submitted will be reviewed and graded by an internal panel against the following criteria:

- Agency background and previous experience working in the development sector / digital campaigns, especially quasi-experimental or mixed-methods impact evaluation.
- Experience in delivering experimental or quasi-experimental impact research, including with journalists, content creators, community media and youth audiences.
- Research approach and design across the full project cycle.
- Work plan and timelines.
- GDPR compliance / data protection protocols.
- Budget for the assignment, with a cost break up for data collection, data handling and reporting for each round (needs assessment, baseline, midline and endline).

The criteria mentioned are indicative and will be finalised post discussion with the evaluation panel. Please include cost break-ups for each round of data collection and presentation.

Research agencies or moderators may bid in consortium with other agencies or moderators if they feel this will strengthen their credentials. They may not sub-contract the project to any other entity.

IX. Terms of payment

Payment will be linked to milestones across the full project cycle, as indicated below:

Milestone	% of contract value
Signing the contract	10%
Inception report (incl. finalised M&E framework)	15%
Baseline	25%
Endline	25%
Contribution to Final Learning Report and Knowledge Dissemination Workshop	25%

The grid mentioned is indicative and will be finalised post consultation with the agency.

X. Timelines

Monitoring and evaluation activities on the project will run for 12-14 months, from September 2026 to November 2027. The tentative timelines for delivery of the research deliverables are:

S.N.	Activity	Indicative period
1	Request for proposal to Contractor	17 th August 2026
2	Last date to share intent to participate and send queries to ebid@in.bbcmmediaaction.org	20 th August 2026 (11:59 PM)
3	Response to queries by BBC Media Action	21 st August 2026 (11:59 PM)
4	Submission of proposal by the Contractor to the specific Ebid ID only- Ebid400@in.bbcmmediaaction.org	1 st September 2026 (11:59 PM)
5	Presentation with top three agencies	September 2026
6	Agency selection	September 2026
7	Inception (incl. M&E framework)	October 2026
8	Baseline	TBD
11	Endline	TBD
12	Final Learning Report and Knowledge Dissemination Workshop	TBD

Timelines are indicative and will be finalised post discussion with the agency.

Section 3 – Instructions to Agencies

The research agencies must submit a closed bid with a detailed proposal and an accompanying financial proposal to the Ebid ID – Ebid400@in.bbcmmediaaction.org by 1st September 2026 (11:59 PM).

Prior to proposal submission, research agencies need to send in any queries and an intent to submit the proposal to ebid@in.bbcmmediaaction.org by 11:59 PM 20th August 2026.

As part of the proposal, agencies must include a risk and mitigation plan outlining potential challenges that can be foreseen across the project cycle, as well as approaches to address the same.

Agency is requested to submit a detail of all the services they will be providing under the contract, please feel free to include these as part of the proposal where appropriate.

a. Compliance and caveats

- BBC Media Action (India) Limited reserves the right to revoke this RfP and contract should the funding no longer be available.
- No costs will be paid for proposal development and for the pitch meeting.

- Confidentiality:

All information contained in this RfP and all other related correspondence and documentation should be treated as “Commercial in Confidence.” This RfP is being issued to select organisations and its intended recipients. The organisations are advised to keep this confidential and only circulate it among intended recipients within the organisation. This RfP and all other related correspondence and documentation, in part or in full, should not be shared outside the organisation without prior written consent of the RfP issuing organisation, after stating the specific intent. Failure to control distribution may result in disqualification from the RfP process. The selected agency is expected to maintain strict confidentiality about all aspects of the programme.

- Proposal validity:

The proposal submitted by the respondents must remain valid and open for acceptance by BBC Media Action for 60 days from the RfP submission date. A proposal valid for a shorter period may be rejected.

- Amendments to RfP documents:

BBC Media Action India may amend this RfP and attached documents at any time prior to the deadline for receipt of proposals. Any such amendment will be notified in writing to all the prospective respondents. To allow time for such amendments to be considered, BBC Media Action may, at its discretion, extend the deadline for submission of proposals.

- Use of trademarks:

The research agency must not use or reproduce BBC’s, BBC Media Action’s or WAN-IFRA’s trademark or logo, or otherwise refer to them, without prior written consent.

- Conflict of interest:

Respondents should notify BBC Media Action if they consider there to be a conflict of interest.

- Inducement:

Offering an inducement of any kind in relation to obtaining this or any other contract with the BBC Media Action will disqualify your tender from being considered and may constitute a criminal offence.

- Notification of award:

BBC Media Action will notify acceptance in writing to the selected agency. If agreement is reached with the selected agency, then BBC Media Action will notify the other agencies as soon as it is reasonably practical.

- Accuracy of information:

By sharing the proposal, all research agencies attest to the accuracy, adequacy and completeness of any data used throughout the proposal and duration of the partnership. Any partial or complete misrepresentation of data, or non-disclosure of pertinent data will disqualify your tender from being considered and may constitute a criminal offence. BBC Media Action is not in any way responsible or liable for any damage, loss or cost associated arising from the inadequacy or inaccuracy of any of the data.

- Data privacy and protection:

The selected agency to be conscious of and maintain the values of BBC Media Action in all matters including but not limited to data protection, editorial and safeguarding guidelines. BBC Media Action follows the General Data Protection and Regulation (EU) and Indian Data Protection Laws with regards to data protection and privacy. We expect the research agency to comply with the same. Please do explicitly specify any other guard-rails and policies regarding data privacy that the agency might follow.

BBC Media Action holds the right to award contracts based on assessed capacity, innovation ideas suggested and other quality/ cost factors. Hence agencies are expected to respond to this RfP only if they agree to fulfil the suggested scope of work and meet the requirements as detailed.

- The selected agency to maintain decorum and appropriate conduct for self and team always.
- The selected agency will need to do multiple iterations depending on feedback from BBC Media Action
- The selected agency will not have any copyright whatsoever over the data (final and draft versions) and its analysis. All copyrights/ intellectual property rights remain with BBC Media Action.
- The BBC has detailed guidance on data collection activities for BBC and its subsidiaries complying with the laws in the UK. However, it would be helpful to understand from agencies on their approach in an Indian context.

Apart from the above, the selected agency will also abide by the BBC Media Action's editorial and safeguarding policy appended with this RfP for reference.

Contract template attached for reference [BBC Media Action's Draft Contract Format.pdf](#)