

SPATIAL JUSTICE –
ENGAGING THE FUTURE?

SOUTH AFRICA

Outline

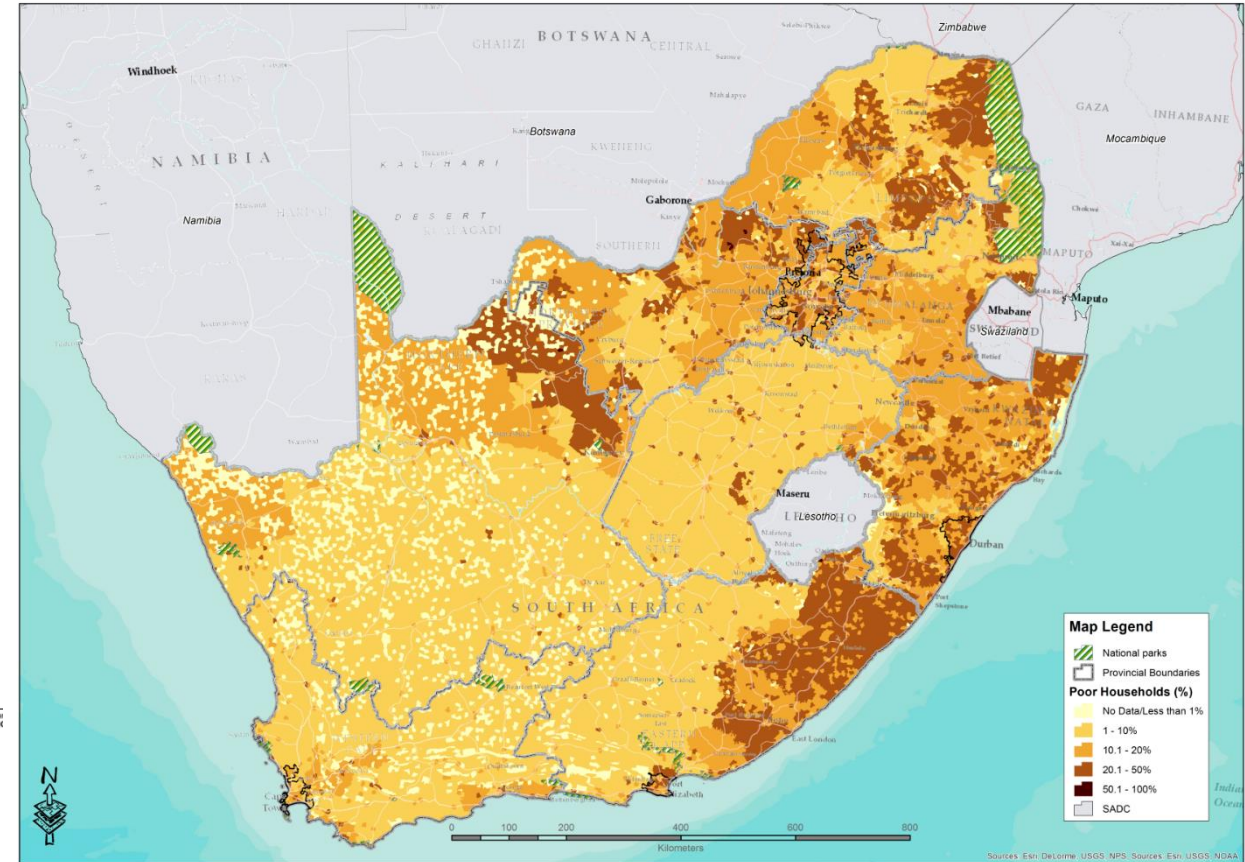
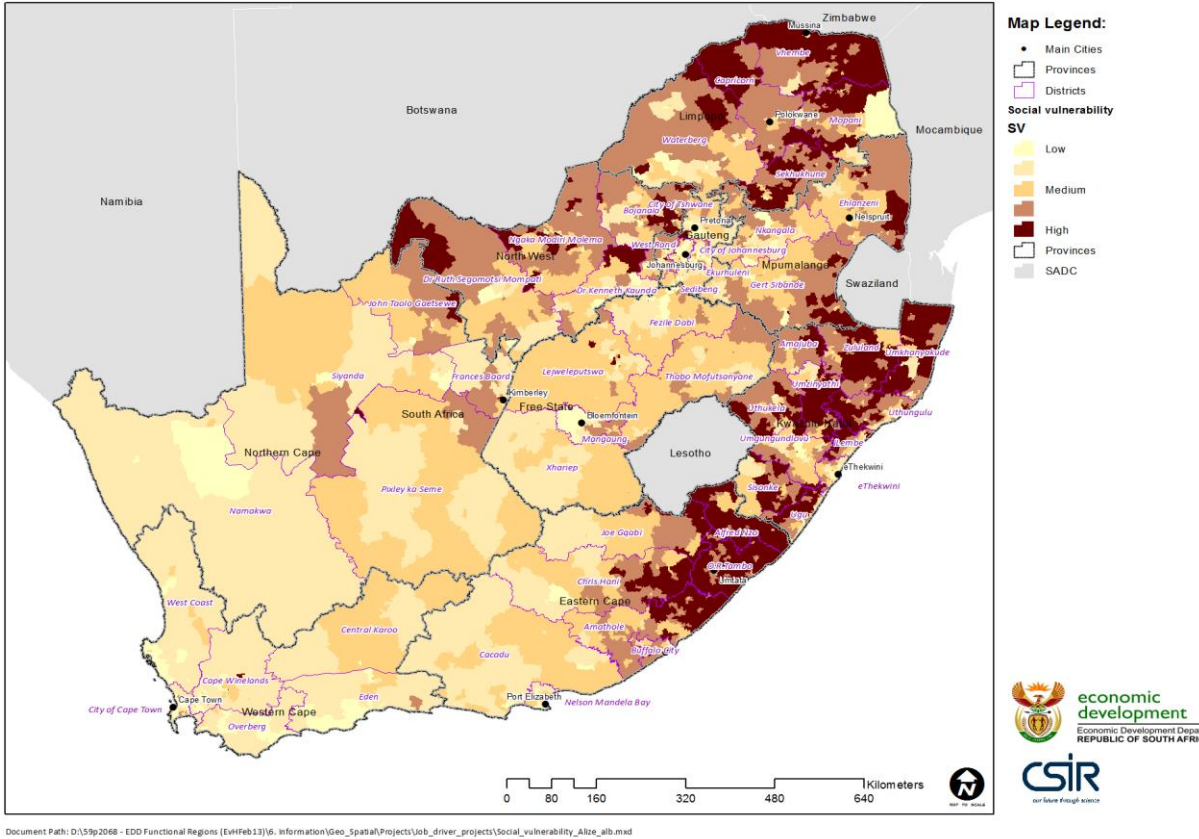
- Importance of spatial thinking and spatial justice
- Snapshot of spatial economy – national distribution of social vulnerability and poverty
- Urban Form, its impacts & how we might intervene
- Rural spatial form
- Set of policy options
- Pre-requisites for advancement to a just spatial form

Spatial Thinking and Spatial Justice

- Spatial thinking matters if we want to understand the dynamics of poverty, exclusion and development and most importantly change them
- Spatial thinking provides the evidence base for identifying interventions and constructing a policy context that will help overcome social, economic and political exclusion. That is achieving spatial justice.
- The search for spatial justice – integrally linked to the struggle for social justice and human rights. Involves a critical exploration of the spatiality of injustice and a view towards the future.
- The concept embodies **activism** and **developmentalism**, involving a critical exploration of the spatiality of injustice and a view towards the future:
“generating new and more effective ways of achieving major human goals such as reducing poverty and disease, fighting racism and other forms of discrimination and working against environmental degradation and political tyranny”
(Edward Soja)
- It encourages us to raise questions not only about changing the legacies of the past, but about “unshackling our imagination from those same spatial legacies” (Said, 1994).

Apartheid – the most “blatant form of injustice through geography”

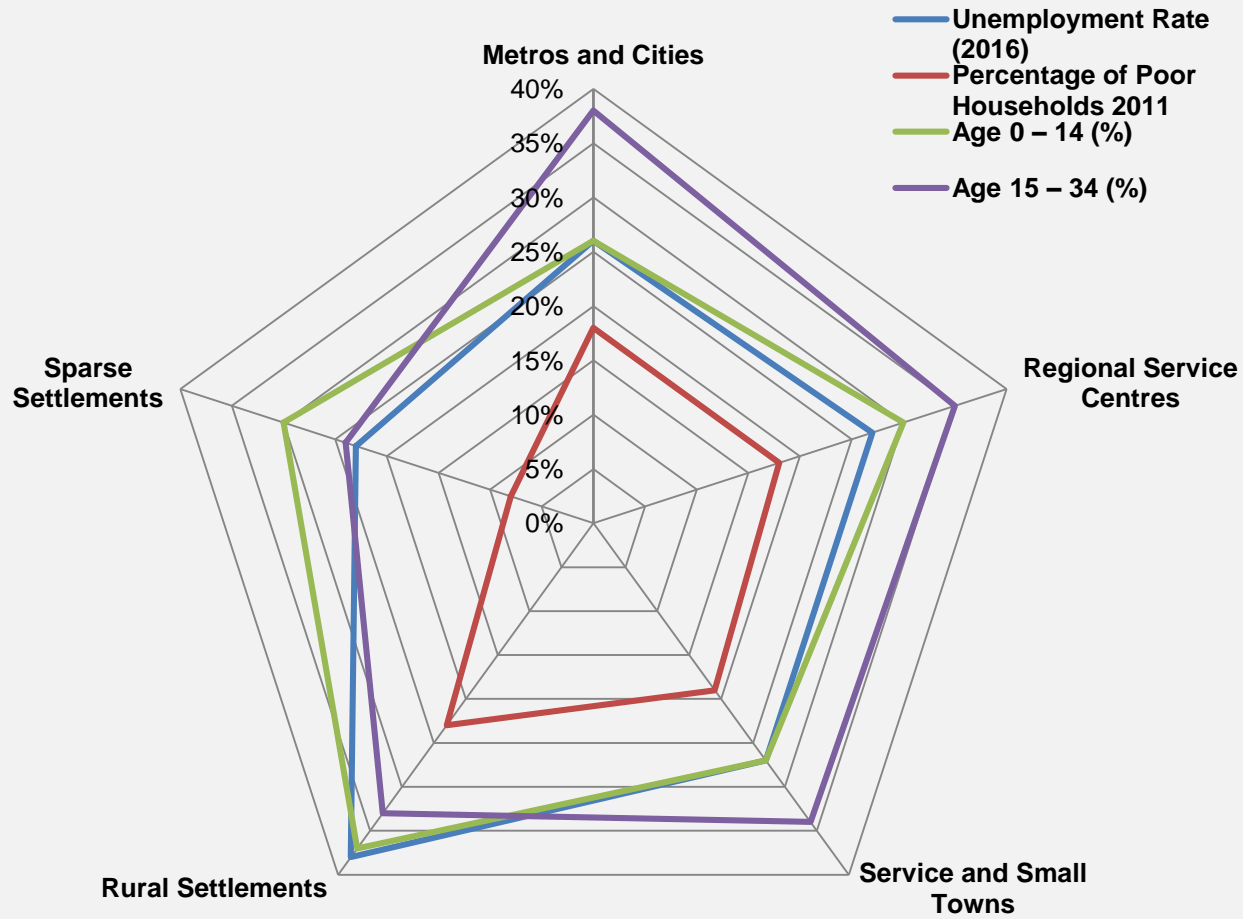
The persistent spatial disparities – affect national unity & social cohesion & can foster political instability



- High levels of Social Vulnerability remaining within densely populated rural parts of former Homeland areas (as % of population in the area)

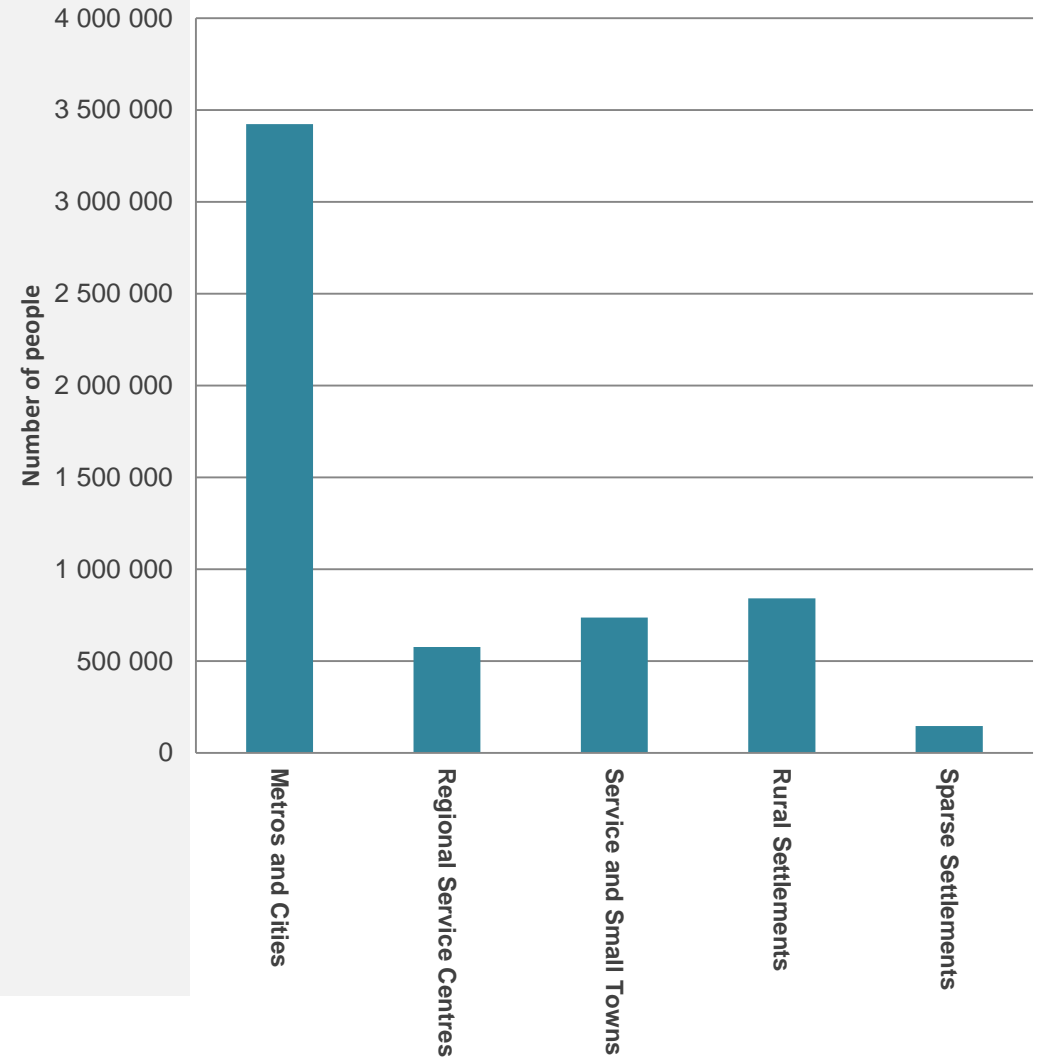
- Persistent poverty, structural unemployment – overwhelmingly affecting townships and former homelands

Inequality challenges across SA – as a % of population in the area



Source: CSIR

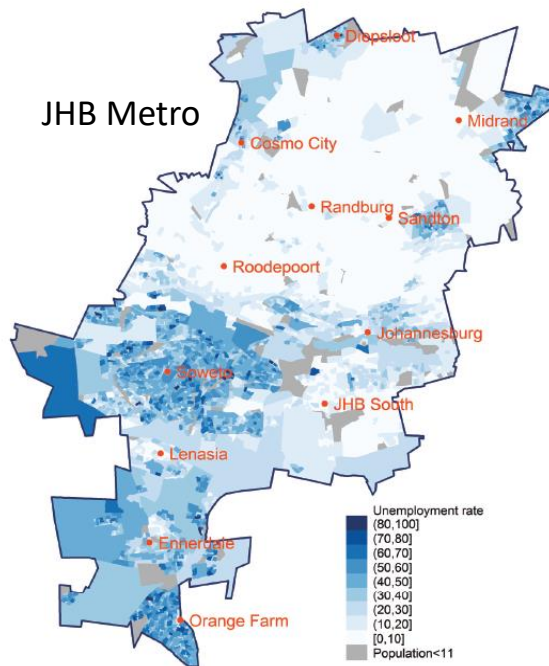
Unemployed People (2016)



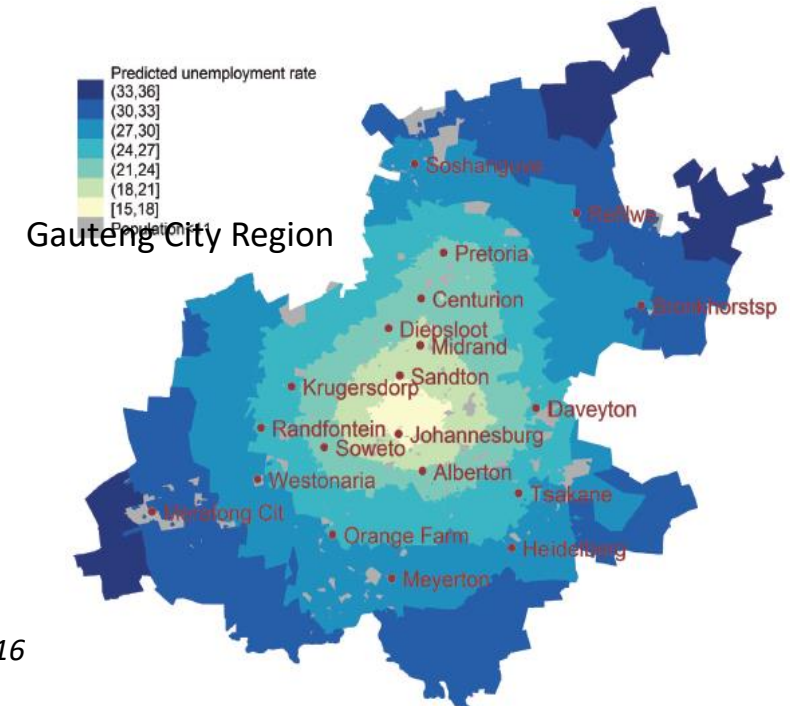
Source: ??

City/Urban Spatial Form

- Urbanisation the single most significant phenomenon globally – In SA currently 60% urban – 70% by 2030 and 80% by 2050 and account for the largest share of GDP – collectively cities and towns account for about 80% of GVA
- Predominant urban spatial form – reflects apartheid patterns
 - concentration of poor and new migrants in densely populated and poorly serviced informal settlements
 - Densely populated urban townships – underserved and far from the major economic opportunities – high costs in terms of time and money for workers
 - Impacts on inequality, unemployment and poverty
- The households living urban townships and informal settlements are often far from opportunities, unemployment rates are the highest and education levels and quality are the lowest. Economic distance therefore adds to physical distance, increasing inequalities between the urban core and the periphery (*Olivia D'Aoust and Somik V. Lall, World Bank, 2017, unpublished*)



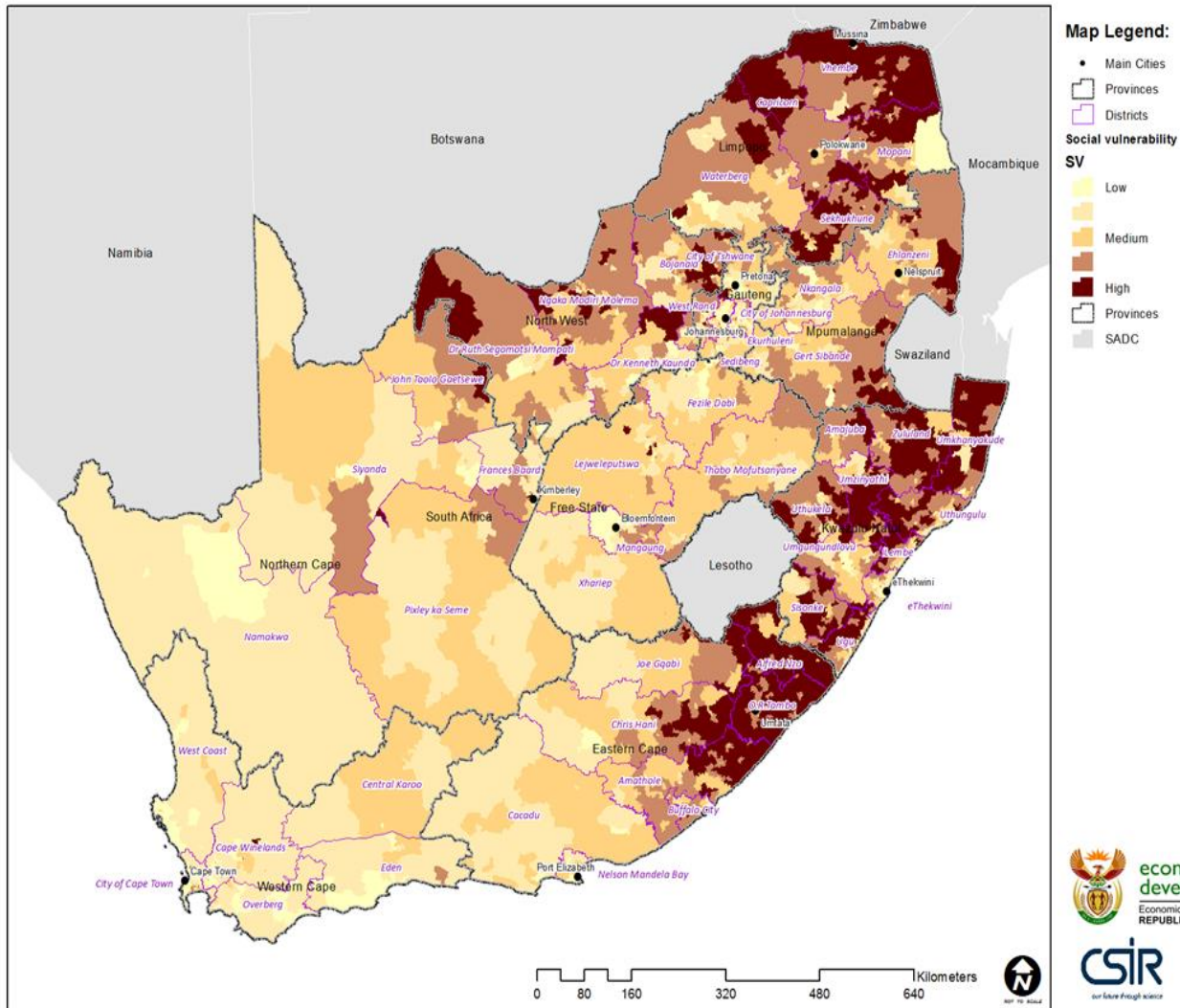
Disconnect between the economic structure and the human settlement structure



Source: Socio-Economic Research Institute, 2016

Rural form

Rural Spatial Geography



- 17 million people with high levels of deprivation:
 - High dependency ratios
 - Low levels of access to services particularly water and electricity
 - Low levels of access to private transport and communication networks
 - High prevalence of female and child-headed households
 - Low incomes

Rural form

- Relative deprivation has not changed (in over a decade)
- The state's structural, legislative & policy interventions – tended to entrench conditions that create marginality, maintain vulnerability of the rural poor, insecure tenure – notably of women
- Laws such as the Traditional Leaders Governance Framework act, Communal Land Tenure Bill and Traditional and Khoi-San Leadership Bill have been particularly singled out for their inadvertent entrenchment of apartheid distortions and the disproportionate empowering of traditional leaders at the expense of tenure security and land rights of community members (HLPC)
- Strong power structures and elites (Traditional Authorities, Mining and Commercial Farmers) wield great influence

	Province containing greater part of former homeland	Material Deprivation %	Employment Deprivation %	Education Deprivation %	Living Environment Deprivation %
Former Bophuthatswana	North West	38.1	46.8	26.0	67.0
Former Ciskei	Eastern Cape	41.5	56.2	24.3	50.5
Former Gazankulu	Limpopo	36.9	58.3	28.9	77.6
Former KaNgwane	Mpumalanga	33.7	47.2	29.1	71.4
Former KwaNdebele	Mpumalanga	29.0	45.9	27.6	65.0
Former KwaZulu	KwaZulu-Natal	48.7	54.5	27.0	67.4
Former Lebowa	Limpopo	38.7	57.2	23.3	81.9
Former Qwa Qwa	Free State	36.8	56.0	22.8	61.4
Former Transkei	Eastern Cape	69.0	58.4	37.2	87.8
Former Venda	Limpopo	36.9	54.5	24.0	77.0
All former homelands		46.4	53.8	28.0	73.7
Rest of South Africa		33.0	30.1	17.9	27.6
All South Africa		37.1	36.0	20.9	43.8

Source: Southern African Social Policy Research Institute (2014)

How might we intervene?

Key considerations:

- Achieving spatial justice is a political problem not a technical problem
- Causes of injustice are structural and lie in the role of power – **we need to confront issues of power**
- Operation of land markets and defence of property values favour privileged over public interest considerations
- Urban planning and design is not values driven or oriented – planners retreat from normative practice underpinned by social justice into bureaucratic practice
- Resistance by private developers – which constitute a powerful and concentrated set of interests
- Strong power structures and elites (Traditional Authorities, Mining and Commercial Farmers) entrench marginality

How might we intervene?

“Take jobs to where people are”

- Path dependence – entrenched spatial allocation of land inherited from apartheid
- Overthrowing this legacy very difficult given strength of market forces & unlikely that townships will de-densify in the foreseeable future:
- Proposed interventions:
 - Complementary investments in neighbourhood amenities to develop employment sub-centres/nodes – township development and regeneration and creation of decentralised/polycentric economic sub-centres or nodes closer to where people live & increase efficiency and affordability of public transport to connect people to the centres of dynamic economic activity

Intervene in land and housing markets – to access well located land

- Expropriation/or onerous taxation – land held for speculative purposes
- More stringent normative & ‘values-driven’ land development regulation and management systems – to intervene and transform spatial processes
- Requirements that private developments make provision for accommodating a proportion of the affordable housing market
- Reclaim and redevelop brown fields in inner-city areas as an urban densification option
- Use well-located publicly owned land for affordable housing

Broad policy options

4 broad instruments or approaches dominate the discourse

- Successful development requires spatial concentration of production and regional integration (cities are where things happen)
- Spread economic development as far as possible to lagging regions
- Tap into distinctive characteristics and qualities – place-based approach leveraging the distinctive potential and specific context and constraints and tailoring development and spending accordingly
- Skills accumulation, provision of basic public services and health and education should be equitably distributed – space blind approach.






Broad policy options

Recognise that different 'spatiality' exist sub-nationally:

- Metros and Cities – expected to grow with increased urbanisation – account for 68% of the economy
- Large growing towns – ought to be urban clusters but which lack high order urban services (urbanisation of people) – weak local capacities
- Smaller towns – experiencing in-migration and rising demands for services – weak local capacities
- Sparsely populated and arid areas – characterised by out-migration and concentration of the economically inactive

Should consider all policy approaches but since forces and factors responsible for variation in well-being are different – need to design and implement the approaches in ways that suit the specific realities and contexts of the different sub-national regions

% of population of the sub-region

	Unemployment Rate (2016)	Percentage of Poor Households (2011)	Age 0 – 14 (%)	Age 15 – 34 (%)
 Metros and Cities Total Population 29 633 727	26%	18%	26%	38%
 Large Rural Towns Total Population 5 889 154	27%	18%	30%	35%
 Medium and Small Towns Total Population 8 391 638	27%	19%	27%	34%
 Rural Settlements Total Population 10 006 387	38%	23%	37%	33%
 Sparse Settlements Total Population 1 871 207	23%	8%	30%	24%

Institutional pre-requisites

Spatial inequalities have deepened despite interventions – therefore need to plan differently. Need a clear spatial vision and policy embracing spatial justice, spatial quality and spatial efficiency. Buttressed by better coordination between government programs based on deliberate spatial policies, as well as mechanisms to introduce spatial accountability in the system.

Establish rules of the game for all social agents premised on spatially just principles

- Where effective spatial or territorial policy has worked, this has been driven by a centrally established coordinating structure to:
 - Oversee the development of coherent national spatial policy
 - Coordinate (vertically and horizontally) and direct spatial policy towards positive social and economic outcomes - by creating a shared understanding across all spheres of government and key sectors in society of the needs, potential and vulnerability of specific places – and the action needed to transform the spatial dynamics in these spaces - spatial contracting
 - Set the tone for institutional as well as regulatory processes that will flow from national through to provincial and local to implement the policy and exercise accountability
- Confront weak institutional capacity across the system not least at local government level
- Meaningfully involve communities as equal partners in designing and shaping urban and rural spaces
- Confront the power structures - burden of adjustment lies with the elite – if we want to foster social solidarity. How do we get elites and corporates to take responsibility for social justice and environmental sustainability –

Futures thinking

While acknowledging that significant gains have been made in terms of improving the social and economic conditions of the majority, from a spatial justice lens, the past historical injustices of apartheid are very much evident in the present...



The spatial future will therefore be much like the present (and by implication not significantly different from the apartheid past)

Unless there is

More deliberate spatial thinking in planning and policy processes, through a critical exploration of the spatiality of injustice and a more purposeful policy framework and robust institutional architecture to drive a spatially just agenda.