



SINDH HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION, GOVERNMENT OF SINDH

STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2027





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FOREWORD

It is with great honour and a profound sense of responsibility to present to you the updated Strategic Plan of the Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) for the period 2023-2027. As the newly appointed Chairperson, I am delighted to embark on this journey of advancing human rights in the province of Sindh, Pakistan.



It enabled us to make significant progress in addressing the multiple human rights challenges faced by individuals and communities in Sindh. In 2022, the SHRC launched a second strategic plan for three years (2022-2025) to advance work on human rights in Sindh.

With the recent amendment of the Sindh Protection of Human Rights Act 2011 in 2023, the composition and mandate of the SHRC has changed significantly. These changes have compelled us to review, revise and update our existing strategic plan to ensure that it meets the evolving needs and remain dynamic and responsive to the changing social and political landscape.

In our pursuit of an equitable and inclusive society, this updated strategic plan provides us with a comprehensive roadmap for the next four years (1 July 2023 - 30 June 2027). It outlines our priorities and the actions we will take to achieve our vision. Our plan embraces a holistic approach that recognises all spectrum of human rights (Civil, Political, Economic, Social and cultural), including preventing and responding to human rights violations and abuses. It emphasizes the need to uphold human rights in all spheres of life.

This strategic plan is based on extensive consultations with our stakeholders, including government agencies, civil society organisations, human rights defenders, marginalised communities and people affected by human rights violations / abuses. Their insights, perspectives and recommendations have been invaluable in shaping our strategic objectives and action plans.

I am confident that with our collective efforts, we will make a tangible difference to the lives of the people of Sindh. However, we are aware that this plan is not a panacea for all the challenges we face. It is a living document and we will remain adaptable, flexible and open to learning from our experiences. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the members of the Commission, the staff of the Commission and all our partners and stakeholders for their tireless efforts and support. Together, we will work tirelessly to ensure the protection and promotion of human rights in Sindh and build a solid foundation for the well-being of future generations.

Iqbal Ahmed Detho
Chairperson
Sindh Human Rights Commission



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the Honourable Chief Minister, Government of Sindh, Syed Murad Ali Shah for his unwavering support. Under his leadership and with his unwavering support, the Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) has made great strides in fulfilling its mandate.

I would also like to extend heartfelt appreciation to Mr. Surrendar Valasai, Ex-Special Assistant to Chief Minister on Human Rights, and Secretary, Human Rights Department Government of Sindh for their invaluable contributions. Their dedication and efforts have played a pivotal role in the progress of the SHRC.

In addition, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Trust for Democratic Education and Accountability (TDEA) for its support in the preparation of the second strategic plan and its assistance in revising the strategic plan in close consultation with the SHRC. The generous co-funding from Global Affairs Canada (GAC) and the Government of Sindh has helped us a lot in this process.

I would like to acknowledge Qindeel Shujaat for his efforts in preparing the strategic plan, and Atta Ul-Mustafa and Barrister Rida Tahir for their valuable technical input in reviewing the plan.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to all the board members, advisors and sub-committee members as well as government officials, civil society and academia representatives, the people of Sindh and other friends of SHRC. Their active participation in the planning process in Karachi and Islamabad and their invaluable suggestions and contributions have contributed to the development of the strategic plan.

Without the support and cooperation of these individuals and organisations, our progress in promoting and protecting human rights in Sindh would not have been possible. We greatly appreciate their commitment to this cause and look forward to continuing this important work together.



ACRONYMS

ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
CAT	Convention Against Torture
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CPU	Child Protection Unit
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CrPC	Criminal Procedure Code
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FIR	First Information Report
GANHRI	Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions
GAC	Global Affairs Canada
GBV	Gender-based Violence
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HRMIS	Human Resource Management Information System
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDP	Internally Displaced persons
IEC	Information, Education, and Communication
ILO	International Labour Organization
KII	Key Informant Interview
LFS	Labour Force Survey
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPA	Member of the Provincial Assembly
NAP	National Action Plan
NCHR	National Commission on Human Rights
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NHRIs	National Human Rights Institutions
NIM	National Institute of Management
PPC	Pakistan Penal Code
PESTLE	Political, Economic, Sociological, Technological, Legal, and Environmental
PWDs	Persons with Disabilities
SCSW	Sindh Commission on the Status of Women
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SHRC	Sindh Human Rights Commission
SNHRIs	Sub-National Human Rights Institutions
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
SPHRA	Sindh Protection of Human Rights Act



ACRONYMS

SWOC	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges
TDEA	Trust for Democratic Education and Accountability
TORs	Terms of Reference
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN	United Nations
UNGPs	United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights
UNHRC	United Nations Human Rights Council
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

SECTION 1

**INTRODUCTION
TO
NATIONAL AND SUB-NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS
&
SINDH HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**



INTRODUCTION

The establishment of human rights institutions has its roots in the global human rights movement and the growing recognition of the need for independent mechanisms to monitor, promote and protect human rights.

HISTORY

The issue of national^[1] human rights institutions was first discussed by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in 1946, two years before the General Assembly proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as "a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations", thus laying the foundation for the modern human rights framework.^[1]

At its second session in 1946, ECOSOC asked member states to "consider the desirability of establishing information groups or local human rights committees within their respective countries to collaborate with them in furthering the work of the Commission on Human Rights"^[2]. Fourteen years later, the issue was taken up again in a resolution that recognised the important role that national institutions can play in the promotion and protection of human rights and called on governments to promote the formation and continuation of such bodies and to provide the Secretary General of the UN, Commission on Human Rights (CHR) and the UN General Assembly with all relevant information on the subject.

In September 1978, the Commission on Human Rights organised a seminar in Geneva to draft guidelines for the structure and functioning of national institutions, which were subsequently endorsed by the Commission on Human Rights and the UN General Assembly.

Some early examples of institutions that can be considered as precursors of NHRIs are the ombudsman institutions originating from Sweden, which played an important role in developing the idea of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs). In the mid-20th century, ombudsman institutions emerged in various countries, primarily to deal with maladministration and state abuse of power. In addition, some countries established human rights commissions or similar institutions to deal with human rights issues. These commissions often had a limited mandate and focused primarily on specific human rights violations or discrimination issues.

PARIS PRINCIPLES, 1993

The international community recognised the need for national mechanisms to promote and protect human rights. On 20 December 1993, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 48/134 on "National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights", with an annex containing the Principles relating to the Status of National Institutions, better known as "Paris Principles", in which it encouraged all states in the world to set up independent national human rights institutions (NHRIs)^[3]. NHRIs are non-judicial, independent institutions created by states through their constitution or law, with the mandate to promote and protect human rights.

[1] Centre for Human Rights, Geneva. (1995). National Human Rights Institutions. United Nations.

[2] *ibid.*

[3] Paris Principles at 25: Strong National Human Rights Institutions Needed More Than Ever. (n.d.). Commissioner for Human Rights. <https://en/web/commissioner/-/paris-principles-at-25-strong-national-human-rights-institutions-needed-more-than-ever>



The Paris Principles were the result of collaboration between states, civil society organisations and international human rights experts. They provided a comprehensive set of standards and guidelines for the establishment and functioning of NHRIs and emphasised independence, pluralism and effectiveness.

PARIS PRINCIPLES, 1993

Criteria set out in the Paris Principles that NHRIs must fulfil

Broad mandate, so that NHRIs are able to promote and protect all human rights.

Broad functions, so that NHRIs are able to deliver on their mandate by providing advice, reporting and monitoring, handling complaints and human rights education, among other “responsibilities”.

Independence from government, set out in legislation or the Constitution.

Pluralism, to ensure that the composition of NHRIs reflects the “social forces (of civilian society) involved in the promotion and protection of human rights”.

Adequate powers, so that NHRIs can initiate inquiries and investigations, gather the evidence and documents they need, consult with NGOs and State institutions and publicise their reports, findings and recommendations.

Adequate resources, so that NHRIs have the funding, staffing, infrastructure and institutional capacity to perform their functions and discharge their responsibilities.

Cooperative work, recognising that effective human rights work requires NHRIs to collaborate with other State institutions, NGOs and civil society groups.

International engagement, so that NHRIs can contribute their knowledge and expertise to international and regional human rights bodies and mechanisms.

Source: GANHRI

The adoption of the Paris Principles in 1993 provided an important impetus for the establishment of NHRIs worldwide, which led to gain momentum worldwide. Many countries have enacted laws or amended their constitutions to establish NHRIs, while others have expanded the mandates of existing institutions to comply with the Paris Principles. The United Nations and regional organisations such as the European Union and the African Union have actively supported the establishment and strengthening of NHRIs through capacity building programmes, technical assistance and peer learning.



Today, NHRIs play a vital role in promoting and protecting human rights in many countries, including Pakistan. There are more than 200 public institutions world-wide[4] and as of April 2023, GANHRI is composed of 120 members: out of that 88 t“A” status accredited NHRIs and 32 “B” status accredited NHRIs[5]. They engage in a variety of activities, including monitoring human rights situations, investigating complaints, conducting research, providing recommendations to governments, raising awareness and advocating for legal and policy reforms.

INTRODUCTION TO NHRIS AND SNHRIS

National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) are state mandated, quasi-judicial bodies with a broad constitutional and/or legal mandate to protect and promote human rights at a national level. NHRIs address the full range of human rights, including civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights[6]. Sub-national human rights institutions (SNHRIs), on the other hand, are established at the regional or local level with a similar mandate and focus on addressing human rights issues specific to their region or jurisdiction. Both NHRIs and SNHRIs play a crucial role in monitoring, advocating for and addressing human rights violations. They also contribute to human rights education and awareness raising. While SNHRIs and NHRIs have similar objectives, they operate independently of the government. However, the structure, powers and functions of SNHRIs may differ from NHRIs.

INTRODUCTION TO SINDH HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

The Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) is a sub-national human rights institution. It was established in 2013 under Section (3) of the Sindh Protection of Human Rights Act, 2011 and amended in 2023.

VISION

To create an enabling environment where Human rights are promoted and protected in Sindh through monitoring and oversight.

MISSION

To promote and protect human rights enshrined in the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1973 and other international obligations and commitments as a state party.

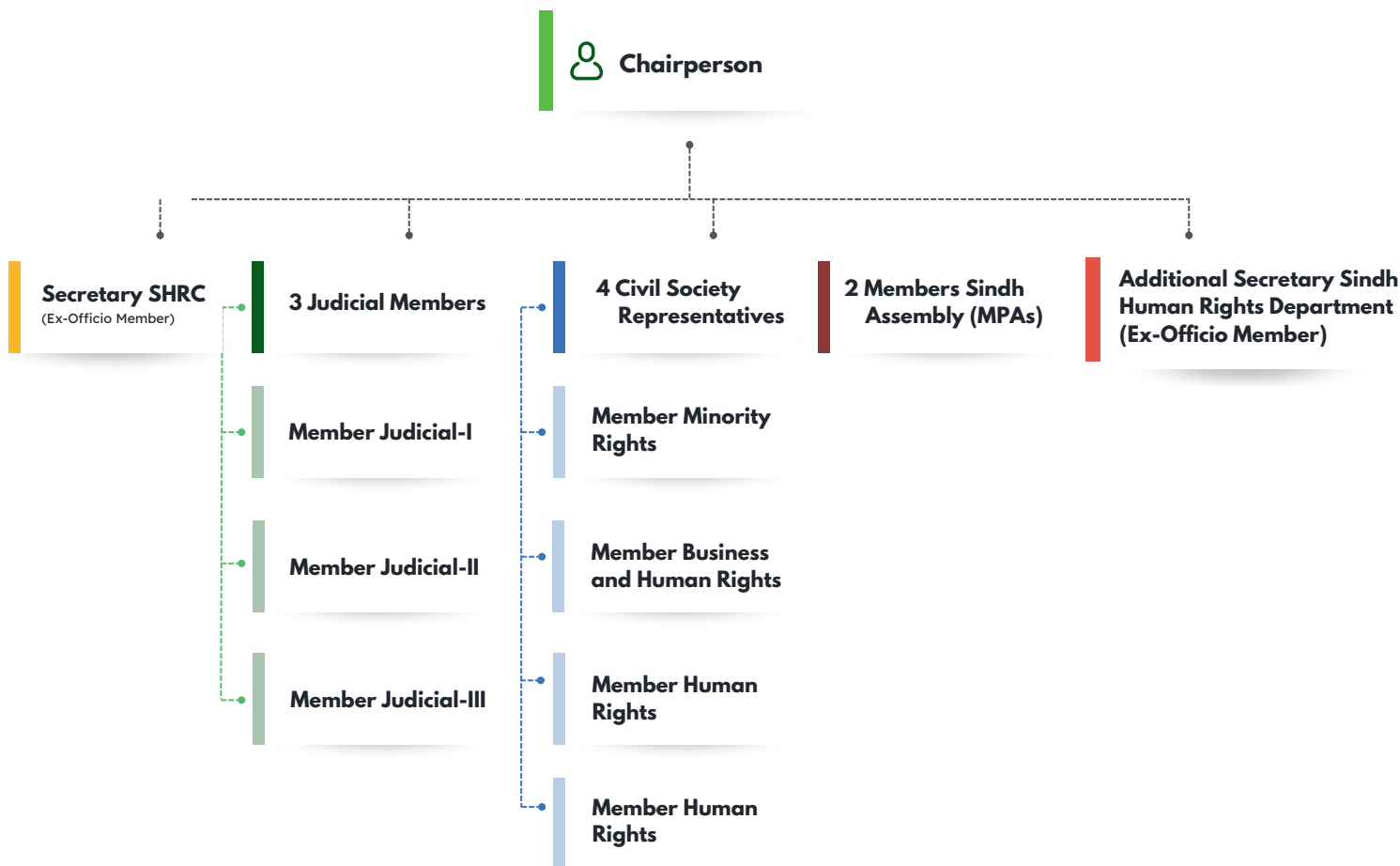
THE MISSION OF THE COMMISSION CAN BE RELEASED BY:

- Providing remedy for fair investigation and redressal through state machinery to respond to violations/abuses of human rights;
- Integrating human rights awareness and education; and
- Bringing all state’s laws, policies, institutions and practices in conformity with human rights obligations enshrined in the constitution and other international treaties and conventions ratified by Pakistan.



COMPOSITION OF THE SINDH HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

The SHRC consists of a chairperson, ten members and a secretary^[7]. Of the total ten members, three are full-time judicial members retired from sessions courts, two are political representatives nominated by the Speaker Provincial Assembly of Sindh, one Additional Secretary or a Deputy Secretary of the Department of Human Rights nominated by the Secretary of the Human Rights Department and four are representatives of civil society with experience in the field of human rights, at least one of whom belongs to a minority and one has experience in the field of business and human rights. The members and the chairperson are appointed for a single non-renewable term of four years. The SHRC has its headquarters in Karachi and a sub-office in Sukkur. The Sindh government has given permission to the SHRC to open a second sub-office in Sukkur and Larkana.





POWERS AND FUNCTIONS OF THE SHRC

Section 4 of Sindh Protection of Human Rights Act, 2011 outlines the powers and functions of the Commission, which include:

- (i) inquire, suo moto or on a petition presented to it by a victim or any person on his behalf, into complaint of -
 - (a) violation of human rights or abetment thereof;
 - (b) negligence in the prevention of such violation, by a public servant;
- (ii) recommend to Government the remedial measures including action to be taken against the persons involved in violation of human rights;
 - (a) serve as an alternate dispute resolution and accountability mechanism for business related abuse of human rights and providing easy access to remedy;
- (iii) formulate, implement and regularly update policies with a view to protect human rights;
- (iv) visit, under intimation to Government, any jail or institution under the control of Government where persons are kept or detained or admitted for purpose of treatment, reformation or protection to see the living conditions of the inmates and make recommendations thereon;
- (iv-a) to visit any business enterprise or corporate entity, with prior intimation to the concerned corporate entity's supervisory body or authority, to ascertain the reported violations or abuse and the working conditions of employees, workers or inmates of the supply chain or the value chain, as the case may be;
- (v) review the safe guards provided by or under the Constitution or any law for the time being in force for protection of human rights and also in the sphere of Business and Human Rights and National Action Plan on Business and Human rights to ensure accountability and access to remedy as an alternate dispute forum and to recommend measures for effective implementation of laid down procedure and for due diligence in business enterprises;
- (vi) study treaties and other international instruments on human rights and make recommendations for their effective implementation;
- (vii) Undertake and promote research in the field of human rights;

Spread human rights literacy among various sections of society;

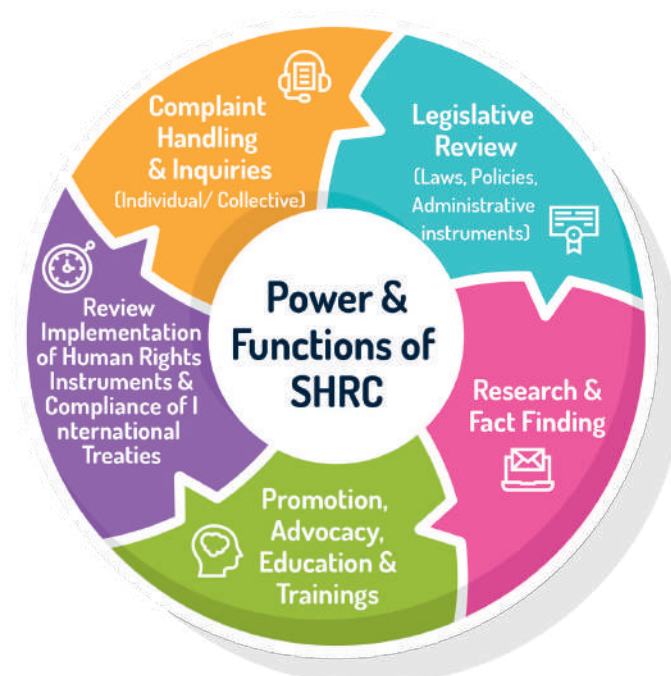
(ix) Promote awareness of the safeguards available for protection of human rights through print and electronic media, seminars and other available means;

(x) Encourage the efforts of non-governmental organizations and institutions working in the field of human rights;

(xi) Publish or cause to be published the various policies, details, data and information relevant to the affairs of the Commission on a regular basis and ensure reasonable access of the public to the same;

(xii) Appoint such officers and staff as may be necessary for carrying out the purposes of this Act, subject to the approval of Government; and

(xiii) Shall perform such other functions necessary for protection of human rights, as may be prescribed.





CHALLENGES AND CONSTRAINTS

The Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) encounters various challenges and limitations in carrying out its mandate. One of the most pressing challenges is to address and respond to the scale of human rights violations and abuses in Sindh. The Commission faces a wide range of human rights issues, including gender-based violence, religious discrimination, child labour, access to justice, socio-economic inequalities, workers' rights violations, etc. Prioritising how to address these issues is a complex task, which is also related to the institutional capacity and resources of the SHRC. Moreover, new human rights issues arise over time, requiring the Commission to adapt and respond promptly.

Given the numerous human rights violations and abuses across the province, the SHRC, as a relatively evolving institution, finds it difficult to reach remote areas and marginalised communities to effectively address and respond to these violations and abuses. The Commission's ability to conduct comprehensive investigations, provide support to victims and proactively advocate for human rights is hampered by financial and staffing constraints.

Another challenge is the limited powers of the Commission, which operates primarily in a recommendatory capacity. While the Commission makes recommendations, their effectiveness depends on the willingness of the authorities concerned to implement the proposed changes. In cases where there is resistance or indifference, the impact of the SHRC recommendation / findings can be significantly limited.

The Sindh Protection of Human Rights Act 2011 serves as the legal framework for the SHRC and gives the commission wide powers to intervene in cases of human rights violations and abuses, and to assess laws, policies, structures and their implementation from a human rights perspective. Although the law was amended in 2023, it still has gaps that constraints the commission from effectively fulfilling its mandate.

In addition, the Commission has been given new responsibilities under the recent amendment. These include the task of investigating reported violations or abuses and assessing the working conditions of business enterprises. In addition, the commission is to serve as an alternative dispute resolution (ADR) body and accountability mechanism for addressing business-related abuses.

However, it is important to recognise that there are already ADR mechanisms and institutions that deal specifically with violations / abuses of workers' rights. The Commission must navigate this complex landscape and find an appropriate way to fulfil its role without duplicating or overlapping the functions of other institutions. This requires a careful balancing act between working with existing institutions and creating its own space for the Commission to effectively address human rights violations /abuses in the corporate and business sector.

SHRC STRATEGIC PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

SHRC STRATEGIC PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS



OBJECTIVE

The Strategic Plan for the SHRC aims to fulfil its mandate under the Sindh Protection of Human Rights Act, 2011 and sets out a roadmap by identifying priority areas and targeted actions over the four years from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2027.

PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY

The strategic planning process involves developing a strategic plan for the SHRC in two phases. The first phase, conducted in 2022, focused on developing a three-year strategic plan (2022-2025). The second phase, conducted in 2023, focused on reviewing and updating the plan for four years (2023-2027) in line with the 2023 amendment to the Sindh Protection of Human Rights Act, 2011. The process included several steps:

Desk Research

A review of relevant documents from various sources, including the legal framework, government reports, judgments, SHRC's previous strategic plan, and other reports, was conducted to gather information and identify gaps.

Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)

Interviews were conducted with SHRC's Chairperson, members and staff to gain insights into their perspectives and aspirations.

Strategic Planning Workshop

A two-day workshop was held with participants from SHRC, the Sindh Provincial Assembly, civil society organizations, and academia. Analyses such as PESTLE (Political, Economic, Sociological, Technological, Legal, and Environmental) and SWOC (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges) were conducted to guide the formulation of strategic actions.

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

FGDs were held with rural and urban men and women, as well as civil society and media representatives, to understand local dynamics, human rights issues, and expectations.



Review of the SHRC Strategic Plan 2022-25

The SHRC Strategic Plan 2022-25 underwent a comprehensive review process in Karachi and Islamabad. In Karachi, a two-day consultation involving government agencies, civil society organizations, and national and regional commissions took place on May 26-27, 2023. The consultation aimed to gather input from various stakeholders, encourage fruitful discussions, and include diverse viewpoints in the strategic plan. Recognising the importance of collaboration, a separate consultation was held in Islamabad on June 7, 2023, with donor agencies and national human rights organizations. These consultations provided valuable insights that were integrated into the strategic plan to address the specific opportunities and challenges related to human rights in Sindh.

Drafting the Strategic Plan

The information gathered from desk research, workshops, KIIs, FGDs and review consultations was used to develop strategic pillars, objectives, and actions. It considered the institutional capacity, operational environment, and evolving human rights situation in Sindh. The draft plan was reviewed by SHRC members and finalised.

Overall, the process involved extensive research, collaborative analysis, consultations with key stakeholders, and the integration of diverse perspectives to develop a comprehensive and inclusive strategic plan for the SHRC.

Approval

The Strategic Plan has been approved by the SHRC unanimously in its board meeting held on 24th October, 2023.

The background is a solid blue color with a faint, light-blue collage of various human rights-related symbols and figures. These include silhouettes of people in different poses, a peace symbol, a bicycle, a flag, a scale of justice, and various international flags like the Pakistani flag and the UN flag.

SECTION 3

SITUATION ANALYSIS OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN SINDH



SITUATION ANALYSIS OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN SINDH

Sindh, Pakistan's second largest province with a population of 55.69 million (2023 Census), has a rich history of Sufi traditions and an ethnically and religiously diverse population. The majority of the population in Sindh follows Islam (91.31%), but Hindus also constitute a significant proportion with about 4.18 million people, or 8.73% of the total population[8]. In addition, Sindh also has followers of other religions, including Christians (0.97%), and others (0.22%), who contribute to the province's religious and cultural diversity.

The Constitution of Pakistan protects the fundamental rights of all citizens without discrimination on the basis of race, religion, caste, creed, residence or place of residence. The fundamental rights guaranteed in the Constitution of Pakistan are primarily covered in Articles 8 to 28.

The federal legislative list in the Constitution was revised under the 18th Constitutional Amendment in 2010 and legislative and administrative powers for 15 federal ministries/subjects were transferred to the provinces, including human rights, education, labour and human resource, minority affairs, women's empowerment and social welfare. However, it is important to note that despite the devolution of legislative and administrative powers to the provinces, certain federal ministries/subjects continue to exist at the federal level, including the Ministry of Human Rights, the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, among others. These federal ministries play an important role in complying with international obligations, formulating policies and coordinating and developing synergies between federal and provincial authorities.

Pakistan has also ratified relevant international conventions, covenants and treaties, including the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and two of its Optional Protocols, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (CCPR), the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and has ratified 36 ILO conventions, including all eight fundamental conventions. These international instruments oblige ratifying and acceding states to take the appropriate legislative and administrative measures to protect the fundamental rights of their citizens and non-citizen where applicable.



PROGRESS

In recent years, the Sindh government has made significant progress in protecting and promoting human rights. The province has enacted various laws to protect the rights of different segments of society.

Sindh passed the Child Marriages Restraint Act in 2013, ending the discrepancy between the marriage age of boys and girls, setting it at 18 years. Other laws such as the Sindh Prohibition of Employment of Children Act, 2017 and the Sindh Child Protection Authority Act, 2011 and amended version in 2021, aim to protect children from violence, abuse and exploitation. The Sindh Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2013 guarantees free education to children between the ages of 5 and 16.

The province has enacted laws to protect the safety and health of workers in hazardous working conditions. It also protects reproductive health rights and extends maternity leave benefits through the Sindh Maternity Benefits Act, 2018. Another important law is the Sindh Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 2015, which provides for the establishment of district-level vigilance committees (DVCs) to keep a constant watch on the bonded labour situation in their respective districts.

The province has also taken a lead in promoting women agriculture workers through the Sindh Women Agricultural Workers Act, 2019, which focuses on the rights of women agricultural and livestock workers and protects rights related to the use of land and its resources for agriculture and livestock by communities traditionally living in these areas. Sindh has also enacted law on the rights and welfare of home based workers i.e. Sindh Home Based Workers Act 2018. Sindh is also promoting women's representation in leadership roles through the Sindh Water Management (Amendment) Act, 2019 which provides for mandatory representation of women in water boards. The province has also passed laws to prevent domestic violence through the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act 2013, and promotes greater representation of women in the police and in politics through affirmative action.

Sindh has taken steps to improve political equality for transgender persons by allocating them seats in local government and setting a quota of 0.5% for government posts in various administrative departments

The province has enacted laws to protect the rights of minority communities, including the draft bill for the establishment of a "Minority Commission and draft bill" Protection of Minorities addressing the issues of forced conversion of girls and women's belonging to other faiths the Sindh Hindu Marriage (amend) Act of 2018, and the Sindh Protection of Communal Properties of Minorities Act of 2013 and creating institutional structures such as establishment of district peace coordination committees on interfaith harmony.

Sindh also has laws such as the Senior Citizens Welfare Act, 2014(amnd2023) and the Sindh Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2018 to promote the well-being and inclusion of senior citizens and persons with special abilities in society (commonly referred to as persons with disabilities). The Sindh government announced a five per cent quota for special persons with different abilities in all government jobs and relaxed age requirements for recruitment

The establishment of others' rights-based commissions (Child, Women, Information, Healthcare Protection of Journalist etc.) and the introduction of innovative reforms have played an important role in advancing human rights in the province. These efforts aimed to eliminate inequalities, promote inclusion and empower marginalised groups.

The Sindh Government has recently adopted the Sindh Human Rights Policy 2023-2027 for five years to ensure protection and promotion of rights of various marginalised sections of the society including women, children, labourers, minorities, differently-abled and transgender persons by addressing two categories of rights: civil and political rights (CPR) and economic, social and cultural rights (ESCR).



CHALLENGES

Although significant progress has been made in the protection and promotion of human rights, there remain some challenges that require prioritising efforts to improve the human rights situation in Sindh, including:

DISCRIMINATION



Discrimination is a critical aspect of human rights violation / abuses that needs attention in Sindh, as it persists in the province for various reasons, even though the legal regime prohibits discrimination. Marginalised groups, including women, religious and ethnic minorities, persons with different abilities, transgender people and members of lower socio-economic strata, continue to face discrimination and unequal treatment in various spheres of life. Discrimination in access to education, employment, health care and housing, as well as in participation in decision-making processes, remains widespread. Women in particular face multiple forms of discrimination, including gender-based violence, limited access to justice and unequal opportunities. Discrimination against religious and ethnic minorities is also a challenge. Cases of targeted violence, forced conversions and property disputes are reported every year. The lack of effective mechanisms to address discrimination and enforce anti-discrimination laws further hinders progress in this area.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC INEQUALITIES



Sindh faces significant economic inequalities, with wealth concentrated in urban centres such as Karachi and Hyderabad while rural areas lag behind. The province's economy is heavily dependent on agriculture, but its share of GDP has declined over the years. In the 1970s, the agricultural sector still contributed 34 per cent of GDP, but today it accounts for only 22.9 per cent (Pakistan Economic Survey 2022-23). This decline has resulted in limited employment and income opportunities for rural communities, exacerbating poverty and inequality.

HEALTH



The health system in Sindh faces many challenges, including inadequate infrastructure, a shortage of health workers and limited access to quality health services, especially in rural areas. This leads to high infant and maternal mortality rates in the province. The infant mortality rate in Sindh is 60 deaths per 1,000 live births, while the maternal mortality ratio is 224 deaths per 100,000 live births[9].

EDUCATION



The literacy rate in Sindh is 62 per cent, according to the Labour Force Survey 2020-21, with a higher rate for males (72.9%) than females (49.7%). Gross enrolment rates in Sindh for primary, middle and high school are 67, 45 and 49 respectively[10], which is lower than the national level GER. Net enrolment rates for primary, middle and high school are 45, 18 and 09 respectively[11]. Access to quality education remains a challenge in Sindh, especially in rural areas. The province struggles with a high school dropout rate, especially among girls. The percentage of children out of school in Sindh is 44 per cent, 51 per cent for girls and 39 per cent for boys[12]. Many children cannot go to school because of a lack of educational infrastructure, including schools, classrooms and teachers.

ADEQUATE HOUSING AND LIVING STANDARDS



A decent standard of housing and living in Sindh is an urgent concern. The province faces many challenges in this regard, especially in urban areas such as Karachi and Hyderabad, where rapid population growth and urbanisation have overburdened existing infrastructure and led to the proliferation of informal settlements. The lack of affordable housing and the prevalence of substandard housing conditions exacerbate the vulnerability of marginalised populations, including low-income households, informal workers and Internally displaced Persons (IDPs). Ensuring access to safe and affordable housing, as well as basic amenities such as clean water, sanitation and electricity, is critical to promoting human dignity, well-being and social inclusion.

ACCESS TO BASIC SERVICES



Access to basic services such as sanitation and safe drinking water is another pressing issue in Sindh. Many underdeveloped areas lack adequate sanitation facilities and water supply is inadequate. This leads to unhygienic living conditions, the spread of waterborne diseases and a high prevalence of malnutrition. A rapid survey conducted by UNICEF of 15 flood-affected districts in 2023 has indicated that nearly one-third of children between 6 to 23 months old are suffering from moderate acute malnutrition, while 14 percent are affected by severe acute malnutrition. Addressing these challenges requires investment in infrastructure development, water management and nutrition programmes.

GENDER INEQUALITY AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS



Gender inequality continues to be a major human rights issue in Sindh. Women face discrimination and have limited access to education, health care, employment opportunities and political participation. Harmful practises such as child marriages, honour killings and domestic violence are still widespread. As in many other regions of Pakistan, there are traditional social norms and cultural factors in Sindh that contribute to gender inequality. The Government of Sindh has introduced legal and policy reforms to mainstream gender equality into development programmes, particularly to overcome the political exclusion of women, the feminisation of poverty and violence against women[13]. However, there are challenges in implementation and requires more affirmative action, enforcement and follow-up by line departments.

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS



In Sindh, children's rights continue to be violated and abused. Large numbers of children are out of schools, child labour is widespread, including hazardous work, depriving them of their right to a safe and nurturing environment. Another pressing problem is child marriage. Girls are married off at a young age, jeopardising their well-being and depriving them of the opportunity for personal fulfilment. In addition, child malnutrition and inadequate health care contribute to the poor health of many children. Child abuse, including physical, sexual and emotional abuse, remains a pervasive problem that often goes unreported and exposes children to long-lasting trauma. In addition, lack of awareness, inadequate child protection services and weak legal frameworks contribute to the persistence of these problems.

MINORITY RIGHTS



Sindh is home to diverse religious and ethnic minorities, including Hindus, Christians, Sikhs and others. However, these communities are often subjected to discrimination, intolerance and violence. Religious minorities also face forced conversions, property disputes and restrictions on the free practise of their faith. The Sindh government has taken steps to protect the rights of minorities through laws such as the Sindh Protection of Communal Properties of Minorities Act, 2013 and the Sindh Hindu Marriage (Amendment) Act 2018. Nevertheless, reforms in the personal laws of minority groups such as Christians (Divorce and Marriage) and Hindus (Inheritance, Maintenance) are essential. Furthermore, it is imperative to rigorously enforce laws aimed at countering hate speech, extremism, sectarianism, and violence targeting religious minorities though the strengthen of district peace committees on interfaith harmony

YOUTH RIGHTS



The youth in Sindh, aged 15-29 face major challenges, outlined in the Sindh Youth Policy 2018. High unemployment, especially among the well-educated youth, limits employment prospects and leads to insecure working condi-

-ns, which in turn contributes to overall social and economic problems. Social challenges exacerbate the situation and have an impact on health, education and safety. Problems such as early marriage and violence against women disproportionately affect adolescents. The rights of minorities, people with different abilities and vulnerable youth often go unnoticed. Given the central role this population plays in the future of the country, activism, volunteering, sports and cultural engagement are critical to fostering resilience and positive development in the midst of these challenges. There is need to revive the students' political unions as per The Sindh Students Union Act, 2022.

LABOUR RIGHTS



Workers in Sindh, especially in the informal sector, often face exploitative working conditions, low wages and lack of social protection. Violations of labour rights, including child labour, bonded labour and unsafe working environments, are widespread. Non-payment of minimum wages is very common. While there is freedom of association and mechanisms to facilitate collective bargaining, only a handful of workers are unionised. Pakistan is a beneficiary of the Generalised System of Preferences Plus (GSP+)[14], which provides preferential access to the EU market. In order to continue to benefit from GSP+ status, Pakistan must comply with certain labour rights standards, including the effective implementation of the core ILO Conventions. These conventions cover areas such as freedom of association, collective bargaining, forced labour, child labour and discrimination in employment. The GSP+ scheme is of potential importance to the Sindh government as it encourages the government to improve labour rights, which will contribute to more sustainable and equitable economic development in the region. Moreover, there need to be implementation of Home-Based worker Act 2019, Sindh Women Worker Agriculture Act 2019, Implementation of Sindh Bonded Labour System Abolition Act 2015 and Sindh Prohibition of Child Labour Employment Act 2017.

[14] Monitoring Missions and Priorities in Pakistan. (n.d.). Monitoring Missions and Priorities in Pakistan. <https://gsphub.eu/country-info/Pakistan#:~:text=In%20compliance%20with%20the%20GSP,a%20lower%2Dmiddle%20income%20economy.>

TRANSGENDER RIGHTS



Transgender rights in Sindh, as in many other parts of the world, face various challenges and complexities. Sindh has taken positive steps towards recognizing the rights of transgender people by proposing the legal framework that gives transgender persons the right to identify their gender and prohibition of discrimination by tacking affirmative action. . However, effective implementation and enforcement remains a challenge. Discrimination and social stigma against transgender persons are widespread, leading to marginalization and limited access to education, employment and housing. In sub instances trans people are also denied their fundamental right to legal identity. They are also exposed to high levels of violence and harassment, including hate crimes. The health system lacks sensitivity and awareness of their specific needs, further hindering their access to adequate health services. after the challenging of the existing federal legal framework such as “Transgender Protection Act 2018” needs to be legislated at Provincial level in the wake of 18th constitutional amendment.

PERSONS WITH DIFFERENT-ABILITIES



Persons with different abilities, commonly referred to as persons with disabilities (PWDs), face many obstacles in Sindh. Although the Sindh Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2018, was enacted to protect their rights, including provisions for accessibility, education, employment, healthcare, social protection and non-discrimination, the implementation of these measures remains a major challenge. Accessibility remains a major problem due to limited physical infrastructure and public space. Educational opportunities are often scarce, with inadequate inclusive schools and a lack of trained teachers. Inadequate accessibility to jobs hinders employment and economic opportunities. Access to health and rehabilitation services remains inadequate, while stigma and discrimination continue to hinder social inclusion. A quota of five per cent (5%) reserved for inclusion and participation of PWDs in various entities is effectively not enforced.

There is need to activate the Provincial council as per the provision of 2018 Act for the realization of PWDs

SENIOR CITIZENS PERSONS' RIGHTS



As the demographic shift towards an ageing society continues, it is critical to address the specific needs and rights of older people. The older population in Sindh faces a number of challenges and issues. Access to adequate health care is limited and expensive when they need specialised geriatric services most. Many older people suffer from financial insecurity and lack of social support, leading to vulnerability. Discrimination and social exclusion based on age hinder their participation in decision-making and community activities. Employment opportunities and meaningful engagement are often limited, and long-term care options are inadequate in the province. To address the issues of ageing population, Sindh has enacted legislation i.e. Senior Citizens Welfare Act (amend) 2023. Some of the guaranties given in 2016 Act for social safety nets and security needs to be restored. It is pertinent to mentioned that amended version 2023 has diluted the such guaranties.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE



Access to justice remains an important human rights issue in Sindh. Many people, especially those from marginalised communities, face obstacles in seeking justice. These obstacles include limited awareness of the law, lack of legal aid services, high costs of court proceedings, corruption within the justice system and delays in resolving cases. As a result, a significant number of people are unable to exercise their rights and obtain redress for their grievances. There is need for linking the access to justice with the rule of law paradigm for bringing reforms within the elements of criminal justice system.

[1] Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement Survey (PSLM) 2019-20

[2] ibid

[3] ibid

[1] Monitoring Missions and Priorities in Pakistan. (n.d.). Monitoring Missions and Priorities in Pakistan.

[https://gsphub.eu/country-](https://gsphub.eu/country-info/Pakistan#:~:text=In%20compliance%20with%20the%20GSP,a%20lower%2Dmiddle%20income%20economy.)

[info/Pakistan#:~:text=In%20compliance%20with%20the%20GSP,a%20lower%2Dmiddle%20income%20economy.](https://gsphub.eu/country-info/Pakistan#:~:text=In%20compliance%20with%20the%20GSP,a%20lower%2Dmiddle%20income%20economy.)

LAW AND ORDER



The law and order situation in Sindh is complex and multi-layered with challenges such as occurrence of criminal activities, political tensions and ethnic conflicts. Organised crime, including extortion and kidnapping for ransom, in the past have persisted in urban centres, affecting public safety, and prison overcrowding needs to be addressed as a significant number of additional prisoners are being held in Sindh's jails. Recently there has been surge of criminal activities in rural parts specially in riverine areas of adjoining district. These dynamics have significant implications for the protection of human rights in the region and require a comprehensive approach that addresses both the shortcomings in law enforcement and the underlying socio-political factors that contribute to these problems, and which is necessary for the maintenance of law and order in Sindh.

IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS



Sindh has emerged as one of Pakistan's leading provinces in enacting progressive laws to protect and empower marginalised groups such as women, children and minorities, following the devolution of powers under the 18th Constitutional Amendment. The province has taken commendable steps by introducing laws that address critical issues such as gender-based violence, child labour, discrimination and religious freedom. However, despite these legislative achievements, the implementation of these laws faces significant challenges. A major factor contributing to poor implementation is the lack of budgetary resources specifically allocated to the effective enforcement of these laws. Insufficient funding limits the ability of relevant ministries and agencies to develop and implement sound implementation strategies, including awareness campaigns, capacity building, monitoring mechanisms and access to justice initiatives. In addition, the lack of robust oversight mechanisms has led to limited accountability and ineffective monitoring of public funds and the implementation of the various laws.

IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE



Sindh is highly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, which exacerbates socio-economic vulnerabilities and hinders sustainable development. Rising temperatures, erratic rainfall patterns and increasing frequency of extreme weather events pose a major challenge. These include water scarcity, agricultural losses, community displacement, infrastructure damage and increased health risks. The agricultural sector, which is an important contributor to the economy, is struggling with lower crop yields and food security issues. Coastal regions are additionally threatened by sea level rise and erosion. In 2022, 12 million people were affected by devastating floods that destroyed more than 20600 schools and over 4.4 million acres of agricultural land, displacing thousands of people. According to UNICEF, 4 million children at the end of 2022 were still living near contaminated and stagnant flood water and continue to suffer health problems from exposure to contaminated flood water.

LACK OF COORDINATION AND COOPERATION AMONG STAKEHOLDERS



A major gap in Sindh's human rights landscape is the lack of effective coordination and cooperation among stakeholders. The fragmented approach and lack of coordination between different government departments, agencies and civil society organisations hinders collective efforts to protect and promote human rights. The lack of a clearly defined mechanism for inter-agency coordination leads to duplication of efforts, inefficient use of resources and lack of synergy in addressing human rights issues. The limited exchange of information and expertise between stakeholders exacerbates the challenges. Without a coordinated and collaborative approach, it becomes difficult to develop comprehensive strategies, policies and programmes that can effectively address human rights concerns in the province.

[1] Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement Survey (PSLM) 2019-20

[2] ibid

[3] ibid

[1] Monitoring Missions and Priorities in Pakistan. (n.d.). Monitoring Missions and Priorities in Pakistan.

[https://gsphub.eu/country-](https://gsphub.eu/country-info/Pakistan#:~:text=In%20compliance%20with%20the%20GSP,a%20lower%2Dmiddle%20income%20economy.)

[info/Pakistan#:~:text=In%20compliance%20with%20the%20GSP,a%20lower%2Dmiddle%20income%20economy.](https://gsphub.eu/country-info/Pakistan#:~:text=In%20compliance%20with%20the%20GSP,a%20lower%2Dmiddle%20income%20economy.)



OPPORTUNITIES FOR SINDH HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

The Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) operates in a context that provides it with several opportunities to advance its mission of promoting and protecting human rights in Sindh. One important opportunity arises from the evolving legal framework in Sindh, which provides the SHRC with the opportunity to work with relevant legislative bodies/structures and contribute to the development of human rights laws and policies.

The enactment of progressive laws after the 18th Constitutional Amendment demonstrates the commitment to addressing human rights issues. The SHRC can actively participate in the formulation, review and implementation of such laws and policies to ensure that they comply with international human rights standards and effectively protect the rights of individuals in Sindh.

In addition, advances in technology and communication provide the SHRC with opportunities to raise awareness, amplify its message and reach out to a wider audience. Through social media platforms, online campaigns and the use of digital tools, the Commission can reach marginalised communities, youth and other key stakeholders. By leveraging these technological advances, the SHRC can promote human rights education, mobilise public support and facilitate the reporting and documentation of human rights violations / abuses.

Moreover, the establishment of federal and provincial human rights institutions and civil society networks provides SHRC with a platform to collaborate with like-minded organisations and share experiences, strategies and resources. Through active participation and collaboration, the Commission can learn from the experiences of other human rights bodies, strengthen its advocacy work and jointly address common human rights challenges.

Another opportunity lies in the growing global recognition and awareness of human rights issues. The international community is increasingly emphasising the importance of upholding human rights standards, which creates an enabling environment for the SHRC to work with international organisations, civil society groups and other human rights commissions at National and Provincial level. By leveraging these partnerships, the Commission can access resources, expertise and best practises to strengthen its capacity and advocacy.

Finally, the increasing demand for accountability and transparency in governance provides the SHRC with an opportunity to engage with government agencies, demand accountability for human rights violations and promote good governance. By advocating for transparency, accountability mechanisms and the rule of law, the Commission can help promote a culture of respect for human rights among state institutions and public officials.

To take advantage of these opportunities, the SHRC needs to adopt a proactive approach that includes strategic partnerships, capacity-building initiatives engagement with public and private sector organisations and effective communication strategies. By taking advantage of these opportunities, the Commission can strengthen its role as a human rights watchdog, advocate for change and contribute to the overall promotion and protection of human rights in Sindh.

SECTION 4

**SINDH HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION STRATEGIC PLAN FOR
1 JULY 2023 TO 30 JUNE 2027**

VISION

To create an enabling environment where Human rights are promoted and protected in Sindh through monitoring and oversight.

Mission of the Commission

To promote and protect human rights enshrined in the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, 1973 and other international obligations and commitments as a state party.

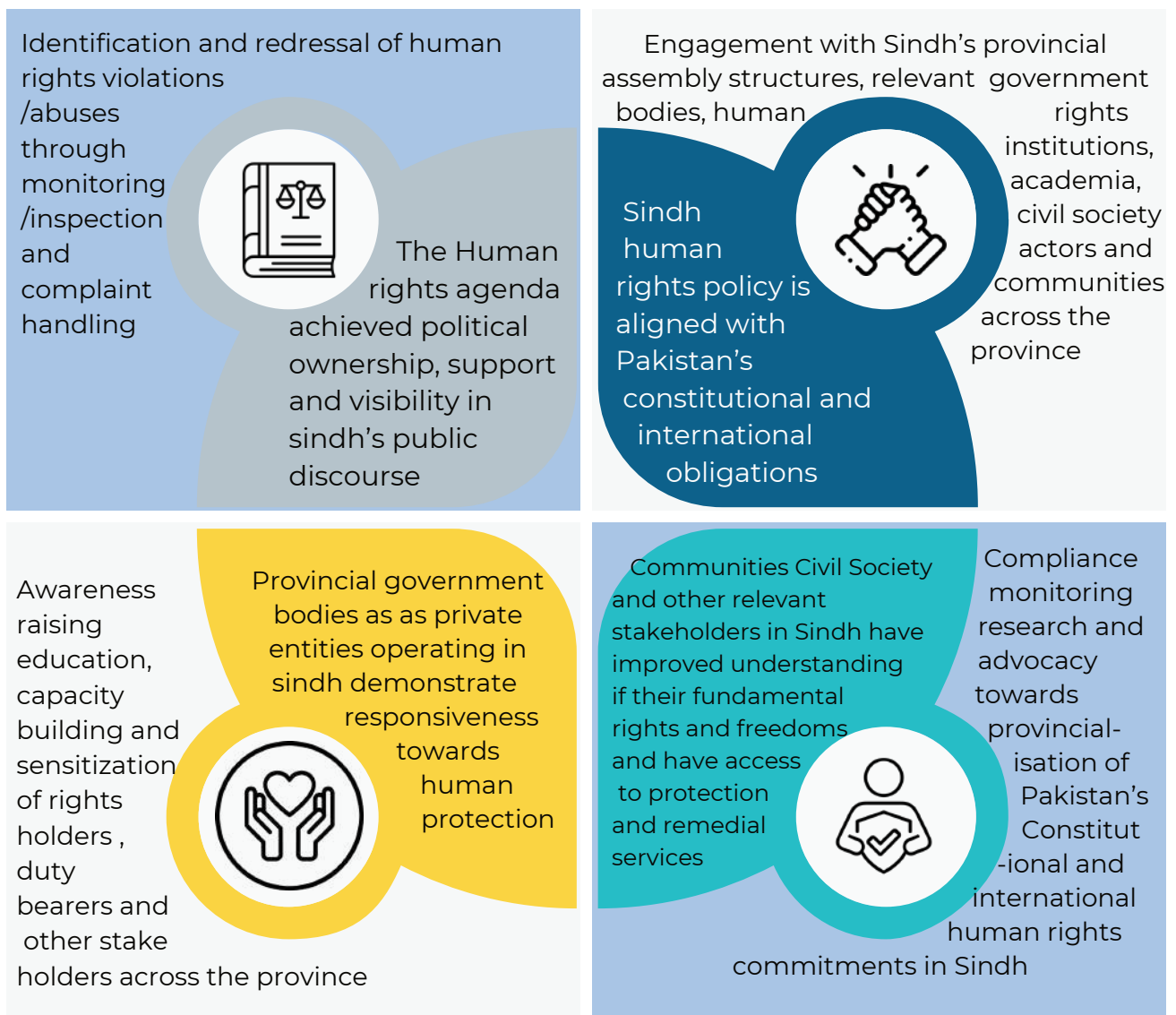
The Mission of the Commission can be realised by:

- Providing remedy for fair investigation and redressal through state machinery to respond to violations/abuses of human rights;
- Integrating human rights awareness and education; and
- Bringing all state's laws, policies, institutions and practices in conformity with human rights obligations enshrined in the constitution and other international treaties and conventions ratified by Pakistan.



THE COMMISSION'S THEORY OF CHANGE

The Sindh Human Rights Commission's premise of its strategic interventions is based on the situation analysis and prevalent context of human rights in Sindh. This serves as the foundation for the Commission to determine the institutional strategic directions, driving its efforts towards improved human rights policy design and delivery in the province. This approach also involves taking into account the independence of the Commission, the availability of sufficient resources, and the favorability of political and socioeconomic conditions, which are crucial for the Commission to fulfil its mandate;





STRATEGIC PILLAR: 1

Systematically monitor and address human rights violations and abuses in Sindh while establishing an accessible and responsive complaint handling mechanism, fostering a culture of transparency, accountability, and human rights protection.

The first strategic pillar of the Sindh Human Rights Commission is focused on monitoring human rights violations and establishing an efficient complaint handling system. This pillar is supported by various provisions outlined in the Sindh Protection of Human Rights Act, 2011.

Under the Section 4(i-a)(i-b) of SPHRA 2011, the Commission has the authority to inquire, either Suo moto or upon a petition from a victim or their representative, into complaints of human rights violations or their abetment. It also has the power to investigate cases where public servants have been negligent in preventing such violations.

Furthermore, the Commission is empowered under section 4(ii) to recommend remedial measures to the government, including actions against those involved in human rights violations. Additionally, it serves as an alternate dispute resolution and accountability mechanism for business-related abuses of human rights, providing accessible remedies (Section 4(ii-a)).

The Act also grants the Commission the right to visit jails or government-controlled institutions where individuals are detained or admitted for various purposes, allowing them to assess living conditions and make recommendations (Section 4(iv)). Moreover, the Commission can visit business enterprises or corporate entities to investigate reported violations or abuses and assess working conditions of employees, workers, or inmates within the supply or value chain, with prior intimation to the relevant supervisory body or authority (Section 4(iv-a)).

PRIORITY AREAS

Priority Area 1: Establish an integrated online Complaint and Case Management System with a robust database

Complaint handling plays a central role in the mandate and functions of the Sindh Human Rights Commission. To fulfil this important role, the Commission will establish a comprehensive online complaint and case management system supported by a robust database. This system would allow individuals to submit complaints and relevant information through an intuitive online platform, making it convenient and easily accessible for complainants. The database component would enable the Commission to store, organise and retrieve complaint-related information efficiently, facilitating streamlined processes and increasing transparency. It can also include a tracking mechanism to monitor case progress. By bringing together the database and accessibility elements, the commission will seek to create a seamless and efficient framework for handling complaints, promoting accountability and protecting human rights in Sindh.



Priority Area 2: Conduct periodic inspections of places of detention, state institutions and business enterprises to monitor and ensure compliance with human rights standards.

The Commission will conduct inspections in a wide range of centres, facilities and institutions, including business enterprises, to identify human rights violations and abuses and make recommendations for improvement to the relevant authorities. These inspections will cover a range of areas, including but not limited to:

(i) Police, prisons and detention centres: The focus will be on assessing conditions of confinement, treatment of detainees including reformation and rehabilitation, access to legal aid and medical care, sanitation and adherence to human rights standards.

(ii) Health facilities: Inspections will assess the quality of health services, availability of essential medicines, patients' rights, hygiene standards and accessibility for vulnerable populations;

(iii) Schools and educational institutions: The focus will be assessing the availability of teachers, school infrastructure, accessibility, child protection policies including prohibition of corporal punishment, availability of books, non-discriminatory syllabus for minority students, etc.

(iv) Social welfare residential institutions: Inspections will aim to evaluate the quality of care and support services for vulnerable populations, including children, shelter homes (Dara-ul-Atfal) the elderly women and persons with different abilities having focus on safeguards related to institutional care; including private sector shelter regulated by government authorities

(v) Girls / Women's shelters: SHRC will assess the quality of services, availability of counselling and rehabilitation programmes, safety and privacy measures, and compliance with human rights standards of facilities that provide refuge and support to girl / women victims of abuse, abandonment or homelessness, such as women's crisis centres, Darul Aman, safe houses, etc.

(vi) Businesses: The SHRC will also conduct inspections of business enterprises and corporations to assess their compliance with human rights standards i.e. UNGP (UN Guiding Principles, National Plan of Action on Business and Human Rights to ensure fair labour practises, non-discrimination policies, occupational health and safety measures and protection of workers' rights.

Priority Area 3: Hold public hearings and fact-finding missions to monitor the situation of human rights violations and abuses in Sindh.

The Commission will periodically hold public hearings to monitor the situation of human rights violations / abuses in Sindh. This will be done through formal hearings or forums where individuals, communities and stakeholders can give public testimony and share their experiences of human rights violations / abuses. A hearing may focus on one or more issues that affect people and the community. Public hearings provide a platform for victims and affected communities to voice their concerns, describe their issues and seek redress for the human rights violations they have suffered. Duty bearers and stakeholders may be invited to attend the hearings. This will also help bridge the gap between government functionaries and the general public related to public policy matters are having bearing on the enjoyment and realization of their enshrined rights in the constitution and international standards.

In addition to the public hearings, the SHRC will also conduct fact-finding missions to investigate specific incidents or cases of human rights violations / abuses in Sindh. During these missions, the SHRC will gather relevant information, conduct interviews, collect evidence and analyse information to gain a comprehensive understanding of human rights violations / abuses and underlying causes. The findings of these fact-finding missions will be shared with relevant authorities and contribute to the overall monitoring and documentation of human rights violations and abuses in Sindh, as well as to the promotion of accountability, justice and the protection of human rights in the region.



Priority Area 4: Establish a referral system and coordinate with government departments and agencies to ensure effective handling of human rights complaints/petitions and take appropriate remedial action.

The Commission will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the handling of human rights complaints and petitions by establishing a robust referral system and coordinating with government agencies and human rights commissions at Federal and Provincial level. This collaborative approach aims to facilitate the structured referral of complaints to the appropriate authorities with the mandate and jurisdiction to address specific human rights issues in a non-judicial manner, leading to the resolution of human rights violations / abuses and the provision of necessary remedies to affected persons including referral for legal aid, assistance and representation through public and private institutions.

In addition to the referral system, and given the limited staff capacity of the SHRC and the growing number of human rights violations, the SHRC will advocate for the development, strengthening and implementation of internal grievance mechanisms within government agencies to ensure that prompt and appropriate action is taken to resolve human rights violations / abuses.

These coordinated efforts will continue to focus on fostering cooperation with provincial and federal human rights commissions to promote cooperation, coordination and synergy between the respective human rights institutions working in Sindh province. Notable provincial-level institutions contributing to these efforts include the Sindh Commission on the Status of Women, the Sindh Healthcare Commission, the Sindh Information Commission, the Sindh Child Protection Authority, the Sindh Mental Health Authority, the Sindh HIV/AIDS Control Treatment and Protection Commission, the Sindh Provincial and District Public Safety and Police Complaint Commission, Provincial Ombudsman Sindh, Provincial Ombudsman Against Harassment Of Women At Workplace, and Sindh Occupational Health and Safety Council, the Sindh Senior Citizen Welfare Council.

In addition, at the federal level, the National Commission for Human Rights, the National Commission for the Rights of Child and the National Commission for the Status of Women and National Commission on Minority are important institutions, which will be engaged in this cooperation.

Given the similar domains and jurisdictions, it is important to avoid duplication and overlapping mandates, which can lead to confusion and inefficiency. By formalising partnerships, preferably through memoranda of understanding, the SHRC can clearly define roles, responsibilities and areas of collaboration with other relevant commissions to leverage resources, expertise and best practises while respecting the autonomy and unique mandates of each commission.



STRATEGIC PILLAR: 2

Enhance knowledge and understanding of human rights and legal entitlements among diverse sections of society to promote a culture of equality and justice.

Strategic Pillar 2 of the Commission's strategic plan is centred around spreading human rights knowledge, promoting awareness of constitutional rights and legal entitlements. By targeting diverse sections of society, it helps to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to benefit from increased knowledge and understanding of human rights. This pillar is supported by key provisions of the SPHRA, 2011.

Through the provision of Section 4(v) of SPHRA 2011, the Commission is empowered to assess the safeguards enshrined in the Constitution and existing laws, including those relating to business and human rights. The Commission is tasked with reviewing accountability measures, ensuring access to remedies for violations and making recommendations to improve the implementation of established procedures.

According to section 4(viii) of the SPHRA 2011, the Commission aims to spread human rights literacy among different sections of society. This includes actively engaging with communities, duty bearers and stakeholders, including law enforcement agencies, parliamentarians, government departments, human rights defenders to ensure that people are aware of their rights and responsibilities.

Section 4(ix) emphasises the promotion of awareness of the safeguards available to protect human rights. The Commission will use print and electronic media, organise seminars and other means to disseminate information on legal provisions, reporting mechanisms and implementation mechanisms and procedure given in various rights related laws in the province including support services. This will help facilitate access to justice, reporting of violations and seeking redress for human rights violations and abuses.

The section 4(xi) of the SPHRA 2011 highlights the Commission's commitment to publishing or causing to be published various policies, details, data, and information relevant to its affairs on a regular basis. This ensures transparency and accountability while promoting reasonable public access to the same.

The Section 4(x) of SPHRA, 2011 recognises the importance of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and training institutions working in the field of human rights.

In addition, Section 4(xiii) of the SPHRA 2011 states that the Commission shall perform such other functions as may be necessary and prescribed for the protection of human rights. This provision allows the Commission to undertake any additional actions or responsibilities deemed necessary.

PRIORITY AREAS

Priority Area 1: Enhance public awareness and education on human rights through effective media engagement.



To improve public awareness and education on human rights, the SHRC will take a comprehensive approach. The Commission will develop informative and easily accessible IEC materials, including brochures, fact sheets, infographics and videos that will effectively explain the concepts of human rights and legal entitlements. These materials will be widely disseminated through various media channels such as social media, websites and public events. The Commission will also launch province wise media campaigns in line with international days to highlight important issues and raise public awareness, such as International Women's Day, International Labour Day, International Children Day, Human Rights Day, World Refugee Day, World Day Against Child Labour and other important occasions dealing with human rights issues.

In addition, the SHRC will actively engage with press clubs, TV channels, radio stations including FM channels and social media platforms to improve coverage of human rights issues. By engaging with journalists, editors and producers, the Commission will provide valuable resources, information and opinions to improve media understanding and coverage of human rights-related issues in Sindh. Furthermore, the SHRC will leverage the power of online platforms, particularly social media and social media influencers, pod-casts to effectively disseminate information, share success stories and promote public engagement. These platforms will provide an interactive space for dialogue and communication with the public. By strategically engaging social media, the Commission will increase its reach and promote a culture of respect for human rights.

The Commission will actively participate in public seminars, workshops and trainings organized by stakeholders. These initiatives will educate people about their human rights and promote a culture of respect and understanding of human rights.

Priority Area 2: : An online-portal on human rights education in Sindh

The establishment of an online portal on human rights education in Sindh will serve several functions related to monitoring human rights and tracking progress. The portal will serve as a central resource where relevant information, data, reports and updates on the state of human rights in Sindh will be made available to the public, stakeholders and decision/policy makers.

First, the online portal will serve as a repository of information documenting the current state of human rights, ongoing challenges and emerging trends. This will enable individuals, civil society organisations and other stakeholders to stay informed about human rights issues, initiatives and policies in Sindh.

Secondly, the portal will serve as a platform for transparency and accountability. By making human rights-related information easily accessible to the public, the portal will promote transparency in governance and decision-making processes.

Finally, the online portal will facilitate knowledge dissemination and awareness raising. It will serve as an educational resource and provide information on human rights principles, international standards and legal frameworks. The portal will feature educational materials, articles, multimedia content and research to enhance the public's understanding of human rights and empower individuals to actively engage in the promotion and protection of human rights in Sindh.



Priority Area 3: Establish partnerships with professional training institutes to integrate human rights education

The Commission will establish partnerships with training institutions such as Sindh Judicial Academy (SJA), National Institute of Management (NIM) at Karachi, National Institute of Labour Administration & Training (NILAT) at Karachi, Sindh Police Academy / Training Centre, Sindh Training Management and Research Institute, etc. to promote human rights education as an integral part of the curriculum and foster a culture of respect for human rights among future leaders and professionals including elements of criminal justice system in Sindh. To achieve this, the SHRC will work with the training institutions involved to review, develop and incorporate modules or courses on human rights into their existing curricula. These modules will cover fundamental human rights principles, international human rights standards, national legal frameworks and practical applications of human rights in the respective fields. The SHRC will provide expertise, resource materials and training support to these institutions to facilitate the integration of human rights.

Priority Area 4: Support capacity building of duty bearers and stakeholders, including law enforcement agencies, legislative bodies, govt. departments, HR defenders in collaboration with technical assistance of partners and civil society organizations.

The Commission, in collaboration with technical assistance of national and international agencies, civil society organisations, will support capacity building of duty bearers and stakeholders, including law enforcement, legislative bodies, government agencies and human rights defenders. Under this collaboration, comprehensive capacity building programmes will be designed and implemented to enhance understanding of human rights principles, laws and their role in upholding and promoting human rights in Sindh where necessary through research products. These programmes will cover various aspects of human rights including international standards, legal frameworks, best practises and specific areas relevant to each target group.

By leveraging the expertise and resources of technical assistance and civil society organisations, the Commission aims to equip duty bearers and stakeholders with the necessary knowledge and skills tools to effectively protect and promote human rights in their respective roles and responsibilities.

Priority Area 5: Enhance collaboration with civil society organisations and human rights defenders to collectively promote human rights in Sindh.

The Commission recognises the importance of working with civil society organisations and will enhance its efforts to increase outreach, knowledge sharing and coordination across Sindh. This will be achieved through regular communication, information sharing and coordinated initiatives. The SHRC will prioritise identifying civil society organisations and human rights defenders networks working with vulnerable groups in each district of Sindh addressing a wide range of human rights issues. Mechanisms for regular reporting and updates from human rights defenders and civil society organisations will be developed to facilitate continuous engagement including Human Rights Advocacy trainings i.e UN Human Rights System, ILO System and others. In addition, periodic meetings will also be organised to provide a platform for human rights defenders and civil society organisations to exchange ideas, raise emerging issues and develop strategise actions.



These efforts will strengthen relationships, provide the SHRC with a grassroots presence and networking at the community level, and advance the collective promotion and protection of human rights in Sindh.

STRATEGIC PILLAR: 3

Monitor compliance with the international human rights regime in Sindh to assess the effectiveness of measures to protect and promote human rights.

Strategic Pillar 3 of the SHRC Strategic Plan focuses on studying and monitoring treaties and international instruments related to human rights, reviewing their compliance and conducting research in the field of human rights. This pillar is reinforced by important provisions in the Sindh Protection of Human Rights Act, 2011 (amended 2023) (SPHRA).

Section 4(v) empowers the Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) to critically examine the safeguards for the protection of human rights enshrined in the Constitution and existing laws, including in the area of business and human rights, which are guided by global standards such as the United Nations Guiding Principles (UNGP) that emphasise respect for human rights by businesses. The SHRC is tasked with ensuring accountability, providing access to remedies and proposing measures to improve the implementation of established business due diligence practices.

Section 4(vi) of SPHRA 2011 emphasises the importance of studying and understanding international treaties and instruments relating to human rights. The Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) will actively engage in the analysis of these international legal frameworks and make recommendations to ensure their effective integration within the province.

Also, section 4(vii) of SPHRA 2011, highlights the importance of research in the field of human rights research, and the SHRC is mandated to conduct and promote research activities that contribute to a better understanding of human rights issues in Sindh.

The fourth provision, section 4(xiii) of the SPHRA 2011, allows the Commission to take on additional duties or responsibilities as deemed necessary.

Priority Area 1: Report on the compliance of international human rights standards in Sindh.

Releasing a comprehensive report on the compliance of international human rights standards in Sindh will serve as a vital mechanism to assess, document, and disseminate information on the human rights in the province. The report will be a culmination of the Commission's efforts in monitoring and studying the compliance of international treaties on human rights ratified by the Government of Pakistan, taking into account their implementation status in Sindh.

Through this report, the Commission aims to provide an in-depth analysis of the prevailing human rights challenges, progress, and emerging issues in the province. It will incorporate robust data, thorough analysis, and compelling case studies related to human rights violations and abuses, with a particular focus on the compliance of international treaties and various international commitments related to Human Rights. The report will provide a foundation for evidence-based advocacy and policy recommendations to protect and promote human rights in the province.



Priority Area 2: Systematically monitor human rights violations and abuses in Sindh and provide evidence-based recommendations in accordance with international human rights law.

The Commission will systematically monitor and analyse the complaints and human rights violations / abuses to identify underlying systemic problems and gaps. By thoroughly analysis, the SHRC will focus on the root causes and systemic deficiencies that contribute to human rights violations in Sindh. The Commission will undertake in-depth research and examine the complexity of identified human rights issues or violations /abuses in Sindh.

Based on its findings, the SHRC will make recommendations to key stakeholders, which may include advisories, policy papers and position papers. These recommendations will be based on international human rights law and Pakistan's obligations to ensure that they are consistent with the domestic legal framework. They will serve as guiding resources to support policy-making, advocacy and decision-making processes.

Priority Area 3: Compile and publish the recommendations of the international human rights mechanisms relevant to Sindh.

Many stakeholders are often unaware of international human rights law and the standards, recommendations and obligations imposed on government. This lack of awareness can impede effective human rights promotion and compliance in the province.

The Commission will bridge this gap by reviewing, compiling, translating into local languages, publishing and disseminating recommendations from a wide range of international human rights mechanisms, including:

- (i) **recommendations from treaty bodies** such as the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ESCR), the Human Rights Committee, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), Committee against Torture (CAT), Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)
- (ii) **recommendations from UN charter-based bodies**, in particular the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process, which reviews the human rights records of all UN member states, including Pakistan,
- (iii) **recommendations of Special Rapporteurs** appointed by the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) to examine specific human rights issues,
- (iv) **recommendations and findings of the Committee of Experts** on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations of International Labour Organization (ILO), and other international human rights mechanisms and other multi-lateral/bi-lateral agreements related to Human Rights.

This dissemination ensures that relevant government agencies, civil society organisations and human rights defenders are informed of the specific actions required to comply with human rights obligations.



Priority Area 4: Establish cooperation with universities and law colleges to facilitate and promote research on human rights issues in Sindh.

The Commission will collaborate with universities and law colleges in the province fostering partnerships that will enable students to conduct research on human rights issues, including the important dimension of business and human rights, as part of their bachelor's and master's programmes. By facilitating this collaboration, SHRC will provide valuable opportunities for students to contribute to the field of human rights through rigorous research, analysis and critical thinking.

SHRC will initially organise seminars and workshops on human rights principles, international human rights law and related topics to enhance students' understanding and interest in human rights. The Commission will provide technical support to students who make human rights a topic in their Bachelor's and Master's theses.

In addition, this initiative promotes a sustainable approach to conducting regular research. Some universities or departments that may be considered as partners for collaboration are law, social sciences, international relations, business/management studies and journalism and mass communication. This partnership not only strengthens the capacity of universities to engage in human rights research, but also promotes a culture of human rights within academic institutions by cultivating the next generation of human rights advocates and scholars and empowering students to make meaningful contributions to the field of human rights in Sindh.

Priority 5: Collaboration with Treaty Implementing Cells, SDGs secretariat of Provincial Assembly and Sindh HR Taskforce for Coherence and Compliance of International Human Rights Regime

The Commission will engage with the Federal and Provincial Treaty Implementation Cells, the Provincial Taskforce SDGs Secretariat, the Sindh Human Rights Taskforce, etc to review for formulation / preparation of the periodic reports of UN core treaties and ILO Convention.

It will also include the review of the progress of the international human rights regime, including progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the implementation of the Generalised System of Preferences Plus (GSP+) in Sindh. SHRC will also coordinate with federal ministry on Human Rights on the implementation of National Action Plan on Human Rights, National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights through Provincial TIC and National Reporting Mechanism and Follow –up (NMRF) for International Treaties.

This collaboration will facilitate coordination, information sharing and joint monitoring efforts. The Commission will closely examine the policies, practices and outcomes related to these initiatives and provide valuable recommendations to the government for improving reporting / compliance, addressing challenges and promoting effective implementation. Through active participation in these partnerships, the Commission aims to contribute to the achievement of human rights goals, sustainable development and fulfilment of international obligations in Sindh Province.

STRATEGIC PILLAR: 4

Legislative review of laws, policies and practices in Sindh for their compliance with fundamental rights enshrined in the Constitution of Pakistan and obligations set out in international human rights treaties.

Strategic Pillar 4 entails the legislative review of laws, policies, and practices in Sindh to ensure their compliance with the Human Rights and fundamental freedoms enshrined in the Constitution of Pakistan and the obligations set out in international human rights treaties and Commitments. This involves a thorough examination of the existing legal framework to identify any inconsistencies or gaps. Recommendations for amendments or reforms are made to align the laws with constitutional rights and international human rights standards, obligated as state party, strengthening the protection and promotion of human rights in Sindh.

Under the section 4(iii) of the SPHRA, 2011 the SHRC is mandated to formulate, implement and regularly update policies for the protection of human rights. This provision highlights the important role of the Commission in developing policies that contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights in Sindh.

The section 4(v) of SPHRA, 2011 empowers the SHRC to review the safeguards for the protection of human rights provided in the Constitution or in existing laws. This includes assessing the safeguards in the context of business and human rights, ensuring accountability, access to remedies and recommending measures to effectively implement established procedures and ensure due diligence in business enterprises.

Section 4(ix) of the SPHRA 2011 is also relevant in this context. It directs the Commission (SHRC) to promote awareness of the safeguards for the protection of human rights through print and other media. This mandate underscores the role of the Commission not only in assessing and advocating for legislative reforms, but also in ensuring that the citizens of Sindh are informed about the protective mechanisms in place.

In addition, under section 4(xiii) of the SPHRA 2011, the Commission may take on additional responsibilities or undertake tasks that it deems necessary.

Priority Area 1: Review and support the implementation of the Sindh Human Rights Policy 2023, and actively monitor the progress and status of its implementation.

The Human Rights Department, Government of Sindh has developed a comprehensive human rights policy 2023-2027 that sets out specific areas of intervention for (i) civil and political rights (ii) socio, economic, and cultural rights and (iii) protecting the rights of vulnerable segments of society. The SHRC will assist the Human Rights Department by conducting an annual review of the policy and provide recommendations for its effective implementation. It will also monitor the progress and status of the policy implementation. This monitoring process will ensure that the goals and objectives set out in the policy are diligently pursued and that any obstacles or challenges are promptly addressed.



Priority Area 2: Support the implementation of the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights 2021-2026 in Sindh

The Commission will assist the Government of Sindh in developing a provincial strategy for the implementation of the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights 2021-2026. With the National Action Plan (NAP), Pakistan intends to provide a framework for the implementation of the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs). The National Action Plan describes how the State will ensure access to effective remedies for human rights violations through legislative, judicial, administrative and other appropriate means/measures.

To this end, the Commission will review the role of key departments and related agencies and make recommendations to the concerned provincial bodies for the implementation of 69 actions relevant to Sindh proposed under the National Action Plan in the following priority areas: 1. Financial transparency, corruption and human rights standards in public procurement contracts 2. Anti-discrimination, equal opportunity, and inclusion 3. Human rights due diligence 4. Labour standards and the informal economy 5. Child labour 6. Forced or bonded labour 7. Occupational health and safety 8. Access to remedy. The Commission will establish a Committee of Experts to monitor the implementation of the National Action Plan and help develop a provincial strategy by working with key stakeholders at the federal and provincial levels (NAP Secretariat, Federal Ministry of HR, Departments, Federations, etc.) to achieve the desired results.

In addition, the SHRC will work with businesses and related stakeholders to review the available alternative dispute resolution mechanisms in Sindh and discuss how the Commission can play an effective role as an alternative dispute resolution and accountability mechanism between companies and concerned stakeholders to address human rights concerns and promote responsible business practices in the province.

Priority Area 3: Provide recommendations to enhance due process within the Criminal Justice System, aiming to address any deficiencies and improve procedural safeguards.

The Commission recognises the importance of due process as a fundamental principle enshrined in international human rights law and the laws of Pakistan. It ensures equal treatment by the state and before any court. In Sindh province, due process problems can manifest themselves in various aspects of the justice system. These include delayed administration of justice, lack of access to legal counsel, arbitrary arrests and detentions, inadequate safeguards for the accused, inconsistent application of the law and inefficient case handling as identified by various studies and documents i.e. Sindh Government Rule of Law road map 2019.

To address these concerns, the SHRC will actively monitor and document cases where the right to due process has been compromised. This systematic documentation will enable the Commission to identify procedural problems and gaps in the criminal justice system. Focusing on the relevant provisions of the general and special laws, the SHRC will review and analyse due process procedures in Sindh. Based on its findings, the Commission will make recommendations to improve the laws, rules and procedures to help strengthen due process rights in Sindh's criminal justice system in light of recommendation by national and international bodies.



Priority Area 4: Conduct a gap analysis of the existing legal framework in line with the Constitution of Pakistan and international human rights obligations in relation to (i) civil and political rights, (ii) economic, social and cultural rights, and (iii) the rights of vulnerable groups in Sindh.

The Commission will conduct a comprehensive gap analysis of the existing legal framework in Sindh and assess its compliance with the Constitution of Pakistan 1973 and international human rights obligations particularly focusing in three key areas: civil and political rights; economic, social and cultural rights; and the rights of the vulnerable populations.

Specific issues that the Commission will prioritise in analysing the gaps in the coming years are the following: (i) right to life, liberty and security, (ii) access to justice, (iii) right to information (RTI), (iv) labour rights, (v) right to affordable health and nutrition/family planning/reproductive health, (vi) right to education, (vii) cultural rights, (viii) women's rights, (ix) children's rights, (x) minority rights, (xi) rights of senior citizens, (xii) rights of persons with different abilities and (xiii) rights of transgender persons. The gap analysis will provide a clear understanding of the areas where the legal framework is inadequate. In this way, the Commission will seek to work with policy makers in Sindh to facilitate the necessary legal reforms in Sindh.

Priority Area 5: Law reforms advocacy with the legislative bodies to promote human rights-focused legislation.

The Commission will play a crucial role in providing technical input and advice to the members of the Sindh Assembly, Standing Committees and other relevant forums. As an independent body with expertise in the field of human rights, the SHRC will offer valuable insight, analysis and recommendations on legislative proposals, policies and practices related to human rights issues. It will also actively advocate for legislative reforms with the aim of developing and adopting laws or amendments to existing laws that are not in line with the Constitution of Pakistan and international human rights standards. The SHRC will raise awareness of the importance of human rights-based legislation and emphasise the need for legislative reforms that effectively protect and uphold fundamental rights and human rights enshrined in the Constitution of Pakistan and International obligation of Pakistan as state party.



STRATEGIC PILLAR: 5

Strengthen the Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) as an effective, efficient, and resourceful institution, enhancing its capacity to promote and protect human rights in Sindh.

The fifth pillar of the strategic plan for SHRC aims to strengthen the institution itself by improving governance structures, resources and expertise. This includes building internal systems, developing professional capacity and fostering strategic partnerships to ensure autonomy, transparency and accountability.

The SHRC strives to optimise its impact, responsiveness and credibility as a leading human rights institution in Sindh and contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights and the creation of a just and inclusive society in the province. Section 4(xii) underscores this by providing the SHRC with the power to appoint officers and staff as necessary to carry out the mandates of the Commission as set out in the SPHRA 2011. This provision is vital in establishing the operational basis of the Commission and ensuring that it can function optimally in pursuit of human rights objectives.

Section 8 of the SPHRA 2011, meanwhile, provides a legal basis for the establishment of the Sindh Human Rights Commission Fund. This fund underpins the role of adequate resources and financial stability that the Commission needs to support its activities and mandate. This Section also highlights the important role of transparent governance of the SHRC in effectively advocating for human rights in Sindh.

PRIORITY AREAS

Priority Area 1: Review and Reform Sindh Protection of Human Rights Act, 2011

The amendment of the Sindh Protection of Human Rights Act, 2011 in 2023 was an important step towards addressing human rights issues in Sindh. However, it is important to note that despite amendments in 2023, the law has several constraints and mandate limitation related to promotion and protection of human rights. Therefore, it is imperative to initiate a review process to further reform the founding law by enhancing powers of the Commission important for effective functioning of the Commission. The review will identify and address gaps and shortcomings. Amendments will be proposed in the SPHRA 2011 to strengthen the SHRC to enable it to exercise its mandate more effectively, strengthen its investigative and enforcement powers, and provide better remedies and redress mechanisms for victims of human rights violations.



Priority Area 2: Notification of Rules: Rules of Implementation, Recruitment Rules, Financial Rules

The notification of rules refers to the process of formally announcing and establishing specific regulations and guidelines within an organization. In the context of the Commission, it involves the notification of various rules, including the Rules of Business, Recruitment Rules, including job description and Financial Rules. The Rules of Business outline the procedures and responsibilities for conducting the Commission's affairs and decision-making processes. The Recruitment Rules set the criteria and procedures for hiring and managing the Commission's staff, ensuring transparency and fairness in the recruitment process. The Financial Rules provide guidelines for budgeting, expenditure, and financial management, and ensure accountability and proper use of resources. By issuing these notifications, the Commission will establish a clear framework for its operations, ensuring consistency, efficiency, and compliance with legal and administrative requirements.

Priority Area 3: Developing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for complaint handling, Sou Moto, inspections, petitions, and fact findings

The development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for handling complaints, Sou moto, inspections, petitions and fact-findings are an essential step for the Commission to effectively fulfil its mandate to address human rights violations / abuses. The SOPs provide a structured and systematic approach to complaint handling and ensure fairness, transparency and consistency in the Commission's work. By defining the procedures and criteria for accepting and processing complaints, the Commission will establish a framework that distinguishes admissible from inadmissible complaints. This clarity is critical for prioritising cases that require immediate attention and resources, ensuring that the Commission's efforts are focused on the most pressing human rights issues. In addition, SOPs allow the Commission to establish a robust and accountable mechanism for Sou moto investigations, inspections and fact-finding, enabling it to pro-actively address human rights violations / abuses even in the absence of formal complaints.

Priority Area 4: Strengthening of the provincial HQ/regional offices and establishment of new regional offices

The Commission recognises the importance of strengthening its headquarters in Karachi as a central hub for its activities and operations and further strengthening its regional office in Sukkur, as well as establishing and making operational an office in Larkana. This includes improving infrastructure, resources and capacity to effectively carry out its mandate to promote and protect human rights in Sindh. The Commission also intends to establish more regional/district offices within four years. These regional offices will enable the SHRC to better reach out to communities, monitor the human rights situation, address local human rights issues and provide timely assistance to people in need. By strengthening its provincial headquarters and expanding its reach through the regional/district offices, the SHRC aims to ensure effective monitoring, resolution and promotion of human rights issues across Sindh, promote a culture of respect for human rights and strengthen the Commission's central role as a leading institution in promoting human rights in the province.



Priority Area 5: Resource mobilisation and establish Human Rights Commission Fund to improve the financial sustainability and effectiveness of the SHRC

Resource mobilisation and the establishment of a Human Rights Commission Fund by the SHRC are essential steps towards improving the financial sustainability and effectiveness of the Commission. By actively mobilising resources, including seeking support from government allocations, donors and other stakeholders, the Commission can ensure adequate funding for its operations, programmes and initiatives.

The Commission will seek an adequate increase in the annual budget through the Human Rights Department from Government of Sindh to support the programmes and operations of the SHRC without relying heavily on donors and technical agencies. In addition, the establishment of a dedicated Human Rights Commission Fund will provide a sustainable mechanism to secure financial resources, which is specifically mentioned in Section 8(1)(2) of the SPHRA, 2011. The SHRC will advocate for the establishment of this fund. This fund can be used to support the Commission's initiatives and will reduce dependence on annual government budgets.

The Commission will seek to increase collaboration with donors and technical agencies to strengthen its capacity and effectiveness and access valuable resources, expertise and technical assistance to support its programmes, initiatives and institutional development.

Priority Area 6: Implement a human resource management system

The aim is to implement a comprehensive human resource management system within the SHRC encompassing systems, training and a performance culture. This includes establishing efficient HR systems and processes for recruitment, interpersonal communication, performance appraisal, professional development and regulating contractual staff. The SHRC will invest in the training and career development of its staff to enhance their skills and capabilities. In addition, a review of the organisational structure will be undertaken to streamline internal processes, improve coordination, promote collaboration and ensure accountability in line with the law and the strategic plan.

Priority Area 7: Development of annual work plans and periodic reviews of the SHRC Strategic Plan 2023-2027

Developing annual work plans and conducting bi-annual reviews of the SHRC Strategic Plan 2023-2027 ensure effective implementation and continuous improvement. These processes outline specific activities for the period, timelines and resources, improve operational efficiency and monitor progress. Regular reviews allow for adjustments to ensure that the SHRC responds to new challenges and optimises the SHRC's response to the evolving human rights landscape in Sindh. It is important to note that the strategic plan remains adaptable and serves as a living document that can be revised and updated to reflect changing priorities and circumstances.

Journal Pre-proof



ACTIVITY PLAN

The activity plan complements the SHRC strategic plan by providing a roadmap and concrete next steps to achieve the strategic objectives set out in the plan.

This activity plan serves as a proposal and allows for flexibility in implementation, as it is important to adapt and tailor the approach to specific needs and circumstances. Although there may be deviations from the outlined plan, the overall objectives should remain paramount throughout the process.

STRATEGIC PILLAR: 1

Systematically monitor and address human rights violations and abuses in Sindh while establishing an accessible and responsive complaint handling mechanism, fostering a culture of transparency, accountability, and human rights protection.

Priority 1: Establish an integrated online Complaint and Case Management System with a robust database

Activities:

- i. System review and identification of gaps
- ii. Appointment of an IT firm
- iii. Design and build user-friendly platform
- iv. Data-base development
- v. Training and capacity building for staff

Priority 2: Conduct periodic inspections of places of detention, state institutions and business enterprises to monitor and ensure compliance with human rights standards

Activities:

- i. Develop a comprehensive inspection framework
- ii. Engagement with relevant authorities
- iii. Schedule and conduct inspections
- iv. Documentation and analysis of findings
- v. Follow-up and monitor progress



Priority Area 3: Hold public hearings and fact-finding missions to monitor the situation of human rights violations and abuses in Sindh.

Activities:

- i. Planning and Preparation (Defining scope, target areas, time-line)
- ii. Stakeholder Engagement
- iii. Conduct Public Hearings
- iv. Conduct Fact-finding missions
- v. Prepare reports
- vi. Prepare recommendations and dissemination

Priority Area 4: Establish a referral system and coordinate with government departments and agencies to ensure effective handling of human rights complaints/petitions and take appropriate remedial action.

Activities:

- i. Review and Needs Assessment
- ii. Meetings & Coordination with Government Agencies
- iii. Development of referral mechanism framework
- iv. Meetings with provincial and federal human rights commissions
- v. Formalizing Partnerships
- vi. Evaluate the effective of the referral system

STRATEGIC PILLAR: 2

Enhance knowledge and understanding of human rights and legal entitlements among diverse sections of society to promote a culture of equality and justice.

Priority Area 1: Enhance public awareness and education on human rights through effective media engagement.

Activities:

- i. System review and identification of gaps
- ii. Appointment of an IT firm
- iii. Design and build user-friendly platform
- iv. Data-base development
- v. Training and capacity building for staff



Priority 2: An online-portal on human rights education in Sindh

Activities:

- i. Appointment of a firm
- ii. Develop and design an interactive and user-friendly online portal
- iii. Compile and regularly update relevant information, data, reports, and updates
- iv. Awareness raising by providing educational resources (articles, multimedia content, research papers, etc)

Priority Area 3: Establish partnerships with professional training institutes to integrate human rights education

Activities:

- i. Identify and establish partnerships with training institutes
- ii. Conduct a needs assessment and curriculum review
- iii. Develop and incorporate human rights modules or courses
- iv. Provide training support and capacity building

Priority Area 4: Support capacity building of duty bearers and stakeholders, including law enforcement agencies, parliamentarians, govt. departments, HR defenders in collaboration with technical assistance and civil society organisations.

Activities:

- i. Needs assessment and capacity gap analysis of duty bearers and stakeholders
- ii. Engagement with Technical Assistance/ CSOs
- iii. Engagement with Duty Bearers/Stakeholders
- iv. Prioritising target groups
- v. Assist in design and development of customised trainings for target groups and resource materials
- vi. Assist in conducting trainings and workshops
- vii. Facilitate exchange programmes (if needed)

Priority Area 5: Enhance collaboration with civil society organisations and human rights defenders to collectively promote human rights in Sindh.

Activities:

- i. Identify CSOs in different districts of Sindh working on human rights
- ii. Hold periodic meetings and consultations
- iii. Knowledge sharing and collaborate on joint advocacy efforts
- iv. Develop a system for reporting human rights violations
- v. Support CSOs initiatives



STRATEGIC PILLAR: 3

Monitor compliance with the international human rights regime in Sindh to assess the effectiveness of measures to protect and promote human rights.

Priority 1: Report on the compliance of international humanrights standards in Sindh.

Activities:

- i. Appointment of a Research Firm/ Consultant
- ii. Data Collection
- iii. Analysis and report compilation with policy recommendations
- iv. Stakeholders' consultations to discuss initial findings
- v. Report Publication
- vi. Report launch and dissemination to key stakeholders

Priority 2: Systematically monitor human rights violations and abuses in Sindh and provide evidence-based recommendations in accordance with international human rights law.

Activities:

- i. Review of complaints/ human rights violations, and identify systemic problems
- ii. Conduct in-depth research and examination
- iii. Discussion/meetings with stakeholders (if needed)
- iv. Prepare evidence-based recommendations
- v. Dissemination and engagement with stakeholders
- vi. Advocacy and follow-up with duty bearers

Priority Area 3: Compile and publish the recommendations of the international human rights mechanisms relevant to Sindh

Activities:

- i. Appointment of a Firm/Consultant
- ii. Review and compilation of recommendations
- iii. Translation into local languages
- iv. Publication
- v. Dissemination to key stakeholders



Priority Area 4: Establish cooperation with universities and law colleges to facilitate and promote research on human rights issues in Sindh.

Activities:

- i. Identification of universities/departments
- ii. Conduct seminars and workshops
- iii. Formalize partnerships/ collaborations
- iv. Provide guidance to students conducting research on human rights
- v. Dissemination of research findings

Priority 5: Collaboration with Treaty Implementing Cells, SDGs secretariat of Provincial Assembly and Sindh HR Taskforce for Coherence and Compliance of International Human Rights Regime

Activities:

- i. Hold regular coordination meetings
- ii. Identify priority areas and establish a joint monitoring and evaluation mechanism
- iii. Conduct in-depth analysis and hold review meetings
- iv. Prepare and submit recommendations to the Government
- v. Disseminate information to stakeholders

STRATEGIC PILLAR: 4

Legislative review of laws, policies and practises in Sindh for their compliance with fundamental rights enshrined in the Constitution of Pakistan and obligations set out in international human rights treaties.

Priority Area 1: Review and support the implementation of the Sindh Human Rights Policy 2023, and actively monitor the progress and status of its implementation.

Activities:

- i. Appointment of a Consultant/ Firm
- ii. Coordination and Engagement with Human Rights Department
- iii. Policy review and analysis
- iv. Stakeholders' engagement
- v. Submit Recommendations



Priority Area 2: Review and Support the implementation of the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights in Sindh.

Activities:

- i. Appoint a Consultant/Firm (if needed)
- ii. Review the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights (2021-2026) and identify the role of provincial agencies for its implementation
- iii. Consultations with stakeholders for a provincial strategy to implement the National Action Plan
- iv. Make recommendations to provincial agencies for NAP implementation
- v. Establish a Committee of Experts to assess progress
- vi. Conduct a review of laws and regulations related to business and human rights, and alternative dispute resolution and accountability mechanisms in Sindh

Priority Area 3: Provide recommendations to enhance due process within the Criminal Procedure Code, aiming to address any deficiencies and improve procedural safeguards.

Activities:

- i. Appoint a Consultant
- ii. Review and analyse complaints/ human rights violations
- iii. In-depth research on the due process procedures in Sindh Criminal Justice System and prepare recommendations
- iv. Sharing of initial findings and engagement with key stakeholders
- v. Report Publication and Dissemination
- vi. Advocacy with stakeholders

Priority Area 4: Conduct a gap analysis of the existing legal framework in line with the Constitution of Pakistan and international human rights obligations in relation to (i) civil and political rights, (ii) economic, social and cultural rights, and (iii) the rights of vulnerable groups in Sindh.

Activities:

- i. Identify and prioritise key area for gap-analysis study
- ii. Appointment of a Consultant/Firm
- iii. Conduct in-depth analysis and prepare recommendations
- iv. Sharing of initial findings and engagement with key stakeholders
- v. Report(s) publications and dissemination
- vi. Advocacy with stakeholders



Priority Area 5: Law reforms advocacy with the legislative bodies to promote human rights-focused legislation

Activities:

- i. Submit law reforms proposals
- ii. Technical input and advice to parliamentarians
- iii. Coordination and consultations with parliamentarians
- iv. Stakeholders' engagement
- v. Advocacy initiatives

STRATEGIC PILLAR: 5

Strengthen the Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) as an effective, efficient, and resourceful institution, enhancing its capacity to promote and protect human rights in Sindh.

Priority Area 1: Review and Reform Sindh Protection of Human Rights Act, 2011

Activities:

- i. Appointment of a Consultant/Firm
- ii. Gap identification and analysis of SPHRA, 2011
- iii. Drafting and proposing amendments
- iv. Engagement with key stakeholders
- v. Submission of Proposed Bill
- vi. Follow-up

Priority Area 2: Notification of Rules: Rules of Implementation, Recruitment Rules, Financial Rules

Activities:

- i. Draft, review, update and finalise rules of implementation, recruitment and financial rules
- ii. Internal consultation and Commission approval
- iii. Submission for approvals
- iv. Notification and dissemination



Priority Area 3: Developing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for complaint handling, Sou Moto, inspections, petitions, and fact findings

Activities:

- i. Analysis of existing practices and procedures for complaint handling, Sou Moto investigations, inspections, petitions, and fact-findings
- ii. Engage with internal and external stakeholders
- iii. Develop draft SOPs
- iv. Organise consultation sessions and workshops with relevant staff members to review and refine the draft SOPs
- v. Pilot test the developed SOPs
- vi. Finalise/ Implement the SOPs

Priority Area 4: Strengthening of the provincial HQ/regional offices and establishment of new regional offices

Activities:

- i. Needs assessment to identify requirements of HQ and Sukkur office in terms of infrastructure, resources and capacity needed
- ii. Allocate resources
- iii. Develop strategy to mobilise funds for shortfall in funds
- iv. Establishment of a regional office
- v. Staff recruitment

Priority Area 5: Resource mobilisation and Establish Human Rights Fund

Activities:

- i. Develop a resource mobilisation strategy
- ii. Advocacy for higher annual budgets
- iii. Engagement with Human Rights Department and relevant stakeholders for establishment of Human Rights Fund
- iv. Networking and donor engagements and follow-ups
- v. Knowledge exchange and learning opportunities
- vi. Joint projects and initiatives with donors and technical agencies



Priority Area 6: Implement a human resource management system

Activities:

- i. Review and refine existing HR management system
- ii. Review and refine recruitment process
- iii. Design and implement training development programmes
- iv. Establish a staff performance appraisal system
- v. Develop and implement inter-personnel communication policy
- vi. Organisational Structure Review

Priority Area 7: Development of annual work plans and periodic reviews of the SHRC Strategic Plan 2023-2027

Activities:

- i. Annual Workplan Development (activities, timelines, responsible parties)
- ii. Budget forecasting and resource allocation
- iii. Periodic Review of Strategic Plan by the Commission on quarterly or biannual basis



Strategic Pillar 1	Systematically monitor and address human rights violations and abuses in Sindh while establishing an accessible and responsive complaint handling mechanism, fostering a culture of transparency, accountability, and human rights protection.					
Priority: 1	Establish an integrated online Complaint and Case Management System with a robust database					
	Time-Line				Lead Responsibility	Partners
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Activities						
Priority: 2	Conduct periodic inspections of places of detention, state institutions and business enterprises to monitor and ensure compliance with human rights standards.					
	Time-Line				Lead Responsibility	Partners
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Activities						



Priority: 3	Hold public hearings and fact-finding missions to monitor the situation of human rights violations and abuses in Sindh.					
	Time-Line				Lead Responsibility	Partners
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Activities						
Priority: 4	Establish a referral system and coordinate with government departments and agencies to ensure effective handling of human rights complaints/petitions and take appropriate remedial action.					
	Time-Line				Lead Responsibility	Partners
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Activities						



Strategic Pillar 2	Enhance knowledge and understanding of human rights and legal entitlements among diverse sections of society to promote a culture of equality and justice.					
Priority: 1	Enhance public awareness and education on human rights through effective media engagement.					
	Time-Line				Lead Responsibility	Partners
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Activities						
Priority: 2	An online portal on human rights Education in Sindh					
	Time-Line				Lead Responsibility	Partners
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Activities						



Priority: 3	Establish partnerships with professional training institutes to integrate human rights education.					
	Time-Line				Lead Responsibility	Partners
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Activities						
Priority: 4	Support capacity building of duty bearers and stakeholders, including law enforcement agencies, legislative bodies, govt. departments, HR defenders in collaboration with technical assistance and civil society organizations.					
	Time-Line				Lead Responsibility	Partners
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Activities						



Priority: 5	Enhance collaboration with civil society organisations and human rights defenders to collectively promote human rights in Sindh.					
	Time-Line				Lead Responsibility	Partners
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Activities						
Strategic Pillar 3	Monitor compliance with the international human rights regime in Sindh to assess the effectiveness of measures to protect and promote human rights.					
Priority: 1	Report on the compliance of international human rights standards in Sindh.					
	Time-Line				Lead Responsibility	Partners
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Activities						



Priority: 2	Systematically monitor human rights violations and abuses in Sindh and provide evidence-based recommendations in accordance with international human rights law.					
	Time-Line				Lead Responsibility	Partners
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Activities						
Priority: 3	Compile and publish the recommendations of the international human rights mechanisms relevant to Sindh.					
	Time-Line				Lead Responsibility	Partners
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Activities						



Priority: 4	Establish cooperation with universities and law colleges to facilitate and promote research on human rights issues in Sindh.					
	Time-Line				Lead Responsibility	Partners
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Activities						
Priority: 5	Collaboration with Treaty Implementing Cells, SDGs secretariat of Provincial Assembly and Sindh HR Taskforce for Coherence and Compliance of International Human Rights Regime					
	Time-Line				Lead Responsibility	Partners
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Activities						



Strategic Pillar 4	Legislative review of laws, policies and practices in Sindh for their compliance with fundamental rights enshrined in the Constitution of Pakistan and obligations set out in international human rights treaties.					
Priority: 1	Review and support the implementation of the Sindh Human Rights Policy 2023, and actively monitor the progress and status of its implementation.					
	Time-Line				Lead Responsibility	Partners
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Activities						
Priority: 2	Support the implementation of the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights 2021-2026 in Sindh.					
	Time-Line				Lead Responsibility	Partners
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Activities						



Priority: 3	Provide recommendations to enhance due process within the Criminal Justice System, aiming to address any deficiencies and improve procedural safeguards.					
	Time-Line				Lead Responsibility	Partners
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Activities						
Priority: 4	Conduct a gap analysis of the existing legal framework in line with the Constitution of Pakistan and international human rights obligations in relation to (i) civil and political rights, (ii) economic, social and cultural rights, and (iii) the rights of vulnerable groups in Sindh.					
	Time-Line				Lead Responsibility	Partners
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Activities						



Priority: 5	Law reforms advocacy with the legislative bodies to promote human rights-focused legislation.					
	Time-Line				Lead Responsibility	Partners
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Activities						
Strategic Pillar 5	Strengthen the Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) as an effective, efficient, and resourceful institution, enhancing its capacity to promote and protect human rights in Sindh.					
Priority: 1	Review and Reform Sindh Protection of Human Rights Act, 2011					
	Time-Line				Lead Responsibility	Partners
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Activities						



Priority: 2	Notification of Rules: Rules of Implementation, Recruitment Rules, Financial Rules					
	Time-Line				Lead Responsibility	Partners
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Activities						
Priority: 3	Developing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for complaint handling, Sou Moto, inspections, petitions, and fact findings					
	Time-Line				Lead Responsibility	Partners
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Activities						



Priority: 4	Strengthening of the provincial HQ/regional offices and establishment of new regional offices					
	Time-Line				Lead Responsibility	Partners
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Activities						
Priority: 5	Resource mobilisation and establish Human Rights Commission Fund to improve the financial sustainability and effectiveness of the SHRC.					
	Time-Line				Lead Responsibility	Partners
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Activities						



Priority: 6	Implement a human resource management system					
	Time-Line				Lead Responsibility	Partners
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Activities						
Priority: 7	Development of annual work plans and periodic reviews of the SHRC Strategic Plan 2023-2027.					
	Time-Line				Lead Responsibility	Partners
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4		
Activities						




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