

## KATCHI ABADIS (SQUATTER SETTLEMENTS) IN ISLAMABAD, GROWTH AND INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE

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### Abstract

The development of katchi abadis is closely associated with the urbanization process taking place in developing countries. Islamabad, though a planned city that was supposed to cater to the housing requirements of all segments of society, could not avoid this phenomenon. In Islamabad, katchi abadis started from labour camps of construction workers and later with the passage of time proliferated to become sizeable communities. As per the survey of katchi abadis 1984-85, there were only eight katchi abadis in the urban area of Islamabad with 1719 households. Over the period of 30 years not only the size of katchi abadis has increased but their number has also increased to 41 with a population of more than 80,000 inhabitants. CDA has adopted different strategies to handle the issue of katchi abadis during the last four decades. Three approaches i) Redevelopment of the existing site, ii) Resettlement at some other location iii) improvement at the existing site proved successful. Unless immediate action is taken the problem will assume such dimensions that it will be impossible to bring the situation under control in the future. As a result, Islamabad would become 'Slumabad' within a very short period. Consequently, the dwellers of katchi abadi have encroached ROW of Highways, Principal Roads, developed plots, green areas, nullahs, etc. In this situation, implementation of the Master Plan of Islamabad would also not be possible.

**Keywords:** Katchi Abdis, Redevelopment, Resettlement, Strategies, Underprivileged Urbanization.

### 1. Introduction

Half of the World's Population is urbanized and will reach 68 percent by 2050 (United Nations, 2019). The total slum population of the world was estimated to be 1 billion in 2006 and the current rates will make it double in 2030 (UN-Habitat, 2003) unless tackled innovatively. In the cities of developing countries, the proportion of people living in slums, which was 29.7% in 2000 became 39.4% in 2014. Agenda No. 11.1 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) ensures access for all to adequate safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgraded slums by 2030 (United Nations, 2015). Urbanization is a continuous phenomenon and Pakistan's urban population is about 37 percent and it's growing annually at the rate of 3.97 percent (Zafar Iqbal Zafar, 2022). Such massive urbanization has led to poor housing quality and affordability, as well as, poor water and sanitation, transportation, health, education, and land management (Khan, 2019). Unplanned and unmanaged urbanization has resulted in urban slums, environmental degradation, poverty, and inequality. Pakistan too, is confronted with a host of urban challenges (Ignacio Artaza, 2019). In Pakistan total housing stock is 20.5 million units, the estimated housing backlog is 7.5 million units, the annual demand is 570,000 housing units and only 300,000 housing units are constructed annually thus

its annual housing deficit is 270,000 housing units (UN-Habitat, 2011). In Pakistan, the major portion of housing has been shared by the public sector and the major approach adopted was the site and services schemes (Zafar Iqbal Zafar, 2022). However, the private sector and NGOs have also made efforts to share the burden, though negligible. Pakistan has a huge housing deficit it is growing with time. Urban population growth in the country has not been matched by growth in housing units or equitable access to land, resulting in housing shortages and the growth of katchi abadis (Ignacio Artaza, 2019). The average annual rate of change of urban percentage for Pakistan was 1.20 during 2005-10 (UN-Habitat, 2009) and the total slum population of Pakistan was estimated to be 47.0 percent of its total urban population in 2007.

Due to the severe shortage of housing about half of the population of Pakistan lives in slums (UN-Habitat, 2011). According to the Government of Pakistan, approximately 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the housing requirements are met by private developers who cater to the high-end market. In contrast, the remaining 60-70 percent of units fall in the category of low-income (Zafar Iqbal Zafar, 2022). Due to the shortage of low-income housing, these people are compelled to live in slums. Urban housing is not affordable for low-income people; thus, the poor have no option but to find shelter in slums and squatter settlements. Their last refuge is the ever-sprawling katchi abadis where the threat of eviction is always imminent, physical infrastructure is inadequate, and basic amenities minimal (Siddiqui, 2000).

Squatter settlement is defined as a low residential area, that has developed without legal right to the land or permission from the concerned authorities to build, and as a result, of their illegal status, infrastructure and services are usually inadequate (UN-Habitat, 2003). Srinivas identified three defining characteristics of squatter settlements: physical, social, and legal (Hari Srinivas, 2015). In terms of physical characteristics, a squatter settlement has services and infrastructure below the "adequate" or minimum levels. In terms of social characteristics, most of the dwellers belong to the lower-income group, working either as wage laborer or in various informal sector enterprises (Hari Srinivas, 2015; Mohanty, 2020). The key characteristic that differentiates a squatter settlement is its lack of ownership of the land on which they build their house (Hari Srinivas, 2015).

There is insufficient research on increasing the supply of housing for the low-income group in Pakistan (The World Bank, 2010). Even though the Government has adopted various approaches, the gap between demand and supply of low-income housing is continuously widening. About 50 percent of the country's population finds its abode in slums and squatter settlements. Experience has shown that the basic need of the shelterless people is a piece of land with minimum services where they can build their houses with their own resources incrementally. The majority of the low-income people in Pakistan have the willingness and capacity to pay for services, provided the cost is recovered in easy installments (Siddiqui, 2000). Both the government and private sector's efforts at alleviating the low-income housing problem have grossly failed in most respects. Targeting has not been done. All the options offered were unaffordable to the poor. Allotment procedures often have been biased against the poor. The government needs to find a formal alternative to illegal sub-divisions; but such an alternative must be equally affordable and accessible for the urban poor (Siddiqui, 2000). As regards the cooperative movement, its performance in Pakistan is rather poor. But in the housing sector, it catered to the needs of only the middle- and higher-income groups, and that too to a limited extent. The poor have always remained outside its purview (Siddiqui, 2000).

Islamabad is the first city in Pakistan which is being developed as per the Master Plan of Islamabad. The pristine order of this plan has only been partially realized. Dense slums of

construction workers, city sweepers, and domestic servants crowd beside the undeveloped gullies and green spaces in the middle of almost every sector (Matthew Hull S., 2009). The development of a new city from scratch provided millions of jobs for different workers. Most of them traveled from all parts of the country. The real impetus for the migration of workers from different parts of the country was the economic opportunities in the construction work.

Unfortunately, the city could not be developed completely according to the Master Plan due to various administrative and financial mismanagement, and shortage of formal housing occurred, and mushroom growth of slums took place. The deficit, therefore, continues to expand and the homeless population is forced to live in sub-human conditions in slums and katchi abadis. In developing countries, the urbanization process, and the emergence of katchi abadis are closely associated. Islamabad, though a planned city that was supposed to cater to the housing requirements of all segments of society, could not avoid this phenomenon. Almost every slum setting exists across the boundaries of cities but in Islamabad, slums are right at the center of urban sectors, and they are inhabited particularly on banks of riverine nullahs (Akhtar, 2012). In Islamabad, most of the katchi abadis are in marginal areas which were considered not suitable for planned development due to topography and were left open. In Islamabad, life took possession at every level accompanied by some in-compatible confused decision-making by CDA as to whether to retain katchi abadis or remove them. The katchi abadis can be read as an inorganic reaction to the top-down/master planned agenda of Islamabad, and at the same time, a phenomenon that is trying to erase the original plan. The unplanned (informal settlements) have become a layer on the grid giving the impression that the "planned" has been taken over by the "unplanned" in Islamabad (Mahsud, 2006). As there is very limited research available on the katchi abadis in Islamabad, the prime objective of this study is to investigate the growth of katchi abadis in the capital city of Islamabad and explore factors behind the growth and strategies adopted by the local authorities to control the haphazard growth of katchi abadis.

## 2. Methodology

A hybrid research approach was used to achieve the objectives of the study. Interviews were conducted with the 30 experts and data was collected regarding the katchi abadis in Islamabad in different periods. The experts were city planners who were involved in the master planning of Islamabad and remained part of local institutes responsible for implementing the master plan and development control of Islamabad. Data about the population was collected from secondary sources like the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, the National Institute of Population Studies, the Ministry of Environment, Akhtar Hamid Khan Resource Center, etc. Content analysis of the issue of katchi abadis in Islamabad was also carried out from newspaper articles that appeared from time to time and from journal articles published in reputed journals. For this, news related to katchi abadis that appeared in national newspapers was gathered from print media houses. A detailed field visit of eight katchi abadis was carried out to observe the current situation of katchi abadis (Figure 1). During the survey, focal group discussions with community members were conducted. The main agenda was to understand the growth patterns of each katchi abadis, to know unsolved issues faced by the community, and efforts made by the local institutes and the communities to improve the living conditions in these katchi abadis.

### Katchi Abadis of Islamabad

According to the survey conducted by the Rehabilitation Directorate of Capital Development Authority (CDA) in 1984-85 nine katchi abadis were found in Islamabad eight abadis were in the Urban area and one Sumble Korak was in the park area. There were 2030 households in

these nine katchi abadis. Another survey was conducted by the CDA in 1988 according to which there were 10 katchi abadis in Islamabad with 3726 households and a population of 26,102 inhabitants.

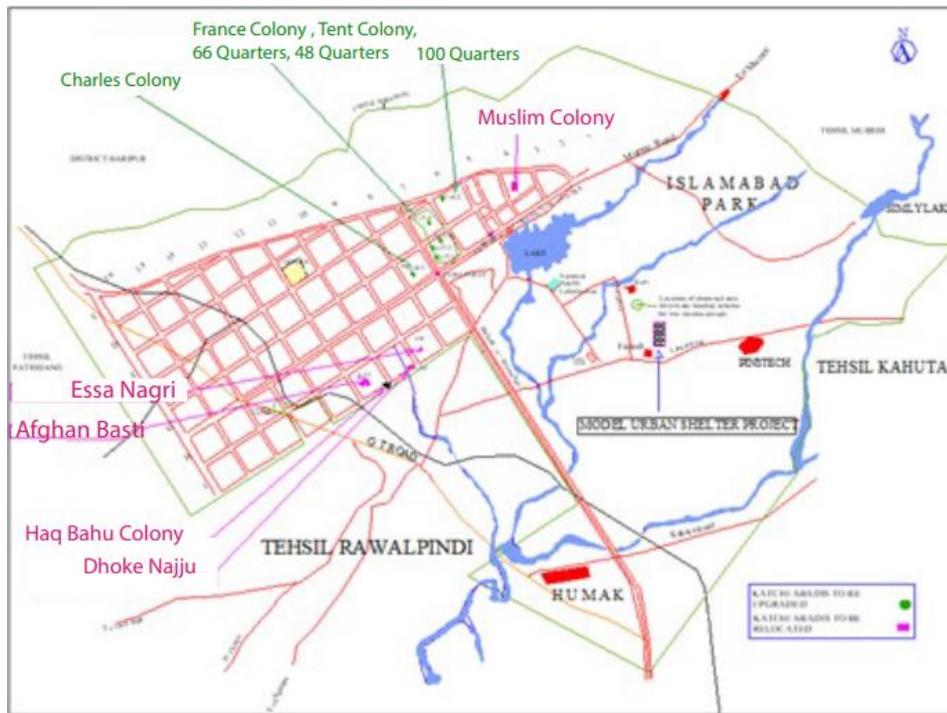


Figure 1: Katchi Abadis of Islamabad

### 100 Quarters

In Sector F of Islamabad, 100 quarters were built by the local authority (CDA) for its low-paid employees. It is located along the Saidpur Kas stream, which feeds into the Nullah Lai. A squatter settlement emerged around these CDA quarters. As per the survey conducted in 1984-85 total dwellers were 99, which increased to 300 in 1995. CDA in collaboration with a Christian Multipurpose Cooperative Society prepared a project for the construction of 3-storey apartments for the dwellers of this katchi abadi. Two flat blocks were constructed and allotted by the Society. However, later, it was found that the Society breached the terms and conditions of the agreement with CDA and started allocating the flats to outsiders. The aggrieved dwellers approached local courts against the Society. Thus, this project was discontinued.

### France Colony

France colony is a squatter settlement comprising of Christian laborer's initially engaged at the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) construction site. It is located on the banks of the Kanitawali Kas, a stream that feeds into the Nullah Lai. As per the survey conducted in 1984-85 it had 163 households which increased to 418 in 1995. Local authorities decided to shift this katchi abadi to another location at Ali Pur Farash. However, the proposed site was allocated for was allotted for Naya Pakistan Housing Scheme where they have planned 22 blocks of 3-storey flats. 90% work on these flats has already been completed. Out of these flats, 400 flats would be allotted to the dwellers of these katchi abadis and the rest of the flat units

would be auctioned in the open market. The area vacated by the dwellers of the two abadis would be utilized by CDA for other uses.

### **Tent Colony**

The tent colony comprises 221 households and most of the households have a joint family system. The community thinks that the plot size (20' x 30') is too small to accommodate a unit of 6 to 7 people. They were willing to pay more money for separate plots for each nuclear family or request a bigger plot. The community wanted land rights for the present site and would not like to be shifted to some other location. The present site is in the center of the city, and they find it convenient because of the easy availability of transportation to their workplace and schooling of their children. The Katchi Abadi is inhabited by the comparatively poorest segment of households among four slums surveyed (Akhtar, 2012).

### **66 Quarters**

Located in Sector G, 66 quarters were built by the CDA for its low-paid employees. A squatter settlement has emerged around these CDA quarters. This katchi abadi is inhabited by the comparatively richest segment of households (Akhtar, 2012).

### **48 Quarters**

48 quarters were built by CDA for its low-paid employees in Sector G. A squatter settlement has emerged around these quarters. As per the survey conducted in 1995, there were 98 households which has increased to 147 within five years (2000) which means approximately 50% increase in the households (Table 1).

### **Charles/Hansa**

When the construction of the largest hospital in Islamabad (PIMS) was to be started, the temporary labour camp was required to be removed from the site. However, there was resistance from the labor camp to clear the site. After a huge protest by the labour they were shifted to another site in Sector G. However, they constructed temporary structures haphazardly and started living there. With the passage of time all the green land along the nullah was consumed by the dwellers of the abadi and thus its size swelled five to six times the initial abadi. As per the survey conducted in 1984-85, it had 135 households which increased to 575 in 1995.

### **Essa Nagri**

As per the latest survey (1995), there were 213 housing units in this abadi. As per the CDA programme of shifting the Abadi from the present location to Farash about 20% of dwellers have been shifted to Ali Pur Farash while the rest of the dwellers are not willing to shift to Farash due to being far away from the present site, as they have their jobs around this area.

### **Muslim Colony, Noorpur Shahan**

It is a squatter settlement of laborer's initially working on Islamabad's largest hospital construction project (PIMS). Muslim Colony is situated near a stream feeding into Rawal Lake, the primary source of drinking water for the residents of Rawalpindi. Muslim Colony is the second largest Katchi Abadi in Islamabad. As per the CDA survey conducted in 1984-85, there were 500 households which increased to 995 in 1995. As per the CDA's shifting plan, 753 plots have been allotted to the dwellers of the abadi in Farash and the process of shifting of abadi is in progress.

### Afghan Bastee/Miskeenabad

Since 1995 the population of two katchi abdis in Sector I series has increased manifold due to Afghan refugees. It was decided to remove the Afghan Bastee in phases. Afghan Commissionerate plays an active role in the repatriation of families with the help of UNHCR. CDA had established a 'Picket' at Afghan Bastee to prevent further expansion. The Afghan Bastee, Miskeenabad, and Haq Bahu Colony have been removed.

### 3. Result and Discussion

As highlighted earlier, there were nine katchi abadies present in Islamabad. However, with the passage of time not only the population size of the katchi abadis has increased tremendously, but the number of katchi abadis has also increased from ten (10) to fourteen (14). The data shows that over a period of about eight years, the number of housing units in these four katchi abadis has increased more than threefold. In absolute terms, the population has increased from 4,209 persons in 1985 to 13,410 persons in 1993. Similar expansion would have occurred in the remaining katchi abadis. A growth trend in the proliferation of katchi abadis in Islamabad has been shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Growth of katchi abadis 1984-85 to 2000

Sr. No	Name	No. of Households				
		1984-1985	1988	1993	1995 <sup>1</sup>	2000 <sup>2</sup>
1	Wapda Colony	163	365	--Removed--		
2	100 Quarters	99	178	288	300	459
3	France Colony	163	277	365	418	350
4	66 Quarters and Tent Colony	282	440	799	783	690
5	48 Quarters	--DNA <sup>3</sup> --			98	147
6	Charles/Hansa Colony	135	211	611	575	779
7	Essa Nagri	--DNA <sup>3</sup> --		185	213	195
8	Dhok Najju	135	222	DNA <sup>3</sup>	182	155
9	Haq Bahu	--DNA <sup>3</sup> --			243	DNA <sup>3</sup>
10	Afghan Bastee/Miskeenabad	368	--DNA <sup>3</sup> --		1000	1599
11	Muslim Colony, Noopur Shahan	500	760	DNA <sup>3</sup>	996	801

Source: 1. Katchi Abadi Cell, CDA  
2. National Institute of Population Studies Survey 2000  
3. Data not available

In the early years of the city development (1960-70), most of the low-income settlements in the city were primarily inhabited by the labor force engaged in the construction of the city. However, since the mid-1980s, these squatter settlements have also provided housing to the people involved in the cleaning and maintenance of the municipal services of the city. The population of these settlements is contributing to the formal development of the city. Most of these settlements have cropped up in the heart of the city, consuming almost all the available marginal land because of their rapid population growth, and further deteriorating living conditions.

CDA constructed quarters for the low-paid employees i.e., sanitary workers and sweepers in three sectors. Later on, these locations become points of attraction for the relatives and friends of the residents of these quarters. They migrated to Islamabad to avail themselves of job opportunities and live in temporary structures along the stream close to their near and dears living in the CDA quarters. Gradually all incidental open space has been consumed by the

temporary structures, but the flow of migration continued. Subsequently, when the Christian communities began to settle, most of their friends, family, and relatives started migrating out of the Punjab province to avoid poverty and religious discrimination and take advantage of extended work opportunities. Now these settlements are overcrowded and congested. These slums are overpopulated, as evidenced by the fact that 45% of the total population resides there in excess. Overcrowding, poor solid waste disposal management, and contaminated water are the main problems that will eventually threaten each slum's future living conditions and have significant policy implications. The residents of Islamabad's squatter settlements can be generally grouped as a "class" since they share a similar social, economic, or educational background. Their political standing is also widely known. Since detailed socio-economic surveys of these settlements are lacking it is difficult to know what particular trends are undergoing in the squatter settlements of Islamabad.

### Population of Katchi Abadis

As per the Population Census of 1998, the population of eight katchi abadis of Islamabad is given in Table 2. The total population of these eight katchi abadis is 32,317 inhabitants.

Table 2: Population of katchi abadis in Islamabad

Sr. No.	Katchi Abadi	Population 1998	Average Household Size
1	100 Quarters	2954	6.7
2	France Colony	3378	6.9
3	Tent Colony	2139	7.3
4	66 Quarters	2965	6.4
5	48 Quarters	1275	5.2
6	Charles/Hansa Colony	4299	5.9
7	Katchi Abadi	7889	8.3
8	Muslim Colony Noorpur Shahan	7418	5.8
	Total	32,317	

Source: (Govt. of Pakistan, 1999)

The growth of dwellers in four katchi abadis over a period of about seven years (from 1995 to 2002) has been given in Table 3 below. During the seven years, the number of dwellers increased from 1058 to 1299 dwellers.

Table 3: Number of Bonafide dwellers in different katchi abadis

Sr. No	Katchi Abadi	Upto 31-12-1995	After 31-12-1995 and upto 7-3-2002	Total
1	Tent Colony	262	46	308
2	66 Quarters	391	84	475
3	48 Quarters	69	29	98
4	France Colony	336	82	418
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1058</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>1299</b>

Source: Katchi Abadi Cell, CDA

According to the police, Bari Imam and nine katchi abadis in the G and F series of sectors are well-known for being hubs for drug sales. According to the survey, most of the residents of these katchi abadis are employed as laborer's, sweepers, CDA Sanitary employees, loaders, and beggars. According to Danish Hussain (2014), the police advised the CDA to remove approximately 11 katchi abadis as soon as possible. A researcher after visiting France colony, observed that this place is a hub of criminal activities, too, including drug abuse and prostitution. The nearby posh areas serve as a huge market for them, and all this happens

because they have the hands-on support of the great influential people from the Mafia (Saira Ali, 2012).

### **Factors Responsible for the Proliferation of Katchi Abadis**

#### **i. Construction Workers/labour force**

In Chandigarh and Brasilia squatter settlements of construction workers emerged at the fringe of these planned cities and are a permanent source of nuisance. Most of these construction workers don't want to return to their home villages. However, Meier thinks, Doxiadis has solved this problem with his "twin city" concept. As per the plan the workers were to live in Pindi and move back and forth by bus (Meier, 1985). In the early years of city development (1960-80) most of the squatter settlements that emerged in the city were primarily inhabited by the labor force engaged in the construction of the city. This labor force continued to move in the direction of the city expansion. However, with time these sites were also occupied by the people engaged in the maintenance and cleanliness of the city.

#### **ii. Non-provision of Housing for lower staff**

Although Doxiadis tried its best to accommodate all sections of society within a sector. However, there has been inadequate provision of housing for the maintenance staff or more specifically, shelter for the people who are providing services to the city and its inhabitants, for example, construction laborers, washers, municipal janitors, milkmen, servants/maids, etc. (Mahsud, 2006). In some cases, the Followers who were allotted plots in the developed sectors (G and F Sectors), chose to sell off these allotted plots in the open market, as the level of infrastructure at these Follower Colonies was higher and it fetched good price. They, however, again resume living in marginal areas. In the absence of a research-based solution, problems could not be resolved, rather the existing katchi abadis continued to swell.

#### **iii. Ineffective Development Control**

As Islamabad is a planned city there were lots of incidental open spaces available along the seasonal nullahs/streams flowing through the city. These sites were left undeveloped due to topographical constraints and to act as lungs for the city. These incidental open spaces became a heaven for the squatters in Islamabad. The growth of the squatter settlements was further encouraged due to the inefficient development control exercised by the Authority. No system could have been devised to control this proliferation of katchi abadis. This was perhaps due to the reason that most of the CDA's maintenance staff was residing in these katchi abadis. The vacant land along nullahs (water channels) and other incidental open spaces within the sectors is the favorite location for the development of katchi abadis in Islamabad. These open areas served as decompression for the sector's dense footprint and were not merely residual but rather carefully designed voids by Doxiadis as organic structural and ordering elements. Due to their ambiguous definition, the open spaces along nullahs were subject to both formal and informal appropriations. They were viewed as vacant because they were not maintained or owned by the CDA, unlike planned public parks (Mahsud, 2006). Considering maintenance staff as part and parcel of the city development and to cater for their housing needs CDA developed quarters for them in the form of planned Follower colonies. However, in later years, it was observed that the areas lying vacant next to these Follower colonies were being occupied by the newcomers.

#### **iv. High Land Prices in Planned Urban Areas**

Due to the complicated procedure of land expropriation in Islamabad, there is little chance of land acquisition in the future unless some better mechanism of land expropriation is explored. The demand for housing is increasing day by day. Due to these reasons, the price of residential plots has multiplied making the city simply out of reach of low-income groups (Mahsud, 2006). In the urban area of Islamabad, the land is very expensive, or simply not available to the poor section of society. As a result, they are resorting to squatting, while the richer people purchase and illegally develop land just outside the boundaries of the urban area. A large portion of this unwelcome development is occurring in the Islamabad Park Area and other places with good access roads, frequently with complete disregard for the detrimental effects on the environment (Botka, 1995). Moreover, the planners are ignorant of the sociology, culture, and economics of the underprivileged. Both our technocrats and planners adopt the ideas, tactics, planning guidelines, and designs used in developed nations. Their strategy lacks a human perspective and places more emphasis on physical outputs and quantitative outcomes than trying to make a qualitative change in the target groups' lives (Siddiqui, 2000). The housing provided by the public sector is out of reach of the low-income group. Moreover, the private sector only focuses on the maximization of profit. Therefore, their target is always high-income and middle-income groups. The low-income group does not fall in their ambit.

#### **v. Govt. Policy to regularize Katchi Abadis 1985**

Meier, after visiting Islamabad in 1985 observed that the aim to prevent katchi abadi, or temporary settlements, in Islamabad itself has succeeded. Moreover, no one complains about them in Pindi either, so the problem has not merely been transferred, but at least partially resolved (Meier, 1985). He further observed that "a few small illegal settlements can be found in Islamabad. They are mainly sweepers and laundrymen, who found out-of-the-way places inside a section and in an open ditch. The outsider, like myself, would require days to find them. The CDA expects to relocate them within a few years" (Meier, 1985). There were few squatters in Islamabad; they were estimated in 1991 to have been around 12,000 – 13,000 inhabitants, or some 5 percent of the total population (Botka, 1995). The problem of katchi abadis in Islamabad became more complex after the policy of the Govt. to regularize the katchi abadis in 1985. Before this, the problem of katchi abadis was not so visible.

#### **Approaches to resolve the issue of Katchi Abadis**

In the past CDA made efforts, from time to time, to address the issue of katchi abadis i.e., i) by construction of small houses for workers, ii) allotment of small plots at subsidized rates within developed sectors to dwellers of katchi abadis and other workers, iii) provision of adequate number of small plots in the sectoral plans, iv) Resettlement of dwellers of katchi abadis at Farash (1991) and v) exercising control over the expansion of katchi abadis. However, these measures were taken in bits and pieces and not as a comprehensive plan and policy to address the issue. Therefore, their impact was not significant.

In 1995 CDA initiated efforts to formulate a comprehensive policy about katchi abadis. A three-day workshop was organized by CDA in collaboration with UN ESCAP and UNDP to evolve doable options for existing katchi abadis. The workshop concluded in favor of the regularization and upgradation of katchi abadis at their existing location. In 1997 CDA approved the upgradation of Six katchi abadis not falling within R.O.W of roads, utilities, and green areas. A small survey team was raised to carry out socio-economic and physical surveys.

In 1999 UNESCAP and UNDP provided funds to expedite the survey work on 10 katchi abadis and evolve the development plan. To facilitate housing for low-income groups entire Sector I-15 was planned for them. 9,500 plots of 3,5 & 7 marlas were allotted at an affordable rate. It was also decided that in the future all Sectors to have at least 350 plots of 3 marla (90.75 sq. yd).

For rehabilitation of katchi abadis a Cell was established in 1998 before this the affairs of katchi abadi were looked after by the Regional Planning Directorate. Currently, against the sanctioned staff of 21 officers/officials, only one officer and one official have been working in this Cell. No vehicle is available for field visits. They are doing nothing but only responding to the queries of the higher-ups, if any, regarding katchi abadis. They have been incapacitated to perform any duty according to the functions of the katchi abadi Cell, i.e., monitoring, vigilance, etc.

#### **a) Model Urban Shelter Project (MUSP): Farash – Islamabad**

To accommodate 1634 dwellers of katchi abadis i.e., Muslim Colony, Essa Nagri, Dhoke Najju, and Haq Bahu, CDA finalized a project, namely Model Urban Shelter Project, Farash. The scheme has been planned in three pockets which are spread over an area of 165 acres consisting of 4000 plots measuring 3 marla each.

Four of the ten katchi abadis in Islamabad have been built within the right-of-way of roads, on allotted plots, or in sensitive areas and have to be relocated. One of them called the Muslim Colony has been selected for relocation to a permanent site at Farash where existing households of this abadi will be allotted pre-developed plots. Development at Farash will be incremental. Initial services will be limited to the absolute minimum and will include the provision of public water tanks, hand pumps, pavement of major roads, leveling/dressing of streets and public transport routes.

The price of the plots has been kept affordable for the dwellers of the katchi abadi. For the present level of development Rs. 21,000/- would be payable for the plot. Out of this Rs. 7000/- will be the down payment. The remaining price will be payable in easy monthly installments spread over three years. The possession of the plot would be given on the payment of the down payment and the transfer of the title on payment of all installments and construction of the house as per Building Regulations of CDA.

The procedure for handing over possession of the plot followed the “Khuda Ki Basti” model. This has ensured the exclusion of land speculators. A “Reception Area” at the site of the project was established providing a site office of CDA and temporary shelters comprising tents, water tanks, toilets, etc. for 25 families/households. At the CDA office, the entitled households from the Muslim Colony would deposit the down payment and receive registration for the allocation of the plot. Possession of the plot was, however, handed over after the entire household moved to Farash, along with its belongings, and stayed in the “Reception Area” for at least one week. After taking over the possession of the plot, the household is expected to live on it. No allotment orders will be issued until all installments are paid and the house is built as per Building Regulations prescribed by CDA for the project area. Because of this restriction, if a household leaves the plot, the allocation can be canceled and the plot withdrawn (National Report, 2001).

#### **4. Conclusions and Recommendations**

There are many factors responsible for the emergence of katchi abadis but two major factors are the market price of land being unaffordable for the urban poor and weak control of CDA.

In Islamabad, sanitary workers or people from lower socioeconomic groups who work primarily in the private sector make up the majority of Katchi Abadi residents.

CDA had adopted different strategies to tackle the issue of katchi abadis with the financial support of international donor agencies, technical guidance of national experts on katchi abadis, and participation of the residents of these abadis. CDA has been successful in handling the issue amicably. The Model Urban Shelter Project and the re-development of Charles/Hansa Colony are worth mentioning.

Every strategy formulated by the CDA, in the past, to solve the issue of katchi abadis in Islamabad has an essential component of strict control on the expansion of the katchi abadis, and the emergence of new katchi abadis. Without this component, the success of the plan cannot be ensured. The rehabilitation plan of Charles/Hansa Colony has been successful only because of control of the expansion of the Katchi Abadi. The dwellers were made clear before the start of the rehabilitation programme that the efforts of CDA would only be successful if the community itself exercised control over the expansion of the abadi. They should be vigilant that no newcomer enters the abadi. Only due to this factor they are reaping the benefit of CDA's rehabilitation program. The success of the resettlement plan at MUSP Farash also relied on the fact that the expansion of the abadi is controlled. Without exercising strict control, the implementation of the plan as envisaged is not practicable.

To control the mushroom growth of katchi abadis CDA prepared a four-phased plan in June 2015 for eradication of 43 illegal slums (Malik Asad, 2015). These slums not only have been built illegally on CDA land but the residents have also established illegal connections of utility outlets. "Many crimes have been traced to the inhabitants of these abadis" and the slum also provides 'hideouts' to criminals. However, CDA has refrained from taking action against katchi abadis.

Since 2015 katchi abadis in Islamabad have been increasing in number and size at a fast pace. Now there are more than 43 katchi abadis in Islamabad. Illegal settlers are freely occupying CDA land in Islamabad especially encroaching Right-of-way of highways, principal roads, etc. The existing katchi abadis have started 2<sup>nd</sup> Storey on the existing structures in Tent Colony against the policy of CDA and have been changing the land use from residential to commercial. Since the selling of property illegally constructed on CDA's land is going on without any check rich people among the dwellers of Katchi Abadi have increased their area of illegal occupation (plot size) by purchasing rights of occupation from adjoining occupants, informally. They have been changing the land use from residential to commercial. Now their car ownership rate has also increased, and they are also facing parking problems. At night they park their vehicles on the dual carriageway, the Right-of-way of which has already been encroached by construction of illegal structures. They are constantly a source of discomfort for the road users and the planned communities in the surrounding area. In Sector G, a beautiful hillock which was part of the green area has been encroached by the squatters. This was a strategic location to be used by the defense forces in case of attack by the enemy.

Refraining the CDA from acting against katchi abadis would not only wipe the previous efforts of the CDA but incapacitate the CDA from acting in the future against so many katchi abadis with such huge magnitude, simultaneously. As a result, Islamabad would become 'Slumabad' within a very short period. The dwellers of Katchi Abadi have encroached on the Right-of-way (ROW) of Highways, Principal Roads, developed plots, green areas, nullahs, etc. In this situation, the implementation of the Master Plan of Islamabad is also not possible.

The Master Plan of Islamabad be disseminated periodically through print media, seminars, and workshops to enhance its awareness among the public, educational institutions, public representatives, and specifically those controlling the affairs of CDA. Public participation may be ensured in the decision-making and policymaking in CDA. In this way, more practicable decisions and effective policymaking could be achieved. Decisions taken in haste, with poor knowledge of the Master Plan, show the incompetency of CDA and become a source of trouble for CDA. However, once such decisions are taken and resources are committed, it is very difficult to reverse them (Botka, 1995). Successful implementation of the Master Plan necessitates aggressive land acquisition and constant control well in advance of actual development.

Only the very wealthy can now access Islamabad due to the high cost of land. To make the city accessible to all social groups and to restore the equilibrium that is steadily being lost, alternative policies and approaches to land development and pricing may be investigated (Botka, 1995). Procedures for acquiring land need to be streamlined and adjusted to reflect current circumstances. If the rate of land supply is slowed, illegal forms of development spread more widely and have a negative impact on the entire urban ecosystem.

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