

MAPPING POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN PAKISTAN, 2006-2011

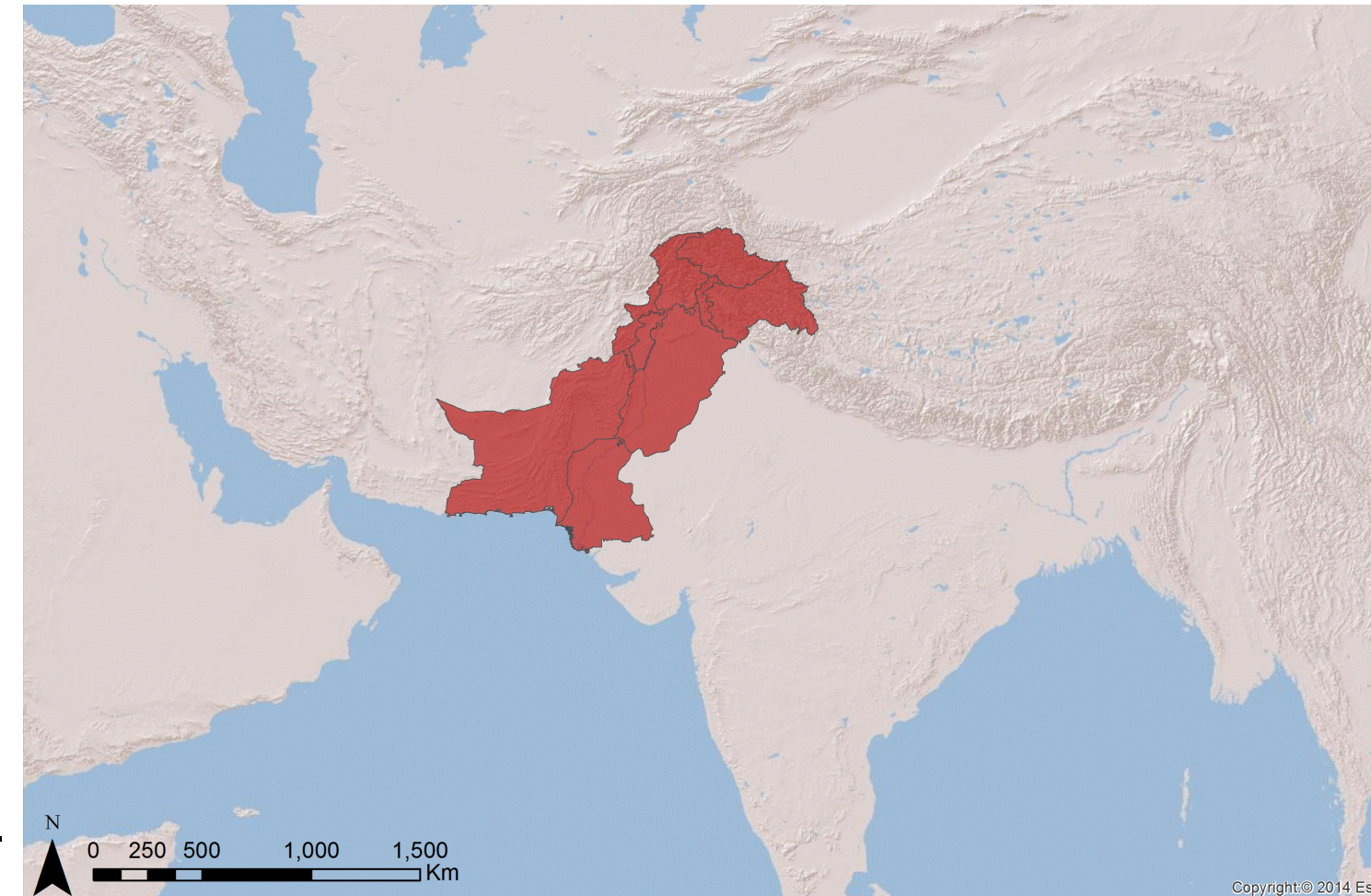
A Geospatial Analysis of Assassinations, Guerrilla Attacks, and Terrorist Attacks

Poster Design and Cartography by Travis Douglas Wheeler, May 2015

Project Overview

U.S. and Pakistani policymakers often cast the violence orchestrated by Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and other Pakistani militant organizations as terrorism, irrespective of the tactics and targets evident in specific attacks. Indeed, many of these groups are U.S.-designated Foreign Terrorist Organizations—and they all target non-combatant civilians. This narrative, however, obscures the fact that Pakistani terrorists and insurgents engage in a wide variety of political violence, including, but not limited to, terrorism. This project examines the three types of political violence most commonly associated with the TTP and other non-state armed groups: 1) Assassinations; 2) Guerrilla Attacks; and 3) Terrorist Attacks. It maps the geographic density of these types of political violence since 2006—an important baseline year before the TTP's launch in late 2007—through 2011, the last year for which data is available. It also explores year-to-year changes in these three manifestations of violence, focusing on the 2008-2009 period that coincides with the dramatic spread of the TTP-led insurgency across Pakistan. Since preventing assassinations, guerrilla attacks, and terrorist attacks might require different security strategies, mapping the geographic concentration and evolution of such violence will help the Pakistani state deploy military, law enforcement, and first responder resources in a more appropriate manner.

lence studied. In the attribute tables of each data layer, I added columns for incident, injury, and fatality counts for each year and type of violence by district, using the Field Calculator to run the relevant calculations. I



then used the overall counts to perform an analysis of year-to-year change in assassinations, guerrilla attacks, and terrorist attacks by district. After performing these steps in Excel and ArcMap, I used standard deviation classification, graduated quantities, and a diverging color scheme to highlight and assess the year-to-year change in these three tactics by district. Finally, I normalized the violence counts with district population data—obtained using the Zonal Statistics tool—to show their geographic density over this project's six-year observation period.

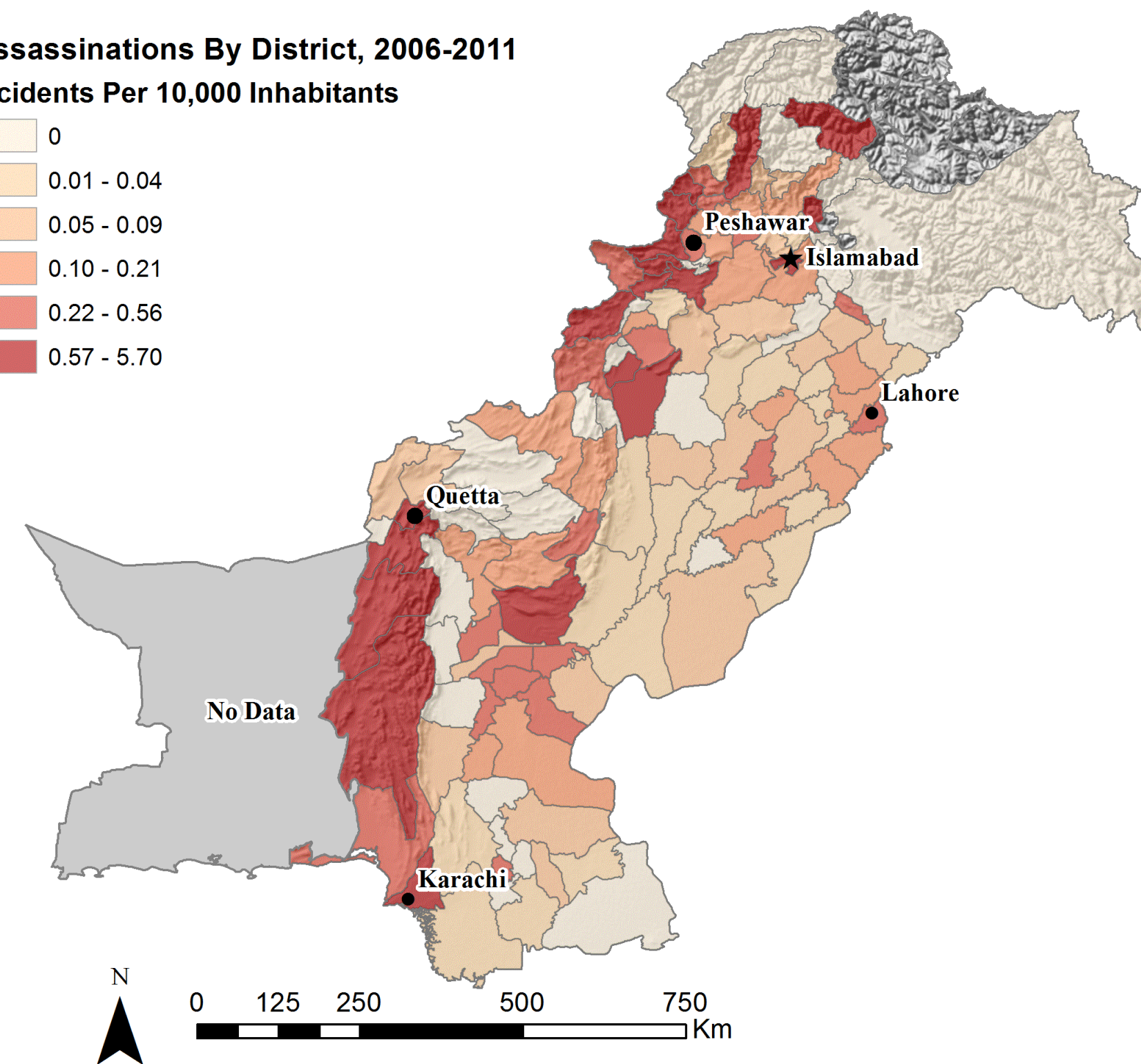
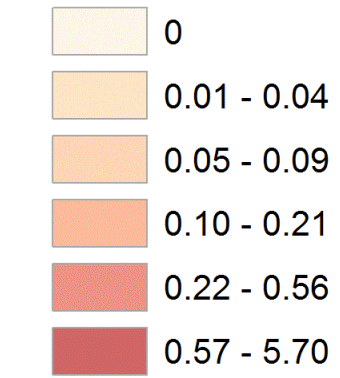
Conclusions

U.S. and Pakistani policymakers should bear in mind the following geospatial insights as they counter non-state armed group's engagement in political violence:

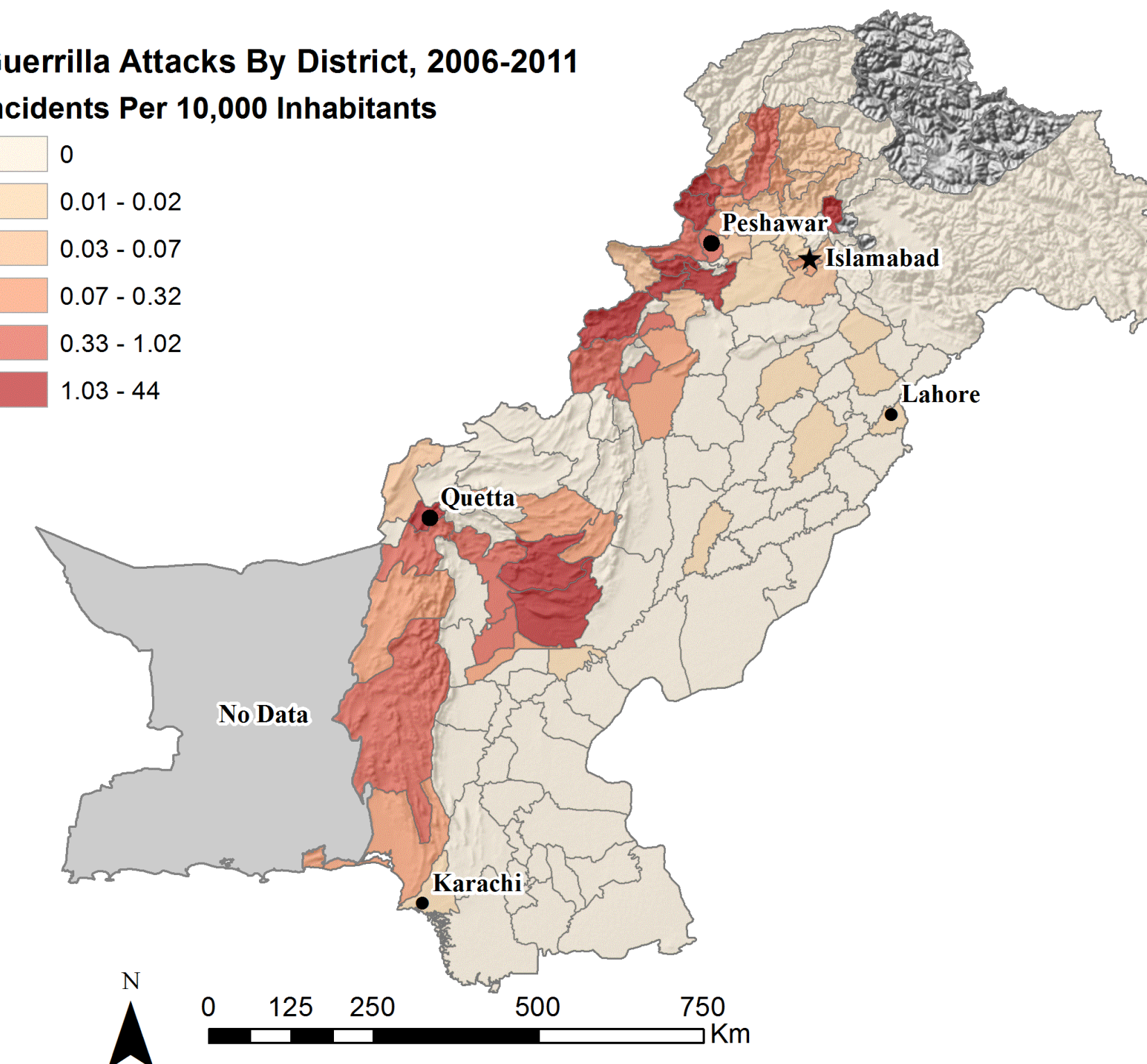
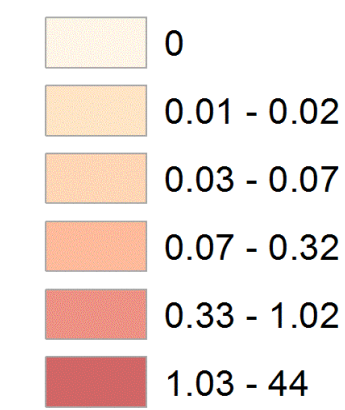
1. The prevalence of the particular kind of political violence is, in part, determined by geography. While assassinations and terrorist attacks plague several districts, guerrilla attacks were more concentrated, affecting: parts of Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces; the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA); and urban centers, albeit to a lesser extent.
2. Political violence fluctuates—and state interventions must change in response. The expansion of assassinations in the 2008-2009 period was dramatic, suggesting the TTP's inability to engage in direct military confrontations while also highlighting the need for more law enforcement resources across the country.

DENSITY OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE BY DISTRICT, 2006-2011

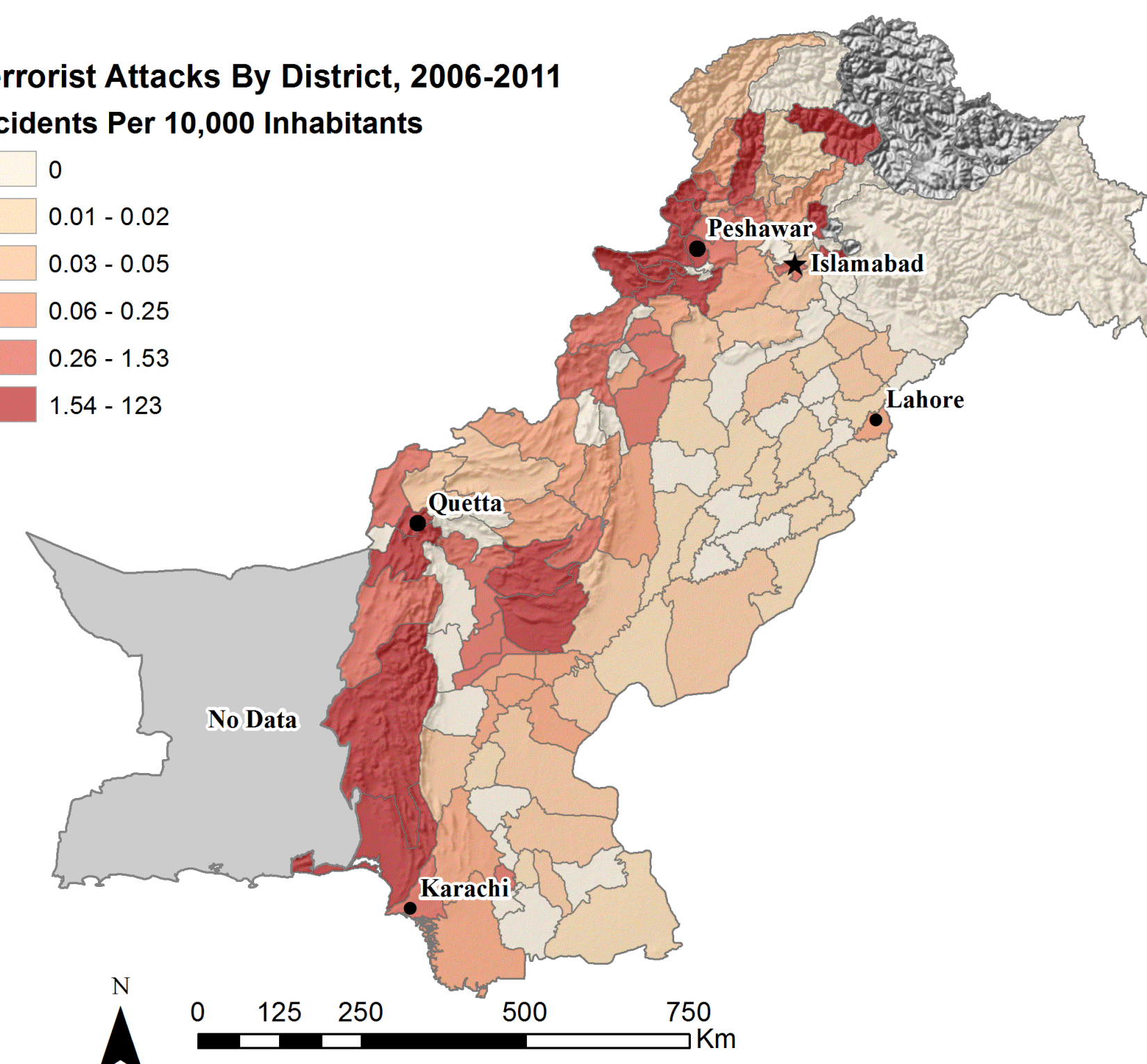
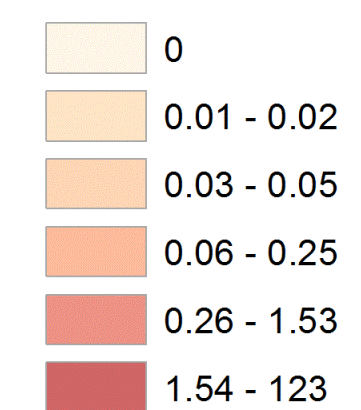
Assassinations By District, 2006-2011
Incidents Per 10,000 Inhabitants



Guerrilla Attacks By District, 2006-2011
Incidents Per 10,000 Inhabitants



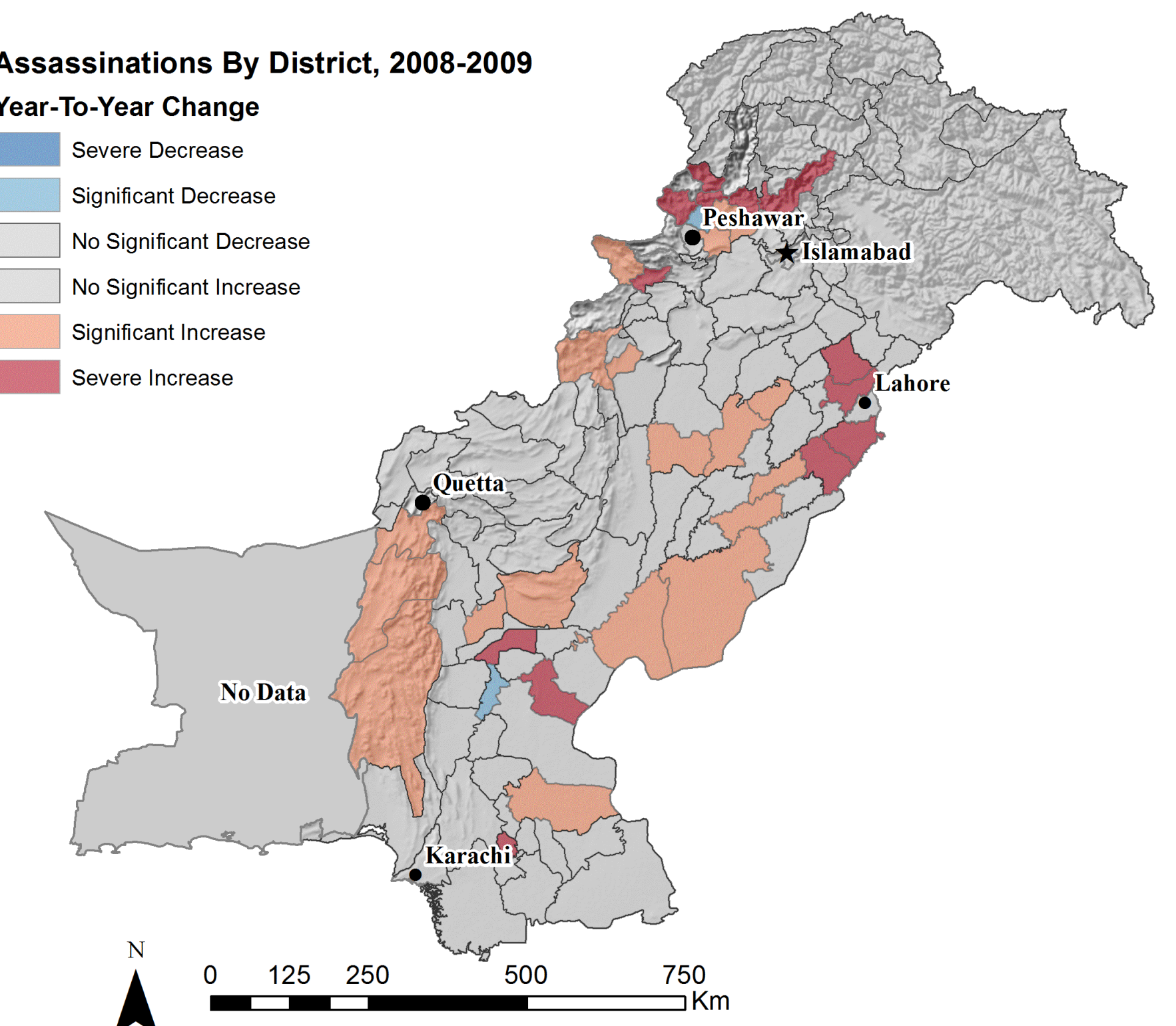
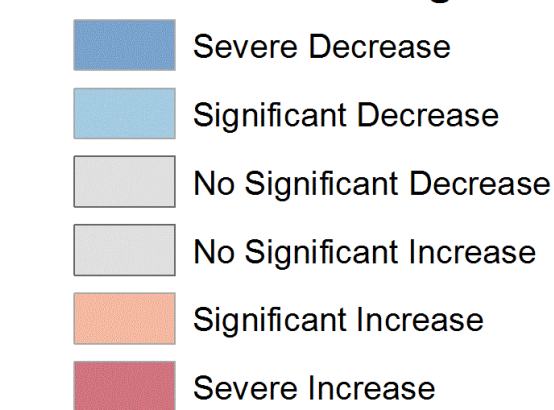
Terrorist Attacks By District, 2006-2011
Incidents Per 10,000 Inhabitants



YEAR-TO-YEAR CHANGE IN POLITICAL VIOLENCE BY DISTRICT, 2008-2009

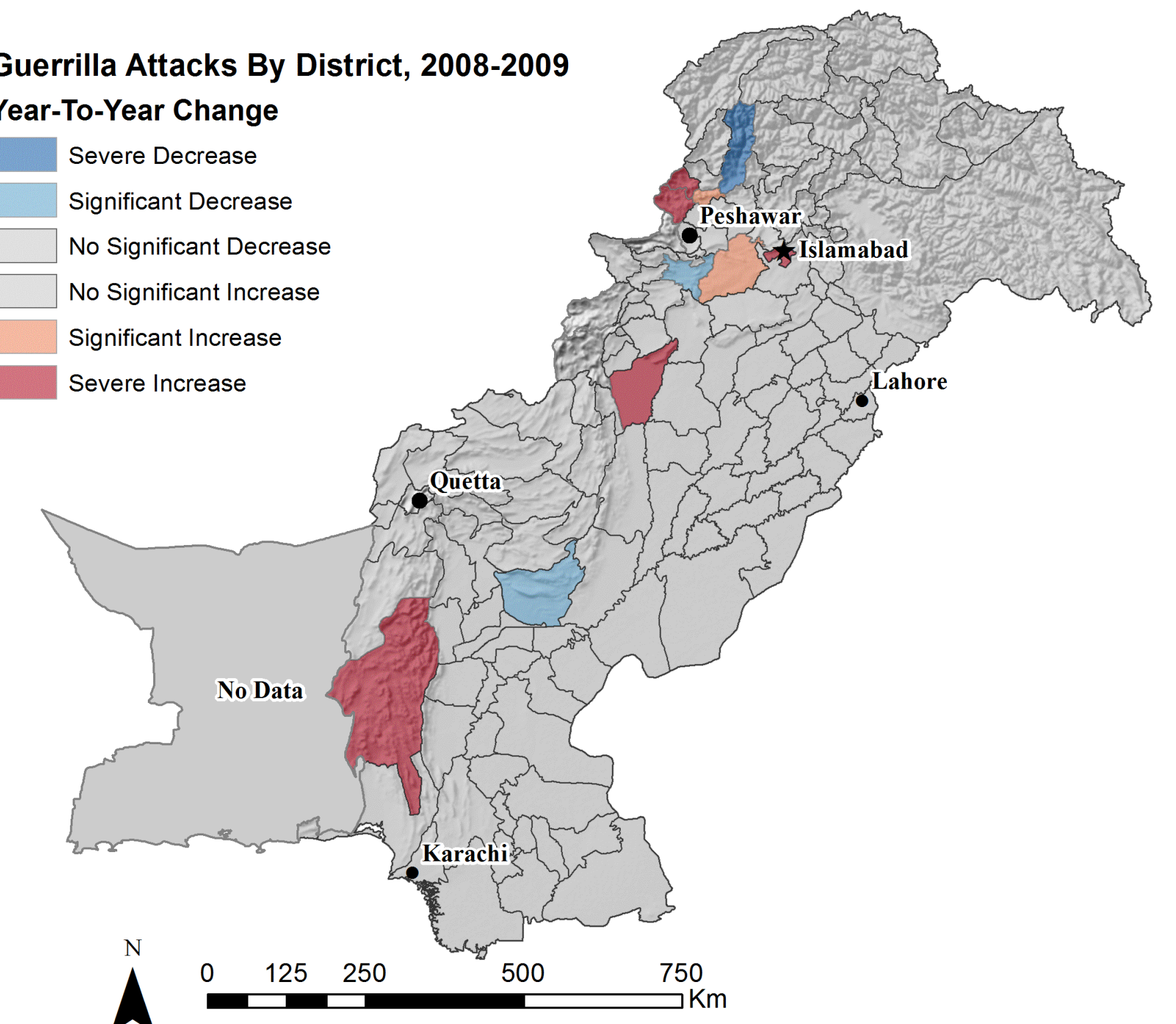
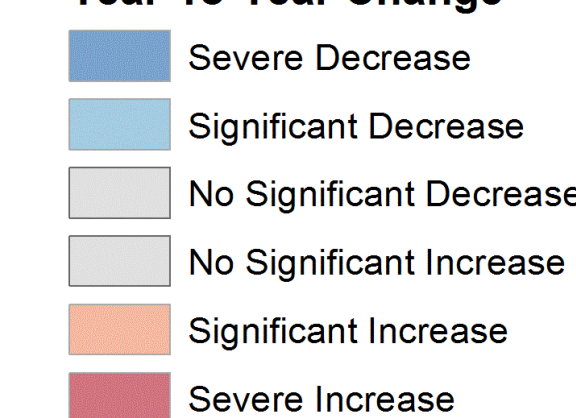
Assassinations By District, 2008-2009

Year-To-Year Change



Guerrilla Attacks By District, 2008-2009

Year-To-Year Change



Terrorist Attacks By District, 2008-2009

Year-To-Year Change

