



Strategic Plan of Provincial Assembly of the Punjab

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April 2019

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FOREWORD

Strategic planning is a modern way of planning and undertaking reforms in any institution and has proved to be helpful. Throughout my career, I have been devoted to proper planning for serious reforms, which I also demonstrated in my previous tenure at the Punjab Assembly. This plan is much needed as the Punjab Assembly is pursuing serious reforms to improve House business, committee system and secretariat support services. As the representatives of Pakistan's most populous province, we are the largest legislature in the country, therefore, our responsibilities to deliver on our core mandate are also huge. In doing so, we must pay attention to the democratic principles as set out in our Constitution and international standards for legislation, oversight and representation. We have, therefore, set out key objectives for the current tenure of the assembly:

1. Enabling the Provincial Assembly of the Punjab to bring about responsive, proactive and effective legislation;
2. Strengthening the Assembly's oversight role and that of its organs;
3. Improving research, library and allied facilities;
4. Increasing public outreach and strategising communication;
5. Improving general administration and human resource (HR) management;
6. Improving and better utilising the infrastructure;
7. Increasing the level of automation and treading towards e-Parliament

These objectives will help us deliver on our mandate and improve the secretariat services. We are committed to implementing this plan in letter and spirit, along with a communication and outreach strategy developed alongside the plan.

We have set up a multiparty "Strategic Planning Oversight Committee" (SPOC) under the leadership of very talented Deputy Speaker, Sardar Dost Muhammad Mazari and will provide the committee necessary financial and other resources in order to fully implement this important plan.

The plan is an outcome of hard work of many individuals and institutions. I am grateful to Deputy Speaker for providing leadership in finalising it, along with all members of the SPOC. From the Secretariat, Secretary of the Assembly, Mr Muhammad Khan Bhatti, along with Mr Inayatullah Lak, Director General (Parliamentary Affairs and Research), and Mr Khalid Mahmood, Deputy Secretary (Legislation) deserve special mention. Our important strategic partner, Tabeer-Consolidating Democracy in Pakistan, has helped us throughout the process which involved consultations with hon'ble Members of Assembly, civil society and media along with a review of international good practices. I would like to express my gratitude for Tabeer's Team Leader, Mr Amir Khan Goraya, Tabeer's Parliamentary Strengthening Lead, Mr Hassan Nasir Mirbahar, and Mr Faisal M. Buttar, the consultant who produced this plan. We are also grateful to all assembly staff, civil society organisations and media for participating in consultations and providing their valuable inputs for this plan.

PARVEZ ELAHI

Speaker
Provincial Assembly of the Punjab

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CDIP	Consolidating Democracy in Pakistan
FGD	Focus group discussion
HR	Human resources
HRMIS	Human Resource Management Information System
LUMS	Lahore University of Management Sciences (Lahore)
MPA	Member of the Provincial Assembly
MPDD	Management and Professional Development Department (Punjab)
NSPP	National School of Public Policy
PAC	Public Accounts Committee
PAP	Provincial Assembly of The Punjab
PCSIR	Pakistan Council of Scientific and Industrial Research
PIPS	Pakistan Institute of Parliamentary Services
PITB	Punjab Information Technology Board
PLSP	Pakistan Legislative Strengthening Project
SPOC	Strategic Plan Oversight Committee
UET	University of Engineering and Technology (Lahore)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Provincial Assembly of Punjab's (PAP) last Strategic Plan was prepared in 2010. However, it could not be implemented because of its complexity and a lack of resources. Work on this plan began in February 2018, about six months before the end of the 2013 Assembly's term. The idea behind the timing was to capitalise on outgoing members' experiences and to have a working draft ready by the time the new Legislative Assembly of 2018 was in place.

This plan has been formulated keeping in view the ground realities, constraints and existing capacities of PAP's establishment. Seven themes have been identified for strategic interventions on functional and operational lines. These include improving the Assembly's legislative and oversight functions and investing in research facilities, automation and the introduction of ICT, and improving communications and public outreach and general administration.

This plan identifies actions that aim to make PAP's legislative function proactive and more responsive to public needs. Similarly, recommendations to make standing committees more effective in their legislative and scrutiny functions have been suggested. Some of these involve changing existing laws and rules to make the committees more relevant, empowered and effective.

The Assembly will certainly require additional financial resources to improve its operations.

As per the recommendations, these resources would be invested in hiring new staff, training them and existing staff, and training the members of the Assembly. Introducing training for staff and members has been found to be a major strategic intervention that will bring about considerable improvement in PAP's outputs.

Infrastructure improvements are also a major requirement for PAP to function smoothly. The Assembly's under-construction facility is expected to be ready within the year. This will solve the major constraint of space availability for staff and members. Its effective and optimal utilisation will be a key factor in operationalising the PAP Secretariat's various branches and wings.

Like a modern organisation, PAP needs to introduce automation and gradually move towards an e-Parliament mode of working. Many areas of Assembly business and those of its Secretariat can be shifted to an electronic and digital mode. Similarly, a public outreach model has been suggested which would involve preparing and implementing a fully-fledged communications strategy.

The Punjab Assembly expresses its resolve and hopes that this Strategic Plan will be implemented in letter and spirit and will help make PAP a model institution in terms of effectiveness, service delivery and governance.

1. BACKGROUND

Pakistan is a federal state comprising four federating units, the provinces. Of these, the province of Punjab is the largest in terms of population. There is a bicameral legislature at the federal level, comprising the National Assembly and the Senate, whereas the provinces have unicameral legislative assemblies.

A legislature performs the functions of oversight, legislation and public representation in order to meet public aspirations and discharge the trust of its electors. The fact that in a Westminster-styled system, the Executive is chosen from a legislature makes these functions all the more important. These functions must be performed in line with public aspirations and general societal consensus on issues of public importance. Consequently, enacting laws and monitoring their implementation—by the Executive—is an important function of the legislature. Similarly, budgeting public accounts through an annual budget and ensuring financial discipline through Public Accounts Committees (PACs) is also a primary function of the legislature.

The Punjab Assembly had developed a three-year Strategic Plan (2010–2012) for its institutional capacity building and for bringing it at par with the challenges and demands of the modern day. For this, the Honourable Speaker nominated a 12-member Strategic Plan Oversight Committee (SPOC) in February 2009. For nominations, factors like each member's experience or level of interest, cross-party representation, gender, geographic diversity and overall leadership qualities were kept in mind. The SPOC's mandate was to develop a three-year Strategic Plan with proposed goals and activities that would enhance the Assembly's human, financial and infrastructure resources as a public institution. The SPOC

drafted the framework for strategic planning in consultation with the political and secretarial leadership of PAP through a series of meetings and events. The process was supported by the Pakistan Legislative Strengthening Project (PLSP).

PAP's last Strategic Plan was developed in 2010 for a duration of three years. The then and next Assembly (2008–2013 and 2013–2018), did not revise or adopt a new strategic plan. Ultimately, the plan could not be implemented.

One of the major reasons for the last Strategic Plan's non-implementation, as also highlighted during various focus group discussions (FGDs) and consultative sessions, was its relative disregard for ground realities, resource availability, the attitudes and mindsets of the persons involved in its implementation, and the complexity of its recommendations and action plans.

In February 2018, towards the end of the last Assembly's tenure (2013–2018), PAP began the process of developing a new Strategic Plan for the next Assembly (2018–2023). The idea was to gain insights from the experience of previous members and produce a draft plan for the Assembly by the time it came into being.

The Punjab Assembly is grateful to the DAI-Tabeer 'Consolidating Democracy in Pakistan' (CDIP) programme, and its partner, the British Council,¹ for providing technical assistance in developing this Strategic Plan.

The primary object of this Strategic Plan is to provide a vision for the next five years and enable the 2018 Assembly to be a more effective body that is responsive and fulfills its constitutional roles and duties. It outlines the broad strategic direction, actions and steps that need to be taken to achieve this goal. It

also provides a framework detailing timelines and responsibilities.

2. VISION

An active and responsive Assembly that improves the quality of life of the people of Punjab and brings about development, equity and equality in society through performing its key functions.

3. MISSION

To strengthen the Provincial Assembly as an institution—so that it effectively legislates and oversees government performance—and be held accountable as per the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

4. VALUES AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

PAP's values and principles guide its operations, working, performance and culture, and in turn, are affected by them. Developing, strengthening and preserving these core values will be a continuous process. PAP's leadership strives to preserve and strengthen these values in line with its constitutional mandate and the essence of democratic processes.

PAP strongly believes in the following:

- **The supremacy of law:** We believe that the lawmakers themselves have the utmost duty to stand by the law and rules at all times. We, therefore, ensure that all our operations and actions are according to laid-down laws and applicable regulations.

1. DAI-Tabeer is a UK Aid-supported programme that provides technical assistance and support to the National Assembly, Senate, Provincial Assembly of Punjab and the Pakistan Institute of Parliamentary Services (PIPS).

- **Representativeness:** We believe that all of our actions should reflect the representative function of members, both individually and collectively.
- **Responsiveness:** We will strive to be proactive, rather than reactive, in taking up issues of public interest and resolving them through appropriate action.
- **Transparency:** We will attempt to increase transparency in all business that is transacted in PAP and the Secretariat.
- **Accountability:** We believe that accountability and the feeling of being accountable are hallmarks of good governance.
- **Dignity:** We will uphold the dignity of all persons (be they electors or members) irrespective of their party position and of all persons working for the Secretariat.
- **Integrity:** We will put a premium on the integrity of every person who comes across PAP in any role whatsoever.
- **Responsibility:** We promote a culture of responsibility and dedication among our staff to make them feel important to our institution's overall objectives.
- **Tolerance:** We promote tolerance of the 'other' within and outside PAP and will attempt to make it a model for others to emulate.
- **Pluralism:** We value diversity and actively discourage discrimination based on gender, ethnicity and religion. We provide equal opportunities to all PAP members and staff.

5. METHODOLOGY

Various tools have been employed to develop

this Strategic Plan, ensuring that the process was thorough, inclusive and consultative. Consequently, this plan is reflective of all stakeholders' input and perspectives.

The process included introductory and sensitisation meetings, FGDs, consultative meetings and a desk review of relevant literature from national and international sources. All stakeholders, including practitioners and academia, have been consulted.

Three meetings were held with PAP Secretariat senior staff and the Deputy Speaker of the Assembly to jumpstart the process. These meetings discussed the previous plan and the direction of the future Strategic Plan.

Two separate FGDs were held with Secretariat staff and PAP members. Fourteen staff members, including ten officers, participated in this meeting. Ten members (four women, six men) attended the FGD. Key discussion themes were the problems, challenges and constraints faced by them, and the reasons for the non-implementation of the previous Strategic Plan (2010–2012).

Five consultative meetings and interviews were conducted with Secretariat staff, the Leader of the Opposition and the convener of the last SPOC.

A major theme in the literature review was a study of international best practices of Strategic Plans developed by different parliaments particularly Commonwealth countries, including the UK, India, South Africa, Australia and Bangladesh.

6. KEY ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

PAP acknowledges that there are many institutional issues and challenges in the structure of the PAP Secretariat and in the mindsets of the people concerned - these are deeply entrenched in our rules and regulations. Any reform effort would have to address these effectively and comprehensively.

The following identified issues must be addressed during the development and/or implementation of the Strategic Plan:

- **Lack of balance of authority and power between the legislature and the executive:** In the absence of separation between the Executive and the Legislature in Westminster-styled democracies, unless the democratic culture is very deep-rooted and strong, the Executive because of its control over the legislature, effectively undermines the latter.
- **Weak committee structure in terms of competence, training, resources and powers:** The committees are neither resourced nor properly functional. The legal framework, which is meant to empower them, does not help either.
- **Lack of inclusiveness in committees:** A number of committees do not have adequate representation of women and minorities. Most committee chairpersons have been men.
- **Lack of capacity of Secretariat staff:** Some of the staff in the Secretariat require intensive capacity building.
- **Lack of formal mechanisms to enhance PAP members' representative role:** Individual members' connections with their constituencies and their ability to represent their constituents is limited under the existing legal framework and the resources at PAP's disposal.
- **Slow, dull and lengthy bureaucratic procedures:** This is an issue that cuts across all government departments but requires priority redressal in PAP's case as it is the supreme lawmaking body in the province.
- **Large turnover of PAP members:** The last couple of elections have resulted in more and more members who are fresh entrants

into the Assembly and are not familiar with government and PAP procedures. Though a positive and healthy sign indicating a vibrant political process, this has made it difficult to run PAP's business smoothly.

In a broader context, these issues lead to many external challenges that any strategic plan has to successfully negotiate and deal with:

- Interruption of democratic processes through unconstitutional means;
- Day-to-day changing political and security conditions;
- Economic upheavals and uncertainties typical of a developing country and society;
- Budgetary constraints.

7. THE PLAN AND ITS STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

In view of the challenges and constraints indicated above, priorities indicated by the members of the outgoing Assembly and the lessons learnt from the experience (Strategic Plan for PAP, 2010–2012), a set of five fundamental strategic objectives has been drawn up. This is followed by further breaking up the larger objective into goals, which in turn, are backed up by timed and measurable activities.

In preparing this plan, due care has been taken to ensure that the strategic objectives, goals and proposed actions are feasible, practical and practicable. At places, the existing capacities have been suggested to be boosted and amplified, but due regard has been given to resources potentially available for these ventures and the overall political culture.

This Strategic Plan comprises seven major areas and corresponding strategic objectives:

1. Enabling PAP to bring about responsive,

proactive and effective legislation;

2. Strengthening PAP's oversight role and that of its organs;
3. Improving research, library and allied facilities;
4. Increasing public outreach and strategising communication;
5. Improving general administration and human resource (HR) management;
6. Improving and better utilising the infrastructure;
7. Increasing the level of automation and trading towards e-Parliament.

Key targets against the strategic objectives are covered as under:

7.1 Objective 1: Enabling PAP to bring about responsive, proactive and effective legislation

Legislation is the key product of any parliament. It is brought about after a lengthy and meticulous process that, according to the existing legal framework, can be triggered in more than one way, viz. by way of a government's motion or private member's bill. Behind the government's motion is usually either a direction by the Chief Minister, Cabinet or a superior court. But what is actually legislated by PAP almost always starts as a draft bill by the concerned department of the government and its approval by the Cabinet.

Concerned standing committees within PAP examine draft bills, undertake hearings as necessary, amend or accept them, and furnish final drafts before the Assembly. It is recognised that the entire process of dealing with a draft bill requires rethinking to make it more efficient, proactive and fast.

PAP aims to ensure that this process and its outcome—the legislation which responds effectively to the public's needs and

aspirations—are proactive and not reactive, and are practical enough for implementation.

PAP has fixed the following goals for itself and decided to take related actions to reach the aforementioned objective:

7.1.1 Supporting legislators in effective legislation

A chunk of legislative business is driven by the treasury. Private members need support in moving their legislation. Members require support in amplifying their understanding of the legislative process, scrutinising it and drafting it. Only a few dozen members in the house have a legal background.

But, notwithstanding the above, even members who are motivated and willing to work on a draft bill do not receive sufficient support in terms of research, drafting and technical inputs owing to inadequate in-house capacity. In the course of the implementation of this Strategic Plan, PAP aims to undertake the following activities to make members more effective legislators:

- **Introduce training and short courses:** PAP will provide training opportunities to its members in coordination with leading course providers in Lahore in management, the basics of legal drafting and legislation, and issues and solutions in the social sector. These course providers may include educational institutions like the Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS), Punjab University and government training institutions like Pakistan Institute for Parliamentary Services (PIPS), the National School of Public Policy (NSPP) and the Punjab Management and Professional Development Department (MPDD).
- **Create legislative drafting section:** PAP will create a Legislative Drafting Section to assist members in getting drafts prepared. This would require hiring more professionals

in the section with necessary equipment. The section will also be provided due space once the newly built facility is handed over.

- **Encouraging private members' bills:** PAP recognises that individual members need to be encouraged to put up private bills that are processed properly and taken to their logical ends. Details regarding such bills and their status will be made public on the website which will lead to members' self-accountability as well as that of the PAP Secretariat.
- **Provide legislative aides to MPAs:** MPAs lack research and legislative drafting services. Such lack hinders their day to day functioning. To bridge the gap, PAP will amplify legislative aides for the MPA and amend the privileges act accordingly. It will look into options such as individual staff or creating sufficient centralised support for all the members.

7.1.2 Improving the quality of committee-level scrutiny and examination of draft bills

Committees are the most pivotal components in the legislative process in a legislative body. Committees at PAP are usually active and vibrant bodies where members participate and contribute. However, the fact remains that available resources on which committees can count for advice, input, expert opinions, and research, are insufficient. The following actions will be taken under this Strategic Plan to improve the working and output of committees' business in terms of legislation:

The provision of additional staff, research facilities and linkages with other organisations are cross-cutting themes across many strategic objectives. Nonetheless, they are shown here in the context of legislative business:

The provision of additional staff, research

facilities and linkages with other organisations are cross-cutting themes across many strategic objectives. Nonetheless, they are shown here in the context of legislative business:

- **Make the staff available to different committees:** At the moment, there is only a skeleton staff that all committees share, except the PAC. This alone is the biggest problem in the running of committees' business and needs to be improved, as a priority. PAP will ensure that, as a matter of priority, all committees are provided dedicated staff as a medium-term target, and, on an immediate basis, not more than six different committees will be lumped together, and dedicated staff provided to each. Additional staff will be hired for this purpose.
- **Amend the rules:** PAP will amend its rules where it is needed to make committees more powerful and independent to ensure better committee level scrutiny and examine the draft bills more diligently.
- **Arrange expert inputs:** PAP will develop linkages with public sector and large private sector research and educational institutions for committees to deal effectively with complex sectoral issues. These will include institutions like Punjab University, LUMS, University of Engineering and Technology (UET) and the Pakistan Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (PCSIR). Formal mechanisms will be developed to obtain technical advice and input from experts in given fields.
- **Formalise legislative scrutiny:** In the current legislative tradition, formal analyses presented to PAP lack information on potential social, economic, financial or other impacts of legislation. These aspects are indeed discussed in meetings, but not formally analysed. PAP will pioneer in this area by developed forms and proformas

seeking this information from the sponsors. Additionally, PAP will build on its linkages with leading research and academic institutions to gain expert advice and input for impact assessment of proposed legislation.

- **Inclusive committees:** The Punjab Assembly has established a committee on gender mainstreaming. However, women and minorities have been less adequately represented in most committees in the past. Moreover, only a handful of committees are chaired by women. PAP will make efforts to address this issue by selecting committee members regardless of their gender, ethnicity or religion, and by ensuring that women and minority group members are provided with equal opportunities to chair committees.

7.1.3 Mainstreaming the legislative process

The workload in PAP has increased manifold because of the increase in the number of members in recent years. Furthermore, population growth in the province and 18th Amendment devolution have increased the range and load of issues meant to be dealt with by PAP. It is, therefore, important that the legislative process is streamlined, efficient and transparent.

Develop forms to simplify and disseminate information: PAP will develop forms to streamline the flow of information regarding its legislative business within PAP and the public. Details of objectives, aims, penal provisions, new rights or duties and the potential impact of every proposed legislation will be sought from the sponsor on a simple form, which will be made available to all members and be put online.

Similarly, forms showing the progress of a draft bill through different phases of the legislative process will also be developed and published online.

7.2 Objective 2: Strengthening PAP's oversight role and that of its organs

Oversight over the executive is another fundamental job of a parliament. Traditionally, albeit PAP, like other Westminster-styled parliaments generally, and other assemblies in Pakistan particularly exercises oversight over the government; but since Ministers of the government are also drawn from the very house, this oversight function remains diluted and not very meaningful. PAP understands that certain major interventions are warranted to strengthen this role of the Assembly.

During the currency of this Strategic Plan, PAP will work on the following goals to achieve this objective:

7.2.1 Capacity building of oversight functions

Although all Assembly members and concerned officials remain aware of their responsibility to hold the government accountable, the 'how to' question pertaining to this assignment remains unanswered. Practically, oversight has become mostly dependent on who, as a person, is chairing a particular committee or meeting. PAP will take the following steps under this Strategic Plan to institutionalise this function:

- **Train members:** The trainings of members, particularly those who head various committees and do not have enough experience of working with the government, will be arranged in collaboration with the Pakistan Institute of Parliamentary Services (PIPS), MPDD and NSPP. These trainings will cover the relevant laws and rules, Assembly procedures and visits to other assemblies. National and international parliamentary exchanges to be held for members to enhance their understanding about parliaments role.
- **Build staff capacity:** PAP will arrange staff

officer training dealing with various aspects of oversight functions in collaboration with PIPS and MPDD. Bespoke courses will be designed for intensive, but effective training, which will cover relevant rules and laws, note-taking, ICT applications and office management.

7.2.2 Empowering and improving the functioning of standing committees

Standing committees are the primary instruments by which concerned departments are held accountable in terms of the exercise of executive power in line with mandates specified by the legislature. As discussed above in the context of legislation, committees' infrastructure requires strengthening to make them more effective. PAP will provide staff and resources to committees under this Strategic Plan.

- **Amend rules of procedure:** PAP will affect amendments in rules to empower standing committees in terms of the taking suo moto notice of their concerned department's actions and omissions, their convening power and their ability to draw their own agenda. The rules will be brought with democratic norms in parliamentary democracy. These will also include changes to improve the transparency of committees' work.
- **Strengthen the backbone:** At the moment, the staff and resources available to committees are inadequate. Lumping together six committees at the maximum and providing them with dedicated staff in the short run has been discussed above. In the medium term, PAP will ensure the hiring of new staff to provide dedicated staff to all committees depending on the quantum of their business on an equitable basis.
- **Involve academia and technocrats:** This has already been touched upon in the

discussion on Strategic Objectives One and Two. PAP feels that while the expert and technical input is necessary to make legislation more effective and practical, involving academia and technocrats in the Assembly's business is something that is per se valuable and worth its while.

- **Make expert input mandatory:** PAP will consider amending rules and making it mandatory for all standing committees to obtain input from at least two technical experts or academics by way of briefings or presentations during the finalisation of any legislation. The only exception would be where the proposed bill is a minor amendment to existing legislation.
- **Hold public hearings:** According to historical precedent, holding public hearings in PAP is rare. The Leadership will encourage committees to hold public hearings on legislative issues and provide necessary wherewithal. Amending rules to facilities this will also be considered. In due course, PAP will also prepare or adopt a public hearings manual in line with the National Assembly of Pakistan. It will be ensured that notices for public hearings are issued well in advance and are published online and in the print media. The public will be encouraged to participate and ordinary people's entry into the Secretariat will be facilitated through security checks. PAP will also make special efforts to ensure that public hearings are attended by women and members of socially excluded groups.

7.2.3 Improving the functioning of the Public Accounts Committee

The PAC remains the most important committee as it is tasked with verifying and ensuring that governments spend public money as decreed and as legislated by the legislature. Given the enormity of this task, PAP has two PACs.

However, PAC business in PAP is marred by a massive backlog and a lack of coordination between the auditors, departments and the PAC Secretariat. The result is a state of indecision and deep pendency.

The PACs recognise the need to revamp the PAC machine on a priority basis, not only to deal with future workloads effectively, but also to dispose of pending work spanning more than a decade. The PACs will take the following steps under this Strategic Framework to achieve this objective:

- **Better informed and trained members:** PAP will arrange training for PAC members so that they understand the intricacies of public finance and accounting (as opposed to the usual hands-on learning). These bespoke modules will be prepared in collaboration with PIPS and MPDD with input from the government and the Auditor General's office, and will provide members the skills necessary for differentiating the material from the immaterial. This is necessary for them to take bold, effective and quick decisions.
- **Consider changing procedure:** Given the workload and massive pendency, the PACs will be asked to review their procedures and consider short and swift means to dispose of business. For instance, relatively straightforward cases, where there is not much difference of opinion involved, may be disposed of in smaller meetings rather than convening full-scale meetings requiring the attendance of all concerned. Similarly, additional instruments to ensure compliance with the PACs' directions may be added to the rules. PAP and PAC will, therefore, engage with the Auditor-general office and other relevant forums to address these issues.
- **Clear backlogs:** PAP is determined to facilitate the PAC in clearing the backlog

spread over a decade PAP will ensure that in the medium term, the PACs dispose of this past workload by employing additional staff and by providing financial incentives to members and staff to work extra hours.

7.2.4 Introducing new committees

Certain areas are not yet directly monitored by PAP, e.g., the enforcement status of various laws, the scrutiny of subordinate legislation, redundancies in existing legislation, oversight of autonomous statutory bodies, budgeting processes, etc. PAP will consider constituting organs and committees to deal with these areas during the course of the implementation of this Strategic Plan.

PAP will constitute at least three new standing committees during the first year of this plan. One of these is the Post-Legislation Scrutiny Committee which will deal with the enforcement of legislation by the Executive and by taking/suggesting further courses of action.

The second committee will deal with independent and autonomous statutory organisations, which, as a matter of obligation, present their reports directly to the Assembly but are independent of the government and the Assembly, viz. the Punjab Public Service Commission, the Office of the Ombudsman, the Office of Ombudswomen, the Punjab Information Commission, the Punjab Commission on the Status of Women, etc. A dedicated committee on this behalf will improve the Assembly's oversight in these areas. The committee will be required to present its report to the Assembly as a counter-comment on these organisations' reports. Although the governing legislation of these bodies do not authorise the Assembly to issue directions to them, PAP believes that this mechanism will improve the governance and accountability of these autonomous bodies.

The third committee will be Ethics Committee,

which will deal with the conduct of the members inside and outside the house.

7.3 Objective 3: Improving research, library and allied facilities

Providing better and reliable research services to the Members is a cross-cutting theme that is critical to both legislative and scrutiny functions of the Assembly. At the moment, these services are relatively rudimentary in nature and are not used much by members. PAP understands that for effective service delivery, it needs to invest in this area. The following actions will be taken in this regard:

7.3.1 Obtaining HR support from educational institutions

In the short run, PAP will develop linkages with large and established educational institutions, both in the public and private sector, to obtain the services of research associates and interns who can be utilised as researchers and assistants to work with individual members and the committees. This will be a mutually beneficial relationship as it will provide large-scale exposure to students while purveying quality academic resources to PAP and its members. Training for staff will also be done through this activity.

7.3.2 Revamping the research section and library

In order to develop and then sustain members' interest in the process of litigation, it needs to be ensured that an in-house facility is available to them that is responsive and proactive. The existing arrangements leave much to be desired. Therefore, PAP will revamp and rebuild the research and library facilities over a five-year period. New staff will be hired within the next two years in the Research Section, and an expanded library will be established after

the new facility is available. PAP will establish a mechanism for tracking the use of its research support to members and the committees.

7.4 Objective 4: Increasing public outreach and strategising communication

The themes of increasing interaction and interface with the general public have already been touched upon in this plan. However, PAP feels that it is high time that the Assembly, as a public institution, be opened up to the general public as a stand-alone objective. Broadly speaking, the general public perceives the Assembly as inaccessible, remote and closed. Unlike with other public offices, the general public has little to do with the Assembly's day-to-day operations. This results in misgivings and misperceptions. In addition, the Speaker usually belongs to the ruling party in the provincial government, so the media is also prone to considering the Assembly's establishment as part and parcel of the wider government.

It is in this backdrop that PAP has now decided to proactively approach and open up to the general public to correct perceptions about its role, operations and those of its members. PAP feels that it should have a custom-made communications strategy to effectively reach out to the public, especially women and members of socially excluded groups, civil society and the media. It has already developed a draft Communication and Outreach strategy, which the PAP will implement.

7.5 Objective 5: Improving general administration and HR management

PAP's Secretariat is much like any other public office in Pakistan carrying various inadequacies and inefficiencies. As the house of the top-most elected body in the province, it is meant to be ahead of other government offices. Major impediments include imbalanced

staffing at various tiers, a lack of staff capacity and motivation, and cumbersome procedures. One of the major strategic objectives in this framework is to improve the overall working of PAP's Secretariat. PAP has set the following goals in this regard:

7.5.1 Increasing and improving the HR base

As indicated, the bottom-heavy human resource available at the PAP Secretariat, yet it recognises the need for developing a proper parliamentary cadre to serve key Assembly functions. PAP recognises the need to improve the state of existing human resources and has set the following action agenda in this regard:

- **An independent and professional cadre of parliamentary officers:** At the moment, PAP officers do not have clearly charted-out career paths or promotion prospects. It is essential to raise a cadre of officers who are dedicated, committed, trained and experienced in parliamentary business in order for PAP to become a vibrant and thriving apex organisation. The Constitution also empowers each of the five assemblies to make separate service act and rules for their employees. In line with this, and to meet the requirements of professional service, PAP will develop its service act and rules and according to the rule, raise its own cadre of officers. After this is done during the first year of plan implementation, PAP will appoint new officers against vacant positions through a merit-based competitive process by the Public Service Commission. PAP aims to have a fully functional cadre of professional officers by the end of this Strategic Plan.
- **Introduce a human resource management information system (HRMIS):** PAP also aims to do away with manual and paper-based HR management.

For this purpose, PAP, in coordination with the Punjab Information Technology Board (PITB), aims to go paperless in its HR management operations within two years.

- **Adjustment of existing staff:** The existing organisation of PAP Secretariat is bottom heavy and disproportionately distributed across the Assembly. It is recognised that disproportionate distribution creates administrative inefficiencies. PAP will undertake staff adjustments to meet the relevant needs of the different departments deploying the right people for the right jobs. After undertaking an exact needs assessment, PAP aims to complete this exercise within the first six months of implementation of this Strategic Plan. New staff, if required, will be hired through a competitive process by hiring a testing service like the National Testing Service, LUMS or a public sector university like UET.
- **Train staff:** To ensure that PAP's staff is up to the task with which it is entrusted, staff promotions will be linked to mandatory training in various aspects of the parliamentary business. PAP will prepare necessary rules in this regard in consultation with PIPS and MPDD and aims to put these in place during the first year of this plan's implementation. PAP will sensitise its staff to gender issues and harassment to ensure a working environment conducive to women.
- **Introduce key performance indicators:** PAP understands that measuring performance is as important to high-quality outputs as trained and able staff. PAP, therefore, aims to develop and notify key performance indicators for officers and officials, particularly in branches responsible for running mechanical and predictable processes. Honoraria for staff will be fixed against performance indicators. PAP aims to have at least 50% of

its branches put under the key performance indicators regime within the first year and all Secretariat branches within the next.

7.6 Objective 6: Improving and better-utilising infrastructure

PAP is currently housed in a building that was constructed about 90 years ago and was meant to cater to a house eight times smaller than the current one. With virtually no new office space added to the PAP building, it is not difficult to imagine the extreme paucity of office space for individuals to work and committees to meet. There is just one committee room in the PAP building for meetings.

Fortunately, PAP awaits a new building that will host most of the offices and more importantly, the house itself. PAP aims to have this new facility completed within the first year of this Strategic Plan.

The new building is a massive and modern structure and was custom built and designed to cater to PAP and its Secretariat. However, it is recognised that PAP and its areas of operation have come a long way in the last 12 years since the building was designed, and particularly in the aftermath of the 18th Amendment of the Constitution. The PAP Secretariat will have to rethink space allocation and make intelligent decisions as to which wings and branches move where. PAP will take professional advice in making these decisions so as to make the best possible use of new space. Areas will be identified for creating a daycare centre for women MPAs and the staff.

7.7 Objective 7: Increasing the level of automation and trend towards e-Parliament

Over recent years, many attempts have been made in various government departments and organisations towards going paperless and

adopting automation, but with no substantial success. While recognising the challenges and constraints, PAP aims to automate its operations and go as paperless as possible during the next years. Given the very formal nature of PAP business, it is not possible to do away with paper altogether for legal and record-keeping reasons. Nonetheless, there are certain areas which can be automated to increase efficiency and speed. PAP must, therefore, meet the following goals under this Strategic Plan.

- **Go digital and paperless:** While not everything under the roof in PAP can go paperless, there are certain areas that should be automated. These include, for instance, the HR and administration branches, establishment wing, member's personal matters like attendance and reimbursements, etc. PITB can help in developing smart tools and applications for many administrative functions like staff attendance, leave, claim forms, member's attendance and for payment of their allowances.

Some less formal portion of the Assembly's business can also be put online, which includes member's questions, their answers by departments and orders of the day. PAP aims to achieve this, in collaboration with PITB, within the first two years of the implementation of this plan.

- **Use existing IT modules:** The IT modules that were developed a few years ago, particularly regarding parliamentary

questions, motions, legislation and speeches on the floor, could not be used for many years due to bugs and lack of software updates. These require debugging and updating. PAP will engage with Punjab Information Technology Board in this regard.

PAP will allocate resources and begin using these modules during the first financial year of this plan.

- **Go green:** Certain activities at PAP require massive printing work. For instance, the passage of budget and finance bills by PAP necessitate the printing of millions of pages. Dissemination of this information to the public and media can be done online, and to members through government-supplied, pre-loaded tablets at much lower costs. Privileges act to be amended to provide tablets and other IT equipment to the members. Similarly, many other printing activities like questions and answers and working papers for meetings can be published online and displayed in the house on screens. This would not only cut out the unnecessary use of paper, but also lead to a smart and efficient outlook.
- PAP aims to bring about the legal amendments required for this during the first six months of the initiation of this plan, and then go paperless in these selected activities, which would have a salubrious effect on costs, clutter and climate.

ANNEX A: STRATEGIC PLANNING FRAMEWORK

Based on the above plan, the Framework has been prepared to structure activities and their timelines. Each Strategic Objective and goal have been treated distinctly.

Strategic Objective 1 Enabling PAP to bring about legislation that is responsive, proactive and effective							
Goals	Activities & Actions	Measurable Indices	Resource Required	Responsibility	Timelines & Term ²		
					Short	Medium	Long
1.1. Supporting legislators in effective legislation	Training & short courses	Number of trainings imparted per annum measured against the previous year	Finances	Legislation Department. PIPS & partners		×	
	Create legislative drafting services	Number of draftsmen available to Members measured against the previous year	Finance & HR	Legislation Department, with support from PIPS and partners.	×	×	
	Encouraging private members bills	Number of Private Members' bills introduced per week of session measured against last year	Finance & HR	Legislation Department, with support from the government.	×		
	Provide legislative Aides to MPAs	Number of research and legislative support provided by the aides	Finances and amendments to the Members Privileges Act	Legislation	×		
1.2. Improve the quality of committee-level scrutiny & examination of draft bills	Make staff available to different committees	No. of staff dealing with Committees measured against total number of committees ³ ; and rate of change on year to year basis	Finance & HR	Committees branch & HR branch. Possible support from partners to be explored as well.	×	×	×
	Amend the rules	Requires onetime amendments		Legislation Department, with support from the government.	×		
	Arrange expert inputs and amend the rules for that	Number of experts made available to the committees; and number of consultations made		Committees branch, with support from the government.		×	×
	Formalise legislative scrutiny	Improvements in the legislative scrutiny mechanism		Committees branch, with external inputs from universities and other institutions.		×	
	Inclusive committee	% increase in women and minority members chairing committee		Committees branch	×		

2. Short term will be from one to two years, medium term will be from two to three years and long term will be from four to five years.

3. Excluding the Public Accounts Committees; since it is only these two committees which have dedicated staff available; all others share about half a dozen staffers

1.3. Structure the legislative process	Develop Forms to simplify & disseminate information to structure the legislative process	One-time action	Finance	SPOC, with support from partners and PIPS.	x		
1.4. Involve the general public	Amend the rules and develop a formal mechanism.	One-time action for amending the rules.	Amendment to the rules.	SPOC	x	x	x
1.5. Formalise the impact analysis	Develop Proformas & linkages with institutions	Number of linkages developed and put in place per half-yearly period	Finances	SPOC, with support from PIPS and partners		x	x

Strategic Objective 2 Strengthening oversight role of the PAP and its organs							
Goals	Activities & Actions	Measurable Indices	Resource Required	Responsibility	Timelines & Term		
					Short	Medium	Long
Capacity building in oversight functions	Train & aware members	Trainings of Members imparted measured against the previous year	Finances	Legislation Department	x	x	x
	Capacity building of the staff	Trainings of Members imparted measured against the previous year	Finances	HR Branch	x	x	x
Empower & improve functioning of standing committees	Amend rules of procedure	One-time amendment to be effected	In-house	Legislation Department, with support from the government.	x		
	Strengthen the backbone	% increase in the staff	Finances and Human resources	Committee branch	x	x	
	Involve academia and technocrats	Number of linkages developed with academic	Finances	Committee branch	x	x	
	Make expert input mandatory	One-time amendment to be effected	In-house resources	Legislation branch, with support from the government.	x		
	Hold public hearings	Number of public hearings done	Finances	Committee branch	x	x	

Improving the function of Public Accounts Committee.	Better informed & trained members by providing trainings on public accounts	Number of trainings imparted to members	Finances	Legislation Department	×	×	
	Consider changing the procedures	Formulate changes & effect amendments	In-house resources.	Legislation Department & PAC		×	
	Clear the backlog of PAC	Total number of audit paras decided versus new ones instituted during the last calendar year, calculated quarterly	In-house resources	PAC		×	×
Chart the uncharted	Make three new committees and make them functional	Constitute the Committees; Number of meetings held by the Committees during the first year	In-house resources.	Legislation Department & Committee branch	×	×	

Strategic Objective 3 Improving Research, Library and Allied Facilities							
Goals	Activities & Actions	Measurable Indices	Resource Required	Responsibility	Timelines & Term		
					Short	Medium	Long
Obtain human resource from educational institutions	Develop linkages with educational institutions and obtain students and researcher to work in PAP	Number of actual interns and researchers deputed in the PAP by educational institutions	Human resource	Legislation Department	×	×	×
Revamp the research section and library	Enhance in-house capacity for research & library resource Subscription of international journals, institutions and search engines	Number of books and researchers increased over a period of one year measured against the last	Finance	Research Department.		×	×

Strategic Objective 4 Increasing Public Outreach and Strategising Communication & engagement with other assemblies							
Goals	Activities & Actions	Measurable Indices	Resource Required	Responsibility	Timelines & Term		
					Short	Medium	Long
Develop and implement a communication strategy	Develop communication and outreach strategy Develop SOPs for media persons	Number of strategies developed	Finances	PRO	×		

Strategic Objective 5 Improving General Administration & HR Management							
Goals	Activities & Actions	Measurable Indices	Resource Required	Responsibility	Timelines & Term		
					Short	Medium	Long
Increase & improve the Human Resource	Develop independent & professional cadre of officers by adopting legislation and amending rules	Promulgation of Rules governing the Parliamentary Cadre officers' recruitment, trainings, promotions and other matters	In-house resources	Admin		×	
	Introduce HRMIS	Install the software and populate database	Finances	Admin & IT		×	×
	Train the staff	Number of trainings imparted per annum measured against the previous year	Finances	Admin, with support from PIPS and partners.	×	×	
	Develop & notify Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Formulate and notify KPIs	In-house resources	Admin		×	

Strategic Objective 6 Improving and Better Utilising the Infrastructure							
Goals	Activities & Actions	Measurable Indices	Resource Required	Responsibility	Timelines & Term		
					Short	Medium	Long
Use the New space intelligently and optimally	Intelligent use of the new space of PAP building	Occupy and populate new building in light of a new space utilisation plan	Proper planning	Admin		×	

Strategic Objective 7 Increasing the level of Automation and tread towards e-Parliament							
Goals	Activities & Actions	Measurable Indices	Resource Required	Responsibility	Timelines & Term		
					Short	Medium	Long
Go digital & paperless	Start e-Parliament initiative	Number of pages printed to be laid before the Members in the house in a quarter measured against the previous calendar year	Finances & HR	Information technology unit	×	×	×
Debug & use the existing IT modules	Allocate funds to debug & update existing IT modules	Number of modules debugged against total number of modules	Finances	Information technology unit	×	×	×

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