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# After 05/11: how can South African municipalities respond?

**Stengthening the  
Migration-Development  
Nexus: Sustainable  
Urban Development  
Strategies  
28 Oct.2008**

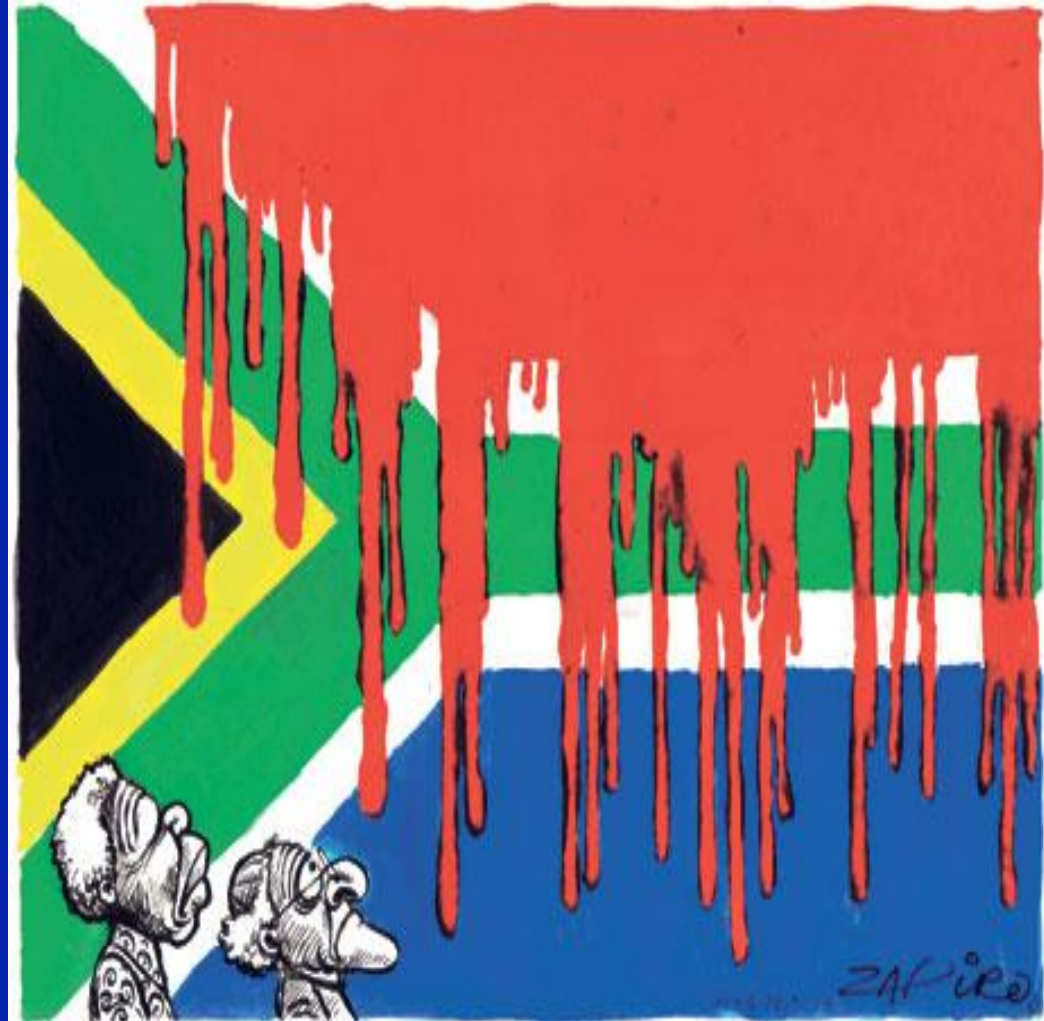
Development and Peace  
Foundation

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# Outline of presentation

1. Getting rid of myths attached to international migration into SA
2. Combining the national & local levels
3. Way forward



# 1. Getting rid of myths ...

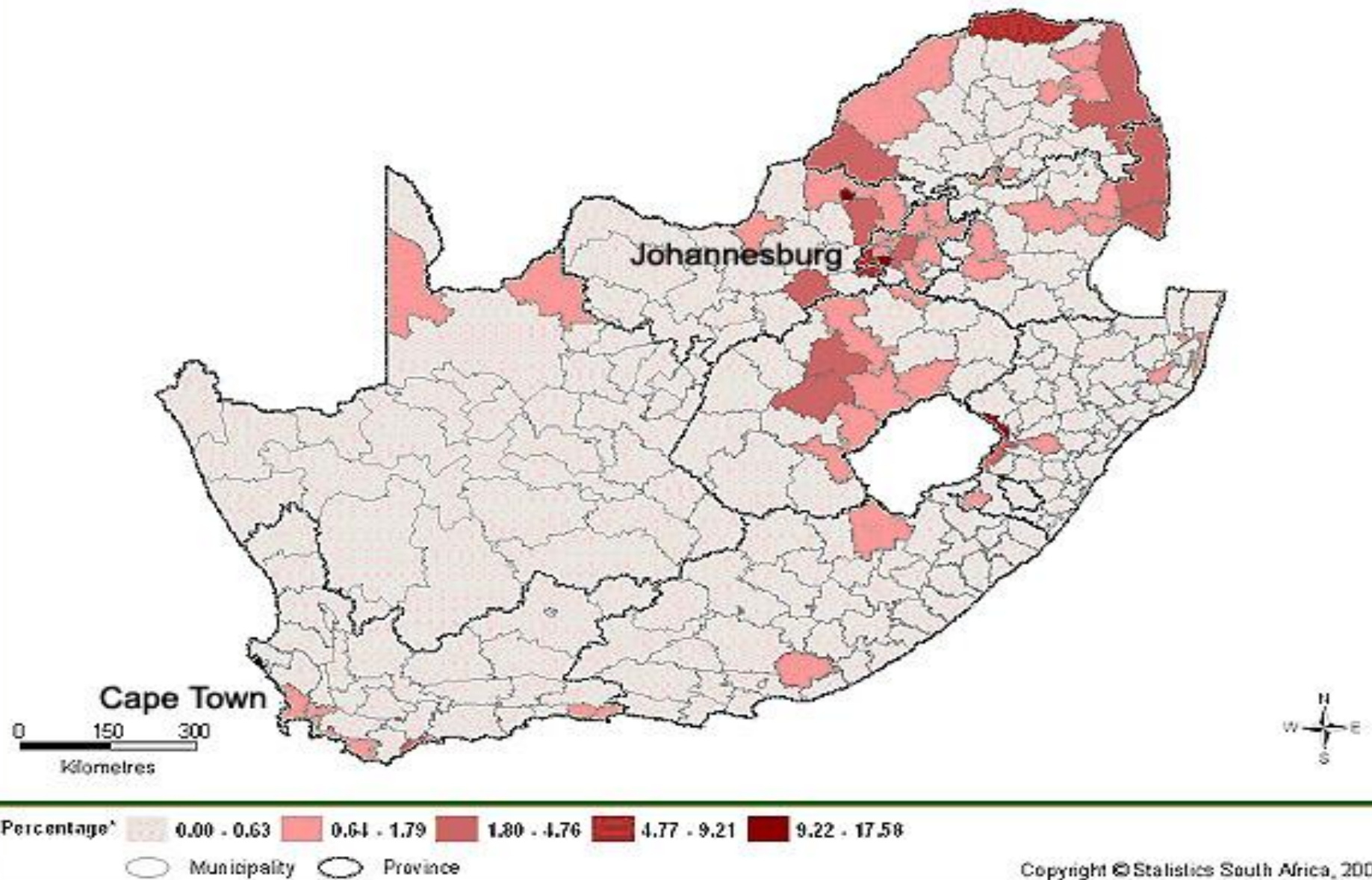
## a. A real demographic change but largely overstated and misunderstood

- ❑ “Human tsunami”, “hordes of Zimbabweans”
- ❑ In 2001, Gauteng Province: 2.4% foreign-born population
- ❑ Foreign immigration = marginal part of demographic changes
- ❑ **Main demographic challenges come from domestic rural-urban and inter-urban migration** (Gindrey & Landau, *Gauteng 2025, Trend paper: Migration*, 2008)

# 1. Getting rid of myths ...

## **b. Territorial disparities**

- Gauteng & Western Cape vs rest of country
- Wide disparities within cities
- Xenophobic violence occurrences not systematically linked to foreigners' presence and concentration



Map 1. Geographical distribution of foreigners in SA, 2003.  
Source: StatsSA, Census.



# 1. Getting rid of myths ...

## c. Urban development challenges

- ❑ Differentiated and targeted planning for social needs of mobile populations: not temporary (permanent phenom. / not sedentary, often on transit)

- ❑ Economic development potential neglected or denied (overemph. on security/hygienist perceptions): overqualified/underemployed

E.g.: Wits-Tufts-IFAS 2006 Johannesburg survey (847 respondents from immigrants neighbourhoods in Joburg)

# 1. Getting rid of myths ...

106. Highest Level of Education Completed * Country of Birth									
			Country of Birth					Total	
			DRC	Mozambique	Somalia	Other Non-South African	South Africa		
Highest Level of Education Completed	DK/RA	Percent		2.00%				0.60%	0.50%
	No formal schooling/ some primary education	Percent	0.80%	2.00%	21.50%	6.70%	6.80%	7.10%	7.10%
	Finished Primary Education	Percent	5.10%	37.10%	24.70%		18.80%	20.70%	20.10%
	Finished Secondary Education	Percent	50.20%	49.00%	40.30%	73.30%	59.70%	47.10%	50.30%
	Finished Tertiary Education (BA, BS, Diploma, etc.)	Percent	37.50%	8.40%	13.40%	20.00%	13.60%	21.60%	19.60%
	Post-grad degree (Masters, doctorate, post-graduate diploma)	Percent	6.30%	1.50%			1.00%	2.90%	2.50%
	Total=N	Count	253	202	186	15	191	648	847

## 2. Combining the national and local levels

- a. A **major tension** bet. a conservative, Apartheid-inherited vision of migration containment and the necessity to adopt a progressive legislative framework for refugees.
- b. **3 specific aspects:**
  - a status quo regarding **labour migration to the mines** and the commercial farming sector and a tendency to favour skilled immigration in a region rife with political instability and underdevelopment;
  - an **overemphasis on border control and repatriation** resulting in vast public expenditures in this area
  - and third, a **first-class refugee regime** in a third world context resulting in abuse of the system for **lack of other entry possibilities**

## 2. Combining the national and local levels

### c. 5 consequences:

- 1) **lack of policy planning, strategic thinking and evaluation** bet. various levels of government;
- 2) refusal to consider “**social cohesion**” dimension;
- 3) lack of **quality data collection mechanisms** and evidence-based policy-making
- 4) denial of very negative shortcomings of **local government structures and impact of decentralisation**
- 5) **high risk of politicization** of xenophobia

# 3. Way forward

## A. Influencing policy-making:

- monitoring the inclusion of issues such as international migration and education to tolerance and diversity in all municipal policy documents and debates (encourage evidence-based policy making);

## B. Combating xenophobia:

- encouraging **South African political leaders** to vigorously condemn xenophobic acts in a non-partisan way;
- exchanging best practices in terms of **policing and judicial treatment of xenophobic acts** to prevent the installation of a sense of impunity;
- supporting **local long-term initiatives to educate children** and local leaders to fight xenophobia, racism and intolerance (e.g.: Alexandra Carnival);
- supporting the setting up of **early warning mechanisms** among communities, in collaboration with national, provincial and local State and civil society stakeholders, to ensure the **protection of populations**.

# 3. Way forward

## C. Supporting capacity development

- support initiatives at municipal level and across the country to **train and hire staff that will specialise in the urban planning of human mobility**;
- develop **local capacity adapted to specific needs** (refugees, labour, high density/low density; concentrate on highly volatile areas): e.g. City of Johannesburg help desk

## D. Improving national / local and interdepartmental communication and joint actions

- support the **creation of intergovernmental bodies / public think-tank** in charge of monitoring, data collection and research in order to capitalise on the developmental dimensions of migration;
- lobby for **labour issues to include international migration** and be part of line functions of national clusters or new Cabinet transversal department.

# 3. Way forward

## E. 2 dimensions of concern:

❖ **Model transfers:** risk from donors and international org. to “sell” short term tool-kits to occupy humanitarian/social development terrain

❖ **Myth of the “benevolent local community”:** need to monitor often nefarious activity of local leaders, middle-path to be found between top-bottom / foreign policy model transfers and “carte blanche” to local communities.



**ROLL BACK XENOPHOBIA**

**WHAT IS XENOPHOBIA?**

Xenophobia is defined as the deep dislike of non-nationals by nationals.

It is based on fear of the unknown or anything that is seen as different.

In South Africa, these largely unfounded fears are that foreigners are to blame for all of our problems.

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