

# **SMALL TOWNS: GOVERNANCE AND MIGRATION**

## **The Case of Pakistan**

**IIED Workshop, London 06 – 07 January 2007**

This case study is an exploration. Much of what is in it is already presented in the following documents:

1. Akbar Zaidi; “Issues in Pakistan’s Economy”, OUP, Karachi, 2005
2. SDPI Paper; “What is Happening in the Small Towns”, a Questionnaire for Research, June 2004
3. Arif Hasan; “The Unplanned Revolution: Observations on the Process of Socio-economic Change in Pakistan”, City Press, Karachi, 2002
4. Arif Hasan; “The Scale and Causes of Urban Change in Pakistan”, Sama Publishers, Karachi, 2007
5. The writings of Architect-Planner Raza Ali (Lahore) and Prof. Mohammad A. Qadeer (McGill) on Urbanization in Pakistan

**Arif Hasan**

**Email: [arifhasan@cyber.net.pk](mailto:arifhasan@cyber.net.pk)**

# PAKISTAN

MAP - 1: 1951

SCALE 1:5,000,000

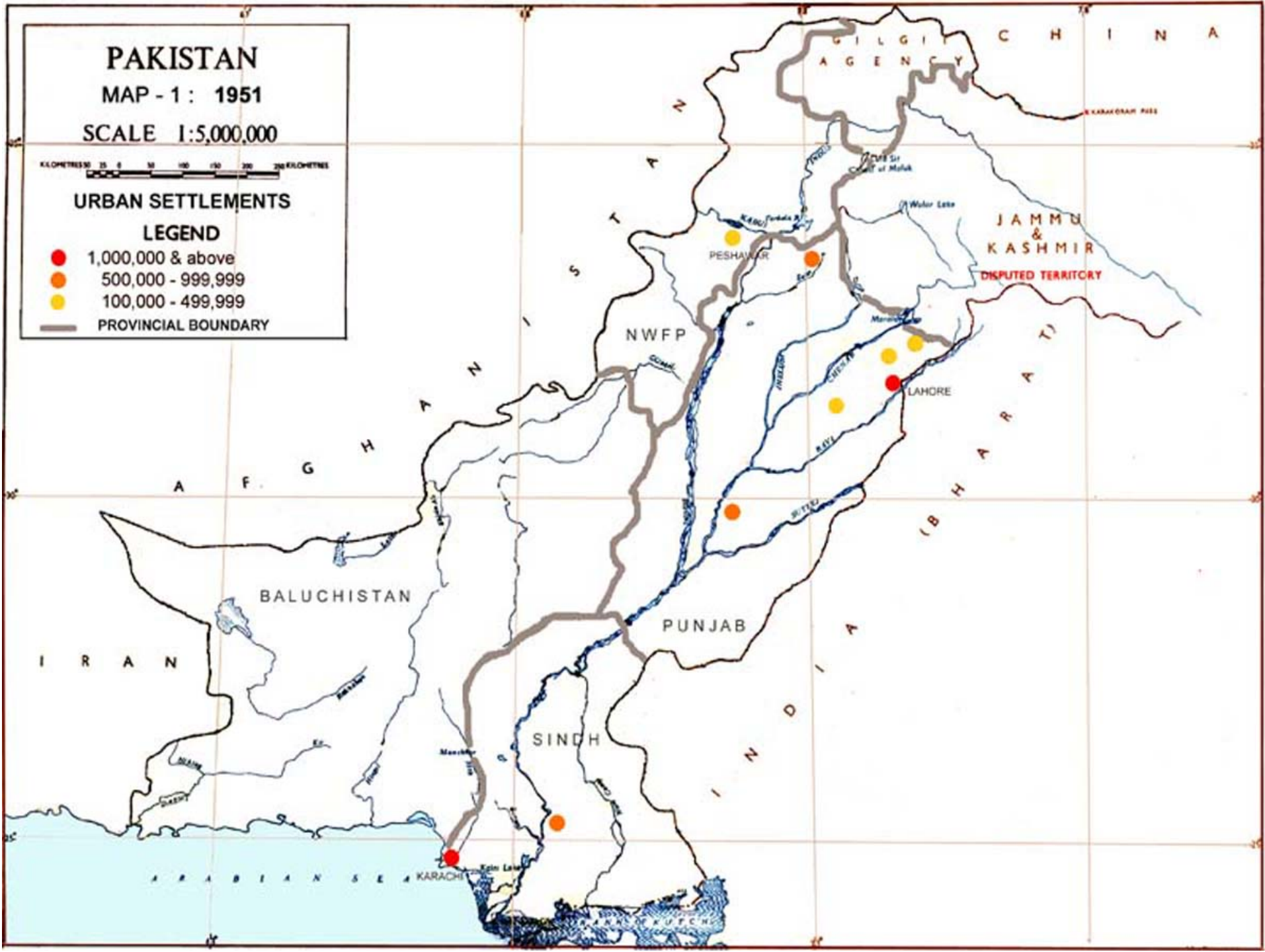
KILOMETRES 0 25 50 100 150 200 250 KILOMETRES

## URBAN SETTLEMENTS

### LEGEND

- 1,000,000 & above
- 500,000 - 999,999
- 100,000 - 499,999

— PROVINCIAL BOUNDARY



# PAKISTAN

MAP - 5 : 1998

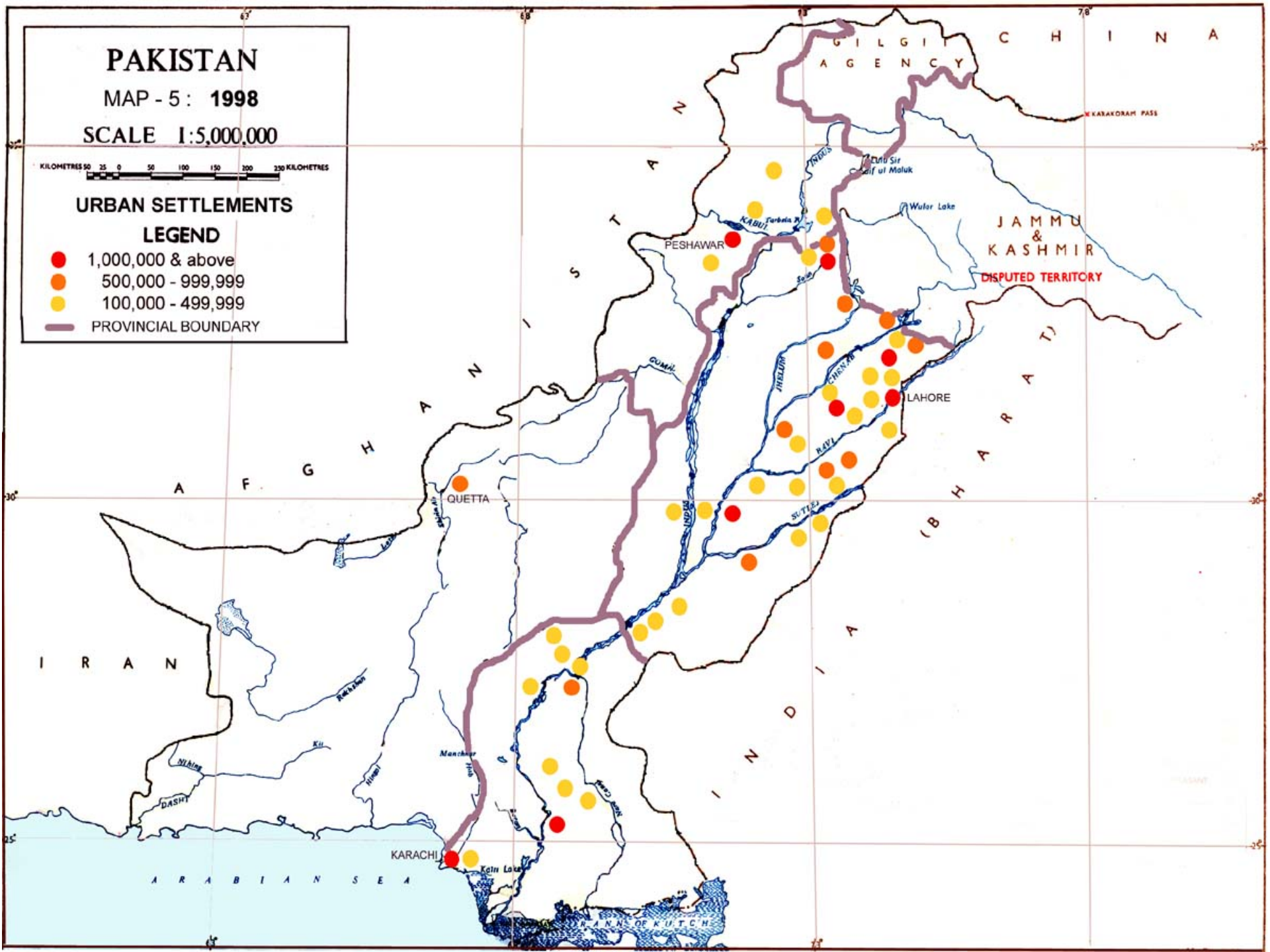
SCALE 1:5,000,000

KILOMETRES 50 25 0 50 100 150 200 250 KILOMETRES

## URBAN SETTLEMENTS

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# HISTORY

Before Colonisation there were three types of small towns.

## 1. **Market Towns:**

- These were on the rivers or in their flood plains as agriculture was carried out in the flood plains.
- They were dominated by merchants trading in agricultural produce and crafts (mainly textiles) produced in the villages in their catchment areas.
- Much of the transportation of agricultural produce was by river navigation. Hence transport contractors were important.
- A nexus of government bureaucrats, tribal and clan heads and traders were involved in the governance of these towns.

## 2. **Towns on Regional Trade Routes:**

- Trade routes linked Pakistan to the Middle East (by sea and camel caravans) and Central Asia (by camel caravans and the seasonal migration of “kochees”).

- Most of these towns also had small artisan based industries in them such as steel, textiles, leather, jewellery.
- They were dominated and/or governed by bureaucrats and merchants.
- Majority of them were located where trade routes and water bodies intersected.

### **3. Towns that Fulfilled Both the Above Functions:**

- These were usually the larger towns.

All these towns had beautiful architecture, most of which is in ruins today.

# SOCIAL STRUCTURE

- Profession was related to caste and/or ethnicity. Each caste and/or clan had its own “punchayat” that dealt with personal and property issues of its members and their relations with the state agencies or other castes and clans.
- There was no social and economic mobility and trade and wages between castes were mostly in the form of barter.
- A “jirga” of different tribes/clans consisting of their senior members settled inter-clan disputes.
- Towns were divided into caste or clan neighbourhoods, each with its own utilities and O&M institutions complete with “lower” caste families who were responsible for maintenance and repair of the neighbourhoods.
- The function of the state was to collect revenue, build and maintain (again through caste relations) necessary infrastructure for the promotion of trade, and to support merchant organisations in developing and maintaining the infrastructure they needed. It was a sort of “public-private partnership”.

# CHANGES DUE TO COLONISATION

- The end of the South Asia-Central Asian / Middle East trade.
- End of local industry due to colonial legislation and replacement of locally manufactured items by European products.
- Creation of perennial irrigation systems (canals) leading to the death of agriculture in the flood plains and the production of enormous surpluses of wheat and cotton which were exported to Europe.
- The building of the railway as an alternative to river navigation.
- Exploitation of forests and mining for commercial purposes by the state thus ending the control of communities over these resources.
- Creation of a hereditary land owning class.
- The imposing of the “Alienation of Land Act” preventing the rise of a local industrial and entrepreneurial class in favour of a landed aristocracy.

# REPERCUSSIONS OF COLONIAL POLICIES

- Many trade and market towns in the flood plains died and initially there was massive de-urbanisation.
- With perennial irrigation new market towns developed on the railway links.
- Port cities became important and developed due to trade with Britain.
- Forest and mining contractors also became important job providers and economic players in the economy of many small towns.
- Migration from the rural areas, coupled with the breakdown of the governance system of the pre-colonisation period, led to the development of a more cash related economy and the weakening of the caste system. This led to more social and economic mobility.
- The new land owning elite became the most powerful non-government player in the politics and administration of small towns. It replaced many of the functions of the merchant guilds and the clan and caste “punchayats”. It had a close relationship with the colonial bureaucracy and helped it manage law and order issues, maintenance of agricultural infrastructure and political relations with other less important power groups.



# CHANGES SINCE INDEPENDENCE

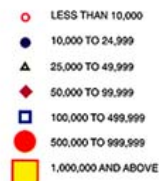
- Pakistan inherited from the colonial power small market towns whose main function was to be a point of interaction between the rural areas and larger commercial interests.
- These towns were politically dominated by the property owning elite and the colonial (later national) bureaucracy.
- In the late 50s and 60s green revolution technologies were introduced in agriculture. As a result, the population of the small towns grew due to migration from the rural areas. Also, new players were introduced into the small town economy. These were fertiliser, pesticide and new seed's agencies; banks; tractor dealers, spare part salesmen and mechanics; and new government agencies (such as agricultural extension services) dealing with green revolution technology inputs and monitoring.
- Middlemen financing agriculture inputs through loans and the markets for agricultural produce and its export to the larger cities increased.
- From the 70s onwards a revolution in transport and communications has eroded the importance of many of the small towns as agents in rural areas can now be in direct touch with their counterparts in big cities.

- The footprint of the big city has become much larger and it has taken over many of the economic functions of the small towns.
- In regions where infrastructure and entrepreneurship were available industry has relocated to smaller towns due to the availability of cheaper land and labour.
- Villages near large cities have become small towns due to “cottage industry” developing in them in support of larger industries in the neighbouring larger cities. (Example, textiles looms, parts for light engineering industry, processing for agri-based products)
- Dormitory villages have developed around many such towns where people from the rural areas cycle, walk or take public transport and go and work in them.
- In such villages labour for agricultural production is no longer available as a result of which mechanisation has taken place in a big way. This has led to the development of a services sector for the purchase and O&M of machinery and spare parts in such small towns.
- Such towns have developed in specific regions of Pakistan and they are very close together, often no more than 10 to 15 kilometres distance from each other and/or from larger towns.
- The conglomeration of such small towns constitutes an urban region (lot of information from planner Raza Ali) and have to be treated as such for planning and environmental reasons.

# **URBAN PLACES PAKISTAN 1998 CENSUS MAP - 6**

## **REFERENCES**

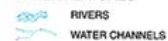
### **POPULATION**



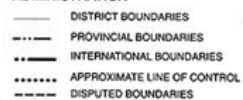
### **COMMUNICATIONS**



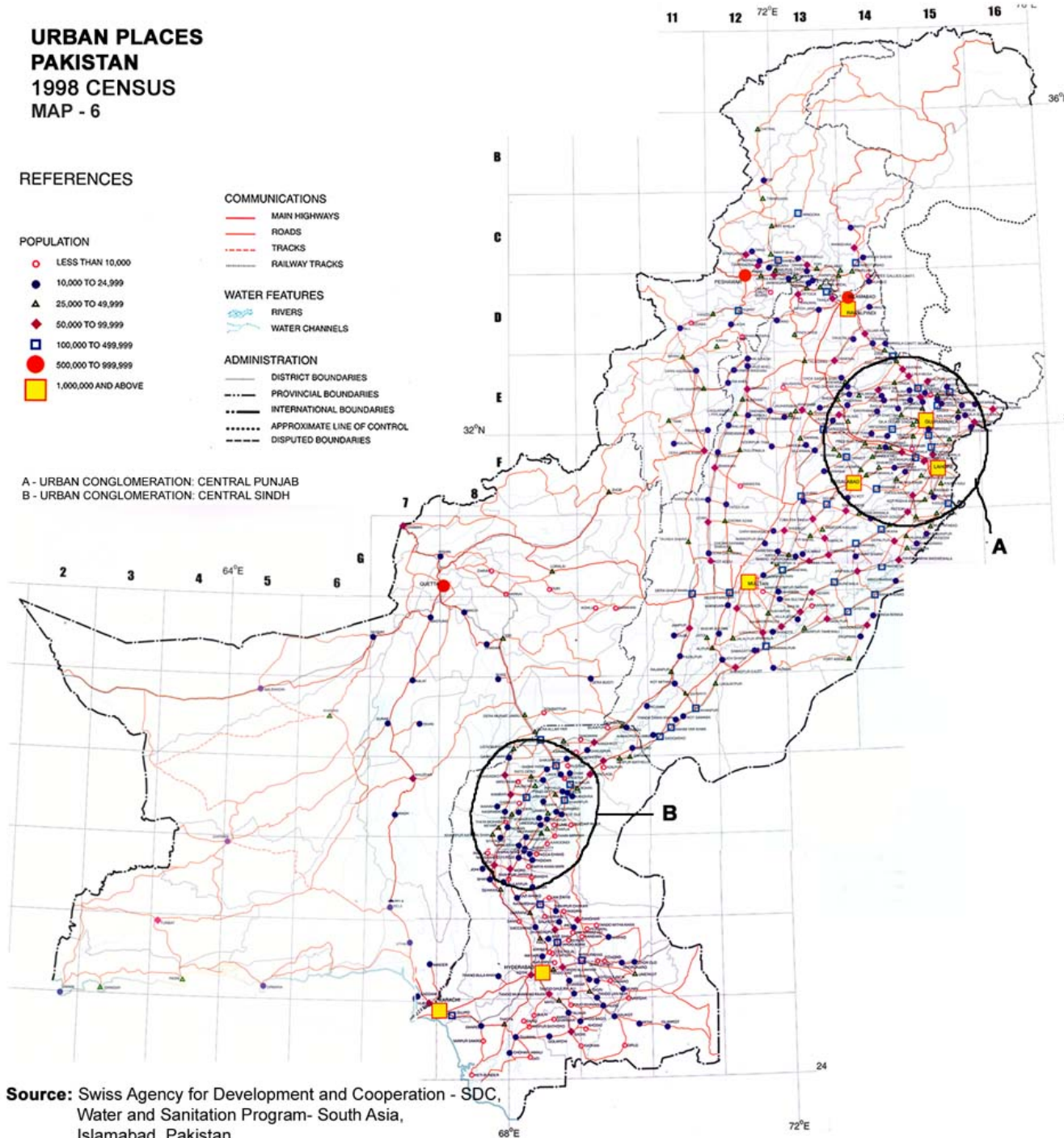
### **WATER FEATURES**



### **ADMINISTRATION**



A - URBAN CONGLOMERATION: CENTRAL PUNJAB  
B - URBAN CONGLOMERATION: CENTRAL SINDH



**Source:** Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation - SDC,  
Water and Sanitation Program- South Asia,  
Islamabad, Pakistan

# **SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CHANGE IN TOWNS IN “URBAN REGIONS”**

- Increase in the power of middlemen and small entrepreneurs. They contested local body elections in the 1980s and often defeated the candidates of the landed elite.
- Landed elite no longer settle the personal and property issues of the people as the caste system along with its “punchayats” is no longer effective. The role of state institutions (courts and the police) dominates.
- Landed elites who had power to obtain funds for improvements in local living conditions have migrated to bigger cities where better opportunities are available, especially education and jobs for their children. The new actors in the urban economy do not have the same relationship with the administration, nor the legitimacy to replace them. Therefore, environmental conditions in the small towns are becoming progressively worse although social indicators such as literacy and infant mortality continue to improve.
- Migration to the larger towns, especially of the better educated and more enterprising, has adversely affected the cultural and intellectual life of the smaller towns which was once dominated by feudal culture and its links with a strong cultural tradition.
- Links with larger cities has brought in liberal values. Alongside of this the migration of the elite and better educated has also encouraged the development of religious parties who now have an important political presence as non-comparative to before.

- Migration to the Middle East and Europe increased dramatically in the 70s and 80s. This migration was mostly of artisans who were considered “low caste” under the caste system. In 1982-83 alone Pakistani workers remitted 2,885.67 million US dollars. Many of them have returned and invested their foreign earned money in transport and real estate.
- The effect of 9/11.
- The role of the Overseas Pakistani Foundation.
- The returnees have developed urban values and have purchased all the gadgetry that a “modern” lifestyle requires. They have also made investments in the social sector but not enough to make a substantial difference.
- Their returns and investments have given them a new status and destroyed the old caste and clan system. It has also led to the break-up of extended families and the creation of nuclear ones leading to social fragmentation and a need for effective state institutions.
- The exquisite built-heritage of the old towns is being ruined as a result of ad-hoc densification and the migration / political weakening of a once powerful and caring elite.

# NEW DIRECTIONS

- Expansion of capitalist / corporate farming and more rural-urban migration.
- Presence of multinational companies in the rural area with outlets and offices in small towns.
- The NGO phenomena and its repercussions: a hope for the future?
- WTO / globalisation effect.
  - The role of the Export Promotion Bureau.
  - Trade increases (especially in agro-products)
  - Cooperatives and groups of small producers are emerging as an alternative to middlemen and corporate sector control of marketing and exports.
  - Formal and informal sector light engineering industry is closing down along with workshops supporting larger industrial production in bigger towns.

- Decentralisation and its effects
  - The return of the landed elite as district mayors but not as tehsil or union council mayors.
  - The removal of the bureaucracy as an intermediary between elected representatives and the people and its repercussions.
  - With the removal of the bureaucracy, the police has been strengthened.
- A change of values effecting the structure of the family and gender relations leading to reaction against these changes.
- A closer link in trade and market relationships between the small towns and the larger cities.

# **THE DECLINING SMALL TOWNS**

- These towns have been bypassed due to the communications revolution.
- Their economy, which was based on being a market town for agricultural goods, has declined and in many cases become non-existent.
- Their elite have migrated in almost all cases for good and as such they have lost their political importance.



Table - 1.1

## Pakistan: Population Size, Rural – Urban Ratio and Growth Rate, 1901-1998

Year	Population (in '000)			Proportion		Annual Growth Rate		
	Total	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban
1901	16,577	14,958	1,619	90.2	9.8	-	-	-
1911	18,805	17,116	1,689	91.0	9.0	1.27	1.36	0.42
1921	20,243	18,184	2,058	89.8	10.2	0.74	0.61	2.00
1931	22,640	19,871	2,769	87.8	12.2	1.13	0.89	3.01
1941	28,244	24,229	4,015	85.8	14.2	2.24	2.00	3.79
1951	33,740	27,721	6,019	82.2	17.8	1.79	1.36	4.13
1961	42,880	33,240	9,640	77.5	22.5	2.43	1.80	4.84
1971	65,309	48,715	16,594	74.6	25.4	3.67	3.33	4.76
1981	84,253	61,270	23,583	71.7	28.3	3.10	2.58	4.38
1998	130,580	87,544	43,036	68.5	32.5	2.61	2.2	3.5

**Source:** Environmental Profile of Pakistan, Government of Pakistan as quoted in *Environmental Repurcussions of Development in Pakistan*, by Arif Hasan and Ameneh Azam Ali

Table – 1.5

## Pakistan: Urban Localities – Population and Growth 1951 - 1998

Province/ Year	Urban localities by population size					Urban population	Average annual urban growth rate
	Total	Under 25,000	25,000 to 49,999	50,000 to 99,999	100,000 and over		
<b>Pakistan</b>							
1951	238	196	23	9	10	6,018,975	4.9
1961	337	280	31	14	12	9,654,572	4.7
1972	433	335	52	22	24	16,593,651	4.3
1981	415	276	73	35	31	23,841,471	3.5
1998	501	259	118	70	54	43,036,400	
<b>NWFP</b>							
1951	29	23	5	-	1	506,540	4.2
1961	43	37	4	1	1	758,516	4.0
1972	54	42	9	1	2	1,195,655	4.0
1981	43	26	10	5	2	1,665,653	3.4
1998	54	24	18	9	3	2,973,047	
<b>Punjab</b>							
1951	160	135	13	6	6	3,598,775	4.3
1961	189	153	21	8	7	5,475,922	4.5
1972	215	157	31	12	15	9,182,695	4.2
1981	215	126	45	24	20	13,051,646	3.3
1998	245	101	66	42	36	22,699,490	
<b>Sindh</b>							
1951	32	23	4	2	3	1,768,494	6.0
1961	68	55	5	4	4	3,167,018	5.2
1972	121	96	11	8	6	5,725,776	4.4
1981	124	99	14	5	7	8,243,036	3.4
1998	159	107	25	14	13	14,661,832	
<b>Balochistan</b>							
1951	17	15	1	1	-	145,256	4.7
1961	35	33	1	1	-	228,468	4.9
1972	39	37	1	-	1	399,584	6.4
1981	32	26	4	1	1	676,772	4.8
1998	42	27	9	5	1	1,516,339	
<b>Islamabad</b>							
1972	1	-	-	1	-	76,641	12.3
1981	1	-	-	-	1	204,364	5.7
1998	1	-	-	-	1	524,500	

Table – 1.6

## Cities of Different Sizes

(Numbers)

Region	Size of Cities						Total
	Under 10,000	10,000-100,000	100,000-500,000	500,000 – 1 million	1 million - 5 million	Over 5 million	
<b>Pakistan</b>							
1951	107	82	7	1	1	-	198
1961	150	114	10	0	2	-	276
1972	114	195	15	3	2	-	329
1981	96	259	21	5	2	1	384
1998	64	356	42	3	5	2	472
<b>Punjab:</b>							
1951	70	57	5	1	-	-	133
1961	78	74	6	-	1	-	159
1972	38	125	11	2	1	-	177
1981	28	153	15	3	2	-	201
1998	6	193	28	1	4	1	233
<b>Sindh:</b>							
1951	15	14	1	-	1	-	31
1961	40	21	2	-	1	-	64
1972	53	39	1	1	1	-	95
1981	50	62	4	1	-	1	118
1998	44	94	10	-	1	1	150
<b>NWFP:</b>							
1951	11	9	1	-	-	-	21
1961	14	17	1	-	-	-	32
1972	9	22	2	-	-	-	33
1981	5	29	1	1	-	-	36
1998	4	35	4	1	-	-	44
<b>Balochistan:</b>							
1951	11	2	-	-	-	-	13
1961	18	2	1	-	-	-	21
1972	14	9	1	-	-	-	24
1981	13	15	1	-	-	-	29
1998	10	34	-	1	-	-	45

Source: Federal Bureau of Statistics, *50 Years of Pakistan in Statistics*, Vol. II, (1947-1997), Government of Pakistan, 1998 Provincial Census Reports, Population Census Organization, and Islamabad as reproduced in: Iffat Ara and Arshad Zaman *Asian Urbanization in the New Millennium*, Country Chapter, Unpublished work, August 2002.



Table – 1.7

## Urban Population Distribution 1951-1998 (by size of urban places)

Population Size		Number of Places/Population Distribution percent				
		1951	1961	1972	1981	1998
Million and above	(#)	1	2	2	3	7
	(percent)	(17.7)	(33.2)	(33.7)	(38.8)	(49.7)
500,000-999,999	(#)	1	-	3	5	3
	(percent)	(14.3)	-	(15.7)	(14.5)	(4.9)
200,000-499,999	(#)	2	2	4	4	13
	(percent)	(8.0)	(18.5)	(6.0)	(4.5)	(9.1)
100,000-199,999	(#)	6	5	9	17	27
	(percent)	(14.9)	(7.3)	(6.7)	(9.9)	(8.6)
50,000-99,999	(#)	6	5	22	34	62
	(percent)	(6.7)	(7.3)	(8.8)	(9.5)	(10.0)
25,000-49,999	(#)	23	30	44	62	111
	(percent)	(13.9)	(11.5)	(9.5)	(8.7)	(9.1)
10,000-24,999	(#)	53	76	145	166	182
	(percent)	(12.9)	(11.7)	(13.3)	(11.3)	(7.2)
5,000-9,000	(#)	75	104	104	80	52
	(percent)	(9.2)	(8.0)	(4.7)	(2.6)	(1.0)
4,999 and below	(#)	41	72	53	17	11
	(percent)	(2.4)	(2.3)	(0.9)	(0.2)	(0.1)
Total	(#)	208	304	387	388	468
	(percent)	(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)	(100)
Population (thousand)		6,019	9,654	16,591	23,827	42,458
Intercensal Increase percent		60.4	71.9	43.7	78.2	

Source: Iffat Ara and Arshad Zaman, *Asian Urbanization in the New Millenium*, Country Chapter, Unpublished work, August 2002.

**Table 2.1**

**Sources of Urban Growth**

(In percentage)

Period	Region	Natural Increase	Re-classification	Internal Migration	Total Increase
1951 – 61	Pakistan	44.8	15.1	40.1	100.0
1961 – 72	Pakistan	72.4	8.1	19.5	100.0
1972 – 81	Pakistan	78.4	2.6	19.1	100.0
1981 – 98	Pakistan	70.3	9.7	20.1	100.0
1981 – 98	Punjab	74.2	11.3	14.5	100.0
1981 – 98	Sindh	70.6	4.5	24.8	100.0
1981 – 98	NWFP	70.0	20.9	9.1	100.0
1981 – 98	Balochistan	43.7	18.4	37.9	100.0
1981 – 98	Islamabad	35.1	-	64.9	100.0

Source: Iffat Ara and Arshad Zaman, *Asian Urbanization in the New Millennium*, Country Chapter, Unpublished work, August 2002

Table 2.2

### Migrants Status of Population in the Urban Areas of Pakistan and Provinces – 1981-98

(In thousands)

<b>Movements of Immigrants</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Punjab</b>	<b>Sindh</b>	<b>NWFP</b>	<b>Balochistan</b>	<b>Islamabad</b>
Total urban population	42,898 (100.0)	23,019 (100.0)	14,480 (100.0)	2,994 (100.0)	1,516 (100.0)	529 (100.0)
Non-migrants	35,990 (83.9)	19,520 (84.8)	12,288 (82.8)	2,612 (87.2)	1,353 (89.2)	217 (40.9)
Total migrants	6,909 (16.1)	3,499 (15.2)	2,552 (17.2)	382 (12.8)	163 (10.8)	313 (59.1)
<b>Migrants within Pakistan</b>	<b>4,496 (10.5)</b>	<b>1,747 (9.6)</b>	<b>1,603 (10.8)</b>	<b>285 (9.5)</b>	<b>141 (9.3)</b>	<b>250 (47.3)</b>
Migrants within the province	2,456 (5.7)	1,747 (7.6)	459 (3.1)	192 (6.4)	58 (3.8)	-
Migrants from other provinces	1,869 (4.4)	365 (1.6)	1,099 (7.4)	90 (3.0)	78 (5.1)	237 (44.8)
Migrants from AJK and NA	172 (0.4)	105 (0.5)	45 (0.3)	3 (0.1)	5 (8.4)	13 (2.5)
Migrants from other countries	1,530 (3.6)	798 (3.5)	661 (4.5)	20 (0.7)	7 (0.4)	44 (8.4)
Migrants who did not report	882 (2.1)	484 (2.1)	288 (1.9)	77 (2.6)	16 (1.1)	18 (3.4)

Source: Government of Pakistan, 1998 Provincial Census Reports, Population Census Organization, Islamabad, Government of Pakistan, 1998 District Census Report of Islamabad, Population Census Organization, Islamabad, as reproduced in: Iffat Ara and Arshad Zaman *Asian Urbanization in the New Millennium*, Country Chapter, Unpublished work, August 2002.