



Project Brief

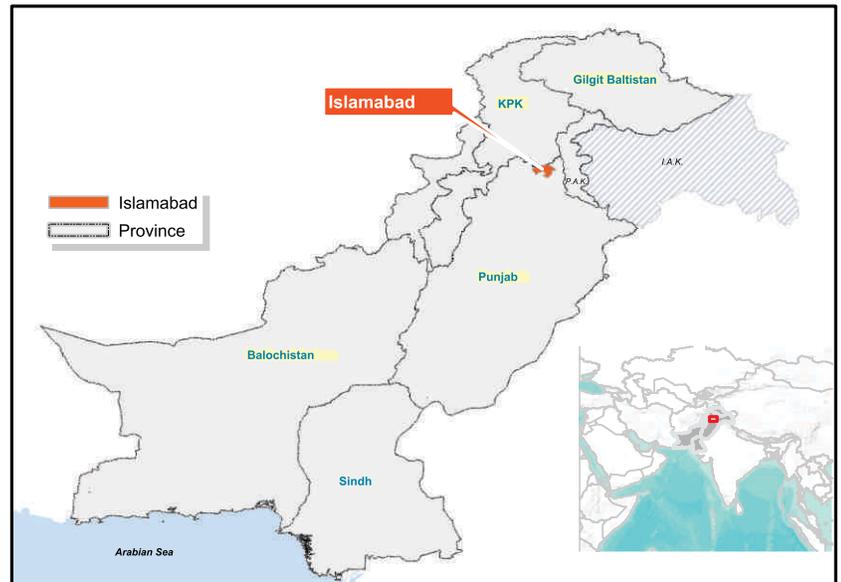
Strengthening Democracy through Parliamentary Development



Pakistan

Quick Facts

- Duration: 1 October, 2009-30 September, 2013
- Implementation Partners: Senate, National Assembly of Pakistan
- Funding Partners: Embassy of the Kingdom of Netherlands
- Geographical Location: Islamabad Capital Territory
- Annual Budget (2013): USD 768,824



In 2002, the authorities of the Parliament of Pakistan sought the support of the Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in strengthening its operations. In the light of the report of an UNDP/IPU mission in 2003, the Strengthening Democracy through Parliamentary Development (SDPD), project was initiated. The overall outcome envisaged for the Parliament in the SDPD is long term. A review mission of the project fielded in February 2009 concluded that the project had made significant contribution to enhancing the role of Parliament but much remains to be done. The mission identified that: (1) Parliament requires support in all key functions and that the lack of support is also obvious in the work of Parliamentary Committees; (2) the Secretariats in both Houses of the Parliament lack the skills and capacity to support the Parliamentarians with regard to crucial work; drafting of laws and amendments to laws; committee work; and research; and (3) Parliament and Parliamentarians have not established strong relationships with Civil Society Organizations, media and citizens and there is a lack of understanding of the roles they play in a democratic society. To address the above constraints of the Parliament, the project started its second phase in late 2009.

Objective

To assist Parliament to strengthen its legitimate role within national governance, enhance its administration, and provide appropriate support for Parliamentarians in discharging their core tasks of executive oversight and law making.



Expected Results

- Enhance the capacity of Parliamentary committees to scrutinize draft laws, oversee the executive branch of government and represent citizens. This involves supporting specific committees in reviewing draft laws, to oversee relevant ministries and the implementation of select laws & policies. It also involves supporting the women's parliamentary caucus effectively to reflect the interests of women from all parliamentary parties in the parliament and supporting parliamentarians and the committees in their engagement with civil society organizations;
- Secretariat staff of the Senate and the National Assembly has the resources and capacity to support the work of Parliamentarians. This involves enhancing institutional capacity of the secretariats through human resource development to enable them to support the parliamentarians and the committees efficiently and professionally;
- Civil society provided with the knowledge and skills to effectively articulate the concerns of citizens to Parliamentarians. This involves enabling civil society organizations to better understand the role and functions of the parliament, to make presentations to parliamentary committees, to advocate their concerns to parliamentarians and give feedback to the committees on the implementation of laws & policies. This also includes capacity building of media so that they are better able to understand the role of parliamentary committees and their role in the legislative process; and
- Aid and support to the Federal Parliament with better coordination. This involves enabling the parliament to effectively coordinate aid through an Aid Coordination Committee. The project would also enhance technical coordination among the parliamentary support projects through a technical working group and among UN agencies through a forum of these agencies.

Main Achievements

- Over 400 parliamentarians and staff were trained and another 342 will be trained this year;
- Supported establishment of a women caucus that

- advocated the passage of 28 key legislations;
- Produced over 150 varied knowledge products;
- Provided support to 12 selected committees of both houses on legislative drafting, including research and oversight;
- Enabled select committees (defense, human rights and foreign affairs) to hold public hearings for the first time;
- Created and built the capacity of Parliamentary Reporters Association, thus significantly improving journalists' reporting on parliamentary affairs;
- Created and built capacity of networks of Youth Parliamentary Schools and Children's Parliament of Pakistan in 30 districts;
- Technical coordination among the parliamentary support projects has been enhanced and formalized by establishing a Parliamentary Support Group with Pakistan Institute of Parliamentary Services (PIPS) as its Chair.

What's Next?

- A new program will be developed to address the needs of Provincial Assemblies;
- New members of National Assembly's orientation program induction 2013 is planned for June - July 2013;
- Policy orientation of women parliamentarians planned;
- Budget process orientation sessions to be held in June along with the induction;
- Senate Committees would be assisted for conducting public hearings.

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