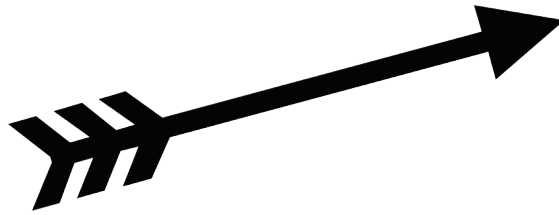


# Pakistan People's Party Manifesto for 2018 Elections



The PPP has come up with a detailed and ambitious manifesto for the upcoming General Elections 2018. The manifesto builds upon Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's original slogan of bread, clothing, and shelter to incorporate education, health, and mass employment as well. The party's plans pledge to remain true to its socialist-progressive roots by focusing on alleviation strategies for the plight of the poor, strengthening democracy and fostering tolerance across the nation.

**Agriculture and Food Security:** The PPP has envisaged a strategy to tackle the issue of food security in rural areas of Pakistan. The Bhok Mitao program will work in tandem with the Zarai Inqelab to increase local agricultural production and availability of food by encouraging the use of drip irrigation technology, high yielding climate resilient crop varieties and by connecting women to the wider market. The **Zarai Inqelab** program will correct the deeply flawed price support system which disproportionately benefits middlemen and big landowners at the expense of small farmers. Both these programs will involve the **issuance of electronic cards, the Benazir Food Card** and Benazir Kissan Card respectively. The former will ensure the availability of subsidized nutritious food to the registered families whilst the latter would streamline all government engagements with the agricultural community in terms of supply of fertilizer, electricity, transport, storage and all associated subsidies.

**Healthcare:** PPP promises to remedy the disturbing healthcare sector through the **Expanding, Linking-Up and Joining-In (ELAJ)** program which aims to provide free healthcare to all. The ambitious program aims to improve accountability and oversight at the union council level, to expand existing facilities and set up more dispensaries and hospitals across urban and rural areas whilst pledging paperless administration and tele-health systems for tertiary health sector. A **Family Health** Service will link and integrate the different levels of healthcare to ensure a coherent system. Family Health Cards will entitle individuals to free of-cost or subsidized health care at public sector facilities. Furthermore, the Mother and Child Support Program will target pregnant women and will provide those cash incentives to make pro-family planning, pro-nutrition, and pro-gender equality choices from the time of conception till 5 years. The program will be part of the PPP's effort to ensure the dissemination of public knowledge regarding reproductive health and family planning.

**Housing and Water:** PPP's focus on housing has led to the development a new housing strategy that will focus on regularizing the vast swathes of illegal settlements through systematically targeting the poor and provision of lease agreements. A certain share of the property tax income will be used to maintain a stock of state-owned land that will be distributed or rented out to the poor at subsidized rates depending upon their needs. The manifesto acknowledges the impending doom of the water crisis and thus emphasizes the need for more desalination projects, lining of canals to prevent water loss, and the immediate financing and construction of the Bhasha Dam.

**Social Protection:** The PPP aims to revitalize the Benazir Income Support Program by increasing monthly cash transfers to PKR 2000 and updating its massive database. It also vows to scale up the existing Sindh Government's Peoples Poverty Reduction Program which will lift families out of poverty altogether by dispersal of interest free loans to start their own ventures, vocational-training, and building up managerial skills along a community based education model. The implementation of minimum wage is guaranteed and will be equated to a living wage which is commensurate with enough income to guarantee a decent standard of living along human lines. The drafting of affirmative action policies for women in public sector employment and police are also promised.

**Differently Abled People:** The party promises a series of reforms for differently-abled people including reserve seats in the National Assembly and Senate, incentivizing private companies to hire more differently abled people through tax cuts and the reviewing of existing quotas for them in public sector employment and universities. Furthermore, a budget for special funds for their education is also proposed.

**Education:** Doubling the GDP share of education from 2.4% to 5% is another one of PPP's big promises if it comes to power. It will try to remedy poor female education rates by incentivizing girls and their families to complete secondary education through cash transfers. To deal with the traumas suffered by children due to natural or man-made disasters, the party will encourage special in-school and after school programs. The Naujawan Pakistan Program will tap into Pakistan's demographic dividend by subsidizing and developing universities in each district, providing mandatory paid internships to all those between 17-21, revitalizing student unions, and reviving the defunct National Volunteer Movement which will create an infrastructure for the youth to engage in humanitarian work nationally.

**Economy:** The manifesto concedes that the incoming government will have to be prepared for serious crisis-management on the economic front. It proposes Exclusive Economic Zones where foreign companies would establish their industries on the condition that they will export 50% of all manufactured goods. A zero tax policy, constant and subsidized electricity supply, and availability of credit will all be utilized to kickstart the textile sector. The huge burden of furnace oil imports on foreign exchange for energy production will be corrected whilst the development of the Thar Coal Power Project and renewables will also be ensured. In another one of its highly ambitious proposals, the party plans to end the colossal Rs 1 trillion circular debt by revamping the entire energy network at a cost of Rs 40-50 billion. It aims to prevent tax evasion by using track and trace software whilst dividing FBR into three discrete entities will improve administration disharmony, accountability, and performance checks.

**Democracy:** There is an emphasis on continuing the devolution process as marked by the 18th Amendment along with the careful implementation of the FATA merger as per the 25th Amendment. The party pledges to make the new province of Junoobi Punjab a reality whilst increasing development budgets of Gilgit Baltistan and Azad Kashmir. It also would strive to make military budgets and expenditure accountable to Parliament.

**Foreign Policy:** The manifesto urges a new direction for foreign policy. It will disallow the foreign army bases in Pakistan whilst urging the US to invest in trade, not aid. The need to collaborate with the Muslim world on Palestine and Kashmir issues is also pressed upon. Improving trade links despite geo-political impediments and development of CPEC, Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline are also stressed upon.

**Other Issues:** PPP plans to plant trees on > 500,000 ha. to act as carbon sinks and also phasing out, and ultimately banning, all single-use plastics. It will outlaw torture, forced disappearances, preventing misuse of Blasphemy Law, decrease death penalties and increase security for vulnerable ethnic and religious minorities along its pluralist tolerant ideology. The setting up of Art Councils, literary festivals, and language boards would promote and preserve heritage.