

# Agricultural Productivity in Sindh and Balochistan-Assessment of the Regional Imbalance Scenario

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## ABSTRACT

*Food for thought comes only after food for the belly. Food in the form of crop production is an essential pre-requisite for the maintenance of a civilized society. A number of methods, one of them being productivity, can assess production. In this paper an attempt has been made to present a simple method of assessing productivity of major and minor crops in Sindh and Balochistan, two provinces of Pakistan. The productivity in terms of cultivated area as well as in proportion to the actual toilers on the land has revealed significant regional imbalances. Most noteworthy being Qilla Abdullah and Awaran in Balochistan for which data is not available; not that agriculture is not practiced here, but is the result of administrative changes and shortcomings, indicating one of the causes of regional imbalances. Districts Central, East, South and West of Karachi, being urban districts show no agricultural data, except for Malir districts which falls in the lowest category, with reference to both types of*

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*productivity. However, there is a great consistency in regional imbalance as far as both productivity per hectare and workers are considered, indicating to the backwardness of these areas, mainly in Balochistan.*

**Key words:** agriculture, Sindh, Balochistan, productivity, regional imbalance

## **Introduction**

The purpose of all human endeavors is to produce goods to satisfy human needs and wants and the fact that food is one of the most basic requirements for sustenance is beyond dispute. This is enough to support the significance of agricultural development as an economic indicator (Qiu, et al, 2007). One of the major characteristics of developing countries is their dependence on a few major agricultural or mineral products as the mainstay of their economies (Barbier, 2004; World Bank 1999, 2001; Todaro 2000). Agriculture is an essential part of the economy of Pakistan, which contributes 21 percent to the GDP, while in the labor sector; it provides 43.4 percent employment to the total labor force (GoP, 2007).

Increased productivity is a key to a healthy and thriving economy. Consequently, the trend in productivity is one of the most closely watched of our common economic performance indicators (Huda et al., 2008). Increased productivity also improves the standard of living by lowering the real prices of goods and services. Agricultural productivity gains are passed on to the consumer in the form of lower food prices (Ahearn, et al., 1998). It is, however, not necessary to entirely agree with the above formulations to be convinced of the crucial role which agriculture plays, especially in underdeveloped economies. Agriculture can contribute to economic growth by increasing efficiency of production and releasing resources to other sectors and by adjusting the composition and scale of output to demand (Ittersum, et al., 2008; OECD, 1985).