

**Adapting to Climate Change or Constructing Climates for Adaptation: Translating
Global Discourses and Local Realities into Projects**

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Abstract

As climate change is likely to have disproportional effects on the social and natural systems of marginalised groups in developing countries, climate change adaptation (CCA) is now recognised as a ‘development’ issue by the climate regime. It has correspondingly, given rise to a set of discourses and policies in view of adaptation interventions in developing countries. This paper investigates how these discourses and policies are transmitted through internationally-financed projects. We observe that they follow the same pattern (framing, design, mechanisms and actors) as development-based external aid. Yet, in the process from their conception to their implementation, these policies and discourses do not follow a simple top-down approach but are socially negotiated, involving ‘brokers and translators’ roles (Lewis & Mosse 2006). Familiarised with external intervention practices and tools, these ‘brokers and translators’, hailing from the educated middle-class, play a congruence role in translating multi-dimensional social and environmental issues into ‘community needs’ by applying the classical tools of development interventions, namely ‘participatory’ approaches, therefore legitimising/illegitimising certain actions and producing project realities. The ‘development machine’ (Ferguson 1994) has been running without interruption as marginalised groups previously known as poor in need of development intervention are being relabelled as vulnerable in need of adaptation through development. The paper explains why this process aimed at reducing vulnerabilities may not be achieved effectively.

1. Introduction

According to the growing and widely accepted scientific evidence, the changing climate is likely to have severe impacts on social, economic, and natural systems, including disproportional effects on the marginalised groups of people in developing countries,¹ consequently increasing the existing inequities between different socio-economic groups (Parry et al. 2007). The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC, hereafter referred to as the ‘Convention’) came out of the 1992 Earth Summit² as the international policy framework to deal with the consequences of climate change. The Convention outlined two major responses: reducing the sources of greenhouse gases (mitigation) and making adjustments to the existing economic, natural, and social systems to minimise the impacts of climate change (adaptation).

Since adaptation has been established as a key response to deal with climate change, a growing body of international policy responses, academic research, and practical interventions has surfaced. The major development aid agencies have incorporated climate change adaptation as a key area of intervention in developing countries (DCs), arguing that climate change will severely hamper past and future development initiatives (Huq et al. 2004). In this debate, marginalised groups of people living in DCs have been identified as the most ‘vulnerable’ to the impacts of changing climate due to their weaker ‘adaptive capacity’ and sole dependence on natural resources for their livelihoods (UNFCCC 1992; Parry et al. 2007). This international response raises important questions about its similarities and differences to previous development initiatives, about its concrete operations and governance, and its social and environmental consequences, especially in terms of its implications for different socio-economic groups.

Based on empirical work in Pakistan, we provide a detailed analysis of how a globally established policy framework – the worldview, issues and solutions agreed upon by the ‘climate regime’s actors’ (Yamin and Depledge 2004) – is transmitted and implemented into the national and sub-national contexts, what kinds of actors are engaged in this process, what

¹ We use the categories of ‘developing countries’ following the United Nations practice, while understanding there are huge differences among and within these countries. Marginality characterises groups placed in spatial, ecological, political and economic subaltern positions with regard to the national society of which they are part, e.g. in slums or marginal lands.

² The UNFCCC officially came into force on 21 March 1994.

specific kinds of ideas, lexicon and activities they rely upon, and why these are apparently accepted by the ‘target beneficiaries’.

We assume here that people and societies not only respond to the physical impacts of climate change but also to the social construction of climate change enacted through discourses, and associated policies and projects. Even the best thought policy framework, when implemented in the multifaceted web of social realities on the ground, tends to enter into highly complicated policy processes. Our purpose is to understand how the actors involved at the national and sub-national levels contextualise and appropriate globally conceived frameworks into concrete projects, how they resolve conflicting issues, and what are the consequences for the marginalised groups and for the achievement of stated policy goals.

In this paper, we provide a detailed analysis of how international climate change adaptation policies and discourses have significantly influenced Pakistan’s national climate change policy documents and on how the global framework has been transmitted through internationally-financed projects from the national to the local level.

2. Development experts and representation

A major category of actors involved in the transmission of global adaptation policies and discourses are the national ‘development experts’, especially non-governmental organizations managers, academics, consultants or state agencies bureaucrats. Originating from the educated elites, they have the expertise and the international and national networks that enable them to play a central role in the ‘norms cascade’ process (Finnemore and Sikkink 1998) – the process of transmission of discourses and policies into the national context, based on their translation,³ and resulting in their internalisation, rejection or adaption (Hufty 2011).

This role as ‘brokers’ (Lewis and Mosse 2006; Bierschenk et al. 2000) allows them some influence over the process, but conditioned on a their adherence to the dominant international norms and policy framework. Kothari (2005, 425) shows that the “increasing professionalization of international development has enabled the expansion of the ‘neoliberal agenda of development agencies’ where ‘development experts’ play a central role in promoting ‘unilinear notions of modernising progress’”. This agenda is associated with the application of a toolkit based on community-based and participatory approaches, which claims to bring people’s voices to the surface but have resulted in assigning additional power

³ In the sense of the construction of a question, and the negotiations and adjustments in view of a common understanding of it (Callon 1986).

and authority to ‘experts’ mostly located outside the local contexts (Mosse 2001), and have led to the neutralization of dissenting voices (Kothari 2005). In fact, the development enterprise is a machinery that converts social realities into ‘technical problems’ and “a matter of rational decision making to be entrusted to that group of people – the development professionals – whose specialised knowledge allegedly qualified them for the task” (Escobar 2011: 52), whereas the autonomous presence of marginalized groups (e.g. women, indigenous, peasants) is largely undesired as it can undermine the experts’ monopoly on development brokerage.

The top level of development experts in the South has tended to internalize the values of their Western counterparts, promoting managerial approaches⁴ and “projecting developmentalist / ethnocentric mythologies onto the subaltern” (Kapoor 2004: 630), to a point that the geographic North-South divide of experts has become blurred and that a ‘class apartheid’ has emerged (Sharpe and Spivak 2003). The Third World or the subaltern is produced by this class of people who originate both from the Third World and from the West (Said 1978).

As established by Mosse (2001) and Bebbington (2005), in participatory processes the non-governmental organizations clearly do construct representations of the people they speak for and influence what comes out with the label of ‘local knowledge’ or ‘community needs’, often not in the interest of marginalised groups. This problem is structural, as NGOs activities are largely donor-controlled and as they essentially adopt a top-down approach, despite the claims of participation, since a managerial approach enable them to govern more efficiently the development enterprise in view of their own constraints (Townsend et al. 2002). In this logics, NGOs are increasingly being encouraged to reshuffle, from being a “source of innovation, organisational pluralism, alternative knowledge creation” towards acting merely as “contractor for national governments and international aid agencies” (Hulme 1994: 257). National NGOs reliance on international aid agencies for financing their organisational structures, programmes and projects suggests that they lack autonomy when it comes to promoting alternative ideas that do not match these agencies’ agendas. This indicates the degree of influence of the aid agencies in the selection worldviews and ideas on which the national development agendas are based, even if there is recontextualisation and ‘translation’.

⁴ Based on the belief that a rational, standardized, technical and modern approach leads to major efficiency – achieves a maximum productivity for the minimum effort. This is at the expense of history, culture and political sensitivity.

3. Brokers and translators

The concept of ‘brokers and translators’, Drawing on the work of Bierschenk, Chauveau, and Olivier de Sardan (2000) as well as Lewis and Mosse (2006), is illuminating for analysing the transmission of global discourses and their application in local contexts. The study of brokerage – les courtiers du développement - is a long-standing theme in anthropology that challenges structuralist-functionalist models, “highlighting the ways in which social actors operate as active agents, building social, political, and economic roles, rather than simply following normative scripts” (Lewis and Mosse 2006: 11). Brokers are actors and networks that claim to represent local people and play the role of connecting local with external actors, peasants and development institutions for example. Albeit not uniform, they can be seen as a class, which shares certain “competencies, strategies, and careers” as they come together through “mutual enrolment and the interlocking of interests that produces project realities” (ibid. 13), but also as individuals who compete for the resources and their position in the social field (Bourdieu 1992) of development experts.

Lewis and Mosse (2006: 2-5) identify three forms of engagements within development practice: (1) the instrumentalist, named after the work of researchers, consultants, managers, or bureaucrats, (2) the populist, which promotes “participatory, bottom-up approaches to development ‘and adheres to indigenous knowledge, and local capabilities” – e.g. Chambers (1972), and (3) the deconstructivist, which sees development as “a historically specific discourse of power of the West over the ‘developing’ world” – e.g. Escobar (1995) and Ferguson (1994). They take great care not to reduce the marginal actors and ‘beneficiaries’ to a passive role and not to overlook their agency and manipulation of the “rhetorics, rules, and rewards of aid delivery” (ibid: 4). They also stress that anthropological study of real-life situations of development practices and ‘development experts’ on the ground provides richer explanations than some simplistic populist or deconstructivist views.

However, while trying to avoid simplistic views, some central questions here are to understand, who defines what development or adaptation means in local contexts and what should be done to ‘develop’ the so-called ‘undeveloped’ groups of people? How do certain global ideas come to be realised as ‘community needs’ by the experts in the ‘development practice’ and mainstreamed into policy and practice?

Critical discourse analysis (Hajer 2006; Fairclough 2010) provides some insights and tools on how international discourses, such as climate change adaptation, are ‘contextualised’ by the

development brokers in such a way that appeal and ‘fit-in’ local contexts. The networks professionally linked to the adaptation framework, and operating at international, national, and sub-national levels, frame the issue of climate change in such a way that solutions are searched for in that frame, limiting other options and discussions. For example, in the adaptation discourse, ‘vulnerability’ is mostly attributed to climate change, although there are many other underlying social, economic, and political causes of people’s marginality (O’Brien et al. 2007; Ribot 2011).

Similarly, the concept of ‘symbolic power’ (Bourdieu 1991) argues that actors holding this power (e.g. experts, in this case) exert domination with the tacit consent of the dominated (powerless) groups, by imposing a particular worldview, which is usually considered ‘natural’. For Bourdieu, ‘utterances’ are not only signs to be understood and examined but are actually ‘*signs of wealth*’ and ‘*signs of authority*’ and, except in limited circumstances, language rarely functions as a ‘pure instrument of communication’ (ibid, 502, emphasis in original). Therefore, the dominated party has fewer choices and is forced to comply with that worldview; thereby, the idea gets reinforced and becomes ‘natural’. However, this does not mean that the people considered ‘beneficiaries’ in development discourse do not have agency. Rather, they participate in this (development) process with the hope of receiving some benefits, but do not necessarily shape or influence the discourse and decision making at large. It is also a fact that ideas and policies developed in the West (where power and money is situated) are more likely to circulate to the global South (where receivers are located) than vice versa (Merry 2006).

In addition to the ‘power of discourse’ in the identification and definition of problems, another important facet, ‘power over discourse’ (Ball 2012; Ball 1993), is useful in understanding how certain ideas are transformed, ‘contextualised’⁵, and adapted to local and national contexts, and finally, how different actors come together to form ‘discourse coalitions’ (Fairclough 2010, 165; Hajer 2006). These coalitions convert complex environmental issues into simple and understandable ‘storylines’ through ‘metaphors’ (Hajer 2006), find their place in the common language, and are uttered by different actors of this coalition who might not even have the same agendas and may have a different understanding

⁵ Fairclough (2010, 165) defines recontextualisation as appropriation or colonisation of one field or institution by another. Put simply, it can be described as taking elements or ideas from one context and place or adapt these in a new context

of the same issue (ibid). For example, the international aid agencies, international organisations, international and national NGOs, climate change networks, relevant governmental departments, experts, government officials, and community-based groups engaged in policy making, programme development, and implementation generally have differing worldviews on climate change, but they come together and form these discourse adaptation networks.

Our approach to discourse analysis is actor-oriented to understand the role of a myriad of actors in the conceptualisation, recontextualisation, and application of globally developed ideas of climate change adaptation on the ground in the shape of policies, strategies, and projects. Each actor of this coalition struggles to get into this ‘field’ of climate change and presents itself as a serious ‘stakeholder’ in order to be part of the process, and be considered as a responsible and active player to achieve their respective organisational goals. Not only restricted to individual actors, stakeholders also include international organisations, UN agencies, networks, relevant government departments, NGOs, media, academics, policymakers and other networks that come together to form ‘discourse coalitions’ and use certain shared ‘storylines’ for a particular period of time (Hajer 2006, 67–70) on a specific issue (e.g. the issue of climate change adaptation).

4. Development and Adaptation Lexicon

With the growing scientific consensus over the impacts of changing climate, terms such as ‘adaptation to climate change’ and ‘vulnerability’ in climate change policy and practice are now widely established concepts (McCarty et al. 2001; Parry et al. 2007). Since vulnerability portrays severe effects and the helplessness of people (Adger 2006) and adaptation shows a positive and optimistic future for dealing with the potential impacts of climate change (Burton 2010), these terms are utilised without any critical analysis, especially when they are translated into concrete actions. As adaptation has already been accepted as a development issue by major actors (Huq, Reid, and Murray 2006; African Development Bank et al. 2003), the critical analysis of ‘development buzzwords’ provides useful insights in dissecting these terms. Some of the famous components of the development lexicon, such as ‘participation’, ‘community-based development’ approaches, ‘capacity building’, and ‘awareness raising’ are increasingly being utilised in adaptation policy and practice. Similarly, vulnerability has come to represent numerous concepts and issues; consequently, a number of activities are carried out in the name of adaptation to climate change. These vague terms are popular among ‘development actors’, since anything goes in the name of adaptation, just as it happened with

‘development’ and its associated lexicon. Buzzwords aid the ambiguity of policies and secure endorsements by potential actors and audiences by ‘providing concepts that can float free of concrete referents, to be filled with meaning by its users’ and ‘shelter multiple agendas, providing room [to] manoeuvre’ (Cornwall 2007, 474).

The positive connotations attached to these terms render their involuntary approval: who would deny the altruistic aim of ‘poverty reduction’ or ‘empowerment’ of marginalised groups and be judged as politically incorrect? The normative power of development buzzwords with the appeal of optimism and altruistic purpose creates their positive image and sanctions their uncritical approval and voluntary adoption in policies and plans. The apparent altruistic purpose of terms such as ‘poverty reduction’, ‘empowerment’, and ‘vulnerability reduction’ readily provides them with legitimacy, where the accompanied methods (e.g. training, participation) become useful, since these are professionally designed ‘means’ through which these noble objectives are supposed to be met. New positive vocabulary has been introduced to portray that the intended subjects of development have an agency instead of merely acting as victims of outside processes beyond their control. Nevertheless, instead of calling them ‘poor’ or ‘under-developed’, labelling them as ‘beneficiaries’, ‘target groups’, ‘partners’, or ‘clients’ does not change the uneven power relationship of developer (expert) with the to-be-developed (subjects) groups of people (Kapoor 2004, 629).

Drawing on the experiences of the ‘AIDS Industry’ in Africa, Watkins and Swidler (2013, 212) critically analyse the non-medical interventions that have generated ‘layers of local brokers who mediate between international donors and poor villagers’. Despite having conflicting worldviews (e.g. the role of women in the spread of HIV as vulnerable as opposed to perpetrators), even ‘mismatched fantasies can create new realities’ and generate practices such as ‘training’ that ‘work’ for everyone’s interests in this enterprise, but may not contribute in reducing HIV transmission (ibid, 212). They further elucidate that results of the HIV prevention interventions by NGOs have largely failed, but they have created new ‘possible careers; new themes to be mastered’ and new forms of structures such as Community-Based Organisations that operate ‘largely to apply outside donor funding’ (ibid, 213). However, Merry (2006) describes difficulties and dilemmas of ‘middle actors’ in translating global ideas of human rights into local social contexts and argues that these actors understand both worlds and are in a better position to ‘look both ways’ and serve as ‘knowledge brokers between culturally distinct social worlds’, but at the same time, they are ‘vulnerable to manipulation and subversion by state and communities’ (ibid, 38). Despite

being able to look both ways, these middle actors ‘must please their donors’; in doing so, they ultimately ‘promote the modernist view’ embedded in the ‘global North, which promotes..., along with democracy, the rule of law, capitalism, and the free market’ (ibid, 49).

Since experts have more power to define, this ambiguity favours them to convert this lexicon into projects and actions. In this way, a number of approaches and activities are legitimised as contributing towards adaptation to climate change. In addition, there are certain activities, such as ‘training’ and ‘awareness raising’, that are implicitly vague and encompass a range of activities that ‘work’ for all the actors involved. Similarly, ‘community participation’ can mean gathering some people from a village at an event, providing refreshments, and asking questions about the issues in order to get their ‘consent’ for what is already planned by the outside ‘development experts’, which are often previously envisaged in the development projects. These buzzwords are preferred by ‘development experts’, as a number of activities can be said to be contributing towards ‘empowerment’, ‘participation’ or the mother of all ‘development’ with added adjectives like ‘sustainable’, ‘human’, and ‘social’ (Rist 2007). This is not a simple imposition from experts or a top-down approach, but rather a socially negotiated process where a myriad of actors ranging from development experts to locally based organisations come together to co-produce project realities. One way to dissect these terms is to analyse what is actually being done in the name of development and the adaptation lexicon, how, by whom, for what groups of people, and with what intended outcomes? Although a host of factors influence what happens on the ground and implementers of policies may not necessarily be part of the policy formulation process, ‘discursive framings *are* important in shaping development practice’ (Cornwall and Brock 2005, 1045, emphasis in original).

5. Pakistan’s national climate change policy: Facing up to finding ground

In this section, I analyse Pakistan’s national climate change policy document approved by the cabinet in September 2012 and subsequently officially launched in February 2013. Funding for policy preparation process was provided by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the entire policy preparation team was based at the One UN Joint Programme on Environment in Islamabad, rather than in a government department. The study of these important documents is important in understanding how climate change is conceptualised as a ‘problem’, the proposed ‘solutions’, and its implications for livelihoods of people.

Although there are issues concerning some aspects of the policy document including the conceptualisation and proposed ‘solutions’ to the ‘problem’ of climate change, this document has contributed to highlighting the significance of the issues related to climate change in general. Because of these developments, climate change is now considered an important ‘problem’, ‘challenge’ or ‘threat’ to be ‘solved’ through the proposed policy prescriptions (Government of Pakistan 2012). A number of government departments, NGOs, media, academic and research institutes and the general public are increasingly acknowledging that climate change is a grave issue and needs to be dealt with seriously. I also do not question the intentions of policy makers, experts and other actors and institutions involved in preparing the policy document but the language and terminology used in the policy document needs to be critically analysed. However, it is also true that ‘much of patterning of language-use is unconscious; language users inherit and absorb standardized ‘packages’ of norms, conventions and usages, that operate beneath the level of full conscious control’ (Gaspar, Portocarrero, and Clair 2013, 30). Thus, the deliberate goals of the actors involved in shaping the policy one way or the other are not under analysis but our aim is to shed light on the underlying assumptions, the use of expert knowledge, the influence of dominant worldviews, and the overall conceptualisation of climate change as a ‘problem’ and proposed ‘solutions’ outlined in Pakistan’s national climate change policy.

In the following sections, I conduct detailed frame and content analysis of the policy document. The adaptation section of the policy document covers eight areas: water resources, agriculture and livestock, human health, forestry, biodiversity, other vulnerable ecosystems, disaster preparedness and socioeconomic measures with sub-sections on poverty and gender. The qualitative software MaxQDA was used to search the terminology in these documents. Wherever applicable, the table of contents, bibliography and annexes were removed from these documents before the content analysis was carried out.

5.1 How the problem is framed?

The policy document frames issues of climate change by repetitive use of climate change vocabulary (Government of Pakistan 2012) in an effort to show Pakistan to be categorised as a ‘vulnerable country’ to the audience of the policy document. The goal of the policy is to ‘ensure that climate change is mainstreamed in the economically and socially vulnerable sectors of the economy and to steer Pakistan towards climate resilient development’ (ibid, 1). Here, the most common climate jargons ‘mainstreaming’ and ‘vulnerable sectors’ are employed to steer Pakistan towards the goal of ‘climate resilient development’. The language

used in the document resembles classic ‘development’ jargon. For example, the objectives include common development lexicon such as ‘gender-sensitive’ and ‘pro-poor’ but the word ‘development’ is replaced by adaptation (Government of Pakistan 2012, 1). Objective nine utilises the usual classic development terminology such as enhancing ‘awareness’ and ‘institutional capacity’, and ‘stakeholders’.

The adaptation section of the policy document starts by labelling Pakistan as ‘most vulnerable to climate change’, while having a low ‘technical and financial capacity’ to deal with the ‘adverse impacts’, making a case for needing (financial and technical) help with adaptation from external funding agencies in order to ‘continue on a development path’ (ibid, 3). The terms vulnerability/vulnerable are used to describe a number of aspects of threats. The term ‘vulnerable/vulnerability’ is used for many sectors including agriculture and livestock (6), human health (9), forestry (9), biodiversity (12), other ecosystems (13), arid and hyper-arid areas (15), wetlands (17), coastal areas (18), disaster preparedness (18), mountain areas (19), poverty (19), gender (20), capacity building and institutional strengthening (31)⁶. The terms vulnerable/vulnerability are used 37 times in the policy document whereas the Task Force Report, the 1st Communication to the Convention and the NEEDS report utilise this term 61, 21 and 24 times respectively.

The policy document is primarily based on the ‘technical framing’ (O’Brien et al. 2007) of climate change and is designed to address the impacts of climate change through adaptation measures, while completely overlooking the social complexities, political issues and other root causes that make people ‘vulnerable’ in the first place. This can also be verified with the frequency of terms being used in the document. For example, ‘people’ is used only eight times while ‘sector’ is mentioned 61 times in the policy document. Vulnerability is conceptualised in terms of potential damage to a geographical area or a sector caused by climate-related hazards or disasters. While coastal areas and marine ecosystems are mentioned, the focus is on extreme events such as ‘tropical cyclones, tropical storms and floods’, which are directly linked to and caused by *climate change only* (ibid, 16). These events may be directly or indirectly caused by climate changes but turn into disasters due to man-made reasons (Mustafa 1998). The document clearly puts climate change at the centre of all the issues faced by the coastal communities and ecosystems, whereas other social, political

⁶ Figures in parentheses refer to page numbers in the policy document.

and economic aspects are either overlooked completely or not seen as central to addressing the climate change impacts.

Pakistan's climate change policy is more in line with international climate change discourse than with the national contexts or local realities, which is evident from the use of language and terminologies. International climate change vocabulary can be found in ample quantities with frequent use of terms such as 'vulnerability', 'adaptation', 'adaptive capacity', and 'adverse impacts'. These terms are frequently found in the original text of the Convention and subsequent decisions agreed in the annual Conference of the Parties (COP). Similarly, a number of internationally famous climate change jargon phrases such as 'climate resilient development', 'pro-poor adaptation' and mainstreaming climate into development are used to define the primary goals of the policy. This can also be verified by counting the number of terms in the document where the term 'international/global' appears 41 times as opposed to 'local' which is used only 16 times in the entire policy document. This difference is also visible in other important documents and reports. For example, the Task Force Report (on which the policy is based) employed 'global/international' 140 times as opposed to 'local' which is used only 11 times. Similarly, Pakistan's National Communication to the Convention and NEEDS reports mention 'global/international' 46 and 70 times as opposed to 'local' which is mentioned only 15 and 12 times respectively (See table 8-5). Not only the terminology but also the overall framing of the issue resembles international discourse and policy, where national priorities and local needs seem to be secondary.

The typical argument of climate change as posing 'serious risk to poverty reduction efforts' and which will 'undo decades of development efforts' is provided to link poverty and climate change (ibid, 19). Poor people are shown to be more 'vulnerable because of their high dependence on natural resources, their limited technical capacity and insufficient financial resources' to deal with the impacts of climate change (ibid, 19-20). Interestingly, the Malthusian argument of population increase also finds its place in the policy document where population increase, 'particularly among those below poverty line', is mentioned in the context of climate change despite the fact that climate change is primarily caused by fossil-fuel based economies and overconsumption of natural resources in the developed countries' economies (Parry et al. 2007), among other causes. The level of poverty, dependence on natural resources and population increase, all related to the marginalised sections of people, are shown as reasons for the severe impacts of climate change in Pakistan. Essentially, this means placing the responsibility on the existing conditions of marginalised groups for the

potential effects of climate change, rather than examining historical and structural trajectories that play a more central role in complicating climate change effects and the inability of these groups to cope with these impacts.

5.2 Framing Solutions

The suggested policy measures are an interesting mix of carefully written texts and unrealistic goals, couched in vague language, to deal with the impacts of climate change. However, it should be acknowledged that there are some relevant policy measures when it comes to biodiversity and other ecosystems, such as mountain areas, rangelands, coastal and marine ecosystems. Some of the policy measures outlined in the biodiversity section include enhancing research efforts, conservation measures with localised means and local level participation, ecosystem-based adaptation and the integration of conservation measures in other relevant sectors and departments.

However, the implementation mechanism for the above-mentioned measures remains an ambiguous area and at best relies on external help. These kinds of policy measures already exist in other relevant federal and provincial departments that are mandated to work on conservation, biodiversity, wetlands, coastal and mountain areas. Moreover, a number of international NGOs, organisations and networks such as the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and Leadership for Environment and Development (LEAD) Pakistan have been providing useful policy advice and technical support to government departments in these sectors, which are reflected in this policy document. The mobilisation of financial resources and the implementation of these measures remain to be seen. Nonetheless, most of the policy solutions excessively use classic development (and now climate change adaptation) jargon. For instance, in the preamble section recommendations include ‘disaster preparedness, capacity building, institutional strengthening, technology transfer’ and many other regular ones such as ‘Clean Development Mechanisms, and ‘raising Pakistan’s stance at various international forums’ among others.

Those groups of people previously known as ‘poor’ in development discourse are now labelled as ‘vulnerable’ in the new climate change debate where the suggested solutions are also familiar, such as incorporating climate change concerns into poverty alleviation efforts in the ‘future development plans’ and ‘management of climate change impacts and environmental degradation effects’ (ibid, 20).

5.2.1 Financing Climate Change

Objective number seven of the policy specifically mentions attracting and facilitating international funding for implementing the policy goals. The policy document even mentions a short term funding mechanism: ‘fast-start finance’ and recommends ‘creating an enabling environment’ to take advantage of the available funding⁷. The entire finance section is geared towards ‘benefit[ing] from future international financial mechanisms’ (ibid, 35), hardly mentioning any national level efforts to generate funds for addressing the issues related to climate change. The chief author of the policy specifically mentioned the Green Climate Fund and other funding opportunities as a way forward for realising the goals mentioned in the document (personal interview) as if it was a ‘project’ to be financed through external funding but not a core issue to be addressed using a national budget for long term and meaningful adaptation. This validates the view that the climate change policy is geared towards attracting international funding opportunities and aims to achieve the objectives that are heavily reliant on international funding rather than reflecting national priorities and voices of marginal groups. The policy document does not propose substantial measures aimed at generating national funding in order to implement the proposed adaptation activities. On the contrary, the Ministry of Climate Change was dissolved into a division within the cabinet secretariat immediately after the new government was sworn in after the national elections in June 2013.

5.2.2 Technology is the Answer

A number of technological solutions are proposed for adaptation, such as finding ‘technological breakthrough for irrigation systems’, ‘development of technological innovations for improved water efficiency for crops, including artificial groundwater recharge’ for improving water recharge and efficiency in the arid areas and construction of ‘barriers’ to combat sea intrusion in the coastal regions, among others (ibid, 15-16). For arid areas, such as Balochistan, other policy measures are to ‘develop technologically efficient equipment for the rehabilitation of *Karez* irrigation⁸ systems including artificial recharge of groundwater’ (ibid, 16).

⁷ Fast-start finance was a short-term funding mechanism agreed in Copenhagen for the period 2010-2012 to provide funding for developing countries.

⁸ *Karez*es are indigenous irrigation system used in Balochistan for subsistence farming and have been largely degraded due to increased water pumping through mechanised tube wells subsidised by the government for agriculture promotion in an arid area like Balochistan.

In the water resources section, need for water infrastructure rehabilitation and improvement is charted to ‘make it resilient to climate change’ and to provide incentives for the adoption of ‘more efficient irrigation techniques’, to be supported by ‘regulatory frameworks’, ‘slow action dams’ and ‘artificial recharge’ measures, and so on (ibid, 4). These technical policy measures are supported with a ‘development touch’ by incorporating the jargon phrases such as ‘active participation of farmers’ and ‘participatory irrigation management reforms’ (ibid, 4). Similarly, policy recommendations in agriculture and livestock has a separate section on technology, which encourages ‘energy efficiency farm mechanization’, to improve farm practices by ‘adopting modern techniques’ and ‘solar water desalination’ (ibid, 7). Section 10 outlining technology transfer policy measures is full of catchy phrases such as to ‘seek technological breakthroughs to harness the potential of geothermal energy’, ‘explore new technological breakthroughs in the field of bio-fuels’ and ‘clean coal technologies’ among others (ibid, 36).

5.2.3 The usual solutions

Although the ‘problem’ of climate change is presented in the new vocabulary with a ‘development touch’, the solutions use classic development jargon, where the adaptation section starts by mentioning low ‘technical and financial capacity’ to deal with the ‘adverse impacts’ of climate change (3) and the entire section six of the policy is entitled ‘capacity building and institutional strengthening’ (30) with a sub-section on ‘capacity enhancement’ (31-32). For example, ‘capacity building’ is a suggested policy measure for water section (ibid, 5), agriculture and livestock (ibid, 6), forestry (ibid, 10-11), disaster preparedness (19) and health, where the recommendation is to ‘build their capacities to reduce these vulnerabilities’ (9), as well as mitigation policy measures on industries (27-28) and international and regional cooperation (34). Indeed, there are entire sub-sections dedicated to ‘capacity building’ or ‘capacity enhancing’ for the policy recommendations on water and forestry. The term capacity building/enhancing and lower capacity is mentioned 35 times in the policy document.

Similarly, ‘awareness raising’ appears regularly as a policy recommendation in many sections, including objective nine, which seeks to ‘enhance the awareness’ and ‘institutional

Rehabilitation of *Karez* system is a complex, political and contested issue and cannot be achieved without having a meaningful policy and its implementation on tube wells. For example see (Mustafa and Qazi 2008; Jamali and Hufty 2011) for a detailed analysis.

capacity’ of relevant ‘stakeholders’ (1). In fact, the entire policy section seven is entitled ‘awareness raising covering a number of sectors where it aims to ‘create broad awareness of climate change issues and its impact’ (33). The policy recommendations include developing ‘a national climate change awareness program’ and ‘ensure mass awareness’ in various sectors that are likely to be impacted by climate change through ‘mass media’, ‘student and community mobilization’ and ‘climate change sensitization workshops’, among others. The policy also encourages ‘creating awareness of the CDM facility among relevant stakeholders through training workshops’. It also crops up as a major policy recommendation in the sections dealing with water (6), forestry (10), socio-economic measures for ‘awareness of the problems of unchecked population growth’ (20) and international and regional cooperation (35) where it is recommended to design ‘awareness programs on climate change’.

The term ‘sustain/sustainable’ is a favourite jargon word employed excessively in the document with various terms attached to it. The first policy objective targets ‘sustained economic growth’ while addressing the challenges of climate change, where climate change is a secondary goal and is framed as a ‘problem’ or an impediment to economic growth, which is meant to be ‘sustainable’. Objective 10 addresses it by prompting ‘long term sustainability’, by assuming that there are different kinds of ‘sustainabilities’, including short term, out there to be pursued. The term sustainable is used in the policy recommendations for water resources (6), agriculture and livestock (7), forestry (9, 11), biodiversity (12), arid and hyper-arid areas (15), wetlands (17) and socio-economic measures where development is meant to be ‘sustainable and caters to the needs of the poor’ (20). These expressions also find put in an appearance in the mitigation section dealing with energy (23), agriculture and livestock (28), and international regional cooperation sections through ‘sustainable development and livelihoods’ and ‘transition to low-carbon sustainable and inclusive development in the region’ (34-35).

The overall goal of the policy is to ‘steer Pakistan towards climate resilient development’ through ‘mainstreaming climate change’ into many other ‘vulnerable’ sectors (1). The water sector adaptation policy measures include making irrigation infrastructure ‘resilient to climate change’ (4); forestry sector encourages to ‘increase resilience’; ecosystems recommendations include conducting ‘detailed studies to identify the most fragile and resilient ecosystems’ (13), disaster preparedness looks to constructing ‘disaster resilient multi-purpose school buildings’, as well as for ‘infrastructure, including telecommunication, power, utilities and

transport which are resilient to the impact of climate change’ (18), and rural housing needs to be ‘climate resilient’ for protection against floods (27).

Participation is also a word in vogue in climate change discourse. For adaptation in the water sector, it encourages ‘active participation of farmers in water management’ for the implementation of participatory irrigation management reforms’ (4). Adaptation actions in forestry call for ‘greater participation of forest dependent communities’ (11); biodiversity policy recommendations encourage the ‘design and implementation of sustainable, participatory management plans’ (17) and for disaster preparedness, it is highly recommended to ‘ensure community participation’ (18). To ‘ensure participation of women and female gender experts’ in decision making about climate change is one policy recommendation (21) among several where participation in many forums is recommended. The adaptation policy recommendation covering forestry is full of climate change and development buzzwords such as vulnerability, adaptation, adaptive capacity, community, participation, sustainable, capacity building and many other similar terms. Despite the rhetoric of participation in the policy document, some actors have raised concerns about effective participation and consultative processes during the policy formulation process (personal communications during data collection process).

All necessary boxes are ticked

All the common buzzwords of climate change and development are used excessively in the policy document. The document is full of climate change and development lexis, such as vulnerability (37), adaptation (59), sustainable (17), participatory (8), capacity building (35), awareness raising (13), resilience (7), impacts of climate change (51), gender (10), development (45), stakeholder (4), risk (18) and many similar commonly used terms in this field⁹.

A number of respondents from various sectors raised their concerns about policy recommendations. A very prominent expert stated that ‘the quality of the document is exceptionally poor and I did not comment on it when they asked me’. He was critical of UNDP involvement, which has influenced the policy making and did not term it a policy of Government of Pakistan (ibid). Research and Development Foundation (RDF), a Sindh-based

⁹ The numbers in parentheses indicate frequency of the term used in the document. The numbers also include the various form of the terms (for example: resilient/resilience and sustainable/sustainability).

NGO conducted a detailed review of the document with reference to Sindh province, through consultation with relevant actors and concluded that the policy seems to be a ‘wish-list of open-ended, less directional and less specific measures without a time frame’ (RDF 2011, 12). Moreover, a number of policy recommendations are very general, or duplications of other existing policies and overzealous in water management, forestry and protecting the glaciers in Himalayan region, which are difficult to implement and monitor (SPO 2012). Heavy reliance on foreign funding for policy implementation is also identified as a challenge, without generating national level resources. Integrating climate change concerns into economic development plans is the key objective of the policy, however, with a limited mandate and meagre resources within climate change division, this goal looks challenging and unrealistic (ibid).

6. Implementing Climate Change

Although only few small-scale adaptation projects and activities are being implemented in Pakistan, their analysis sheds light on involved actors, implementation approaches and nature of activities as modes of transmission of policies into on-the-ground activities. Most of these projects are small-scale isolated activities implemented by the NGOs, and usually financed by external funding channelled through multilateral and bilateral development aid agencies. Since addressing climate change is a core objective of international organisations, aid agencies and networks, it directly influences activities of the NGOs as their funding is dependent on these agencies and organisations. One of the climate change focal persons in an international NGO acknowledged that since climate change was an emerging issue their organisation arranged international events and conferences to be acknowledged as active leaders in this area and to attract funding for climate change activities in Pakistan (Int # INGO13). International environmental NGOs, networks and international organisations¹⁰ working in Pakistan have increasingly incorporated climate change as a core sector for their work, since it shows their concern in the international community. Another respondent from a well-known international organisation provided justification that since they are totally dependent on funding for continuation of their activities, they changed their strategies accordingly, in order to be able to work. He stated:

¹⁰ (e.g. Care, IUCN, WWF, Oxfam, LEAD Pakistan, UNDP)

Since we are interested in sustainable development, we introduced climate change as one of the three pillars in our strategy . . . by attributing a number of activities to climate change adaptation (Int # INGO09).

Since these organisations are totally dependent on external funding that is increasingly being channelled in the name of climate change adaptation, re-orientation of their strategies seems a logical strategy, in order to continue their activities. The international NGOs are mostly based in the capital city while few have offices in provincial capitals and mostly implement projects through subcontracting local and national NGOs. In this way, national and local NGOs are directly dependent on international NGOs and aid agencies for their projects. Therefore, climate change has become an area of intervention for many local NGOs. This chain of dependency creates common interests and coalitions for combined efforts by all the organisations (and people working in them) to justify adaptation as a core issue of local people.

One UN Joint Programme on Environment in Pakistan, through its Grass Roots Initiative Programme (GRIP)¹¹ funded 24 projects to small-scale NGOs across the country for environmental issues, including climate change adaptation projects. The titles of approved projects are similar to community development activities funded under different programmes¹². Similarly, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Small Grants Programme has funded 57¹³ community-based projects for addressing climate change related issues all over the country. These projects are implemented at small-scale by ‘participatory approaches’, to involve local people and usually include ‘awareness raising’, and the ‘training and capacity building’ components, through which information about climate change and its impacts are shared among local people.

Climate Leadership for Effective Adaptation and Resilience (CLEAR)—a project being implemented by Leadership for Environment and Development (LEAD) Pakistan—aims at ‘[b]uilding the capacity of southern Pakistan’s civil society to adapt to climate change’. The

¹¹<http://oneunjpe.org/cmspage.php?meid=8> (accessed May 15, 2014)

¹²Some of the titles include community forestry, irrigation efficiency, sanitation, community-based solid waste management, integrated water management, bio gas, and community-based natural resource management. Others also used new climate jargon, such as community-based climate adaptation, community-based climate change mitigation.

¹³<http://www.sgppakistan.org/climate.html> (accessed May 15, 2014)

project is providing training to master trainers from 45 small NGOs and CBOs, who subsequently provide ‘awareness raising’ on ‘climate change adaptation’ to their own organisations and local ‘vulnerable communities’, in order to prepare the Local Adaptation Plans of Actions (LAPAs), through applying ‘participatory approaches’. These LAPAs are used to the development of small-scale projects implemented by these NGOs and CBOs in partnership with local communities and funded by the CLEAR project. The project also aims to involve local communities in policy formation¹⁴.

The LAPA preparation follows a typical process of problem identification, suggested solutions, available resources, stakeholders and risks involved with the application of participatory methods. With specifically developed tools, the LAPA process cleans up the complex social realities (and social dimensions of climate change) into simplified data to fit in the models, charts and diagrams to identify implementable activities within the scope of project. This process leaves little room for exploring other activities and paves the way for ‘training and awareness creation’, as a means of adaptation.

Summary description of CLEAR project

Climate Leadership for Effective Adaptation and Resilience (CLEAR) project has been conceived through a participatory approach of LEAD Pakistan to address the urgent and growing threats of climate change to poor and vulnerable communities in Punjab and Sindh provinces in Pakistan. The project addresses lack of capacity, lack of effective models, low and ineffectively articulated public demand for the Govt. to act, and lack of awareness among vulnerable communities as to their rights in relation to climate change. CLEAR project is not only empowering communities to practice climate change adaptation but also promoting a bottom-up approach for people friendly policy making. The project enables communities to implement climate adaptive technologies (e.g. mobile flood warning systems) and facilitate increased knowledge for adaptation (e.g. changing cropping patterns, under-ground water reservoirs), introduction of alternative livelihoods, particularly women and other vulnerable groups (e.g. poultry farming, livestock farming, etc.)

¹⁴For details see project website <http://www.lead.org.pk/projects/clear.htm> (accessed 15 April 2014)

Source: (LEAD Pakistan)

6.1 Commonly Agreed Targets and Themes

Since ‘adaptation’ is being implemented by the very same actors engaged in development, some of the terms and activities have been converted almost into rituals, while implementing an adaptation project, without which they have limited chances of getting funding. Some of these categories include vulnerable, poor, gender, women, training and capacity building, community participation and awareness creation, among others. Climate change adaptation projects usually involve ‘awareness creation’, ‘training and capacity building’ and information-sharing activities, through which climate change knowledge is transferred to the local levels. It seems that no externally-funded development project is complete without incorporating some or all of these categories and activities. Local CBOs and small NGOs and even local people have mastered these terms and categories, through participating in many development projects and trainings. In the following sections, activities of CLEAR project and other initiatives are outlined and analysed in this context.

6.1.1 Training, Capacity Building and Awareness Creation

Trainings and awareness creation are an integral part of CLEAR project, while preparing the LAPAs. It was repetitively emphasised in climate change project events, such as seminars and training activities, that the local communities must be given ‘awareness’ and ‘training’, in order to adapt to these impacts, through supporting their ‘own’ initiatives by ‘participatory’ approaches. Lack of awareness about climate change among local population and the need for training (or capacity building) were mentioned on 54 occasions by 17 respondents during field-level interviews. Creating awareness and providing training were the most popular activities according to the respondents. The adaptation projects also include published material in local languages, to disseminate information on climate change or ‘create awareness’ among beneficiaries. One of the NGO representatives described the importance of awareness creation and training in these words:

Local people do not know about climate change. First of all, we must aware them about climate change and how it is affecting their livelihoods. For adaptation, awareness creation and providing training are integral parts of any project on climate change (Int # LNGO15).

Another respondent shared his experience of implementing an adaptation project in this way:

Our project provided training and told the beneficiaries about climate change and its impacts on water resources, and how they can adapt and mitigate its impacts. We published brochures on climate change for raising awareness in different languages (Int # LNGO 17).

Similarly, the commonly used terms, such as ‘participatory’, ‘empowerment’, ‘stakeholders’ were repeatedly used while referring to climate change projects and activities. On many occasions, people’s marginality was directly attributed to climate change and solutions were sought in the form of projects with familiar activities of ‘training’, ‘capacity building’ and ‘awareness creation’. On the other hand, decreasing irrigation water, local waste dumps, groundwater depletion and poverty were mentioned, as directly linked to climate change impacts by many respondents (Int # LNGO11; Int # LNGO16; Int # LNGO14; Int # LNGO04; Int # LNGO18). When asked about their sources of information about climate change, most of them referred to the Internet, newspapers, trainings conducted by the international NGOs actively working on climate change in Pakistan, such as LEAD, WWF and IUCN, Oxfam GB, among others.

6.1.2 Poor, Vulnerable and Women

The other categories mentioned in adaptation projects are ‘poor, vulnerable and women’ likely to be affected by the impacts of climate change. Respondents from small-level NGOs and CBOs repeatedly mentioned these categories as the groups of people in need of adaptation through development projects. For example, CLEAR project specifically provides instructions for its Master Trainers to include these categories in their trainings on awareness creation and data collection methods. As a local NGO worker states the following:

The ultra-poor and landless people especially women are the most vulnerable . . . they will be the most affected people by climate change impacts (Int # LNGO16).

Since the project is still being implemented, it is still to be seen whether these LAPAs can enable local people to raise their voices and demand their rights from the concerned actors that are in-charge of the distribution of resources (NGOs, Government Departments, and Politicians etc.), to get support in resolving their livelihood issues. At the face of it, it appears that conducting regular activities of training and raising awareness were two approaches that were implemented in the past, without meaningful outcomes for improving livelihoods of marginalised people. These LAPAs also do not question (or take into consideration) other factors and processes that undermine (or can impede) the livelihoods of local people, such as

inefficient government departments responsible for facilitating local people's livelihoods, politics of patronage and other environmental and social issues.

6.1.3 Community Organisations and Village Development Plans

The usual indicator for sustainability of projects is the creation of some form of formal structure, commonly known as Community Organisation (COs) or Village Organisations (VOs), where some volunteers are assigned roles for management of this organisational form. Some members of the group are invited to participate in trainings in a nearby town and get free food, stay in a hotel and sometimes get money in the form of a daily allowance. I have observed these kinds of activities during our data collection in addition to our experience, while working with the NGOs in Pakistan. The activities under the projects are also labelled as 'community mobilisation', as if they were unorganised and have to be brought together to achieve project goals. These COs and VOs usually evaporate once the project and the funding is over (Watkins, Swidler, and Hannan 2012; author's personal experience). When asked about the presence of any existing organisation, a fisherman answered 'yes, they [the NGO] formed their own Community Organisation for their project implementation', referring to it as an *external* form of entity, that was created to implement the project and distanced himself from it, since he was not part of it. One of the NGO partners in CLEAR explained that they established a number of activities and brought together community-based organisations to prepare the LAPAs, through which a number of activities will be conducted (Int # LNGO04). These outsider categories can undermine the already existing social structures by converting them into CBOs and relying on external funding for their activities. In a similar manner, the activities charted out with these COs and VOs, previously named as Village Development Plans in rural development projects, are being renamed as LAPAs in the climate change strategies and projects.

7. Mapping the transmission mechanism

Transmission of international policies and discourses is a complex, socially-negotiated, process involving a number of actors and organisations operating at different scales. The above-mentioned activities are important but show only one of the primary ways of transmission of adaptation discourse to the local level. In addition to the transfer of adaptation knowledge and policies to the local level, this discourse is also shared among networks and peer organisations. For example, LEAD Pakistan organised training for the International

NGOs¹⁵ ‘to plan, integrate and mobilize climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies at the local level, through the formulation of draft action plans’ (LEAD 2012). These international NGOs are likely to transfer adaptation knowledge to their respective local partners, through small-scale projects and the funding on climate change adaptation.

During our data collection, I attended workshops, seminars and training events at national, provincial and local levels, where this transmission actually takes place. These spaces of knowledge brokerage and translation are important venues to observe how the global ideas are actually converted into actionable interventions on the ground. For example, I attended a three-day national level workshop held in the capital city of Islamabad on climate change¹⁶, where all the major organisations were represented, including government departments, research organisations, international and national NGOs, international organisations, academicians and private sector. Pakistan’s vulnerability to the impacts of climate change, scientific evidence, and lack of resources were key topics of the event, where the need for raising awareness and capacity building of departments and local people were emphasised for meaningful adaptation to climate change. Furthermore, I attended a training orientation session by LEAD project staff for the CLEAR projects’ partner NGOs in Southern Sindh¹⁷. The 19 participants from 15 NGOs and CBOs were briefed about the global nature of climate change, including glacier melt and its impacts, in the form of floods, in addition to food security and livelihoods. It was emphasised that the local communities must be given ‘awareness’ and ‘training’, in order to adapt to these impacts, through supporting their own initiatives by ‘participatory’ approaches.

Other instruments supplementing this transmission include financial and technical support to the government of Pakistan for policy formulation, preparation of important reports and other

¹⁵ Participants from INGOs, such as Save the Children, Concern Worldwide, Church World Service, and Hope 87 attended the three-day training workshop.

¹⁶ The workshop was titled ‘Inspiring Leadership for Sustainable Development’ held on July 23-25 in Islamabad. Topics and sessions were mostly focussed on climate change, climate compatible development, green economy, mainstreaming climate change into development and other environmental issues.

¹⁷ The training session was held in the costal district of Thatta in the office of a local NGO Sindh Radiant Organisation on 05 April 2012.

research to fulfil the obligations of the Convention¹⁸. At the policy level, re-labelling of existing projects and activities as climate change adaptation is evidenced by high-level experts involved in drafting Pakistan's national climate change policy. For instance, the chief policy author explained that 'we can re-label many activities to show them as adaptation so that the global climate change community acknowledges our contributions and we can secure more climate change funds' (Int # GOVEXP01). Correspondingly, global level policy prescriptions, in the form of 'technical guidelines' and scientific research, are translated into local contexts by international organisations operating in this field, in addition to direct funding to Pakistan-based organisations (see Figure 1 for a simplified illustration).

8. Analysis and Concluding remarks

In addition to considerably influencing Pakistan's climate change policy document (outlined in Chapter 8), global discourse on climate change has significantly penetrated the implementation channels. Renaming projects as Local Adaptation Plans of Actions (LAPAs) is evidently inspired by the National Adaptation Programmes of Actions (NAPAs), prepared in the international negotiations of the Convention. Existing issues in the field of 'rural development' (e.g. lack of irrigation water, low rates of return for small farmers, poverty, water-borne diseases, declining groundwater, lack of income earning opportunities, degrading natural resource base and so on) are now being directly linked to concepts, such as 'vulnerability' to climate change impacts. Comparatively, the suggested solutions (e.g. improving irrigation efficiency, introducing drought resistant and low delta crops, alternative livelihoods and women's empowerment, and others) are justified under the climate change adaptation banner. Previously known as 'Village Development Plans', the documents prepared by conducting the activities of training and participatory workshops are now renamed as Local Adaptation Plans of Actions (LAPAs).

¹⁸ Some of the examples include National Economic, Environment and Development Study (NEEDS), Pakistan's National Communications to UNFCCC, Pakistan's Options for Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation by LEAD funded by the British High Commission, and other funded research on climate change.

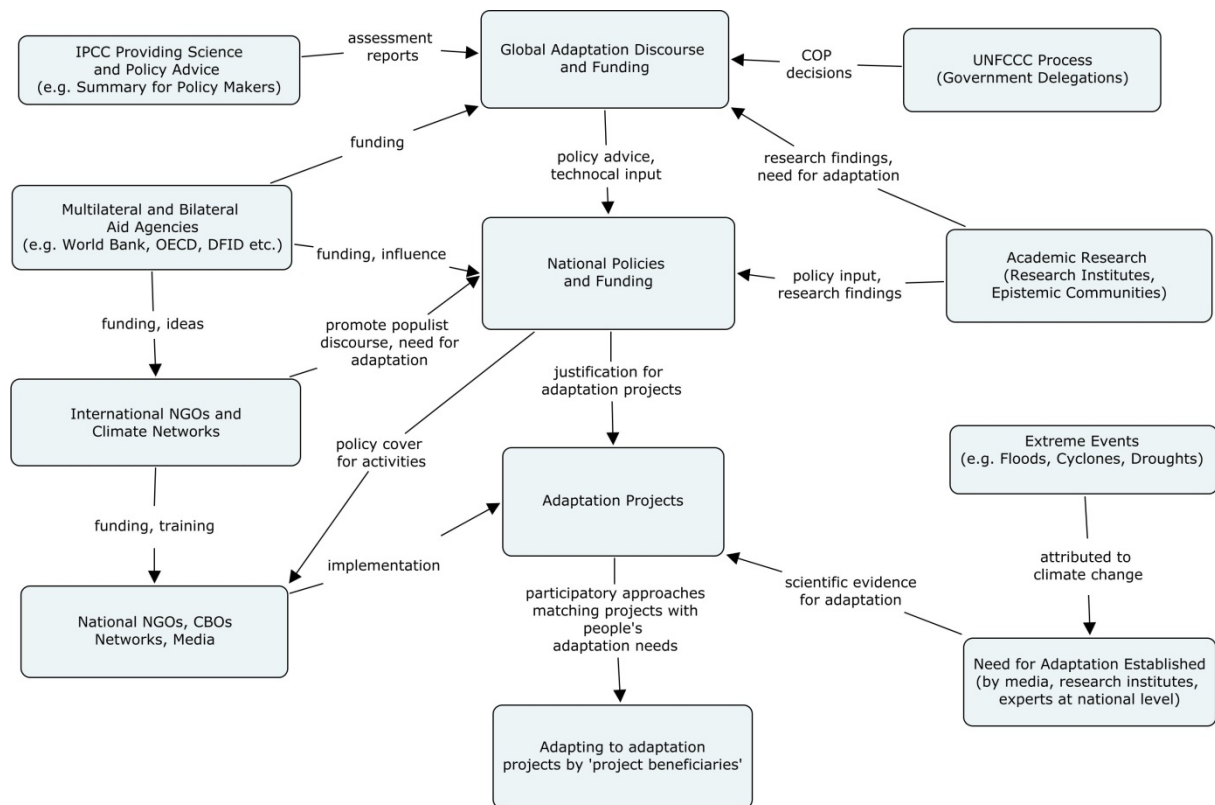


Figure 1: Simplified illustration of transmission of discourses across different levels (please follow the diagram from the top central box on ‘Global Adaptation Discourse and Funding’)

Interestingly, the implementation approaches in adaptation are very similar to those of ‘rural development’, such as ‘community based-adaptation’, ‘participatory assessments’, where the target beneficiaries need ‘awareness creation’ and ‘training’ to get ‘empowered’ and ‘sensitised’ for project sustainability. Donor agencies prefer it when villagers (beneficiaries) receive training, since people are then enabled to participate and become ‘self-actualising, empowered individuals’, which satisfies donors that their interventions will sustain by transferring the (expert) knowledge, where people are ‘sensitized’ (Watkins and Swidler 2013, 210). Trainings are an easy indicator of success that both brokers and donors can report for achievement of project’s objectives, since there are agreed upon rituals of conducting training and ‘anyone can be trained on anything’ (ibid, 211). Additionally, the participants like these trainings, as they get free lunches, travel allowances and a sense of inclusion in the activities of the educated elite. In the development debate, the ‘problem’ of poverty is portrayed as caused by complex socio-economic, environmental and historical factors, but the most common solutions included ‘awareness raising’, ‘capacity building and training’, and

the promotion of 'sustainable development' through externally funded projects, which have been severely questioned and debated (Cornwall and Eade 2010; Ferguson 1990). Although, the 'problem' of climate change is portrayed as having different causal nature, interestingly, it is being addressed through the very similar solutions, with the very same actors and through the mechanisms used in 'doing development' but with the expectation of different results.

From the activities envisaged in the LAPAs and other policy documents, the pre-existing issues (of marginality) are being presented with different causal nature, through relating them to the impacts of climate change, in new policy contexts, yet with similar solutions. This raises the question that if the issues, their causal nature, proposed solutions, implementing mechanisms, actors involved and the intended beneficiaries are all similar, why are these being relabelled under the banner of climate change adaptation? A possible explanation can be that the ideas generated at the national level with associated policies (and finances) are difficult to be simply imposed in a top-down fashion. Broad support is needed from other actors at the sub-national, district and village level, including the intended beneficiaries for their legitimacy. The techniques and tools of 'participatory' approaches for data collection are applied in order to portray that the proposed interventions are based on locally-driven needs. This is done by offering CBOs projects and funds that are completely dependent on international NGOs and aid agencies.

The most educated cadres of development experts work at the NGO headquarters and international organisations based in the capital city and provincial headquarters, preparing project strategies and writing reports and funding proposals for continuation of activities (Watkins and Swidler 2013; author's personal experience). The relatively less educated ones are named as 'field coordinators' and 'community organisers' and are usually based at district-level NGOs offices. The last category is community-based organisations whose volunteers provide entry points to the villages and the intended target 'beneficiaries'. These CBOs get small projects, training opportunities in nearby cities and are a target of 'awareness creation' and 'capacity building'. All the partners in these activities try everything to get along, since it is in the mutual benefit for both the capital NGOs and the local CBOs that the projects 'work' (or at least seem to be working). Prolongation or sustainability of projects and their activities means maintenance and continuation of careers of a large number of middle-class educated people working in these organisations. Discovering or even mentioning failure is in no one's interest in this chain of effects, since each organisation depends on the other operating at different scale (Fyvie and Ager 1999), where success has to be produced and

projects need to ‘work’ (Watkins and Swidler 2013). The vagueness of adaptation and development lexicon provides ample room for development experts to show that activities are contributing to adaptation, which are legitimised by adopting the so-called participatory approaches that generate data to be used as an evidence for community needs. However, local realities and priorities may be totally different from the project objectives.

Although the participatory concepts apparently value ‘local knowledge’ as the key to understanding concerns of people, the need for awareness creation—especially among local people—is usually a major activity in the projects. However, awareness creation also implicitly indicates that the (development) experts have knowledge, while local people do not, which also grants the experts a superior position in this structure of givers and receivers, both in material form and in terms of their authority.

The development and adaptation lexicon are increasingly being used in ‘doing adaptation’ and the proposed activities (e.g. trainings, awareness creation, capacity building), and at best, serve to technicalise and de-politicise the deep-rooted issues by offering cosmetic solutions (Cornwall and Brock 2005; Ferguson 1994). Here, de-politicisation refers to short-term projects that portray a false impression that problems are being solved and can mask the underlying structural causes of people’s marginality by deflecting attention. This false impression also fosters a culture where the people in power are not held accountable towards their responsibilities. By technicalisation, the managerial approaches imposed by widely-used activities of trainings, capacity building and awareness creation are presented as the ultimate solution of complex and multidimensional matters that are embedded in wider structural and historical processes (exacerbated by politics of patronage, non-functional state-organised institutions and organisations, among others) and require political reforms.

In this process, brokers and translators, mostly hailing from the educated middle-income elites in the global South equipped with the latest (Western) knowledge play a central role in the transmission of global discourses and associated policies by serving as ‘development experts’ within government agencies, international organisations, international and national NGOs, and other networks. While the NGOs, networks and CBOs claim to represent the interests of local (marginalised) groups of people and play a communicative role between the local priorities and other actors operating at the national and international levels, the situation on the ground is somewhat contradictory and worrying. In a countrywide survey of civil society organisations, Bano (2008) demonstrates that development aid, channelled through large mainstream NGOs in Pakistan, is counterproductive for creating social capital, since these

organisations have no memberships of grassroots people for whom they claim to work. This indicates that the claims of representing people and their needs by mainstream NGOs is problematic despite the application of participatory and people-centred approaches in their practices.

In application of these projects, the identified issues of target beneficiaries are conceived as technical questions of management, where need for training people is generated, since these NGOs have limited capacity to challenge or transform other factors and hence ‘training’ is suggested as the best solution. However, the analysis of people’s views shows that their realities and priorities are different from what policies and discourses inform us with.

Our analysis shows that international climate change adaptation narratives (having origins in climate science) generate policies (at the national level), along with resultant actions (especially at the local level), and are deployed as a discursive concept by a myriad of intermediary actors to justify certain adaptation actions as ‘solutions’ to the identified ‘problems’ of ‘vulnerability’. When combined, these discourses, knowledge, international negotiations, funding and policies produce certain categories, resulting in politics which define some countries as ‘highly vulnerable’, and also create subjectivities by labelling marginalised groups of people as ‘vulnerable’ to climate change and in need of help with adaptation through projects.

This paper further demonstrates that international discourse and policies on adaptation are diffused across countries at national level; however, this transmission takes a different form when it travels to local level. Although national climate change adaptation policies do not affect local livelihoods, at least at the moment, they do create new categories of people known as ‘vulnerable’ who are in need of adaptation and for whom projects will be developed and money will be spent. These strong similarities between international discourse and national policies as compared to between national policy and local priorities (within national boundaries) are significant. This is manifested in Pakistan’s national climate change policy document orientation; I call this policy disposition as ‘facing up to find ground’.

With the new development challenge (re)discovered in the form of climate change globally, the layers of existing brokers and translators operating at different scales are reactivated to find solutions, in the form of adaptation plans and projects funded by external aid. In this way, reproduction of development discourse in the name of adaptation is sustained by the coalition of actors who come together to produce project realities. With these approaches, the

historically-rooted social and structural problems of people are conceived as technical questions of management, and the need for projects is generated, whereby the well-known and established approaches are utilised for legitimising these activities. Through the transmission and translation of this discourse, the local governance process for key livelihood resources is not affected, but rather the discourse is consumed on its way to the local level by a series of actors (brokers and translators), and the ‘development machine’ keeps running in the name of climate change adaptation.

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