



# IPRI Strategic Plan 2023-2025

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## Message from Chief Patron, Dr. Moeed W. Yusuf

No individual, institution or country can progress without having a clear vision and strategy to achieve goals and objectives in mind. Few organisations are fortunate enough to forge a clear path ahead and pursue it in an earnest to achieve the desired ends. But there is also nothing more satisfying than overseeing an organisational process of critical thinking that brings about the clarity needed to take the institution to the next level.

As someone who recently oversaw the whole-of-government effort to prepare Pakistan's first-ever National Security Policy, I was committed to using my role as the Islamabad Policy Research Institute's (IPRI) Chief Patron to produce a similar kind of strategic vision and clarity on the next phase of the institute's journey. I am extremely proud of the entire IPRI team for having produced an introspective, yet forward looking, strategic plan that will guide IPRI's decision-making and outputs over the next three years. It has all the ingredients of success that will further enhance the institute's contributions to public discourse and policy-making on our critical national issues.

IPRI's strategic plan represents a beginning of the next phase, but it is also the culmination of a period of intense internal reforms that began in the Fall of 2020, and were aimed at transforming IPRI into a modern-day think tank able to operate at the highest international standards. IPRI has not only expanded its research frontiers but also introduced digital products, including a student-oriented digital library, and effectively used technology to further its agenda of informing policy and public discourse. The institute has also expanded its array of international partnerships and enhanced its global activities. Testament to the hard work and dedication of IPRI's leadership and staff, the institute was recognized as the 74<sup>th</sup> highest ranked government-affiliated think tank in the Global Go to Think Tank Index Report, 2021 produced by the University of Pennsylvania.

I wish team IPRI even more success as they continue to serve Pakistan and the global intellectual and policy community.

## Message from President, Ambassador Dr Raza Muhammad

Islamabad Policy Research Institute has completed its reform and restructuring process aimed at bringing its research culture and communications strategy in line with the best practices being followed by top think tanks of the world. The resulting lean and efficient organisation with improved human capital has already carved out a niche for itself in the international think tank community, as evident by the institute's 74<sup>th</sup> rank, in the list of government affiliated think tanks presented by the University of Pennsylvania's TTCSP Global Go to Index Report 2021.

The National Security Policy (NSP) of Pakistan is credited with shifting the focus from an emphasis on traditional notions of security to all facets of comprehensive security. In the last two years, IPRI has also undergone reorientation in its research and communication outreach culture in order to examine and disseminate multi-dimensional comprehensive national security issues. While recognising this reorientation, IPRI's strategic plan outlines key goals for reaching broader horizons. These key goals include enhancement of research quality and impact of policy-oriented research; expanding IPRI's influence and partnerships; refining our areas of focus; widening communication and dissemination of IPRI's research; and improving agility, dynamism and institutional governance.

IPRI's Strategic Plan, 2023-2025, aims at setting a roadmap for the research focus, national and international partnerships and communication outreach strategy to keep the institutional dynamism and research culture in line with its core values of non-partisanship, originality and scholarly rigour. I am grateful to the entire team of IPRI for their time and effort in drafting this plan, which serves as a milestone for the next generations of the institute. I am extremely confident that effective implementation of this plan will contribute to IPRI's growth and progress as a think tank of national and international stature.

## **Our Mission**

To inform policy and drive change through research and dialogue on all facets of national security leveraging data, innovation, and technology



## Core Principles, Values and Strengths

### Excellence

Subscribing to the highest possible standards of evidence-based and policy-oriented research.

### Commitment

Conducting research with the aim of contributing positively to the state and strengthening Pakistan's traditional and non-traditional forms of national security.

### Openness

Willingness to ask and answer difficult questions to bring about action-oriented change.

### Non-Partisanship

Conducting impartial analysis regardless of political and social context.

### Innovation

Utilising innovative research approaches and modern platforms to offer unique insights for policy-makers.

### Integrity

Subscribing to the highest possible ethical standards of research and policy discourse without prejudice or bias.

### Dialogue

Promoting an exchange of ideas, narratives and research at multiple levels to share critical insights besides providing a conducive platform for critical conversations between different national and global stakeholders.

### Partnerships

Building, fostering and strengthening multi-sectoral partnerships on national and international levels.

### Teamwork

Utilising collaborative work to bring together individual strengths and talents in pursuit of common and complex goals.

## Core Strengths

- **A focused vision** of providing policy input to the relevant circles in order to strengthen Pakistan's national security through a balanced blend of experience and youth, including practitioners as well as academics
- **Access to policy-making corridors**, which raises IPRI's credibility as a think tank that has potential to facilitate policy change.
- **Wide array of research products offered** in the form of research papers, policy briefs, research studies, conference reports and monographs.
- **Experience in fostering dialogue** and arranging debate and discussion events, including international and national conferences, webinars and seminars, and roundtable discussions.
- **Readability of research products** that extends beyond the policy-making community, making these available for the consumption of the general public.
- **Extensive network and partnerships** including collaborations and joint ventures with external partners in Pakistan as well as abroad.
- **Large visibility and digital presence**, in particular, viewership amongst academia, students and media.
- **Solution-focused** research with a focus on action-oriented recommendations for complex issues pertaining to comprehensive national security.



# IPRI TODAY: WHERE WE ARE



## Current Expertise

Established in 1999, IPRI is one of the oldest non-partisan quasi-autonomous think tanks, affiliated with the National Security Division (NSD) of Pakistan. The institute has risen over the years to become a leading organisation in the field of policy research and advocacy as reflected in its impactful research output, wide-ranging outreach, and vast digital footprint.

It is a matter of pride that IPRI has been ranked 74th in the ‘Government-Affiliated Think Tanks’ category by the University of Pennsylvania’s Think Tank Civil Societies Programme (TTCSP) in its Global Go-To Think-Tank Index of 2021.

Our expertise lies in providing policy-oriented recommendations, as well as educating and informing the general public on issues of national importance. At the heart of IPRI’s activities lies the philosophy that policy and scholarly discourse can be aided through an inclusive dialogue of all stakeholders and a non-partisan and data-driven research approach. Our research and advocacy teams are encouraged to rely on primary sources and field surveys to lend authenticity to our output.

### Research at IPRI

IPRI’s research focus has changed from an erstwhile emphasis on traditional security to coverage of all aspects of comprehensive national security. In the last two years, IPRI has undergone a reorientation of research culture with the objective of aligning its research products to policy issues germane to non-traditional notions of security. The overarching areas of research and advocacy that the institute focuses on are:

**Strategic Studies**

**International Relations & International Law**

**Economic Security**

**Governance & Public Policy**

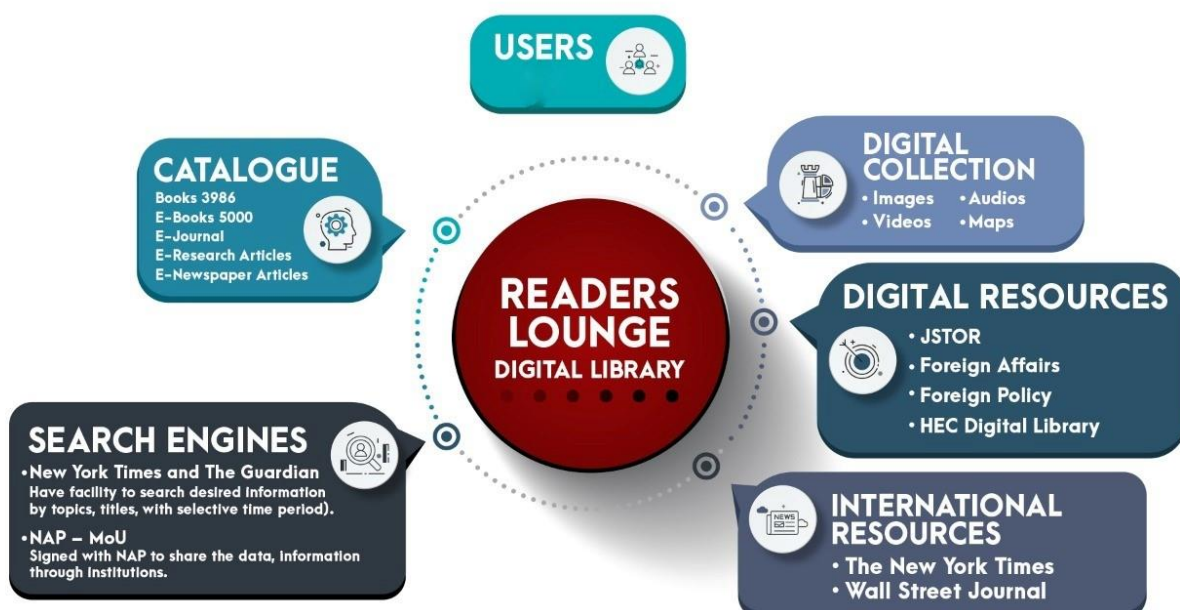
IPRI regularly focuses on existing and emerging issues of comprehensive national security, governance and international politics through its wide array of research products including:

- Academic Research Papers
- Policy Briefs
- Empirical Research Studies
- Policy Memos

The quality and quantity of our research products has grown substantially in the past two years as shown in Annex A.

## Digital Library

To aid our research endeavours, IPRI has at its disposal a well-stocked library. However, in this digital age, students, professionals, and researchers must have access to research material online. Therefore, keeping in view that the goals and services of traditional libraries have changed, an initiative of developing a digital library was undertaken at IPRI in 2021. Today, the Readers Lounge (Digital Library at IPRI) offers a user-friendly and resource abundant digital tool for easier access to the latest information and research material. Its reach has also been extended to students, researchers and scholars beyond IPRI.



## IPRI Publications

IPRI's publications have a vast national and global readership ranging from think tanks, libraries and academia to government ministries, departments and many other fora. IPRI publishes a biannual research journal, which provides a well-articulated, comprehensive and objective analysis of regional and global strategic, political and economic issues. The IPRI Journal follows a triple-blind peer review (one national and two international) policy. Recognized by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan, the Journal is widely read and quoted. The Journal is also recognized internationally by Clarivate Analytics and indexed by Web of Social Sciences. The Journal welcomes international authorship and has its own website as per the requirements of HEC. Moreover, the Journal has its own management and a distinguished Editorial Advisory Board. IPRI Journal is registered with CrossRef - the official Digital Object Identifier (DOI) Registration Agency of the International DOI Foundation.

IPRI publications include monographs, Fact Sheets, policy papers, and books on varied subjects, including international security, regional security dynamics and conference anthologies.

## Dialogues at IPRI

In order to generate healthy discussion on all aspects of comprehensive national security, IPRI organizes a wide range of events that attract renowned thought leaders, academics and policy-makers from Pakistan and the rest of the world. These events include international and national conferences, roundtables, seminars and webinars, and Twitter Spaces. IPRI's flagship conference, the Margalla Dialogue, has earned itself the repute of a notable international conference that takes place annually, featuring top policy-makers and leading experts from diverse fields, who discuss a wide range of issues on different facets of national security.

## IPRI Collaborations

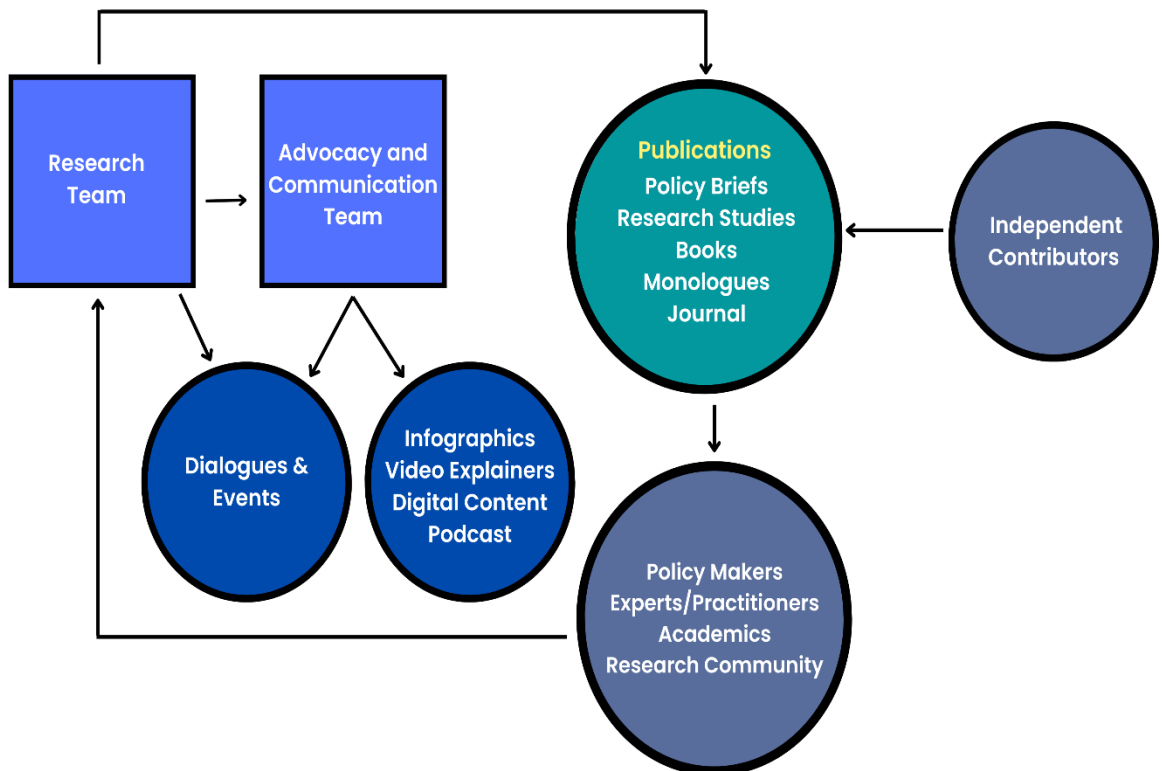
IPRI takes great pride in its partnerships, recognising that the engagement with like-minded institutions can only make the policy discourse richer. IPRI has over thirty Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs), covering twenty countries. Research collaboration in terms of joint researches, seminars, and participation in joint events has been carried out with prestigious think tanks and academic institutions in the last two years.

## Communication and Outreach

As part of reforms at IPRI aimed at widening the Institute’s influence and impact, IPRI in the last two years has adopted a comprehensive communication and dissemination strategy. The driving philosophy of our communication endeavour is a belief that a positive change can be driven through data, digitalisation and innovation. Making use of this philosophy, our expertise has recently expanded to the digital realm and research work is now supplemented with digital products, including but not limited to infographics, explainers, podcasts and dispatches, which ensures greater traction of IPRI’s policy relevant products. Efforts undertaken under IPRI’s communication and dissemination strategy have thus far yielded great results as IPRI’s social media accounts have gained substantial traction in the recent past and continue to be a credible source of information for academia, students, and the general public. The communication strategy of IPRI has yielded impressive results (Annex B).

### IPRI Workflow Chart

Research and advocacy events at IPRI are continuously driven by various well-integrated processes and feedback loops as depicted in the chart below:





# **IPRI TOMORROW: WHERE WE ARE HEADED**

## Strategic Goals

### Goal 1 | Enhancement of Research Quality and Impact of Policy-Oriented Research

One of the defining features of IPRI is its commitment to carry out policy-oriented research in order to prescribe actionable solutions to relevant stakeholders. We are committed to solving complex problems that face Pakistan and the region at large by identifying policy issues and providing policy prescriptions to relevant government stakeholders. This requires that IPRI produces high quality research products by leveraging its in-house expertise, as well as external peer-review inputs. It also requires that IPRI further strengthens its inter-governmental linkages in order to ensure that its research is demand-driven and takes into account the needs of the government.

#### Objectives:

- To ensure that our products meet the highest standards of scholarly rigour and ethics, at par with global standards.
- To contribute to the national policy-making processes of Pakistan and provide actionable policy recommendations and solutions about national problems to the policy-makers through demand driven issue identification process.
- To improve the quality of research employing proper evaluation and feedback mechanism.

#### Way Forward:

- Expand our contributors and peer-review pool to include policy practitioners and academics of international repute.
- Cognisant of the important role of publications in improving the impact of think tanks, we will put greater focus on improving the ranking of IPRI's premier journal within the Higher Education Commission (HEC) categorisation. We will pursue an ambitious program to improve categorisation of IPRI Journal to HEC recognized W category and enhance the readability of the journal.
- Make optimal use of in-house expertise, especially through research chairs and senior research fellows for providing mentorship to researchers.
- Strengthening existing feedback mechanisms and fostering new ones with relevant government ministries in order to receive input on the potential areas of interest for research and the quality of our research products. This would further enhance the quality and impact of the research carried out at IPRI.
- Renewed focus on more concise research products such as "Policy Briefs," analysing the problems and crystallising solutions, for ease of assimilation of key policy-makers.



- The impact of our research would be gauged through a tangible metric aimed at measuring the value of our policy recommendations through direct feedback of clients and focused surveys.
- Increased focus on survey and primary sources-based research after the identification of issues directly impacting the human security.



## Goal 2 | Expanding Influence and Partnerships

IPRI's activities are underpinned by a firm belief in a collaborative approach that fosters good will and broadens the scope through which ideas germinate and recommendations crystallize. For this purpose, IPRI aspires to collaborate with like-minded think-tanks as well as internal and external partners to benefit from the best international practices in research methodology and approach. Through the expansion of partnerships and widening of our intellectual footprint, we would continually strive to strategically position ourselves amongst the leading think tanks and remain an integral part of national and global conversations pertaining to international affairs, global security and governance. Doing so requires the implementation of a multi-faceted strategy, which equips IPRI with the right tools to expand its influence and diversify its partnerships.

### Objectives:

- To be globally recognized as the leading think tank contributing to the policy-making process of Pakistan.
- To generate and facilitate national and global conversations pertaining to international affairs, strategic studies, global security and governance.
- To collaborate with like-minded think tanks and academic institutions in order to create a medium for free exchange of idea and to build mutually beneficial capacities and expertise.

### Way Forward:

- Improve ranking in the “Best Government Affiliated” quasi-autonomous Think Tanks by getting into the top 50 category.
- To increase IPRI research scholars' participation in globally recognized conferences and international fora, and to publish academic work internationally.
- Establish a mentorship and workshop series, with specific focus of engaging and training the youth that are currently studying in various academic institutions in Pakistan.
- Strengthen our existing partnerships and build linkages with new local and international think tanks through an extensive and rigorous outreach strategy, which will involve holding joint events, exchange opportunities and fellowships, as well as the signing of new MoUs.

### Goal 3 | Refining Areas of Focus

Evolving geopolitical and economic global landscapes continuously call for the revision of priority areas of research. In line with the direction provided by the National Security Policy, there is a greater recognition at IPRI that both traditional and non-traditional security aspects impinge on Pakistan's national security. The twenty-first century has brought to the fore newer challenges, including economic vulnerability, ecological degradation and cyber-security issues. In the midst of emerging global trends, we aim to refine our areas of focus in tandem with a more holistic understanding of national security. Achieving this objective would require redirection of human and material resources towards more specialized areas of focus.

#### Objectives:

- Provide policy input to cater to national security as well as human security threats.
- To develop an area-specific expertise in regions of importance for Pakistan in addition to the existing thematic areas of research.

#### Way Forward:

- In recognition of growing non-traditional threats to Pakistan's national security, we will focus our research effort on:
  - Climate Change and Environment.
  - Emerging Technologies.
  - Human Security.
  - Economic Threats.
- To complement the existing research domains of strategic studies, international relations, and governance and public policy, we will make optimal use of the Economic Security and International Law Research Chairs set up in 2022, to produce policy papers yielding actionable recommendations for policy-makers.
- We will undertake a Special Research Project series, specifically to focus thematically on human security and sustainable governance. Expert input would be solicited from amongst the experts outside IPRI, based on specialized area being researched.
- The region and geographical area-specific expertise will be sedulously built by focusing our research team's effort on countries and geographic regions of interest to Pakistan.

## Goal 4 | Communication and Dissemination of Research

At IPRI, we take pride in our philosophy of disseminating and communicating our research products through digitalisation and innovation. Making use of this philosophy, we have added a wide array of products to IPRI's research output on print, electronic and digital media platforms. The underlying goal is to broaden the outreach of IPRI and have a global digital footprint through an effective communication strategy. IPRI's social media accounts have garnered enormous traction in the recent past and continue to be a reliable source of information for academia, students, policy-makers and the general public. The reach and scope of above efforts would be further enhanced through optimisation of best available human and material resources.

### Objectives:

- To enhance IPRI's outreach by leveraging innovative technology and tools.
- Increasing public access to emerging debates around national policy issues.

### Way Forward:

- We would enhance the quality and frequency of our digital products such as video explainers, podcasts and infographics based on IPRI's research products.
- IPRI would increase its outreach through different social media platforms while, initiating and facilitating dialogues on national and global issues.
- We would expand the outreach of IPRI's research through enhanced engagement with national and international print, and electronic media.
- We would encourage national and international thinkers to share their views and responses on current developments through IPRI's platform.

## Goal 5 | Improving Agility, Dynamism and Institutional Governance

At IPRI, there is a deep understanding that an organisation's greatest asset is its human resource. We are committed to recruiting, rewarding and grooming a workforce that aligns itself with our mission. We recognize that a dynamic workforce can only be built when it is trained and equipped well to handle the challenges that present themselves in a fast-changing environment. As such, we commit to providing greater opportunities for capacity-building and skill-development. It is important that our workforce knows how valued they are and how deeply impactful their contribution is.

### Objectives:

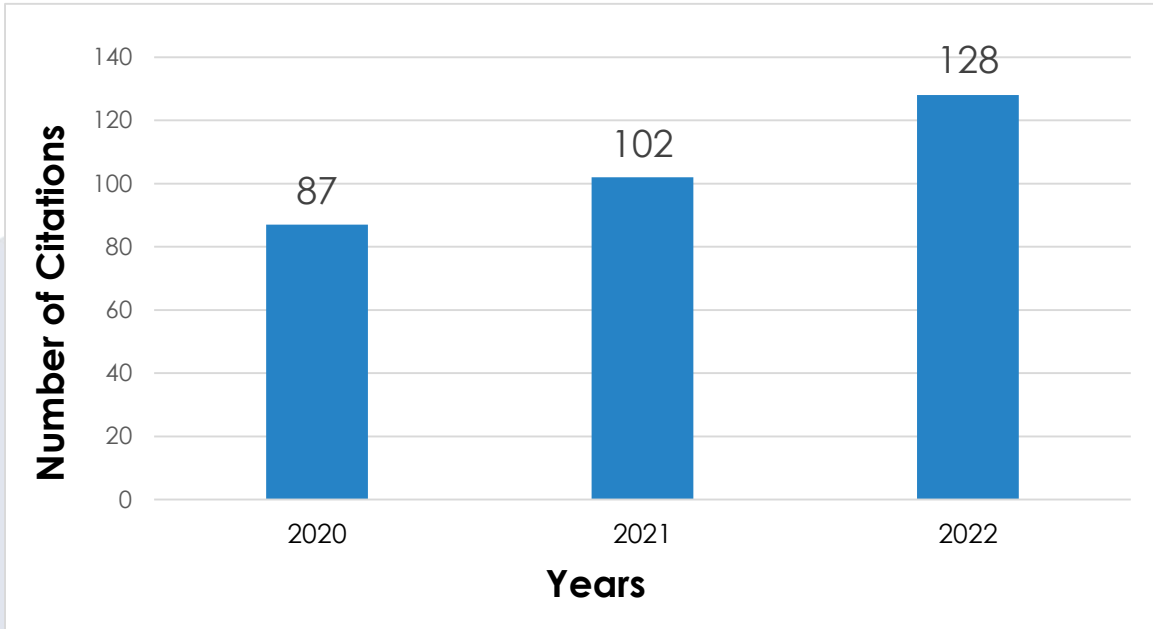
- To train human resource to adapt to the ever-changing needs of policy research.
- To encourage professional growth and build capacity of IPRI's human resource.
- To adopt best institutional practices, policies, and mechanisms for a high quality and conducive work environment.

### Way Forward:

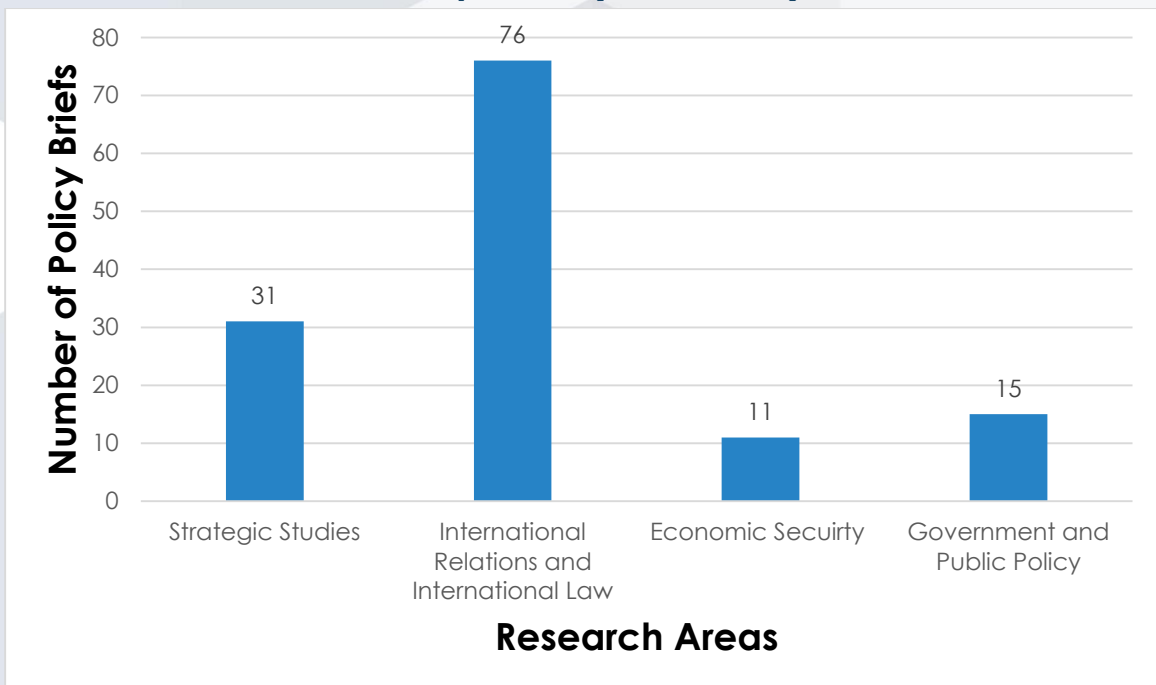
- To develop insight into practical issues of public policy relevance, we would arrange exposure trips to field areas like Balochistan, particularly Gwadar, and the newly-merged districts of erstwhile FATA, Azad Jammu & Kashmir, Gilgit Baltistan, and Special Economic Zones.
- We would equip research and advocacy teams with modern research and IT tools through regular training sessions run by nationally and internationally-renowned experts.
- To further improve the research capacity of our team, all researchers would be required to achieve an annual professional certification relevant to their areas of interest and expertise.
- We would also devise a Human Resource policy, based on international best practices for employee development, retention and performance appraisal.
- As IPRI expands over the years, we would encourage a balanced mix of researchers representing diversity of background that could offer balanced and fresh perspective on multiple issues. Our organisation is open to scholars from all walks of national life, be it academia, military, retired civil servants or media persons.
- Carrying out periodic self-evaluation is an important part of our pledge towards quality and excellence because it offers us a systemic and holistic view of our research output. A tangible metric would be designed to achieve this end.

## Annex A: Quality and Quantity of Research Products

### Research Citations

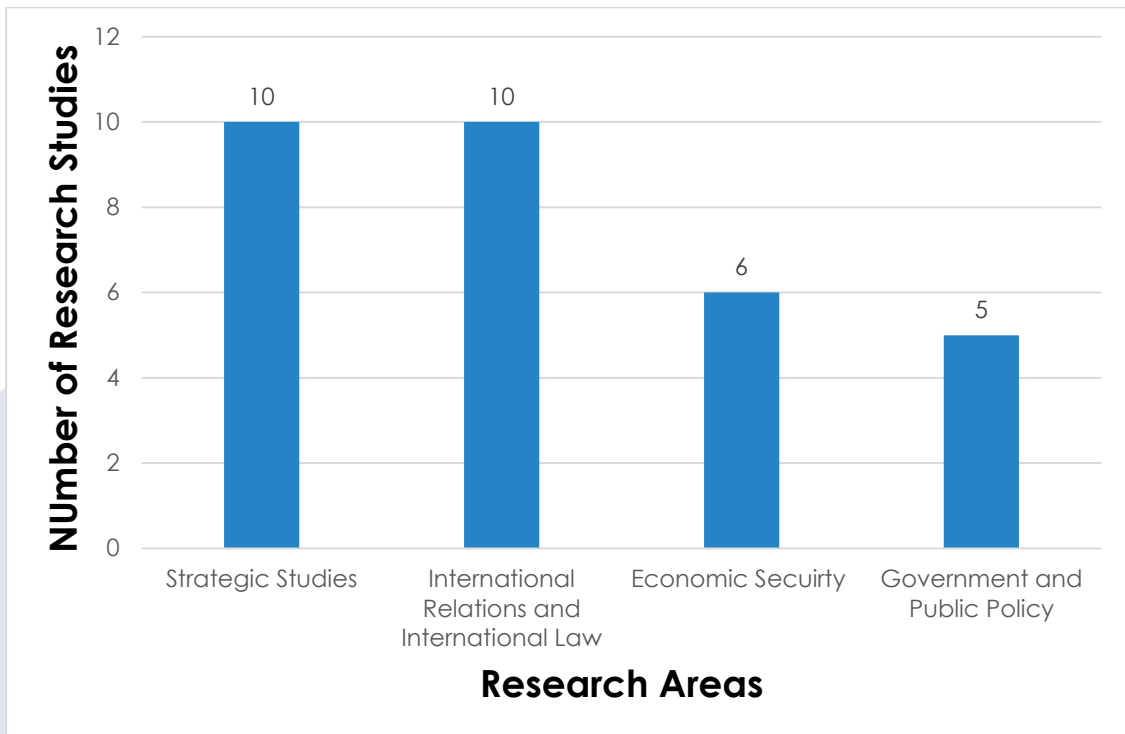


### Policy Briefs (2020-2022)

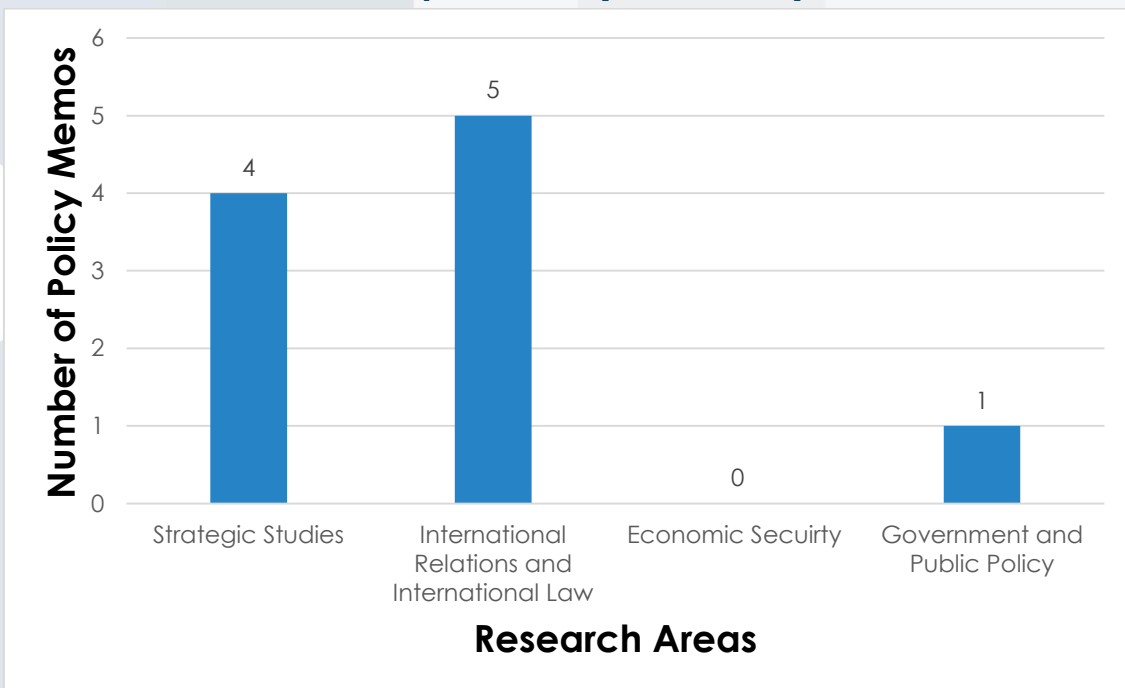




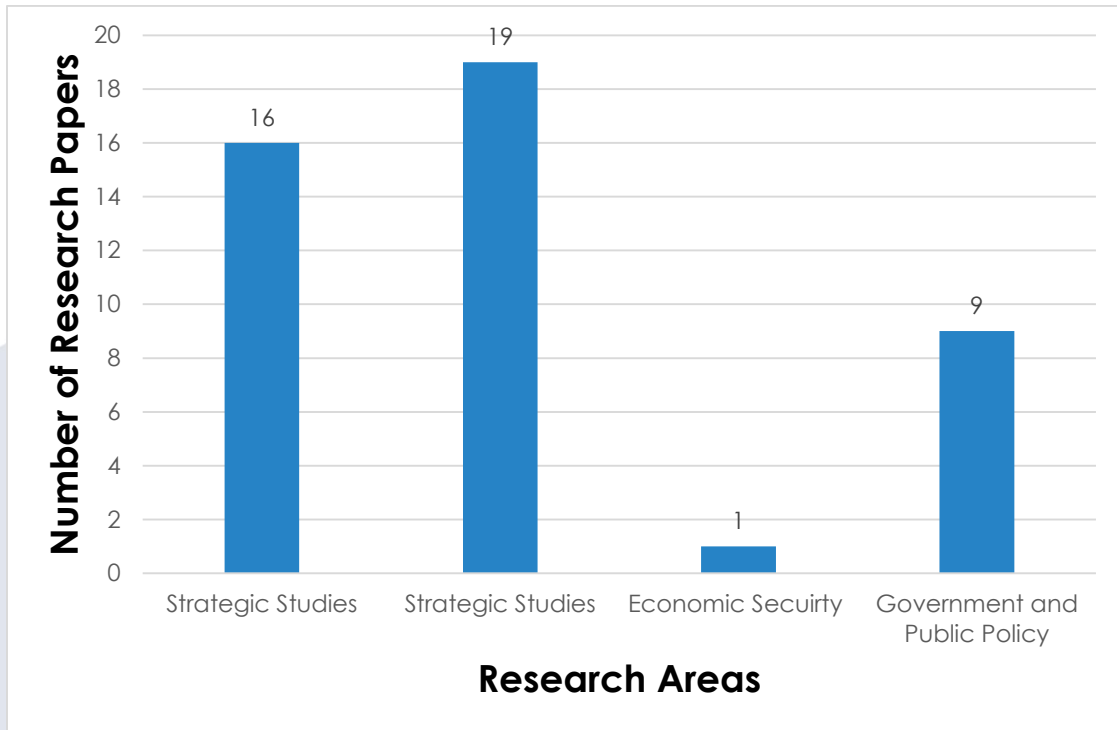
### Research Studies (2020-2022)



### Policy Memos (2020-2022)

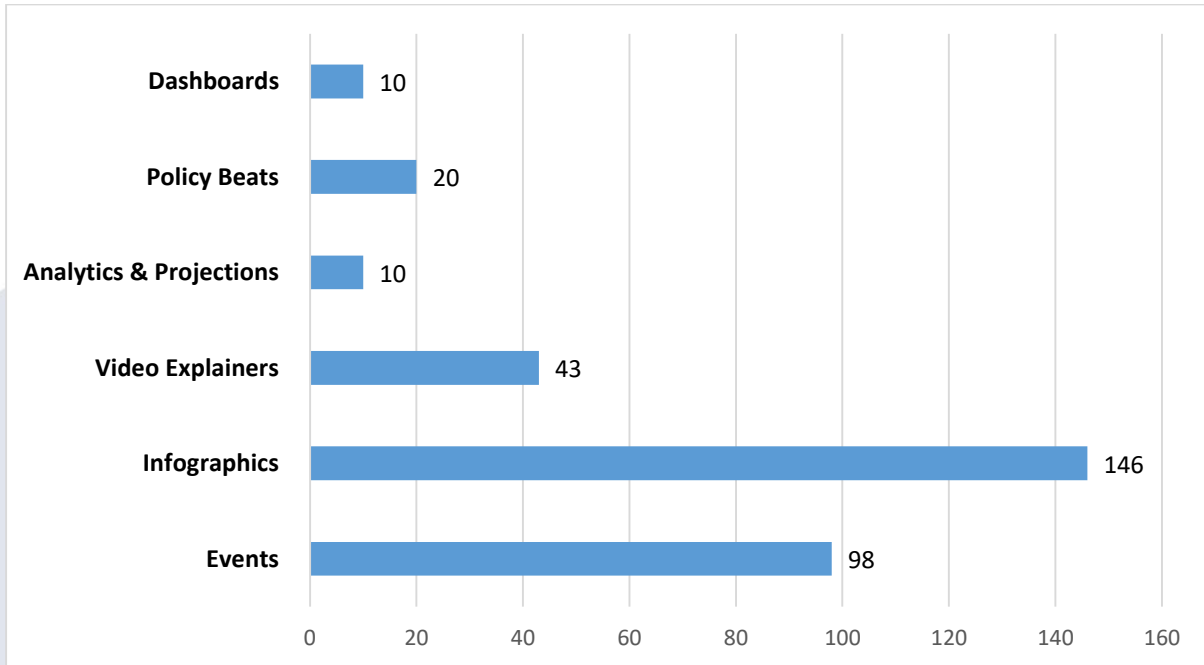


### Research Papers (2020-2022)

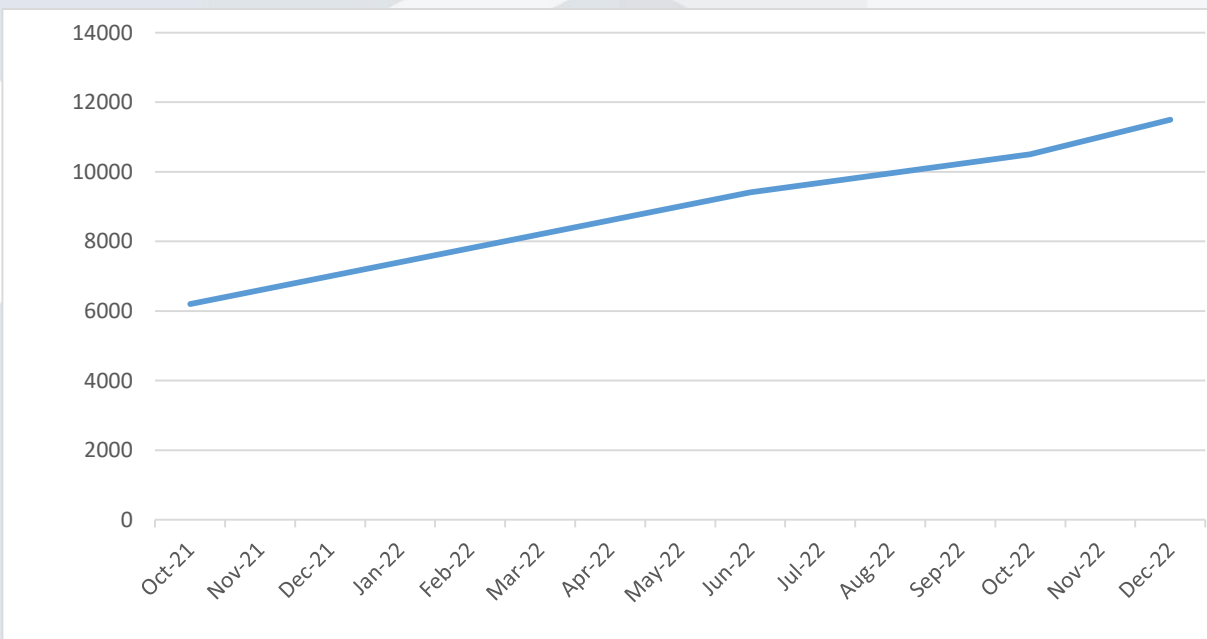


## Annex B: Communication Strategy Output

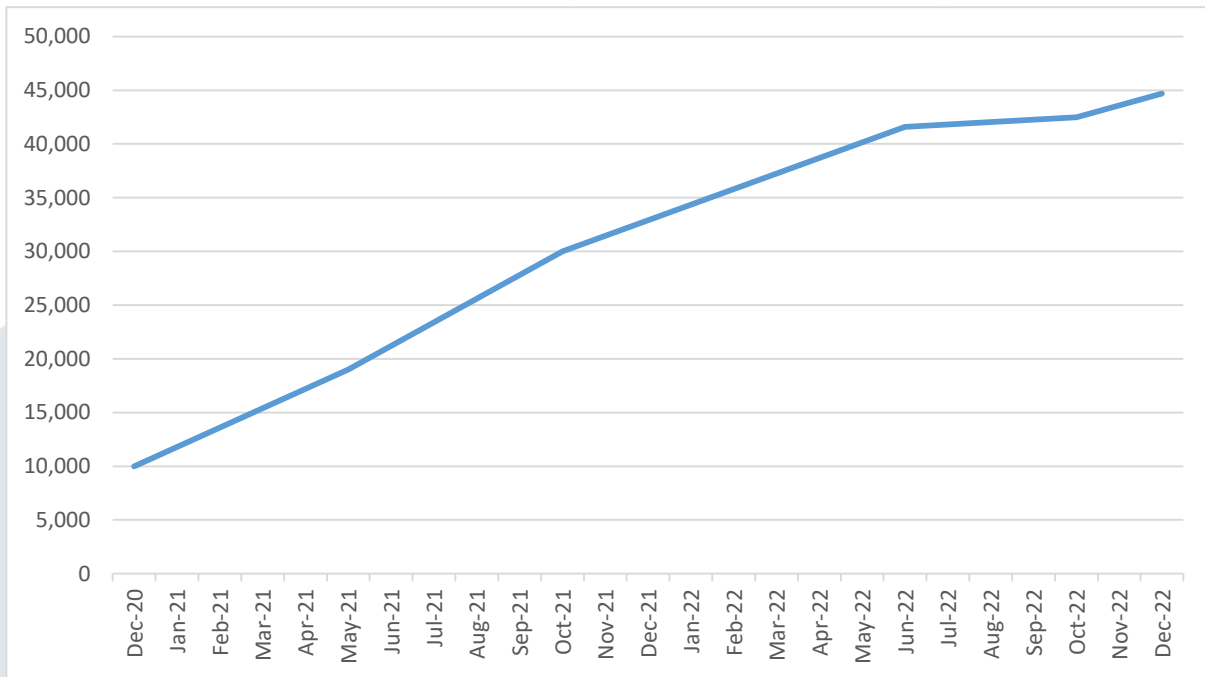
### Communication Products (Jan 2021-Oct 2022)



### Youtube Subscribers (Oct 2021 - Dec 2022)



### Twitter Followers (Dec 2020- Dec 2022)



### Facebook Followers (Dec 2020- Dec 2022)

