

# Can the LLA be a Vehicle for Transformative Adaptation? (Draft)

**Prof. Mizan R. Khan, Ph.D**

Deputy Director, ICCCAD, IUB, and  
Programme Director

LDC Universities' Consortium on Climate Change  
(LUCCC)

--

Presentation at the on-line Int'l Symposium  
on Evidence for Action: Aligning the Climate & SDG Agenda

IDS, Sussex University

20-22 July 2021

# Outline of my Talk



- ▶ LLA – the Context
- ▶ LLA & Transformative Adaptation (TrAd) – What do they mean?
- ▶ Local/Space/Place & Power
- ▶ Reality: Int'l/National Governance, Fin
- ▶ Can it be done? A Framework proposed

# LLA- the Context

- ▶ In dev engineering, organizing themes/principles keep changing; the latest accretions in climate change are Resilience, TrAd, LLA, decentralized climate fin, etc.
- ▶ Adaptation (Ad) was an afterthought in the UNFCCC, it gradually moved upward for some reasons we know
- ▶ Over the last decade Ad deficit continues to widen due to lack of leadership, capacity, finance & tech
- ▶ Centralized, top-down initiatives were not delivering
- ▶ Rich evidence established the efficacy of LLA & CBA, but locally-led actions yet are far from the mode
- ▶ So the GCA came up with  
the tracks of LLA & NbS
- ▶ One theme of CAS 2021 was the LLA

# My Argument

- ▶ Ad is inherently local or regional as CC impacts differ spatially & socially – across regions & socio-econ groups
- ▶ So Ad actions must remain bottom-up, with National govts providing a facilitative policy-instit framework
- ▶ But what is the reality? Can the mainstream model - unreformed - realize the LLA potential? A business-unusual approach is needed
- ▶ What actually should we mean by LLA & TrAd?
- ▶ Under what conditions LLA can realize its potential?
- ▶ I argue for a need to reconnect local/space with power – a revaluation of space, with focus given both to *physical* – situating human artifacts in the natural world, & *institutional*, situating human relations within the hierarchies of political-administrative power
- ▶ Along this line, a 7-element Framework of LLA is proposed

# What should we mean by LLA?

- ▶ LLA is regarded as a shift in Ad paradigm – meaning a shift in fundamental approaches & assumptions in existing practices
- ▶ Literature shows still overwhelming practices in Ad are driven not by local actors who experience first hand the CCIs, but by those living far away from those locale/space/places
- ▶ If we really mean a paradigm shift, we must ask upfront - Who, What, How & When, etc. & all this is related to power structure
- ▶ In LLA, the first `L' should define what is local, what is its relationship with space or place; the 2<sup>nd</sup> `L' is central – locally `led' – this inquiry can better inform the challenges in applying the LLA principles
- ▶ Next, who are the leading local actors? Local govt functionaries – officials & elected Reps, local CSO/NGO leaders, local business & communities at large
- ▶ LG officials are transferable, so the local elected Reps, community & business leaders must lead, with LGs supporting the process
- ▶ So, LLA is wider than CBA, which subsumes the latter

# The Legacy is: Focus on Temporal over Spatial

- ▶ Social theory up until the 1960s has emphasized on the temporal, i.e. the historical axis as determinants of human relations to the detriment of the spatial; Foucault wrote (1986):
  - ▶ Space was treated as the dead, the fixed, the undialectical, the impossible. Time, on the contrary, was richness, fecundity, life, dialectic. To recover from this historical devaluation, to make space visible again as a fundamental referent of social being, requires a major rethinking not only of the concreteness of spatial practices but also of the philosophising abstractions of modern ontology and epistemology
- ▶ So a renewed tradition of critical analysis of power & space began since the 1960s
- ▶ In such a reevaluation of space, focus is given both to *physical* – situating human institutions in connection to the natural world, & *institutional*, situating human relations within hierarchies of power: “The world is `out there’ but power is also `up there’ (M’Gonigle, 1999).
- ▶ An ex: Schumacher’s (1973)- Small is beautiful... is an attempt to reframe dev projects, aligning small-scale local initiatives with space & power

# Getting back Local as shaping the Global

- ▶ Locale/places change at a rapid pace due to modernization & globalization
- ▶ As a result, some scholars refer to the 'erasure of place' (Escobar 2001), 'non-places' (Relph 1976), or 'placelessness' (Auge 1995)
- ▶ Society, people's identity & places have become fluid (Bauman 2012)
- ▶ But Horlings et al (2020) while elaborating the EU SUSPLACE Program argue & I fully agree that place is more relevant than ever – it's not just a blank canvas, nor just a geographical entity, with varied resources, but embodies culture, values, ethos & relations
- ▶ We can look at a locale/place just as an administrative unit, but relationally oriented scholars point to actors/relations/processes, networks, i.e. connectivity that stretch beyond admin boundaries (Ingold 2008; Woods 2015; Massey 2005; Pierce et al. 2010)
- ▶ So we need to challenge the view of local as product of the global, & establish instead the local construction of the global (Massey 2005)
- ▶ Nation state as the omni-potent institution faces challenges from above & below – by business & citizen groups, so to strengthen both subsidiarity & local value chains based on social entrepreneurship

# What is TrAd?

- ▶ Ref to Tr is in the SDGs preamble (“transformative steps [...] to a sustainable and resilient path)(UN, 2018), in the GCF mandate (“paradigm shift towards [...] climate-resilient development pathways”)(UNFCCC, 2012), and in the Paris Agreement Article 7 (“greater adaptation needs can involve greater adaptation costs”).
- ▶ There is a growing academic Lit, but I define TrAd `as the end result of enhanced resilience and adaptive capacity on a sustainable basis against spatial & socio-econ vulnerabilities from current & future CCLs
- ▶ TrAd is frequently contrasted with incremental adaptation, as a continuum, beginning with reactive, coping strategies
- ▶ TrAd can be characterized by:
  - ▶ system-wide changes/restructure, such as human & ecological as an integrated whole, with focus on sustainability
  - ▶ grounding human artifacts on spaces/places in the natural world
  - ▶ Questioning the effectiveness of existing systems, social injustices and power imbalances
  - ▶ an integrated approach to CCA & DRR
  - ▶ a focus on the current and future environmental and climate changes

# A Lens of Pol Ecology can strengthen LLA to realize TrAd

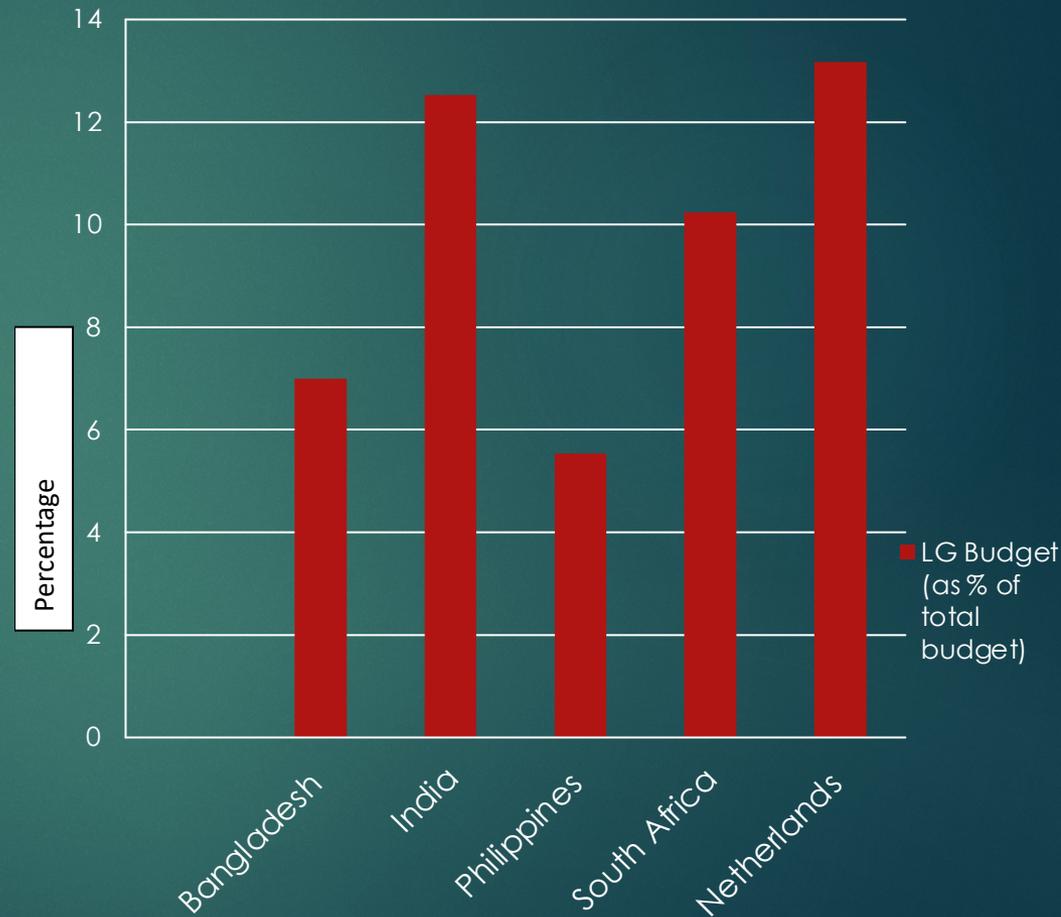
- ▶ **Political Ecology**: a powerful discourse combining elements of Ecology & Pol Econ, that seeks to ground centralist hierarchies to place & people, with communities controlling most of their life needs
- ▶ As CC impacts on NRs, habitats, human artifacts, which are local/regional, **pol econ of adaptation** is also local, but connected at other scales including global; so focus on new territoriality connecting the community with space
- ▶ There is a structural antipathy to central regulation of ecol resources; so `eco-system-based management/adaptation (EbM/EbA), is advocated (CBD, UNFCCC, IUCN), which grounds econ activities to fit within a healthy ecosystem functioning; so this is not just technical, but transformative of the industrial/centralist/corporatized frame
- ▶ This will contribute to turn on its head the existing approach of global-local to **local-global**, thus reconstructing what has been deconstructed during the 20<sup>th</sup> century - human person as members embedded in locales/spaces; it's the antonym of castle in the forest
- ▶ Market mechanisms will remain, but must be under local control

# Mismatch bet Global Calls & Reality in Funding?

- ▶ GCA's flagship report, "**Adapt Now**" calls for increasing decentralised funding to LGs, CBOs .. to identify/prioritize, implement & monitor CC Ad
- ▶ LDCs target under **Vision 2050** - 70% of CF down to local level
- ▶ This is now more important as local communities on the frontlines face quadruple distresses - COVID-19, env & climate crises & poverty
- ▶ But under the Grand Bargain 2016 on humanit assist, direct funding flows to local level remain small – 4.7% in 2020 against a target of 25% (ODI)
- ▶ <10% from global CF was targeted at the local level (Soanes, et al. 2017)
- ▶ 80:20 ratio relate to 2 aspects – 20% Ad fin against Mitig; only 20% as grants; even for LDCs – 2/3 is loan- a new CI Debt Trap
- ▶ 20% of blilateral Ad fin goes to LDCs & increasingly ODA is used as Ad fin, while overall ODA goes down
- ▶ Only 3% of LDC Ad fin needs bet 2020-30; only 3% of LDC Ad fin targeted to women groups, while only 9% targeted to non-state entrepreneurs & NGOs (Soanes, et al. 2021) - very poor support to promoting LLA agency
- ▶ Very low level of donor transparency (ibid)
- ▶ Few agencies endorsed the LLA Ps – FCDO, AF, GEF, CIF, UNCDF, UNDP

# Status at Nat Level: LG Budget 2021

Country	LG Budget (in USD bn)	Total Budget (in USD bn)	LG Budget as % of total budget
Bangladesh	4.979	71.234	<b>6.99%</b>
India	58.520	466.913	<b>12.53%</b>
Philippines	4.944	89.386	<b>5.53%</b>
South Africa	9.579	93.592	<b>10.23%</b>
Netherlands	76.582	581.533	<b>13.17%</b>

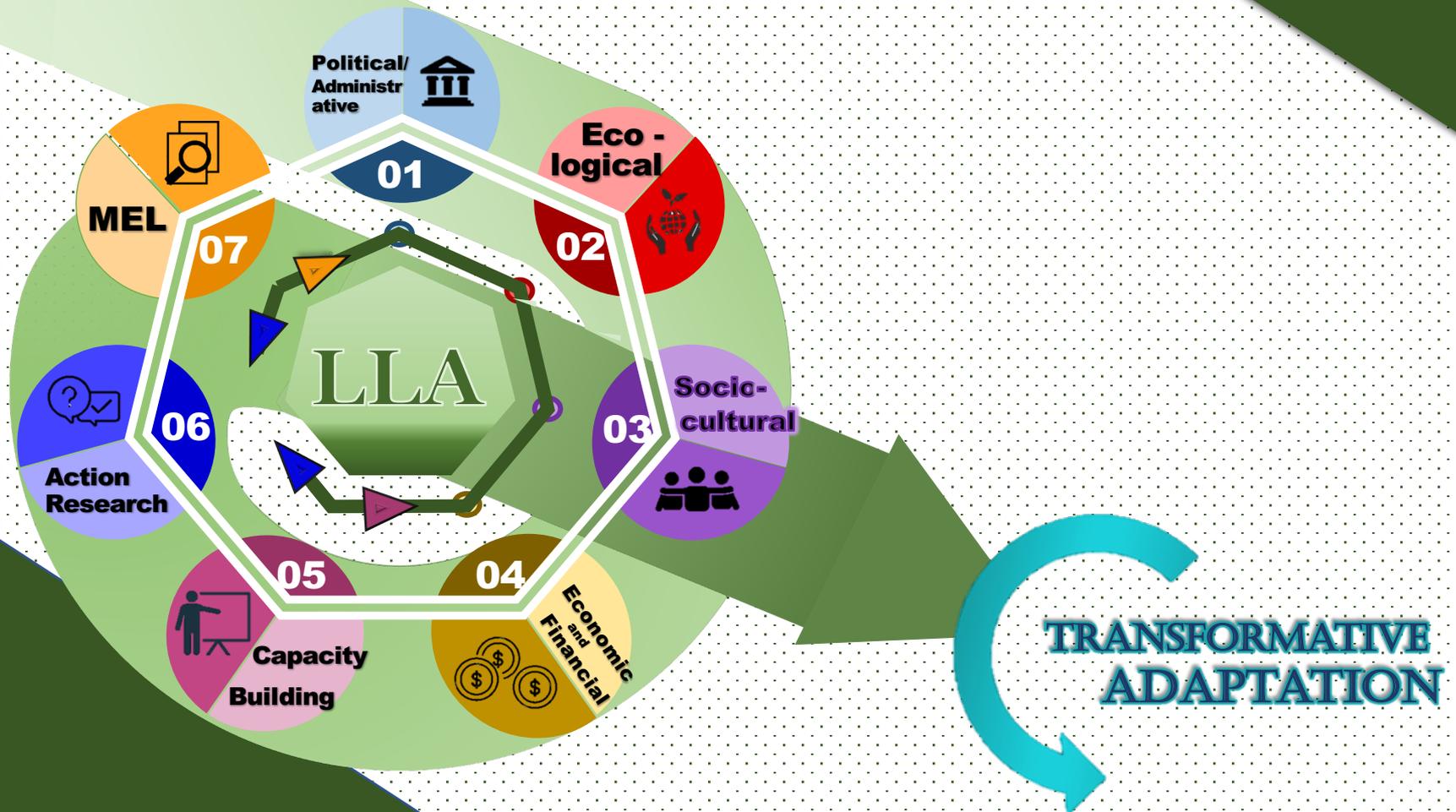


Country allocations to LG greatly differ

# Capacity Building, Action Research & MEL

- ▶ Earlier, supply-driven short-term project-based consultancy-led CB under TA programs did not work well
- ▶ Now focus to be given to demand-driven CB for LG elected Reps, officials, local CSO & business leaders & communities – in local langs
- ▶ CB to focus on understanding of local CCl, designing of fundable progs & implementation skills, as well as on fiduciary mgt
- ▶ Transparency & Accountability – both top-down & bottom-up
- ▶ Experience in Ad interventions is relatively new, so a learning by doing approach has to be taken
- ▶ This is where Action Research is extremely important, that integrates local/indigenous & scientific Kn & methods – ARA a new platform
- ▶ Finally, MEL is extremely important: Big data won't do; National aggregate data mask spatial & socio-econ/gender differentiation; so for LLA, we really need to generate sub-national and local level data & indicators for effective MEL
- ▶ In these 3 elements – CB, AR & MEL – universities must play the central hub – what our LUCCC is about..

# LLA: A Conceptual Framework



**Thankyou**