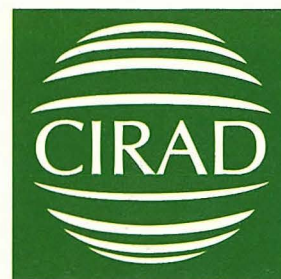




University of Pretoria



THE AMATOLA DISTRICT ZONING PROJECT :
ADDRESSING DIVERSITY
AND THE SPATIAL DYNAMICS OF RURAL AREAS
(Eastern Cape Province, South Africa)

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Extension & Rural Development**

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& Rural Development**

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Note

The zoning methodology has been presented in a separate working document. The following document highlights the results of the application of the methodology in the District of Amatola, Eastern Cape Province. Those who have read the methodological paper might wonder how one produces such a report from a simple zoning exercise. This paper goes beyond the results of the zoning exercise itself, which aims at identifying current spatial diversity.

It is the result of the interpretation of this diversity and extensive use of secondary information not collected through the zoning process, but structured around the spatial framework provided by the zoning exercise. It shows what can be achieved when one goes beyond the zoning exercise itself:

- How can we explain the diversity observed ?
- What are the underlying factors behind such a diversity ?
- Can we attempt to build a spatial model from the zoning exercise itself ?
- Can this model stimulate discussion ?

The model presented here is one of the many possible representations of the Amatola District. It derives from a number of hypothesis that have not all been properly verified yet. The main one is that history and segregation have played a crucial role in the spatial dynamics of the Amatola District.

The model is specifically intended to stimulate discussion around a central issue. The Amatola District explicitly cuts across the boundaries of apartheid. However, historical boundaries still seem to have a strong impact on spatial dynamics. How can the Amatola District Council reconcile three historically different blocks into a balanced and integrated territory ? The risks of desintegration are not minute. The Western part of Transkei could well drift towards Umtata and its Transkeian roots and identity. Similarly, the commercial rural hinterland could well strengthen its links with other regional agricultural and marketing hubs such as Port Elizabeth or Queenstown.

Integration relies on mutually beneficial relationships between the different historical blocks within the district and would ensure a balanced redistributive development of the whole Amatola district. However the will for integration is a political one and goes beyond the scope of this report. This report only highlights some issues that could stimulate political discussion on the future of the Amatola district.

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1 Introduction

The Amatola zoning project was conducted in order to highlight the diversity of rural situations within the Eastern Cape and the changes they are going through. Its results were to be used for discussions around rural development planning in the area.

The idea of conducting such a project was brought forward after conducting various socio-economic studies in the local area of Kambashe. The zoning must enable a better interpretation of the results obtained in Kambashe area, by situating it in its environment, by identifying the main basis of organisation of the regional layout and the flows of money, population and products. Furthermore, highlighting the diversity of the situations allows one to envisage the use within a wider area of the knowledge acquired in Kambashe, in particular the elaboration of a regional typology of households (Bonnal & al., 1998).

The Amatola District totally includes the Kambashe area and is one of the 6 Districts of the Eastern Cape Province. It has an area of 26.000 km² and shelters around 2.000.000 inhabitants (1996 census). It is the area of jurisdiction of the Amatola District Council (see administrative and local government overview in Box 1).

It was first decided to test out a methodology elaborated in Brazil (Caron, 1997) on six magisterial districts (Peddie, Middledrift, King William's Town/Zwelitsha, East London, Komga, Keiskammahoek). As the results proved worthwhile (Caron, 1998), it was then decided to extend the study area to the whole of the Amatola District and to design a planning tool from the results. It was also deemed that a study of the Amatola would provide us with results that might be useful for the Eastern Cape as a whole as this District, due to its central geographical position within the Province, encompasses the three main elements:

- Commercial farming areas;
- the Southern and Central part of former bantustan of Ciskei; and
- the Western part of the former bantustan of Transkei.

Box 1. ADMINISTRATIVE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT OVERVIEW

Transitional Local Council (TLC): local government for towns (ie: municipalities), whose members are elected.

Transitional Representative Council (TRC): local government for the rural areas of a given Magisterial district, whose members are elected.

Magisterial district: the basic administrative unit representing central government during colonial times and apartheid era. Their limits are still used to define the jurisdiction areas of TRCs. The Amatola District is for example made up of the agregation of 19 Magisterial districts.

District Council: representative body for the various constituent councils (for example 19 TRCs and 22 TLCs in the case of the Amatola District Council).

Training played a key role in the whole project. The use of the methodology had to be mastered by a number of people in order for such an exercise to be replicated in other areas when necessary. During the initial surveys, a number of scientists (from ARDRI¹, ARC, UP, ECDALA) were familiarised with the methodology (Caron, 1998). Two junior economists from ECDALA were later included in the project team and a geography student from Fort Hare took part in the enterprise. A junior staff from ARC's Development Impact Analysis Group also joined the team for a couple of weeks.

The chapter is developing the following aspects drawn from the results of this zoning process.

- Part 1 describes the diversity of situations highlighted with a description of each spatial unit.
- Part 2 focuses on the explanatory variables that can be identified to explain the diversity and the spatial distribution of situations.
- Part 3 is an attempt to create a spatial model for the Amatola district.
- Part 4 discusses key issues and problems related to regional development that appeared crucial during the zoning interviews.

¹ ARDRI : Agricultural and Rural Development Research Institute ; ARC : Agricultural Research Council ; UP : University of Pretoria ; UFH : University of Fort Hare ; ECDALA : Eastern Cape Department of Agriculture and Land Affairs.

The methodology applied is summarised in Box 2 (Lhopitalier & al., 1999).

Box 2. AN OVERVIEW OF THE METHODOLOGY

Zoning is a geographical delineation (mapping) of spatial units presenting an acceptable degree of homogeneity, according to criteria relevant to the objective pursued and to the scale of the analysis.

The choice is made to take advantage of the knowledge of local stakeholders who live and work in the area. The produced knowledge is structured from the verbal representations of stakeholders who have already unconsciously completed the essential part of the analysis of the complex situation. It is the comparative analysis of their representations, the search for consistencies and inconsistencies between them that will enable one to generate new representations. Three options are taken:

- The first option relies on the choice of variables that account for the diversity and the dynamics of the situation. They are not determined *a priori*, but become the object of the study. Conversely to most of the agro-ecological surveys and GIS, the variables are not chosen *ex ante*, according to the abilities and skills of the expert in charge of the analysis.
- The second option consists in using cartographic support as the basis for dialogue and the portrayal of knowledge. It allows the persons interviewed to express themselves while referring to specific locations, material objects, geographic boundaries, etc.
- The third option is to focus on dynamics. Diversity is the focus one can easily start with. One has then to further explain diversity by taking into account forms of territorial and social organisation. Such a process is the basis for modelling rural space evolutions. Space is looked upon in its entirety and the exercise integrates the influence of different stakeholders and of exogenous phenomena and events.

The methodology is based on 5 steps:

- Desktop study of maps and bibliography, design of an interview framework, selection of a base map and selection of interviewees. The preparation of the questionnaire and the matrix to collect information revolves around the choice of a set of variables that are relevant for the area and the questions one should answer. One must also define the key variables that represent best the diversity one wants to represent. The remaining variables will be there to provide additional information and to help in cross-checking the answers. One must therefore include inter-dependant variables.
- Interviews: participatory mapping of homogeneous spatial units (HSU) according to the selected criteria and collection of data on these units. Practically, the interviewee is placed in front of the base map, a sheet of tracing paper is then placed over that base map in order to draw with a lead pencil the spatial units identified by the interviewee. One must then gather information from each defined unit and place it in the matrix.
- Comparative analysis of interview maps and design of a synthetic map with homogeneous spatial units. The maps are then combined in order to obtain a synthetic map, based on the comparative analysis of the different interview maps. This gives a clue to the questions raised before the start of the exercise and bring us closer to the objectives set by the zoning. This synthetic map is therefore based on the comparative analysis of the interviewees' verbal representations of their environment, but also on the researchers' hypothesis and analysis of that area, bringing secondary information available on the area of analysis.
- Validation of the synthetic map through feedback, field observations and use of secondary data.
- Further analysis and design of a synthetic spatial model highlighting the trends in spatial and social dynamics.

1 The diversity of rural situations in the Amatola District

Rural situations highlighted in the Amatola District are very diverse, as shown on Map 1 (see also Annex 1 for an example of detailed information). They are the following ones:

Urban areas

Urban areas do not fall all under one single category. There is a striking hierarchy of urban centres:

The City: *East London.*

East London is the main urban centre in the Amatola District. It is endowed with all services and industries normally available in major urban centres. It is the only river port in the country and also acts as a very powerful magnet structuring the spatial and economic organisation of the region. Its spatial influence as the major city in the Amatola District stretches to most areas of the district (its influence is only undermined by that of Port Elizabeth in the westernmost commercial farming areas of the District).

Major towns: *King William's Town and Butterworth.*

These two towns boast an impressive range of industries and services but do not have the influence of East London on the spatial and economic organisation of the region. Their spatial influence is closely related to their surroundings: King William's Town is the focal point of the former Ciskei, whereas Butterworth is the central point of the eastern part of Transkei.

King William's Town is in fact part of an urban sprawl linking it with East London through numerous townships and peri-urban areas (Zwelitsha, Mdantsane...).

Agricultural centres: *Fort Beaufort, Adelaide, Bedford, Cathcart, Stutterheim, Idutywa and Komga.*

These towns offer all the essential range of services of urban centres (banks, shops, co-operatives, garages...) and they act as structuring elements within their close rural surroundings at the Magisterial district level.

Minor towns: *Alice, Peddie and Ngamakwe.*

Such centres do not offer the range of services (often limited banking facilities) of the above but still have a great influence on their surroundings (at the Magisterial district level).

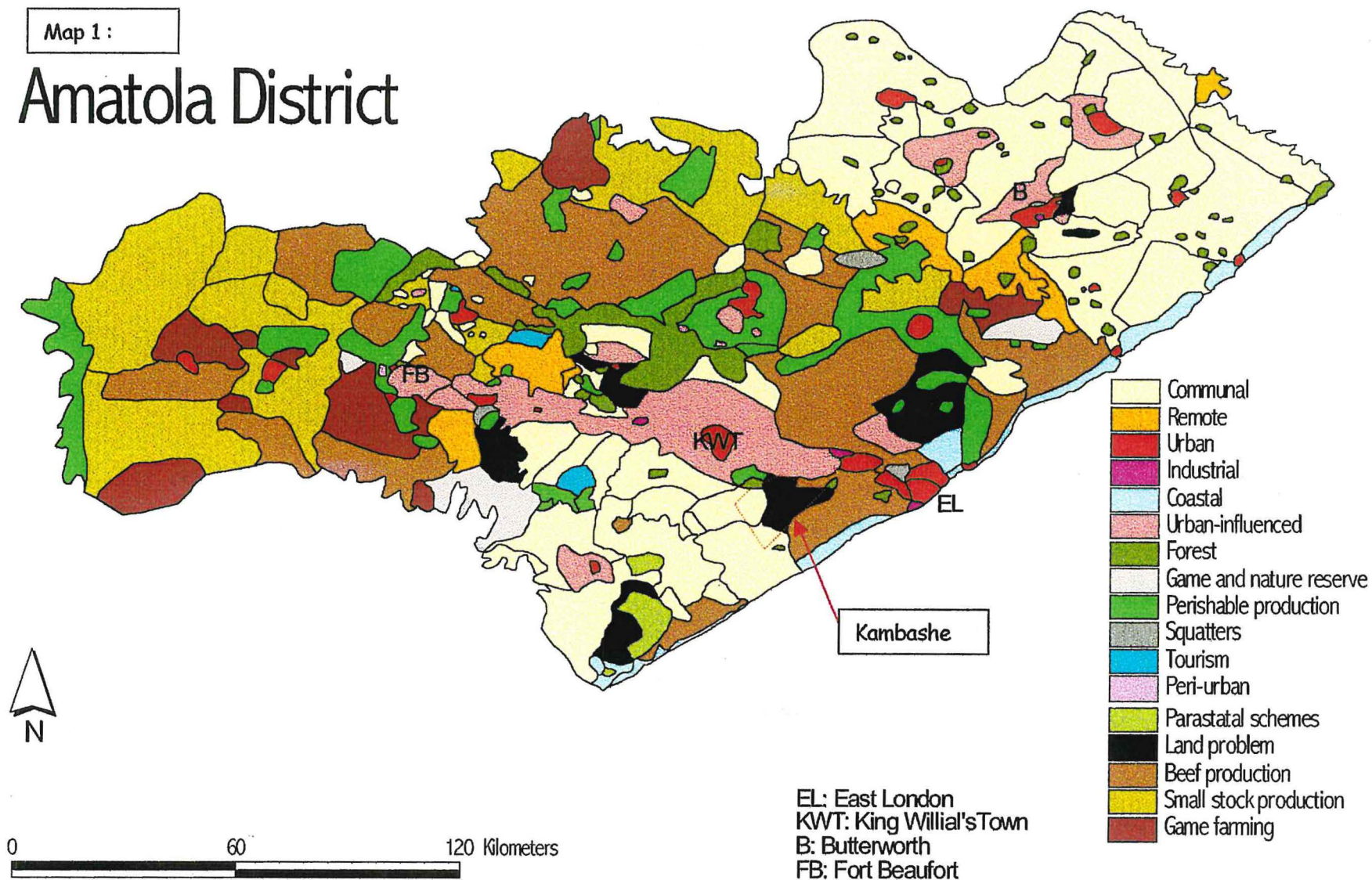
Administrative centres or trading posts: *Keiskammahoek, Middledrift, Balfour, Seymour, Tsomo, Centani and Willowvale.*

Remains of a colonial administration, these centres have never enjoyed the development of other centres, either because of the lack of infrastructure development or because of the closeness of a more attractive centre. They could be defined as minor communication hubs.

Townships exist around most towns but, apart from Mdantsane and Zwelitsha that are becoming urban centres of their own, they have not been considered separate areas as they are strongly integrated to urban areas, because of economic and demographic patterns.

Map 1 :

Amatola District



Industrial areas

Industrial areas are neighbouring East London (West Bank and Fort Jackson), King William's Town, Zwelitsha, Berlin, Dimbaza and Butterworth. These areas have developed considerably between 1980 and 1994 in or around the former bantustans, due to fiscal advantages and to subsidies granted to industries in order to promote employment. The effect of the end of apartheid was that this financial support stopped and a drop in the economic activity has been felt with a lot of industries closing down or relocating in other parts of the country.

"Grey" areas

By "grey" areas, we refer to informal settlements spreading around a number of towns, mainly urban centres situated in the former bantustans. Such areas have been identified around the towns of Alice, Idutywa, Nqamakwe and Butterworth. Such settlements are the result of migration of people from the neighbouring rural areas or even from people who used to live within the town but can no longer afford the housing rents. Generally, such settlements have been established on commonage or municipal land.

Peri-Urban areas

The concept of peri-urban areas is a key element for the understanding of spatial dynamics within the District. These are areas that have very often been mentioned during the interviews and frequently referred to as 'urban-influenced areas'. The definition is quite straightforward and highlights the impact of urban centres on the surrounding rural hinterland. These areas have been defined as the ones from which people can commute daily to an urban centre. They appear as spatial rings around urban centres and along the main roads. Welfare payments and wages are the main sources of income for such areas. We are in fact facing a rural population with urban living patterns. Such areas are partly a result of Betterment policies², which created 'closer settlement schemes', and partly a result of the collapse of the rural economy. Not all villages enclosed in the peri-urban ring are former closer settlement schemes.

Communal areas

The main issue in characterising such areas is obviously the land tenure issue. These areas are characterised by the absence (apart from some few isolated areas of freehold or quitrent tenure³) of private ownership of land assets and therefore by the existence of communal management of most productive resources (Lasbennes, 1998). The past tweaking (especially through Betterment Planning policies) of such communal management systems has had a dire impact on the productive base of such areas.

"Communal areas" is a generic term that conceals a wealth of diversity highlighted and characterised by the zoning. Initially most interviewees would say "everything is the same,

² Policies set up from the 1940's that aimed at replanning the rural areas. They involved villagisation schemes and a strict planning of the village space into residential areas, arable lands and grazing camps.

³ Freehold tenure : unalienable property rights over land.

Quitrent tenure : long-term lease granted by the State to the tenants. Some restrictions (sale and transmission) on rights.

employment is rife and pensions are the main sources of income ". However, it turned out that communal areas were extremely diversified and that understanding this diversity was a key aspect for designing proper development plans. Such areas can for example be sub-divided according to the main productive activities being pursued:

Urban influenced communal areas:

Such areas have been previously described under the peri-urban areas section.

Tourism influenced communal areas:

Such areas are located along the coastline and around the mountain resorts of Hogsback and Katberg areas. The nearby presence of tourism based activities close to such communal areas seems to stimulate a number of local initiatives (arts and crafts) and to offer employment opportunities within such areas.

A peculiar type of area can be found in the Southern part of the Middledrift district. A famous priestess resides in that area and people from all over the country come and visit her. A thriving accommodation business has developed within that area due to the influx of pilgrims.

Remote communal areas:

Some areas were qualified "remote" during the interviews. Obviously the concept of remoteness varies from one area of the District to the other. In the former Ciskei area, parts of the Victoria East district and the Amatola Basin were qualified as remote, the reason being that transport to and from those areas was scarce. However in the former Transkei area, some areas deemed remote can be objectively qualified so as transport infrastructure is totally absent and people have to travel by foot for long periods to access the transport network and its related opportunities.

Communal areas with livestock and crop production:

Such areas are further subdivided on the map according to the main production system (cattle, goat, sheep, mixed livestock, and crop...). There will not be a thorough description for each of them. The choice of production system is largely related to the ecological conditions within each area. What must be highlighted here is the fact that, although agricultural activities still occupy space, they play a marginal role in most households' income (most of the income derives from welfare payments and remittances; Zarion & Laurent, 1997).

State support services are close to non-existent in many areas. Fencing is highly degraded and this affects livestock management being practised (Saqqali, 1998). Most crop production only takes place in residential gardens and there is very little marketing of production.

Commercial farming area

Commercial farming areas also show a great diversity. They differ from the communal areas for their land tenure system is of the freehold type. It therefore offers a great tenure security and the land assets can also be used as collateral to obtain loans for investing in agriculture

activities. The main criterion in order to highlight such diversity is the choice of production systems being set up by farmers.

Perishable products farming

Such farms are specialised in the production of perishable products (dairy products, vegetables and fruits) destined for the urban markets. These holdings are generally taking advantage of their geographical situation as they are often situated in the vicinity of towns or major road networks and they are also close to sources of water for irrigation purposes.

However, some patches of perishable production do not respond to such geographical criteria:

- in the Adelaide district, a remote valley in the Northern part of the District takes advantage of excellent agronomic conditions and niche markets to specialise in vegetable and fruit (strawberries) production ;
- in the Cathcart district, a number of remote farms (i.e. : accessible only by dirt roads) have turned to dairy production. This is due to a reorganising of the dairy sector: Bonnita⁴ was keen on extending its dairy production and has therefore approached farmers situated in good agronomic settings for dairy production and offered them incentives to switch to dairy production. It has therefore extended its collection zone to what would seem to be uneconomic areas (because of the costs for storage and transport).

Vegetable production in those districts bordering the former Transkei is also geared towards the huge market that Transkei represents. Traders from Transkei come directly to such farms and collect the goods for the Transkei market.

The irrigated production of citrus is mostly concentrated in the Fort Beaufort and Adelaide districts. It is included in a highly integrated commodity chain with the Kat Co-op⁵ and the Outspan⁶ export structure in Port Elizabeth. It is interesting to note the creation of a second private co-op in Fort Beaufort by a group of farmers. Furthermore, a group of less than 20 formerly disadvantaged farmers who have inherited Ulimocor⁷ farms are still expecting a settlement of their land tenure situation in order to secure the necessary funding for the upgrading and expansion of their activities.

Beef production

A great number of commercial farms are geared towards the production of beef meat. These are generally situated in areas where the carrying capacity remains good (4-6 ha / LSU⁸), mainly due to sufficient rainfall. Meat is either sold to abattoirs, butchers, and traders who organise stockfairs.

An interesting fact is that such farmers generally buy a number of cattle from the communal areas, mainly through traders and especially during winter and drought period when cattle can be acquired at low prices from communal farmers.

⁴ A regional dairy co-operative.

⁵ A local citrus co-operative.

⁶ A citrus export agency, now called Capespan.

⁷ Also known as Ciskei Agricultural Corporation, a disbanded parastatal which ran Ciskei government agricultural ventures (plantations, irrigation schemes...).

⁸ Large stock unit.

Small stock production

Small stock production occupies the lower rainfall portions of commercial farming districts. The main productions are merino sheep and angora goats although a number of farms also produce meat, mainly for the communal areas market. Wool is marketed through BKB⁹ in Port Elizabeth. Most of these farms, especially those close to the communal areas or to the main roads are suffering from stock theft.

Game farms

Game farming is rapidly expanding throughout the commercial farms of the Amatola District. This expansion is mainly linked to two factors: the prevalence and increase in stock theft and the uncertainty regarding the prices of domestic animals.

Farmers do not switch outright to game farming. It is generally initiated as a sideline activity because of huge capital investment necessary for setting up a game farming venture (fencing costs, building of accommodation). Therefore, game farming ventures are often the result of a grouping of neighbouring farmers into a conservancy scheme whereby each farmer commits piece of land to the conservancy and shares the cost and benefits of his participation according to its share of land given.

Forests

For most, State forests are found in the districts neighbouring the Amatola Range, along the former Transkei coastline and in the Nqamakwe and Tsomo districts and were mostly owned by the former bantustans. They are either "natural" or planted forests. With regard to "natural" forests, inhabitants from neighbouring villages collect firewood from them and send their cattle there for grazing. With regard to planted forests, the locals can be employed as foresters, a situation that has become increasingly rare since 1994.

Tensions between communities and forestry operators are often tense, as communities would like to become more involved in the management of forestry. A number of incidents around the Hogsback forest are a reminder of such claims (communities orchestrating fires within the plantations).

The number of sawmills in the area has considerably diminished. The only remaining major sawmill can be found in Stutterheim and provides employment to communities from as far as the Keiskammahoek Magisterial district. A private sawmill has been set up in the Mpofu district.

Nature reserves and game reserves

The development of tourist activities in this area is limited due to its remoteness and difficulty of access.

⁹ A regional wool co-operative.

Parastatal land

The main issue revolves around the disposal and transfer of the former bantustans agricultural assets (from Ulimcor and Tracor¹⁰)¹¹. However, the process is not yet finalised and pressures from neighbouring communities around such state assets are mounting. The main assets are:

- the pineapple production farms in the Peddie district ;
- the irrigation schemes along the Fish and Keiskamma Rivers;
- the citrus farms along the Upper Kat Valley.

It is not yet decided whether such assets should be transferred to whole communities or to private individuals. In the case for instance of citrus production, land invasions of productive farms are undermining the success of such ventures.

Land related problem areas

There are a number of areas where land-related issues (land tenure and ownership) were seen as the main problem. Most of these areas are situated within what used to be "Released areas", that is land that was retroceded to the homelands during the consolidation process. Part of the land was turned into trust tenure to accommodate the displaced and former farmworkers. The rest of the land was either leased or sold mostly to wealthy individuals with connections within the bantustans administrations (Lhopitalier, 1998).

Therefore, land related tensions are very strong between the overpopulated villages and the absentee landlords. Land hungry communities are invading semi-abandoned prime agricultural land. A number of such communities are actually descending from farmworkers families and they therefore claim to have a very justified right over these farms.

Coastal areas

Due to its particular agro-ecological setting and the tourism potential, the coastal area stands apart as a given area. It can be roughly subdivided into two separate areas:

- the Western Coastal areas that stretch to the West of East London, towards Port Elizabeth along the coastal road (R56). They include perishable production farms, holiday resorts (especially the Mpekweni Sun¹²) and communal areas benefiting from employment in the tourism sector, income opportunities through the marketing of arts and craft and finally accessibility of urban centres through the presence of a coastal major road ;

¹⁰ Transkei Agricultural Corporation : a disbanded parastatal which ran Transkei government agricultural ventures (plantations, irrigation schemes...).

¹¹ Such parastatals were set up to deal with the large agricultural assets transferred to the Bantustans during the consolidation process (reassembling Ciskei into a single and unified territory with a continuous boundary). It involved the transfer of land from the Republic of South Africa to the bantustans through expropriation of white commercial farmers and resettlement of black population.

¹² A casino initially created within Ciskei as gambling was banned within the Republic of South Africa.

- the Eastern Coastal area, stretching from East London through the Transkei Wild Coast. The main difference with the Western area is the absence of coastal road and poor accessibility. In the former Transkei area, tensions are rife between communities and private holiday resorts operators regarding the sharing of tourism benefits. Environmental degradation of the coastline is also a concern.

It is also quite surprising to witness the lack of utilisation of marine resources through fishing or related activities along the coastline, except in the form of casual leisure fishing.

2 An understanding of spatial dynamics and their impact on rural dynamics: the main explanatory variables

In addition to the identification of the present diversity of the situations, the surveys enabled the gathering of numerous informations relating to the transformations in process. They also enabled the identification of evolution factors that might not be directly linked to the local or regional situations, as with the characteristics of the labour market, and in particular the relationships with the main urban and industrial centres of the country (Port Elizabeth, Cape Town and Johannesburg).

The legacy of apartheid and bantustan policies

Apartheid policies stopped only recently. They left strong marks on the landscape and the organisation of space. Apartheid policies resulted mainly in :

- the appropriation of the natural resources which were most favourable to commercial agriculture (regular rainfall patterns, low and flat areas for mechanised agriculture, etc.) and setting up white commercial farms in the border region and the coastal area westward (former pineapple production basin). Of course, the characteristics of natural resources could not be used as the only explanation for ethnic spatial distribution. Even if there is an indirect link between them, Frontier wars and the fact that communities are closer to or further away from urban centres and major roads have also played an important role;
- the differentiation of land tenure systems (Lhopitallier, 1998) : freehold in commercial areas ; mixed and extremely complex tenure systems in communal areas¹³, resulting from successive administrations and legislation thus creating many strata which, today, have given rise to numerous conflicts and claims. Furthermore, one finds tribal lands, communal lands, trust lands and private lands. In fact, the situation is much more complex than that. While this was the situation until the independence of Ciskei and Transkei, the bantustans' governments then set up assumed the right to own all land, while only land for collective use (accessed through the village headman) or land under lease were allowed;
- population displacements : forced removals of black spots, villagers and private Xhosa farmers who resided in "white areas", in the border region or other regions of the country, but also white farmers whom were expropriated when Ciskei and Transkei became independent (Switzer, 1993). The demographic pressure resulting from the displacements

¹³ Over 35 separate pieces of legislation regulate land access and administration within the Province.

into former Ciskei and Transkei¹⁴, reinforced the attraction of generating extra-agricultural incomes via migration, especially since black agriculture was not in a position to compete with white commercial farmers for economic reasons, as the attribution of state subsidies was unequal (Van Zyl & al, 1996). This pressure as well as the deregulation of the local mechanisms of the management of the commons (Lasbennes, 1998), which results from population flows, could also be the cause of erosive phenomena that are ground for concern. Furthermore, a few black villages still exist in the border region. Conflicts with surrounding farm owners have developed since 1994, mainly due to an important wave of farmworkers' evictions¹⁵ ;

- the application of the betterment planning policy in many villages, a policy which radically modified housing practices (grouping in residential areas), exploitation practices as well as practices of management of the environment (delimitation of areas suitable for cultivation on top of hills and by default, of grazing areas on the rest of the communal territory). This policy, among others, contributed to deregulating local mechanisms for the management of the commons (Lasbennes, 1998; De Wet, 1995). Betterment policies were applied more vigorously in former Ciskei than former Transkei.

The development of rural space by the former bantustans government resulted in the production of scattered areas in which one can find :

- areas in which investments were significant in the field of agriculture. These investments concerned the implementation of irrigation infrastructures and/or labour intensive farms. Everywhere, State services were always available through parastatals and their disappearance, after 1994, has created serious land tenure as well as investment valorisation problems, transfer to private entrepreneurs, not to mention the fact that many civil servants have not been paid salaries;
- areas in which expropriation of commercial producers resulted in the relative abandonment of agricultural production. These areas are considerably encroached whereas in the neighbouring villages, pressure on the resources is considerable and agricultural abandonment is intense. Land tenure conflicts become accentuated as communities are invading those farms;
- developing and maintaining commercial parastatal farms near the coast;
- the creation or maintenance of state forests, mainly in the highly uneven areas of Amatola mountain range for commercial or ecological purposes;
- the investment in urban and peri-urban areas (roads, electricity, water conveyance), which reinforces the attractiveness of towns and the intensity of the migration phenomena.

Concerning agricultural production, this policy resulted in the coexistence of areas in which problems are intensified since 1994, and of marginal areas in which agricultural abandonment is considerable. After the disappearance of bantustan governments, the ecological, economic and social results of their policies can be heavily felt.

¹⁴ Transkei was less affected by population influx as it resisted the influx, therefore putting more pressure on Ciskei.

¹⁵ The fear of legislation securing farmworkers tenure rights prompted a number of farmers to lay off workers in anticipation.

The impact of migration

Towns offer employment opportunities in the secondary and tertiary sectors and improved access to health, education and administrative services. Furthermore, where one lives in relation to the city and to industrial sites is essential. So, major roads and transport systems strongly influence the spatial structuration.

The spatial distribution of the population is very irregular. The distribution concentrates essentially in the central territorial continuum of the urban and "rurban" areas (East London-King William's Town) and, to a lesser extent, around Butterworth. This situation results, firstly, from the forced removal of the populations mentioned above, and secondly, from the tax assistance policy to industries in former bantustans and from the migration phenomena, which can be categorised in the following way:

- pendular migration towards neighbouring urban and industrial areas to go to work;
- step by step migrations : a young family member from a remote communal area migrates at first towards the "rurban" area, then towards a township, thus progressively coming closer to the labour market. Family members are thus scattered. Even while it is no longer inhabited, the house of the native village, in the communal area, is being kept ;
- migrations from remote communal areas to distant urban and industrial centres. Migrants usually send a portion of their income to their family. However, miners returning to the village after they have been made redundant has been a frequent occurrence during the last years and there appears to be a shift from distant migrations to regional migrations.

Depending on where one lives in relation to towns or to small rural towns and on the transport conditions to reach them, one can distinguish various concentric areas around employment centres and major roads: the "rurban" ring which is, in some way, the dormitory rural area for the urban labour, the peri-urban ring and the remote communal areas. In each case, the demographic characteristics, the migration flux, the structure of the incomes, the functions attributed to agricultural production and the work force it employs, are specific and inter-dependent.

The impact of natural resources

Due to its influence on the amount of rainfall, proximity to the coast helped define spatial distribution under apartheid as well as the agricultural utilisation of the land. But this factor is also affected by transport conditions, due to the position of major roads, urban employment and the development of economic sites and activities.

In the remote communal areas, the characteristics of the natural resources play an important role, especially since, locally, agriculture often represents the only productive activity. This is the case for the remote valleys of former Ciskei and large tracts of former Transkei, in which some form of peasant systems have remained. For instance, the type of vegetation (veld types) is always taken into account to select stock being kept on communal rangelands. Goats will be favoured in steep and bushy environments whereas cattle will be kept on flat grasslands.

The presence of a beautiful coastline has stimulated the tourism sector: importance of private

initiative, domestic employment in holiday homes, employment in the tourist industry, major communication roads in the Western part of the district. However, the Eastern part suffers from its inaccessibility.

3 A spatial model of the Amatola District

One can derive from the above analysis a spatial model of the Amatola district using the concept of territorial systems, i.e. a portion of space characterised by a given situation and organised as a whole entity. This organisation relies on a network of relationships between spatial units and stakeholders that make it specific.

Our hypothesis is that the Amatola District includes three separate territorial systems (Fig. 1):

- an urban based sub-system revolving around East London (East London magnet): the graph highlights the strong urban focus of the system, including the former Ciskei and part of the corridor, i.e. the area of the Republic of South Africa that was separating the former Ciskei and Transkei.
- an agriculture based sub-system (commercial hinterland system) in the commercial areas (Border Region, Fort Beaufort, Adelaide and Bedford districts): the graph shows the integration of the small urban centers and their rural surroundings, linked between them by a road axis.
- a rural sub-system revolving around Butterworth in the western part of former Transkei (Transkei system): The graph highlights the dynamic expansion of the urban network through the upgrading of infrastructure (mainly roads).

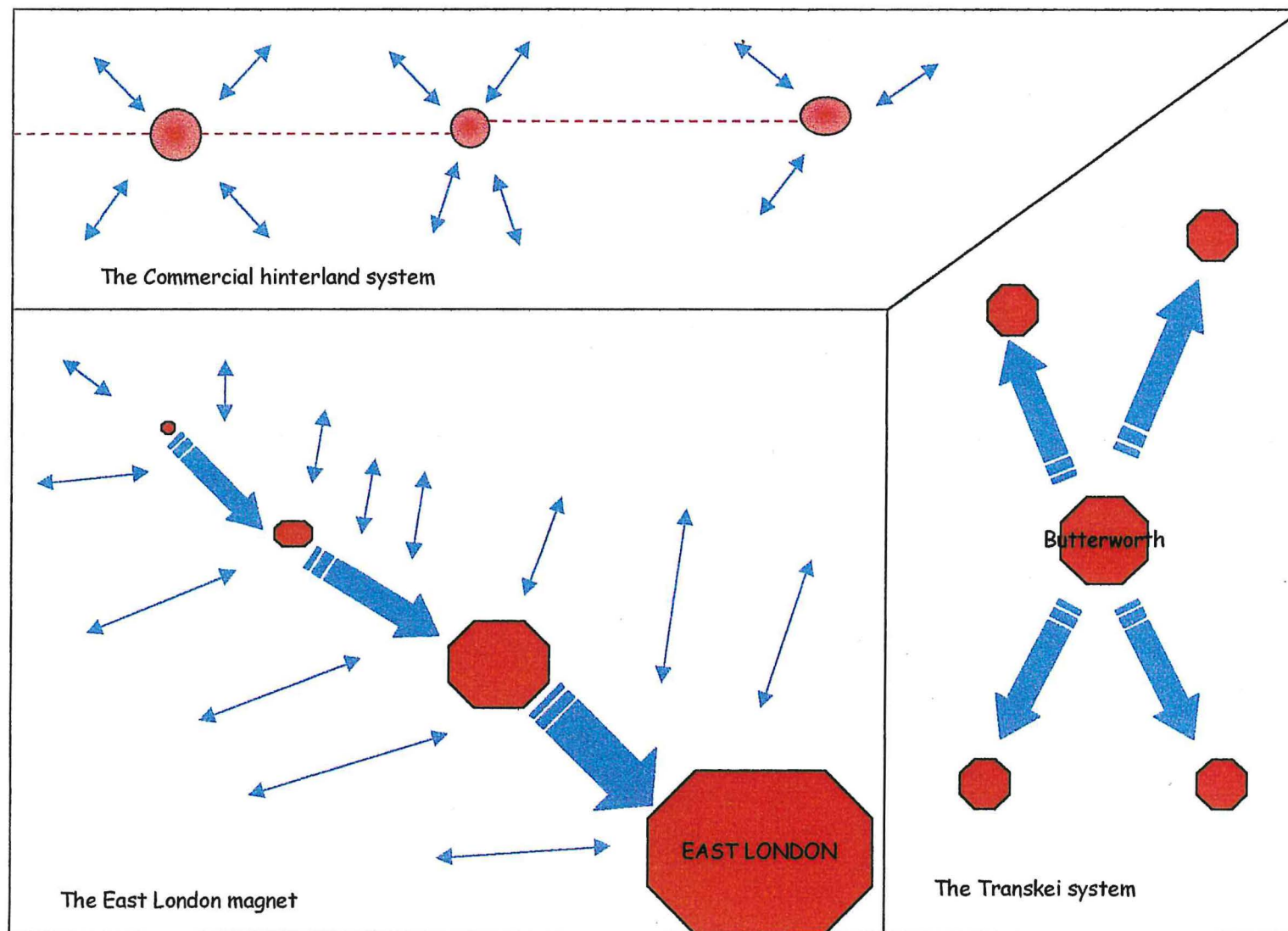


Fig 1. The Amatola District 3 territorial systems

The East London magnet

The highly urbanised network of towns and townships spanning from East London to King William's Town along the N2 stretches its influence to most rural areas of the former Ciskei.

The whole system relies on two fragile pillars:

- the industrial and services activities of the East London-King William's Town area ;
- the huge provincial administration providing civil servants jobs and economic opportunities through various tenders.

The relative wealth of this area acts as a very strong magnet for the whole region as people thrive to reap a little benefit and income from this pole of activity. This obviously has a strong impact on migration patterns as people leave the rural areas to seek a "better" life in urban centres.

Rural areas of the former Ciskei hardly generate any agricultural surpluses. A consumption orientated and income transfer (welfare payouts, civil servants salaries and remittances) based economy runs most of these areas. The productive base of such rural areas (mainly agriculture) has mostly disappeared. The little income generating activities, apart from a few fragile agricultural success stories (stockfarming and citrus farming), are centred around the channelling of funds coming from outside (services and trade) and the transport (taxi) industry as an essential component for the smooth running of the whole economic system (assisting migration patterns and the provision of consumption goods).

The crisis in the commercial hinterland system

The loose network of rural towns and their rural hinterland in what used to be the former Republic of South Africa is showing clear signs of a mounting crisis. Most of these towns are suffering from a degradation of town services. Numerous businesses are leaving such towns or downsizing their activities. Most of these towns used to benefit from the thriving surrounding rural activities. Money earned on the commercial farms would be reinvested in such urban centres before. New priorities (upgrading of townships) and limited funding have put such towns in a state of jeopardy.

Surrounding commercial farms are suffering from:

- the restructuring of the agricultural sector (marketing boards and co-operatives) which makes profits harder to come by as marketing related risk is increasing;
- the downsizing of State support services (especially the maintenance of by-roads leading to the farms);
- the increased insecurity in the form of stock theft and farm attacks.

A lot of such farms are now very difficult to sell, especially those bordering the former bantustans. Most farmers are attempting to diversify production in numerous ways:

- most are abandoning small stock production due to stock theft;
- those neighbouring the former bantustans are engaging in vegetable farming (cabbages, potatoes...) to cater for the huge markets that those densely populated areas represent;
- a number of them are attempting to start up game farming ventures.

The development of a rural network in the Transkei system

Although Transkei is often referred to as a crisis area, the recent dynamics highlighted during the analysis show a trend in endogenous development triggered by the upgrading of infrastructures. It would appear that the Eastern part of Transkei is undergoing a more spatially balanced development than, for instance, the East London area.

The trading business is thriving and major businesses from Butterworth are now opening branches in the neighbouring towns. The trade and marketing sectors are thriving with the recent development of improved transport infrastructure.

Compared to the former Ciskei's rural areas, it appears clearly that agricultural activities are still playing an essential role in the region's livelihoods. We can also witness embryos of commodity chains being developed, especially around the wool growing areas.

The relationships between the three systems

There are strong linkages between the commercial farming areas (especially Cathcart, Stutterheim and Komga magisterial districts) and the former Transkei. Transkei is proving to be a very lucrative market for cash crops (especially cabbages) being grown on the commercial farms. The marketing can take place in the following ways:

- either the farmer travels to Butterworth to deliver the goods,
- or traders from Transkei travel to the farms to collect the fresh produce.

Animal production is also a sector where exchanges are strong, during drought periods (especially winter), commercial farmers will drive up to Transkei and Ciskei to purchase cattle from the communal areas at low prices and then raise them on their excess grazing camps. Likewise, traders from Transkei and Ciskei will come and buy cattle and small stock from the commercial farmers.

The commercial farming areas are also very much focused towards the urban centres of East London and King William's Town. There is a weekly agricultural market in King William's Town and a number of agro-industries in East London (dairy, tomato packing factory...) that provide a number of marketing opportunities for fresh produce. Animal production is either geared towards the monopolistic butcheries of East London or are sold live to farmers of Free State. A number of livestock farmers double themselves as agents, who buy and sell stock, this sideline is proving to be a very lucrative activity.

Migration and flows of population are obviously key elements in the relationships between the three systems, as described in part 2.

4 Some widespread issues

The development of squatter camps and land invasions

The mushrooming of squatter camps around former bantustans towns is a widespread phenomenon. It leads to an increase pressure on local councils to deliver services to such areas and to tensions between TLC and TRC, both refusing to take responsibility and jurisdiction over such areas.

Land invasions are also occurring within what is generally described as "State Land". Former bantustan's State or leased farms are being the target of land invasions. This phenomenon is going to make the redistribution of State assets a very difficult business.

The insecurity on commercial farms and in communal areas

The commercial farms are increasingly facing a security problem. Farm murders often make the headlines but theft is far more common and prevalent. This has forced a number of farmers to switch production systems. There is a tendency to switch livestock farming practices from small stock (goats and sheep) to large stock (cattle), especially in vulnerable areas, near urban centres, main roads and former bantustans areas. The rapid development of game farms can also be partly linked to the increase in stock theft (although poaching then becomes a concern).

However, theft is not only an issue for commercial farmers. Stock and crop theft is also widespread in communal areas and is often seen as a limiting factor to the development of agricultural enterprises. The theft of fences from grazing areas to fence off residential areas and gardens is also a problem.

Tensions between local authorities and the issue of Administrative boundaries

Tension and conflict between TRC and traditional authorities is more of a rule than an exception. It was reported to be a major issue in most districts of the former Transkei as chiefs are battling with TRC over the issue of land allocation and land use planning. However, in the former Ciskei, the "civil" society seems to have taken over local politics and its bases are very much entrenched. Traditional leaders in the former Ciskei have now accepted their limited consultative role.

In some instances, local authorities are battling over the inclusion or exclusion of certain areas in their Magisterial district. Such conflicts are depleting precious resources within local authorities.

In terms of administrative boundaries, one should question the existing boundaries between

magisterial district, especially on a practical basis. Such boundaries are mostly the result of a very ancient administrative system inherited from British rule. They are sometimes no longer adapted to the current situation. For instance, people living within the Southern part of the Keiskammahoek district are intimately linked, in economic terms, to the town of Middledrift. In a similar manner, people from the Southern part of the King William's Town district, including the Southern part of the Kambashe area, have a far easier access through the R56 to East London.

The breakdown of State support services

Two services are mainly incriminated: agricultural extension services and public works. The reintegration of bantustans within the New South Africa has meant a decline of State support services, which were deemed uneconomic.

The disbanding of the bantustans agricultural corporations has left a vacuum that has created a decline in most productive areas that used to be run by parastatals (irrigation schemes, dairy schemes, pineapple schemes, citrus schemes and maize schemes...). Most of these badly managed schemes are now being semi-abandoned with a costly degradation of related infrastructure.

The closure of state supported tractor ploughing services is often stated as a major reason for the agricultural decline in communal areas. Most rural areas are also complaining about the quasi absence of extension services. There is a clear lack of motivation on behalf of extension officers. Most are now stationed in small urban centres and are lacking direction and transport to operate in a suitable manner.

The end of tax relief for Border industries has also led to the closure of numerous factories and has exacerbated the unemployment crisis within the region.

Public works are mainly incriminated in commercial farming areas. There probably has been a welcome shift in priorities in terms of transport infrastructure upgrading and maintenance. Whereas former bantustan areas are seeing new roads being built or upgraded, isolated commercial farms are complaining about the poor maintenance of access roads that is jeopardising their already difficult situation.

Conclusion

The diversity of situations within the jurisdiction of the Amatola District Council and the three spatial systems raise questions related to the setting up of priorities for different areas characterised by totally different and sometimes conflicting development problems.

At the local level, one can also question the need to separate the institutions governing urban and rural areas. Town and country are proving to be so closely linked that it might be relevant to implement a single political institution with jurisdiction over both urban and rural areas. This could enable a rebalancing of the attractiveness of both town and rural areas. Recent developments in the form of the municipal demarcation process are heading in that very direction. Type B municipalities will be created by the aggregation of a number of TRCs and TLCs. The distinction between rural and urban areas will disappear, as these new municipalities will have jurisdiction over a territory encompassing both rural and urban areas.

The analysis does show, however, a close relationship that has always existed between the former bantustans and the Republic of South Africa (flows of money, workforce, goods...). The breaking apart of historical boundaries seems to strengthen and diversify such relationships. The analysis also reveals spatial units and networks that do not match the existing administrative boundaries. It is bound to create problems of data collection, census demarcation and adequate delivery of public services.

The productive base of the whole region lies essentially (but not exclusively) within the commercial farming areas and a few large urban centres such as East London. The economy basically revolves around the transfer of people, goods and financial resources from such productive areas to the rural hinterland where little surplus is produced. In a traditional economic model, urban centres would stimulate the development of activities within the rural hinterland to satisfy the needs of such centres. The very strong socio-economic engineering of apartheid policies has only stimulated production within the white farming areas and the urban centres. Whole tracts of space, namely the former bantustans, have been deliberately left on the fringes of the mainstream economy fulfilling the single purpose of labour reservoirs for the system (Bundy, 1988). The little productive activities taking place within such areas (subsistence farming) were mainly encouraged to ensure the reproduction of such labour.

The disbanding of previous policies has not yet given fruit. The central government has focused on issues such as privatisation, decentralisation, deregulation and streamlining of State services and interventions. The ones related to the creation of new institutions, the design of a new social safety net, the creation of new enabling legislation have not yet received much attention. The recent exposure to the global economy has shaken the traditional economic activities of commercial farms (having to cope with deregulation) and urban centres (facing competition over industrial investment) and has apparently not yet offered any benefits to the communal areas. In fact, the disbanding of previous policies and the relative withdrawal of State intervention appear to have reinforced the previous system of unbalanced interaction between town and country. One must however take into account the very small timeframe, a mere five years, since the transformation of South African politics. Such a harsh statement can in fact be questioned by the current dynamics taking place in Transkei where signs of endogenous development are visible, mainly through the explosion of the informal economy.

Local production of wealth within rural areas is limited mainly to agricultural production in a

broad sense (forestry, agro-transformation...) and to the development of tourism. Although local productive activities would stimulate other ones (services, transport, trade), they currently mainly rely on the arrival of outside wealth (pensions, salaries, remittances...). It is therefore essential to be able to understand and model, at the very local level:

- the flows of incoming money;
- how this wealth is being distributed amongst the community;
- what proportion of this wealth is being invested locally in productive ventures;
- where does this wealth flows back to and how it could be retained locally to foster local economic development;
- how outside goods and services being bought could be produced locally.

It is also essential to identify the various marketing channels and economic activities ensuring the smooth running of this wealth transfer system in order to envisage how they could be influenced into assisting local economic development.

Encouraging local economic development in communal areas also requires to understand the local management systems of resources that could be channelled into productive activities and to identify the bottlenecks hampering the development of such activities.

Once again, the key challenge is likely to be how to gear public intervention to foster a more spatially balanced development of the district. The "public actors" (namely the Provincial legislature, the District Council and the TRCs and future municipalities) can be positioned as facilitators for a better (and maybe different) co-ordination between the three systems and their complex and diversified networks of local actors. How can this "public actor" develop and implement policy in order to channel the existing flows, to modify existing networks, to create new networks and eventually to lead to the creation of a new spatial organisation, while local demands mainly focus on basic services?

In order to achieve such a goal, implementation of development in the Amatola District will have to take into account the "spatial issue". The pressure to deliver should not lead to the entrenchment of the inherited spatial context.

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Annex 1 : A summarised matrix for an homogeneous spatial unit.

KING WILLIAM'S TOWN -RAINFED AGRICULTURE AND LIVESTOCK COMMUNAL AREA

Productive activities	Subsistence crop farming (maize and beans). Dominantly sheep farming (in decline). Gardens, poultry and piggeries. One dairy farm. Brick-making.
Natural resources	Flat lands. Abundant rainfall. Many rivers that could be used for irrigation
Demographic patterns	Dense grouped settlements. No immigration. Emigration to King on weekly basis, East London on monthly basis or Cape Town on annual basis.
Income	Mainly welfare payouts, Remittances to a lesser extent.
Employment	Local forestry Administrative positions in King since 1994
Land tenure	Communal, "Permit To Occupy" system.
Land use	No fences. Grazing deemed suitable for sheep farming. Decrease in cropping areas. Theft of animals.
Local services	Inadequate extension. Informal moneylenders. Clinics and mobile system. Primary school in each village, few secondary schools. Pension pay-points.
Rural-urban linkages	Easy (road) but too expensive to work in King on daily basis.
Infrastructure	No irrigation, tarred road close-by, electricity and water supply. Decaying dipping tanks.
Marketing system	Local.
Institutions	TRC and civics. Wool growers association.