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PARTNERSHIP FOR AFRICAN SOCIAL & GOVERNANCE RESEARCH

Strategic Plan
2019-2023

Towards Communities of Excellence for Research and Public Policy

Contents

Acronyms

AU	African Union
CUE	Commission for University Education
DFID	Department for International Development
EIPM	Evidence-Informed Policy-Making
HEP	Higher Education Programme
KES	Kenya Shilling
MRPP	Master of Research and Public Policy
PASGR	Partnership for African Social and Governance Research
PDT	Professional Development Training
PEDAL	Partnership for Pedagogical Leadership in Africa
RE	Research Excellence
STI	Science, Technology, and Innovation
USD	United States Dollar

Coming of Age

We embark on the next phase of our work to implement the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan for the Partnership for African Social and Governance Research (PASGR), with a sense of confidence and optimism, inspired by the enthusiasm our programmes continue to generate in the research and public policy space, the energy of our staff and the growing list of partners joining us to drive the agenda forward.

Slightly a decade since it was first conceived in 2008, PASGR has come of age as a credible Pan-African organisation making a significant contribution towards research excellence in governance and public policy in Africa. Indeed, external reviews of our programmes conducted in 2013 and 2017 have acknowledged the remarkable success of our three core programmes and their unique features.

The 2014-2018 Plan period has been simply phenomenal, with all our programmes showing runaway success. The next Strategic Plan (2019-2023) will, therefore, build on this success through improvement and scale-up, with a focus on greater impact.

The Higher Education Programme recorded enormous progress following the creation and implementation of an alternative pedagogy as an integral aspect of the delivery of the Collaborative Master of Research and Public Policy (MRPP), to create exceptional learning moments for both instructors and learners. The Pedagogical Leadership in Africa (PedaL) was the spark that was needed to ignite transformation in higher education in Africa. In just two years, the initiative, which began with five core partners, has extended to 16 partner universities and over two thousand lecturers are set to be trained in the new Plan period.

The work on PedaL in the next Plan period will entail consolidation, scaling up and integration with curriculum reforms.

During the next phase, PASGR will work with partners to roll out the planned Doctoral programme in Public Policy, to raise a generation of highly trained public policy researchers and leaders in Africa.

Another key area of work in the 2014-2018 Plan period entailed training, under the Professional Development and Training (PDT) programme, also known as the PASGR Institutes.

Notably, gender has been integrated into all the training modules for the short courses and a stand-alone module on gender has been developed. In addition, the programme has introduced a customised Academic Leadership training for top level university leaders.

Building on its success, the PASGR Institutes will in the next Plan period place priority on partnerships, regional delivery, increasing blended delivery and exploration of new courses.

The third core programme is Research, which has given rise to research policy communities, Utafiti Sera, (policy research) which are active in three key countries. In the next phase, these will be extended to other countries of PASGR's operation, while working through partnerships.

With the encouraging achievements of the last Plan period, we are clear about the work we must put in for the next four years. While we have set in place a robust monitoring and evaluation system to capture the results of the next Plan period, we have already envisioned success by identifying key indicators.

We look forward to the next four years of fulfilling work as we continue to grow our partnerships base and to strive for sustainability in building communities of excellence in research for public policy.

Tade Aina
Executive Director

Executive Summary

This Strategic Plan 2019/2023 builds on the first Strategic Plan 2014-2018 of the Partnership for African Social and Governance Research (PASGR), *Building Research Excellence for Public Policy*.

It provides key strategic directions after four years of building the foundations of work and an institution founded to advance research excellence for public policy in Africa in an era of rapid multiple changes in technologies, knowledge production and systems, demographics and the global political economy.

Produced after a participatory process involving various PASGR stakeholders and constituencies, the Plan outlines PASGR's journey over the next four years in the new contexts of changing funding and regulatory regimes, challenging demand from constituencies and intense competition for excellent and high quality delivery of programmes.

It articulates the strategic direction, emerging themes, objectives, time-frame, measures and resource requirements necessary for PASGR's transformative interventions in research and research uptake for public policy, higher education, professional development training and fellowships, policy engagement and communications.

PASGR's mission and vision will remain as they were in the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan, having been re-examined and found to be relevant and aligned with the next phase of the organisation's work. However, the core values were identified and tightened in order to support the vision, the ongoing evolution of the organisation's culture, its institutional sustainability and nimbleness, and its continuing capacity to play a leading and decisive role in its field.

In the Plan period, PASGR will continue to focus on achieving its core objectives in Higher Education; Professional Development and Training; and Research uptake and Policy Engagement. Fellowships predominantly through the PASGR Institutes will constitute an important programme delivery instrument.

The core objectives in the Plan period are as follows:

- Continuously establish and sustain partnerships at national/regional and international levels for advancing research, higher education and training;
- Facilitate and advance the creation of policy and research communities for knowledge generation and policy uptake;
- Enhance and balance revenue sources to ensure sustainability;
- Strengthen internal processes for organisational development;
- Intensify strategies that advance the recognition, identity and sustainability of the organisation; and
- Promote gender equity and diversity in PASGR and her programmes.

PASGR will work for the attainment of these objectives at both the institutional and external levels. The foundation for each of the programmes and the overall institutional strategy have been laid in both the inaugural

programme cycle (2011-2014) and the previous Plan period, 2014-2018. In the next phase, PASGR seeks to boost the initiatives that have proved successful, and take them to the next level, while establishing strong new partnerships and programmes and reconfiguring, where necessary.

Areas of Focus

A Transformative Pedagogy Through the Partnership for Pedagogical Leadership in Africa (PedaL)

A key highlight of the 2014-2018 phase was the creation and implementation of the Partnership for Pedagogical Leadership in Africa (PedaL). This alternative pedagogy is now an integral aspect of the delivery of the Higher Education Programme's Collaborative Master of Research and Public Policy (MRPP), creates exceptional learning moments for both instructors and learners.

Initiated under the British Council-supported Strategic Partnerships for Higher Education Innovation and Reform (SPHEIR), PedaL builds on lessons learned from PASGR's initial experiments with alternative pedagogy.

Through PedaL, PASGR has redesigned, refined and scaled up her pedagogy initiative, beginning with five core partners and extending to 16 partner universities. Over a thousand faculty are set to be trained in the new Plan period. PedaL will also seek to integrate the achievements and lessons of the initiative into broad macro-institutional practices in the universities and into the larger national education systems.

 The processes, methods and contents of this alternative pedagogy will be consolidated, distilled, synthesised, scaled up and increasingly integrated with curriculum reforms that contribute to building the next generation of African active and productive citizens and leaders.

A Doctoral Programme in Public Policy

Another key development in the Higher Education Programme is the planned Doctoral Programme in Public Policy.

In the 2019-2023 phase, PASGR will work with existing university partners and new entrants to finalise the design and establish the Doctoral programme, starting with a few key institutions as pilots. This will be done as PASGR continues to consolidate and institutionalise the collaborative Master of Research and Public Policy.

The Doctoral programme will strengthen the pipeline for the production of a new generation of public policy researchers and leaders in Africa and deepen PASGR's research capacity strengthening efforts in Africa.

A Dynamic and Innovative Training and Fellowships Programme

Innovation, creativity and disruptive thinking remained the hallmark of the Professional Development and Training (PDT) Programme, also known as the PASGR Institutes, in the 2014-2018 period. PASGR continued to offer a range of high quality professional development courses for different audiences in the African research, academic, civil society and policy space.

The programme started offering institution-based training and successfully conducted training in two institutions.

IT also also led PASGR's efforts in work around development data, the data revolution and the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

PDT's training was reconfigured into the flagship Advanced Research Design (ARD) course, with three core modules and a wide range of optional courses that embrace both methods and policy-centred courses.

A key highlight of the programme is the integration of gender into all modules, and the design and delivery of a standalone module on Engendering Social Science Research Methods.

Towards the end of the last Plan period the programme, in partnership with HEP, began a customised Academic Leadership training aimed at top level university leaders. The training was delivered to member universities of the African Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) with support from the Master Card Foundation.

In the 2019-2023 Plan period, the PASGR Institutes will build on previous success while placing priority on partnerships, regional delivery, increasing blended delivery and exploration of new courses. This will include a funding strategy driven in collaboration with delivery partners. There will also be an emphasis on developing and implementing sustainable fellowships that will support all the three PASGR programmes.

Policy Oriented Research and Uptake

Work advancing the evidence to policy process commenced in the last Plan period through the research policy communities, *Utafiti Sera,* which are active in three key countries, will be extended to other countries of PASGR's operation.

The next four years will see PASGR further consolidate its governance research approach with the thematic focus addressing global and national development challenges with implications for public policy.

The research implementation will go hand in hand with an active research uptake and policy engagement focus.

The three research themes under the Plan period 2014-2018 will be retained as they remain relevant. A new theme on the politics and governance of new technologies, artificial intelligence and the Fourth Industrial Revolution, and implications for public policy and development, which was proposed by the Board, will be implemented alongside other themes recommended by the Research Committee.

Partnerships will be the key delivery mode for the implementation of research in the Plan period.

PASGR will enhance its collaboration with partner institutions in Africa and beyond, while expanding its sub-granting capacities as it seeks to provide increased opportunities for excellent governance research, capacity building, and direct engagement for emerging scholars and researchers working with more established senior researchers.

Pillar of Excellence

PASGR is built on a pillar of excellent and rigorous evidence-based research for public policy, a commitment to a transformative pedagogy that enhances learning and teaching in graduate studies in the social sciences and related disciplines and tooling and re-tooling African public policy researchers and leaders through intense capacity development and short-term training. This presupposes unrelenting attention to tracking, monitoring and evaluation, and measuring performance against agreed outputs and outcomes.

In the 2019-2023 Plan period PASGR will continuously develop tools, systems and a culture that emphasises and integrates a robust monitoring, evaluation and learning system encompassing the necessary and relevant baseline information, indicators and targets.

Our vision is 'a vibrant African social science community addressing the continent's public policy issues'. PASGR's three core programmes bring together the right mix of universities, research institutions, government, policy actors, researchers and academics to:

- Advance research, higher education and training;
- Facilitate the creation of active and inclusive policy and research communities;
- Enhance the institutionalisation of a research culture in Africa's universities and research organisations; and,
- Strengthen graduate-level teaching and practice of social science research and public policy, including coordination of a collaborative Master of Research in Public Policy (MRPP) and a Doctoral programme in Public Policy.

About us

The Partnership for African Social and Governance Research (PASGR) is an independent, non-partisan Pan-African not-for-profit organisation established in 2011 and located in Nairobi, Kenya. Currently engaged in more than 16 African countries, PASGR works to enhance research excellence in governance and public policy that contributes to the overall wellbeing of women and men. In partnership with individual academics and researchers, higher education institutions, research think tanks, civil society organisations, business and policy communities, both in the region and internationally, PASGR supports the production and dissemination of policy relevant research; designs and delivers suites of short professional development courses for researchers and policy actors; and facilitates the development of collaborative higher education programmes.

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Our Strategic Setting

PASGR was conceived around 2008 and, after extensive consultations with African and other stakeholders, started as a project by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) in 2009 to address three crucial aspects of African higher education, governance and public policy.

The first was the critical deficit in social science capacity for effective and high quality training and research that addresses governance and public policy issues in Africa, using the best practices and the highest quality of social science theory and methods available.

Second was the challenge of emerging democracies and the demand for performance and delivery by governments at different levels in the era of competitive electoral politics.

With many African countries undergoing transition from authoritarian rule and embracing democratic governance in various

forms of electoral politics, legal transitions, the presence of some democratic institutions, such as parliaments, the executive, the judiciary and new constitutions, public accountability, transparency, the rule of law, increasing devolution and decentralisation of governments to take services closer to the citizens became paramount.

The new dispensation also raised a regime of internationally accepted rights and a commitment to performance. This culminated in the era of the popular 'Africa Rising' narrative, synonymous with the economic boom of 2000 - 2014. Subsequently, a subdued economic outlook gave even greater prominence to the demand for performance and delivery by governments, leading to the need for evidence-based public policy and its delivery mechanisms, as well as rigorous monitoring and evaluation processes, the collection, analysis and presentation of evidence, and the use of theories that predict and explain behaviour, processes, institutions, systems and actions.

The final element is that in the globalised world, African governments have committed themselves to norms, agreements and compacts, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the African Union Commission Agenda 2063, that embrace education as a key driver. In particular, the important role of quality higher education is well-articulated in Aspiration Number One of the African Union's Agenda 2063 that speaks of a prosperous continent, with the means and resources to drive its own development and well-educated citizens.

There is, therefore, need for evidence from research to address issues and illustrate progress made towards aspects such as poverty reduction and enhanced quality of life for ordinary citizens and the most vulnerable. Similarly, research evidence will assist in formulating policies and programmes that foster growth and inclusion, social justice, food security, citizen safety and security, new forms of social and political actions, access to employment and sustainable livelihoods, and climate change.

With the dawn of the fourth industrial revolution; the provision and impact of new technology and technologies in providing and maintaining basic services assumes an increasingly overarching role in economic development and social transformation.

Also, social policy as a key element of public policy for inclusive development, participatory democracies and just societies is an undisputable element of sustainable and equitable development today. In our previous Plan period (2014-2018), we expanded the scope of our research programme from the initial focus on social policy to a more inclusive focus of public policy.

While a number of vehicles had been established to undertake economic research to address these realities, there still existed a gap in the research from social and political science and related disciplines that informs public policy for effective governance.

Central to the poor state of social sciences in Africa was the condition of African universities. They faced the common challenges of rapidly rising student numbers not proportionally matched by rising staff numbers; slower growth rates for postgraduate student numbers; significant weaknesses in thesis supervision and poor completion rates (especially at

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the PhD level); persistent gender barriers that inhibit female participation in doctoral education, research and teaching; a looming age cohort challenge with large numbers of teaching staff and nearing retirement; significant weaknesses in research skills and knowledge of graduates from Masters level programmes; and research activities being crowded out by teaching and administrative loads as well as pressures to undertake supplementary income generation, such as consultancies and teaching at private universities.

However, there have been important improvements in the condition of African universities and the social and political sciences in this decade, and things are beginning to look up.

First, some African countries have put in place innovative policies to strengthen tertiary education systems, guarantee autonomy but also demand accountability. A more dynamic cohort of vice chancellors has capitalised on this autonomy to advance their universities, enhance outcomes and attain improved regional and global rankings.

In the recent past, attention has been paid to higher education by donors. The World Bank has set up a number of centres of excellence while bilateral donors have invested in improved governance capacity, academic manpower development and promoting North-

South and South-South collaboration aimed at enhancing the role of African universities in the global knowledge economy.

It is also noteworthy that in 2015, African stakeholders came together in Dakar, Senegal to push for an African-led, forward-looking and sustainable revitalisation of higher education on the continent.

In addition, a number of African countries have strengthened their research funds awarding councils and increased funds for research. This has led to improvement in knowledge production in countries like South Africa, Egypt, Nigeria, Tunisia, Algeria and Kenya. South Africa, Ethiopia and Tanzania have prioritised doctoral programmes to expand the pool of quality academics. African universities have taken up the challenge of quality and

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A lot more needs to be done. Most investments in university education have concentrated on science, technology and mathematics (STEM) programmes at the expense of the social sciences and humanities; and basic research at the expense of policy relevant research, as well as teaching and learning. Overall, there is need for increased work in high quality research that directly confronts development challenges, emphasises uptake and engages policy actors to move evidence to action.

excellence themselves through platforms such as the Association of African Universities (AAU) and the Alliance for Research Universities in Africa (ARUA).

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The methodologies, conceptualisation, and theorisation for advancement of knowledge have often been skewed and delinked from African realities and the pursuit of an internally driven African epistemology remains elusive. The need to recognise and work with and within an integrated knowledge system that includes its different dimensions such as professional, citizen and indigenous knowledge along with innovation hubs, non-university-based research and higher education, is now more urgent.

Significant improvement is also needed in the design and delivery of social science programmes. Presently, disciplines are bounded in silos that are not consistent with

the multifaceted nature of public policy conundrums. There is need to extend the current efforts to embrace multidisciplinary approaches in research to graduate training programmes such as the MRPP. Most importantly, a convergence between the natural and the social sciences and the humanities is seen as inevitable in the pursuit of sustainable solutions to public policy challenges in an era of significant technological and other transitions.

The education system and indeed delivery of social science and other programmes have persistently grappled with questions around capturing the needs of the vulnerable groups from fragile states, poor socio-economic backgrounds, those with special needs, young researchers and women. Further, the emphasis on building and inculcating knowledge has tended to mask 21st century skills as well as values that have maintained our social fabric over generations. The gradual shift in teaching and learning practices towards more active student centred approaches in graduate education is therefore a positive development.

PASGR's work addresses all these challenges and opportunities, builds communities of practice, facilitates networking among researchers, promotes inter-generational dialogues, reduces isolation and advances the professional development of emerging scholars, researchers and policy actors.

What We Do

PASGR was founded to provide high quality research, higher education and short-term professional development that advance and inform relevant social and public policy. Its aim is to address the twin elements of remediation and excellence in the social sciences, related disciplines and public policy research in Africa.

PASGR seeks to not only build capacity and enhance excellence, but also create awareness around the need to put governance, social policy and social development at the centre or core of public policy practice and theory. Thus social and public policy institutions that address inclusion, employment, youth, gender, education, social protection, climate change and sustainable development need to be reworked to be accessible to trained

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professionals in the field.

The social and political sciences and related disciplines in Africa today have the opportunity and tasks of contributing to more rigorous and effective policies and debates through high quality research, training and higher education.

PASGR continues to forge formal partnerships between universities across the continent to deliver quality graduate programmes in research and public policy at masters and doctoral levels. Through this, it is not only raising the profile of graduate training in public policy but also increasing the pool of high quality home-grown African PhDs as well as a special cadre of next generation public policy actors, leaders and researchers.

Additionally, the collaborative approach is intensifying integration of staff and students from distinct African contexts, promoting multicultural consciousness and allowing sharing of resources to leverage increased access to quality and relevant higher education. It is also a vehicle for intergenerational conversations and mentorship of young researchers, early career policy practitioners and actors as well as academics.

Through the Partnership for Pedagogical Leadership in Africa (PedaL) PASGR is successfully unlocking the intrinsic motivation among university academic staff to innovate in their teaching and learning strategies. It aims

to facilitate holistic development of well skilled graduates able to exploit opportunities in the labour market; create employment for others; and, to participate fully in the fourth industrial revolution.

This is what PASGR sets out to do.

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Building on our Success so far

PASGR has made significant achievements since inception in 2009, notably the development of the MRPP, design and implementation of professional development activities for researchers and university teaching staff, a number of research projects, and participation in the post-MDGs discussion.

As early as 2013, PASGR was establishing a niche in the field of social science and public policy research, an External Review commissioned by the Board revealed.

In 2017 another Independent External Review acknowledged the remarkable success of PASGR's three programmes and their unique features.

The MRPP has transformed the landscape of graduate education in public policy in Africa by initiating 14 programmes of public policy in eight African countries. There is phenomenal and effective demand for the programme with individual students and partner universities meeting its operational costs on a sustainable basis. This remarkable initiative was crowned by the funded collaborative Doctoral programme in public policy.

Further, the distinct successes of the training and the research and policy engagement work is apparent. Through the innovative Utafiti Sera model PASGR continues to build a community of researchers and policy actors working together to generate appropriate and negotiated policy actions and uptake through programmes, legislation, policies or administrative and other forms of civic actions.

PASGR also takes credit for outstanding effort in tooling and re-tooling scholars and researchers in research methods and in new technologies and skills in the social sciences and policy studies. This work will be expanded to partner universities to propel them into active participation in the fourth industrial revolution.

PASGR has pioneered innovations in pedagogy as well as research methods, evidence generation and uptake. The PedaL initiative has successfully expanded the focus and conversation on curriculum reform to include pedagogical innovations as well as assessment for learning. PASGR will continue to lead the shift from general didactics to active learning approaches across universities on the continent.

As globalisation continues to challenge the content of education, blur boundaries and complicate the spaces of education, PASGR is working with universities to innovate and respond appropriately. In the Plan period, PASGR will scale up these innovations and facilitate their institutionalisation in partner universities and beyond. It will harness the potential of relevant North-South and South-South initiatives to facilitate uptake and replication of innovations for greater impact across the continent. A key area of focus will be capacity strengthening of university leaders to create conducive environments for uptake.

For sustainability, PASGR will in the Plan period diversify funding and revenue sources, continue to initiate innovative and creative demand-driven programmes and transform and expand existing programmes.

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Vision

PASGR's vision is to become a vibrant African social science community addressing the continent's public policy issues

Mission

PASGR's mission is advancing research excellence for governance and public policy in Africa

Core Values

Integrity and Financial Probity

We are ethical, accountable, transparent and trustworthy in our operations

Responsiveness

We act and react deliberately and genuinely to internal and external stakeholder demands
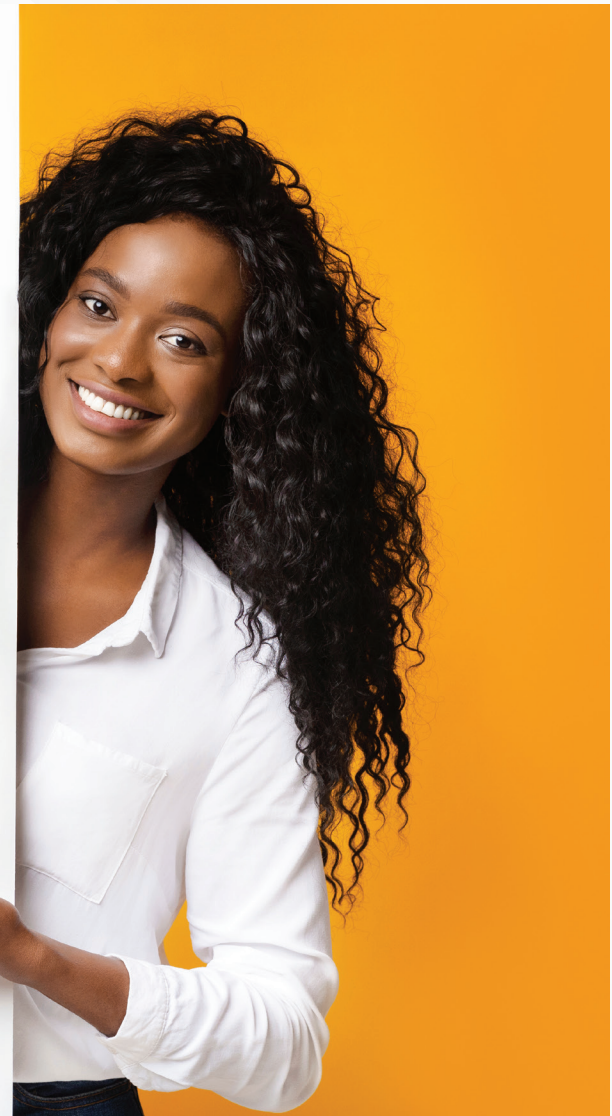
Gender Equity & Inclusiveness

We promote gender equity and diversity in all our operations and programmes

Results Orientation

Our work shows positive, visible and concrete outcomes and impact

Drive for Excellence

We strive for the highest quality in our processes, products and services to advance the vibrancy of the social science community

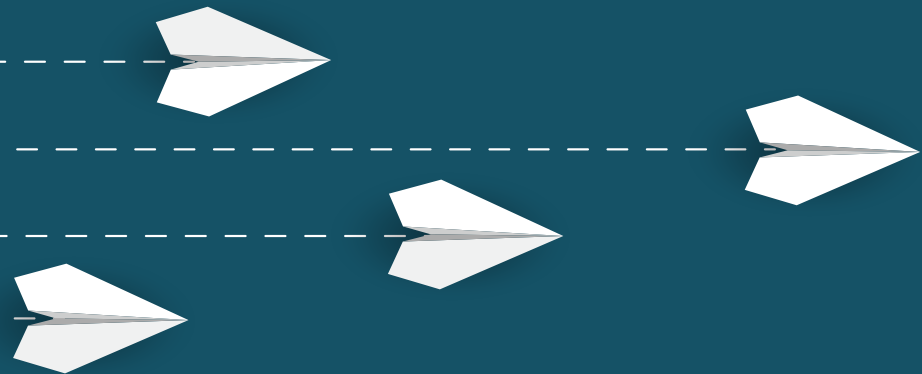# Rationale for 2019 – 2023 Strategic Plan

Approach and Methodology

In developing this Plan, PASGR involved key stakeholders in intensively reviewing the current status of the organisation. This entailed looking at challenges, dynamics and opportunities and PASGR's institutional capacities and conditions, as well as the global, regional and national situation of the social sciences.

The Board, management and staff participated at different stages. Other stakeholders who participated in the process were beneficiaries of PASGR's programmes, members of the Steering Committee and students of MRPP, researchers and trainees, representatives of funding organisations and partners in related networks and organisations.

The 2019-2023 Strategic Plan recommends a growth and sustainability strategy that will:

- Enable PASGR to creatively respond to the changing social and economic environments
- Enable PASGR to identify core priorities and activities in light of environmental factors and internal capacity
- Provide clear objectives and direction to management and staff
- Enable PASGR to re-examine and re-adjust capacity, structures and processes in response to changes in the environment

The strategic direction of the three key programmes Higher Education, Professional Development and Training and Research, along with the work of the Communications Unit and Core Administration, will be informed and guided by successes achieved in the last four years, lessons learned and the agreed priorities for each of the result areas.

Our Strategic Direction

Over the next four years, PASGR's work will build on the successes of its three key programmes, as well as the partnerships it has formed, while introducing innovative and creative elements that emphasise scaling up, improved delivery, effectiveness and efficiency, a demand-driven orientation and funding and revenue diversification and sustainability.

The strategic direction of the Higher Education, Professional Development and Training and Research programmes, along with the work of the Communications Unit and Core Administration, will be informed and guided by successes achieved in the last four years, lessons learned and the agreed priorities for each of the result areas.

Higher Education Programme

In the Higher Education Programme (HEP), PASGR works with African universities to strengthen graduate-level teaching and practice of social science research and public policy. Currently, PASGR works with 14 universities in eight countries to deliver a collaborative Master of Research in Public Policy (MRPP).

The graduate programme, with a dual focus on social science research and public policy, is a two-year full time course that includes a thesis and field experience. The programme uses highly participatory teaching and learning activities, with emphasis on group work, individual and group projects and e-case studies. It has attracted a rich mix of students across multiple disciplines interested in pursuing or advancing careers in research/university teaching or policy practice.

In the last Plan period, all the initial 12 collaborating universities had launched the programme. They were joined by the University of Nairobi and the University of Pretoria.

The 14 universities, along with two proposed new partners, constitute the base for the Doctoral Programme in Public Policy expected to be implemented in the new Plan period.

The MRPP faculty and collaborating institutions also constitute the base for the Partnership in Pedagogical Leadership (PedaL), a new initiative to transform teaching and learning at the graduate level in African universities.

PedaL

Under the Partnership in Pedagogical Leadership (PedaL), PASGR works with seven institutions to embed and catalyse systemic change in teaching and learning practices in graduate social science programmes. The partners are: Alliance for Research Universities in Africa (ARUA); Institute of Development Studies (IDS) of the University of Sussex, UK; and five implementing partner universities: Egerton, Ibadan, Ghana, Dar es Salaam and Uganda Martyrs. PedaL is being replicated across universities on the continent incrementally.

The PedaL initiative is organised around a series of interlinked activities, with objectives to design and implement features and processes that drive PedaL pedagogy in selected social science graduate programmes; develop the capacity of lead course instructors to catalyse systemic change in teaching and learning methods/pedagogy; create and sustain an active community of practice around PedaL pedagogy; support delivery of graduate social science programmes using PedaL pedagogy and share lessons across the partnership and facilitate the institutionalisation of PedaL in partner universities.

PedaL started in 2018 and was launched in a successful inception workshop and the first

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steering committee meeting held. Progress has been made on all the five objectives of the initiative. Specifically, the PedaL training programme has been designed, piloted and rolled out.

Doctoral Programme

After a successful scoping study and a series of collaborative design workshops involving all the MRPP universities, along with participants from Makerere University,

University of Pretoria and the IDS, University of Sussex, PASGR's Doctor of Philosophy in Public Policy programme is set to be launched and implemented in the Plan period.

The Doctoral programme is expected to innovatively enhance interdisciplinary grounding in the practice of public policy and to deepen research competencies. It is designed to impart knowledge and skills in communication and scholarly publishing as well as leadership in pedagogical practice for the next generation of academics, researchers and policy practitioners, to enable them to contribute to national and global development. It aims at providing graduates with knowledge, skills and competencies that enhance leadership in policy relevant research, the practice of public policy and advancement of scholarship in public policy. Among other things, the programme will be central for bringing issues that affect marginalised groups to the centre of public policy.

Its objective is to prepare public policy leaders, researchers and practitioners to advance their countries' policy priorities and address developmental challenges. Graduates will also be able to bridge the gap in multidisciplinary approaches to policy relevant research and to enrich the practice of public policy.

The initiative will strengthen linkages with relevant networks and universities outside the MRPP network as students will be sourced competitively to attract the best talent for scholarships. It will also forge close continuing linkages with the research and policy communities to enhance its quality and relevance. The programme will use a scholarship scheme to enhance access for marginalised groups: young researchers as well as those from fragile states, poor socio economic backgrounds and women.

Lessons Learned

The Higher Education Programme's work in the past four years has not been without challenges. The lessons learned will guide the programme in the next four years. These critical lessons can be summarised as follows:

- Inclusive, participatory processes take time and cannot be rushed without cost. For example, the course design for MRPP could have been developed faster using "experts" and inclusion of "northern" universities, but this would have jeopardised the sense of ownership and commitment by the African teaching staff. This lesson has been carried over into the design of PedaL and the new PhD programme.
- PASGR's role as a catalyst and facilitator could encourage long-term dependency but it is essential for quality assurance,

spreading the benefits of network effects and sustaining a shared vision.
- Programmes can be sustained through effective demand and private resources. Universities have generated resources for operational costs of the MRPP on a durable basis through a variety of funding models independent of PASGR. Thus, PedaL and the Doctoral programmes have been designed to generate effective demand.
- The MRPP process, as well as PedaL and the Doctoral programme must be viewed as long-term undertakings. Their designs have included an inbuilt sustainability element but will still require and benefit from both donor and other forms of financing such as student loans so as to ensure reach and the provision of opportunities for less privileged students .
- Cross programme linkages generate resources, expertise as well as effective demand for various PASGR programmes. This will be maximised in the Plan period.

The Way Forward:
2019 – 2023

At inception, the strategic objectives of the Higher Education Programme focused on pursuing "formal partnerships among African universities on masters and/or doctoral programmes". Following extensive

consultation with universities, focused exclusively on facilitating the design and launch of a master's programme, the collaborative Master of Research and Public Policy (MRPP) was created.

It is now timely for PASGR to build on this and launch and implement the Doctoral programme while enhancing the PedaL initiative in order to further advance African higher education in the social and political sciences. In this regard, the strategic priority and objectives for the Higher Education Programme will be as described below.

Strategic objectives:
- Design, launch and catalyse delivery of a Doctoral programme
- Develop active communities of practice around PedaL, the MRPP and PhD programmes
- Advance the visibility of the three HEP initiatives (MRPP, PhD and PedaL) and institutional sustainability
- Diversify funding, revenue sources and partners for sustainability

These objectives will be realised through the following core activities:

Partnership for Pedagogical Leadership in Africa (PedaL)
- Upgrading of teaching staff directly involved in PedaL delivery
- Start-up implementation support for progressive roll-out of newly-designed courses both centrally and regionally
- Increase the number of teaching staff adopting new teaching/ learning methods
- Mechanisms for sustaining collaboration around content, pedagogy, quality, marketing and possible programme enhancements
- Inclusion of other universities
- Planning for sustainability and institutionalisation of PedaL.

Doctorate in Public Policy programme design should:
- Ensure relevance to specific disciplines
- Build on or leverage investment in MRPP, PedaL and PDT content in development of courses and pedagogy
- Include MRPP universities and possible new groups of universities

- Be seen as attractive and useful to African universities
- Take into account prospective new sources of financial support.

Professional Development and Training (The PASGR Institutes)

The Professional Development and Training (PDT) or The PASGR Institutes programme led PASGR's efforts in work around Development Data, the Data Revolution and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the Strategic Plan period 2014-2018.

With innovation, creativity and disruptive thinking as its hallmark, PDT was the home and incubator of new ideas and innovative projects that did not fit easily into PASGR's mainstream programming.

However, the main focus of PDT's work was provision of a range of high quality professional development courses for different audiences in the African research, academic, civil society and policy communities. Beyond delivery to individual researchers and policy actors, the training programme commenced institution-based deliveries and successfully conducted training in two institutions.

The programme's training was reconfigured

into the flagship Advanced Research Design (ARD) course with three core modules and a wide range of optional courses that embrace both methods and policy centred modules. The programme, which was continuously renewed, and tailor-made for different audiences, also provides targeted training to strengthen the capacity of public policy actors as research consumers and data users.

It is involved in a constant tooling and re-tooling process that helps strengthen research and leadership capacity and advance excellence. A key quality of the programme is the effort to engender the social sciences, leading to the integration of gender into all modules and the design and delivery of a standalone module on Engendering Social Science Research Methods.

Towards the end of the last Plan period the programme, in partnership with the Higher Education Programme, began a customised Academic Leadership training aimed at top level university leaders. This training was delivered to member universities of the African Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM), with support from the Master Card Foundation.

Increasingly, the short term intense and in cases, blended professional development and training is evolving with two components, namely (i) the researcher-centred component that builds and enhances research capacity for emerging early and mid-career researchers and academics and (ii) the policy actor-centred component that is aimed at enhancing the capacity of policy actors to appreciate research and data for public policy, and to discern and judge the quality and utility of research and data for policy. The policy-centred component also builds awareness on the importance of research and data for policy. More modules based on demand and need, are constantly under development.

In the Plan period, priority will be placed on partnerships, regional delivery, increasing blended delivery and exploration of new courses. There will also be an emphasis on developing and implementing sustainable fellowships that will support all the three PASGR programmes.

Lessons Learned

The lessons learned, which will guide implementation in the new Plan period are:

- Sustained demand from regional higher education institutions, think tanks, research networks, public institutions and civil society organisations creates the imperative for the programme to diversify its offerings in order to effectively include diverse graduate students, young researchers, university and other sectorial leaders and advocacy groups.
Increasing demand for institution-wide capacity strengthening makes a compelling case for PASGR to adopt a variety of approaches, including partnerships and joint deliveries to meet new trends.
- To date, all PDT courses have been available only in English (although a number of participants from Francophone and Arabophone Africa have participated). PASGR is exploring new means to expand coverage to include Francophone, Lusophone and Arabophone Africa.
- Increased demand for greater use of technology enhanced learning (TEL), including mobile phone learning, to enhance inclusivity and cost-effectiveness and improve quality of delivery, compels PASGR to be at the forefront in adopting technologies.
- The realisation that PASGR must be an active participant in multi-stakeholder contexts around policy issues, particularly with governments, business, non-academic civil society organisations and individual policy actors, demands that PASGR, in its policy forums, should continue to convene different groups not only to bring evidence to bear on policy, but also to institute policy roadmaps and action plans.

The Way Forward: 2019 - 2023

To continue to enhance both the quality of the content and the highly interactive mode of delivery of the courses, PASGR must advance

the value of training and capacity building in all its programmes. The PASGR Institutes and the fellowships have a central role to play during this Plan period. PASGR will also continue to identify partners for institutional delivery.

The following activities will be undertaken to realise the programme's objectives:
- Expand the current suite of short professional development modules by broadening the offerings to include subject-specific content, technical skills and professional practices
  Expand and develop both African and

international partnerships to develop, co-deliver and promote professional development courses, and involve them more in co-design of modules, as well as fundraising.
- Work with other PASGR Programmes to stimulate innovation and seek out novel applications that use technology to enhance the adult learning experience, initiate new digital practices and methods and facilitate the creative delivery.
- Implement the PDT Business Plan
- Increase participation of women and younger social scientists and policy actors
- Develop inclusive fellowship programmes that support PASGR's work across all programmes and explore new and demand–driven issues and themes across programmes

Overall, the PDT programme will continue developing training modules and opportunities to offer courses in various configurations to different audiences. It will also develop and build PASGR's fledgling fellowships initiative. For sustainability, it will determine with delivery partners, a multi-year plan for collaboration on professional development and capacity building. This will include a funding strategy that will be driven in collaboration with partnerships based on innovative and plural funding models.

Research

PASGR's overarching goal is to provide African policy actors with quality social science research that will inform their public policy actions. The bias is on social science research that is "non-economic" but also humanistic and multi-disciplinary, because adequate attention has already been directed at economic research in Africa.

In the previous Plan period, PASGR's Research Programme focused on social policy and governance issues that broadly reflect the priorities of African governments well aware of the significance of social policy in public policy, as well as the challenges and opportunities of inter and multidisciplinary research for development. Going forward, this has been reframed under a governance research approach.

Governance research is about rigorous inquiry into state-society-market relations, that provides solutions to public policy problems. This perspective is based on the principle that governance involves a set of institutions, structures, actors, incentives and ideas drawn from and beyond government. It holds that while interactions among multiple actors and institutions have the potential to provide responses to the challenges of development, they may also contribute to conflicts.

PASGR facilitates governance research that systematically analyses the complex dynamics underlying these interactions, determining their influence on development efforts, and providing policy options. One of Utafiti Sera's more important features is that it is problem-driven and always seeks to identify what is likely to work in a specific context.

PASGR combines this high quality research approach with opportunities for emerging researchers to work with senior scholars who lead, guide and mentor them in the research process.

The choice of research themes is guided by issues attracting attention in the region, and consideration of the value such research would add by addressing overlooked governance issues.

PASGR's Board, with advice from an independent research committee, and staff periodically select research themes.

Since inception, PASGR has covered the following issues:

- Effective public services delivery
- Social protection (Made up of two sets of research: "Governance characteristics of non-state protection services" and "Political economy of social policy uptake")
- Think tank–university relations in Africa
- Research leadership in Africa
- Urban governance and turning African cities around
- Inclusive growth and employment in agri-business and agriculture in Africa
- Accountability and empowerment in new forms of social and political action in Africa

Bridging the gap between research evidence and public policy remains a key challenge and a pre-occupation for many organisations. Governments, private foundations and funding partners have recognised this challenge and contributed to efforts that connect research to policy making, major interventions and programme implementation.

In Africa, given the multiplicity of actors with different interests, ideologies, power, resources, capacity and knowledge in the policy making terrain, organisations established to support evidence informed policy making for sustainable social change face an array of complex challenges. This calls for adapting and doing research, knowledge building and policy engagement differently from the current conventional approaches. It is this realisation that has informed PASGR's innovative approach to working with research–policy communities, through the Utafiti Sera initiative.

Utafiti Sera supports, builds and enhances a community of researchers, activists and policy actors to ensure that appropriate and negotiated civic and policy actions and uptake occur through programmes, legislation, high quality policy debates, policy design or administrative and other forms of civic actions and engagement around issues for which there is research evidence or rigorous synthesis of available knowledge.

The overarching goal of Utafiti Sera is uptake of research evidence, defined as supporting civic engagement, advocacy and design of national policies, setting agenda for high quality national policy debates, and contributing to modification of existing policies, programmes and implementation through the application of research evidence. To achieve these goals, the short to medium term objectives are:

- Establishing and sustaining vibrant research-activist-policy communities on specific development and public policy challenges in a country
- Generating new research evidence and/or synthesising existing evidence and making it available to policy actors and practitioners through policy briefs, newspaper articles, radio broadcasts, social media, among other forms of communication; and
- Engaging key policy actors, activists and practitioners through direct contact, policy advocacy and the use of "issue champions" at crucial moments, such as meetings, policy forums, rallies, fairs, workshops and targeted public events.

PASGR in the previous Plan period implemented Utafiti Sera interventions in six projects in Kenya, Rwanda, Nigeria and Mozambique. The next four years will see further expansion, elaboration and adaptation of the Utafiti Sera approach to different contexts and sectors.

Lessons Learned

- The Utafiti Sera approach is a unique innovative approach providing both theoretical and practical solution to enhancing evidence uptake in policy processes in the region.
- There is value in narrowing the target audience of researchers rather than having calls that are open to the entire region. The next four years will combine open calls with targeted invitations
- PASGR's research should find innovative ways of recruiting and retaining a new generation of motivated and committed social science researchers
- PASGR's unique governance research approach requires well developed research communication tools for dissemination, greater reach and impact.
- Greater quality control is necessary, not only through a more intensive peer review of PASGR's products, but also through a

research leadership approach that insists on the lead researcher's responsibility for quality control.

The Way Forward:
2019 – 2023
Tollowing activities will be undertaken to realise the Research Programme's objectives:
- Undertake policy-informed governance research on selected themes and topics that have implications for public policy
- Facilitate the institutionalisation of research-to-policy through research – policy communities (Utafiti Sera)

Strategic Objectives:
- Deliver high quality and policy relevant research to varied audiences
- Grow networks, partnerships and platforms for young and emerging social science researchers' in Africa, especially women
- Expand and institutionalise research-policy communities (Utafiti Sera) to facilitate uptake of research evidence.

- Expand the geographical and linguistic coverage of the research-to-policy work to North Africa, Francophone Africa and other parts of southern Africa
- Work with experienced PI's to incorporate inter-generational and interdisciplinary learning and collaborations for effective mentorship and quality assurance.
- Continuously forge strategic national, regional and international partnerships with organisations that will strengthen social science research on the continent.

Communications and Policy Outreach

When PASGR was conceptualised, the need to include communications, outreach and capacity building activities that would engage users at all stages of the research and enhance utilisation of research in the policy process was articulated.

Consequently, the Policy Outreach and Training Programme (now re-named Professional Development and Training) had the following among its four broad activities:
- Building awareness about PASGR to generate interest in and demand for research among the African policy community and

- Marketing the activities and research of PASGR corporately and on a programme-by-programme basis.

A small Communications Unit was developed and led PASGR's internal and external communications and supported the policy outreach work.

Communications and Information Communication Technologies (ICT) strategies and policies were also developed. Websites for PASGR (www.pasgr.org), and the MRPP (www.mrppafrica.org), were developed and social media platforms including Facebook, twitter and Instagram launched. There was also a marked growth in PASGR's media and technological sophistication.

PASGR's Communications Unit supported the launch, publicity and dissemination of the programmes' activities and also overall institutional technological innovations and endeavours across all programmes. Additionally, a customised web-based project selection tool, which is used to receive and rank proposals and applications sent for PASGR research or training opportunities, is in use and continues to be reviewed and reconfigured.

Lessons Learned

- Communications and Policy Outreach should continue to be integrated into all programmes and in all the phases of implementation
- PASGR should invest more intensively in the design, instruction and management of its digital and electronic platforms, particularly the websites, social media and media analytics
- Digital PASGR, a platform, work approach and culture that integrates digital processes and structures in all PASGR's programme delivery, work processes and systems is in its pilot and rudimentary phase needs to be further developed and advanced institution-wide.

The Way Forward:

2018 – 2022

Communications and digital technologies constitute core elements of PASGR's strategic direction. Greater attention will be paid to these elements as issues that cut across all programmes.

PASGR will seek resources to strengthen its Communications and Digital Technologies unit to support all programmes, as well as undertake further institutional development.

Communications and ICT strategies will be

Strategic objectives:
- Facilitate the creation of policy and research communities
- Enhance PASGR's institutional and external communications
- Continue to advance and implement Digital PASGR

reviewed and updated. The Unit will undertake the following activities:
- Undertake communication for programmes
- Supporting the different needs of each programme and their respective activities
- Position PASGR regionally and globally as a respected actor in African higher education, policy and research
- Define and maintain PASGR's institutional identity as the key to excellence in social and political science research for public policy organisations
- Produce innovative materials and content.
- Enhance PASGR's Communications and Digital Technologies capacities.

Strategic Capabilities

Leadership and Management: PASGR has an effective Board, competent Management team and staff who possess requisite capacity to deliver this strategy. The staff capacity will be enhanced through recruitment of sufficient numbers and skills enhancement for the existing team.

Organisation Culture and Values: PASGR's core values will facilitate delivery of the strategy. In the Plan period, PASGR will leverage on inter-departmental synergy to achieve the intended outcomes. In addition, initiatives will be undertaken to further strengthen positive culture adaptation.

Innovation: PASGR employs innovation in its unique pedagogy and focus. The professional development and higher education work contains strong elements of alternative pedagogy in programme delivery. Both the Higher Education and the Professional Development Training programme courses use the most current advances in adult learning to maximise learning outcomes. These include optimum manageable classroom sizes; interactive learning that includes role playing; the case approach; e-cases; participative learning and several new pedagogical approaches that transcend the old classical modes of delivering learning and teaching.

Excellence and quality in research and training: PASGR strives for the highest standards of excellence in its work in research, higher education and in training. The team strives to attain the best international practices, gain currency in knowledge, content, processes and methods and remain relevant and competitive both within Africa and internationally.

Adoption of ICT: PASGR has proved to be a leader in the adoption of ICTs in capacity building. The continued use of ICT in other areas, such as internal processes and stakeholder communication, will make the implementation of the Strategic Plan more effective.

Relevance for Public Policy: Policy relevance through high quality social sciences is PASGR's key strength. PASGR strives to build elements of policy impact into its work right from inception to conclusion.

Partnership approach to work: PASGR is built on partnerships between the secretariat, universities, individual researchers, think tanks, public policy institutions, funders and other stakeholders. The Higher Education Programme that is in partnership with 13 universities in eight countries exemplifies this approach.

Digital PASGR: An imperative for digital innovation and engagement has emerged: organisations have realised that they must use digital channels to engage with their key stakeholders to maintain relevance and drive the conversation. However, few realise how fast the change needs to happen, or how transformational it needs to be.

PASGR will pursue innovation to disrupt its own operational model in advance. PASGR realises that. without innovation strategies, it could lose lose its competitive advantage in an increasingly competitive world. There is, therefore, no time to lose, as technology change is accelerating exponentially and new digital platforms and devices are emerging.

Furthermore, owing to the expectations of the 'Generation Y' or 'digital natives' PASGR must keep up with the pace of change or lose relevance.

Delivering the Plan

PASGR's secretariat in Nairobi, made up of a nimble competent and creative staff of 14, will co-ordinate the delivery of this Plan. The Secretariat will work with partners, networks and funders to mobilise the necessary human, technological, intellectual and financial resources needed to implement the Plan.

Partners: PASGR is structured and organised on partnerships. The Collaborative Masters, the PASGR Institutes, the Doctoral programme, PedaL and the Research Programme all work through and with formal partners who share their vision. Partnerships are expressed through MOUs and a system of norms and practices. The MRPP currently has 14 formal partner universities in eight African countries; PedaL has five core partners and both PDT and the Research programmes work with established partners in both African and non-African universities and institutions. Partners facilitate access to other universities as well as key stakeholders in the host country and in other countries through their networks.

Networks: PASGR operates both as a partnership and a network of partner institutions, policy actors, activists and independent researchers in delivering her various projects and programmes. The networks have been useful for harnessing talent and broadening exposure to global trends and international practice. The Plan period will see an intensification of working in and with existing and new networks on ongoing and new projects.

Funders: PASGR's funders have included: The UK Department for International Development, DFID, that has provided core funding for 10 years. The Canadian IDRC, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Open Society Institute for East Africa (OSIEA), the Bosch Stiftung, the UN Foundation, the DFID- SPHEIR programme, the DFID A4EA programme, INASP and Master Card Foundation RUFORUM supported academic leadership grant.
To supplement grants and support that it received in the previous Plan, PASGR in this Plan period will intensify resource mobilisation to include current funders while diversifying to new funders.

PASGR operates both as a partnership and a network of partner institutions, policy actors, activists and independent researchers in delivering her various projects and programmes. The networks have been useful for harnessing talent and broadening exposure to global trends and international practice.

> PASGR will put in place a monitoring system to ensure that planned activities are implemented, and setbacks and variations are addressed as they arise. The impact of implemented plans will be assessed.

Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

The success of the implementation of this Strategic Plan will depend largely on how planned activities and outputs are effectively monitored and evaluated. The purpose of monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the Strategic Plan will be to assess what has been achieved, suggest ways to overcome difficulties if any and lay the basis for improved implementation of the Strategic Plan.

PASGR will put in place a monitoring system to ensure that planned activities are implemented, and setbacks and variations are addressed as they arise. The impact of implemented plans will be assessed. Achievements of Human Resource development plans, for example, should be reflected in improved staff performance.

Monitoring and evaluation will be done at three levels: organisation wide strategic level; programme level; and individual performance level.

What will success look like?

- At the end of the Plan period, PASGR's contribution to building communities of excellence for research and public policy will be reflected in the following:
- Transformation of higher education in Africa, from the point of view of how teaching, learning and academic leadership are carried out
- Development of a critical mass of over 2,000 PedaL-trained university lecturers
- Revitalisation of the higher education practitioners' community and creation of new communities of excellence
- PASGR will have began to have a place in research that addresses difficult policy issues for both governments and citizens
- Growth of research communities in Africa that continue to provide evidence for different policy issues
- Tooling and retooling of another 1,000 activists, researchers and practitioners in policy-related research methods, policy analysis and academic leadership.

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