Strengthening Democracy through Parliamentary Development supports the Parliament, the Parliamentary Committees, and the Secretariats in their key functions, and works with Parliamentarians to improve their links with civil society.

**Strengthening Democracy through Parliamentary Development**

In 2002, the Parliament of Pakistan sought the support of the Inter Parliamentary Union (IPU) and UNDP in strengthening its operations. Following the report of their 2003 assessment mission, the Strengthening Democracy through Parliamentary Development (SDPD), project was initiated.

The project supports the federal and provincial Parliaments, the Parliamentary Committees, and the Secretariats in all key functions, and works with Parliamentarians to improve their links with civil society.

The project also works with key parliamentary bodies that legislate and oversee the government’s work to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and on women’s empowerment, as well as those that steer the broader agenda of parliamentary reforms.

**QUICK FACTS**

**Duration:** 20013-2017

**Implementing partners:** Senate, National Assembly of Pakistan, and Provincial Assemblies of Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan

**Funding partners:** Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

**Location:** Nationwide

**Annual budget (2014):** US$800,000

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Objective

- Support and strengthen the national and sub-national Parliaments, enabling them to efficiently perform their functions.
- Strengthen Parliament’s constitutional role in national governance, enhance its administration, and provide support to Parliamentarians to discharge their core tasks of executive oversight and law making.

- The project enabled select committees (defence, human rights and foreign affairs) to hold public hearings for the first time.
- The project created and provided training to the Parliamentary Reporters Association, significantly improving reporting on parliamentary affairs.
- The project has improved the Parliament’s outreach to young people through the Youth Parliamentary School and the Children’s Parliament.
- Technical coordination among parliamentary support projects has been enhanced and formalised with the establishment of a Parliamentary Support Group with the Pakistan Institute of Parliamentary Services (PIPS) as its Chair.

Expected results

- Parliamentary committees to will be able to scrutinise draft laws, oversee the executive branch of government and represent citizens.
- Secretariat staff of the Senate and the National Assembly will have the resources and skills to support the work of Parliamentarians.
- Civil society organisations will have the knowledge and skills to effectively articulate the concerns of citizens to Parliamentarians.
- Aid and support to the Federal Parliament will be better coordinated.

What’s next?

- An assessment of civic education initiatives and needs in Pakistan will lead to the formulation of a civic education programme.
- The project will hold a series of strategic planning workshops for WPCs and formulate a comprehensive plan to strengthen WPCs by improving their institutional and technical abilities.
- The project will provide support to national and provincial MDG Task Forces to perform their functions and play an active role in achieving the MDGs.

Main achievements

- The project supported the establishment of a national Parliamentary Women’s Caucus and supports Women’s Caucuses in all provinces, Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan.

Where we work

UNDP partners with people at all levels of society to help build nations that can withstand crisis, and drive and sustain the kind of growth that improves the quality of life for everyone. On the ground in more than 170 countries and territories, we offer global perspective and local insight to help empower lives and build resilient nations.