IDEALISTIC INTENTION OR REALISTIC RESPONSE? EXPLORING VARIOUS RESPONSES TO URBAN SECURITY IN SOUTH AFRICA

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South African context

- High levels of
  - Unemployment
  - Inequality
  - Insecurity
  - Crime
- Various responses to crime and insecurity
  - Also in the built environment
    - New type of utopia or realistic response?
    - Implications for social order and spatial integration?
    - Implications for urban sustainability?

Urban security and sustainability

- Link between urban security and sustainability
  - City not sustainable if crime and fear of crime (Conzens)
  - City not sustainable if citizens fear crime and safety of their livelihoods (Du Plessis)
  - Urban safety – key challenge for sustainable development (Tibaijuka)
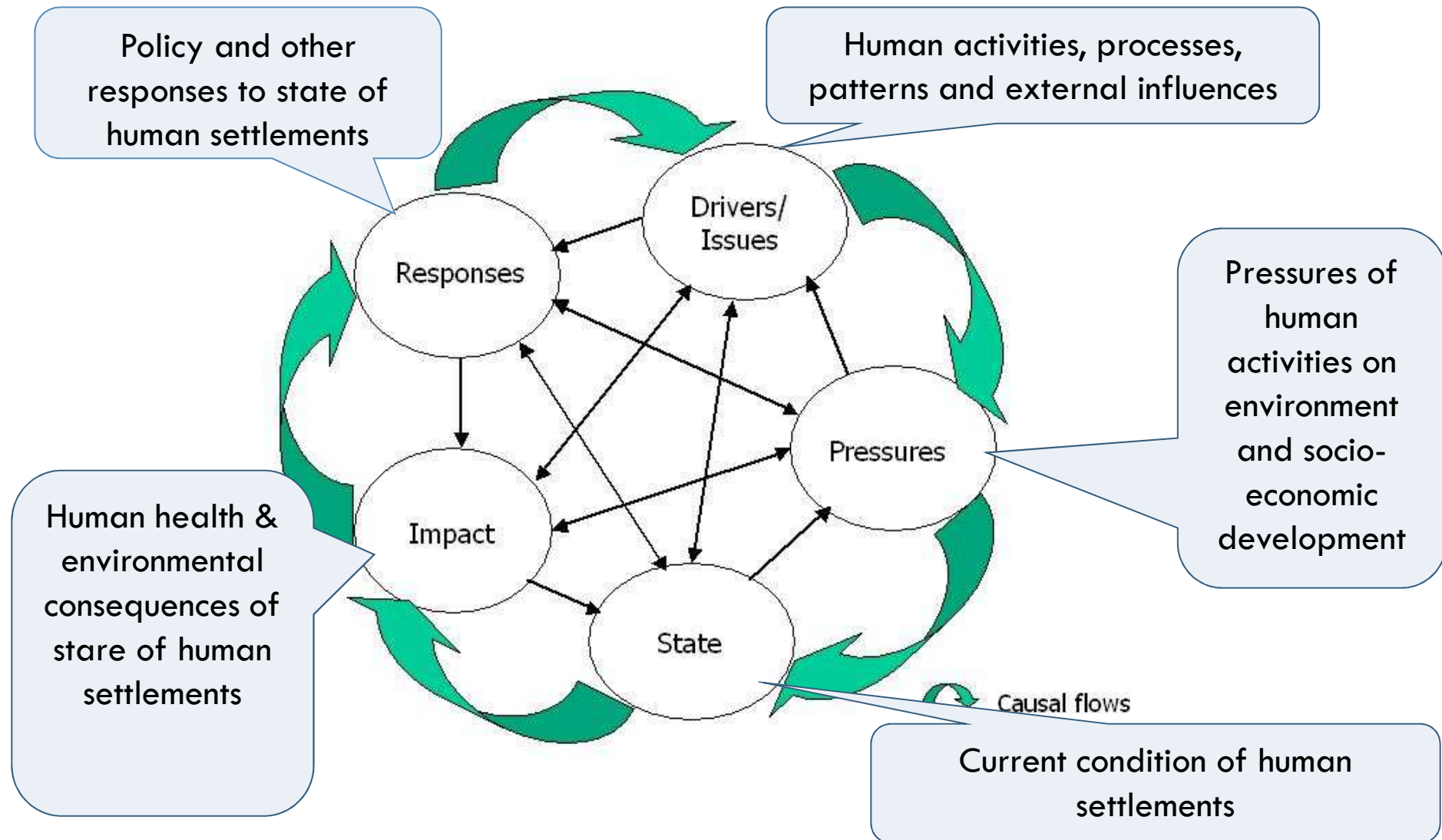- Also in South Africa

Crime a key driver

- Study – crime key driver influencing sustainability of human settlements in South Africa
- Forces of transformation – pressures on settlements
- Influence state and have certain impacts
- Not linear cause and effect relationships
  - Systemic relationship
  - E.g. response to crime (target hardening) can cause escalation in violent crime → fear of crime → exclusion → poverty → original driver of crime

Urban security not in isolation

- Cannot consider urban security and its impact on urban sustainability in linear way or in isolation

- To understand relation to other
  - Drivers e.g. poverty, unemployment
  - Influence pressures e.g. fear of crime
  - Impact on social order, spatial integration and democratic governance

- Need for integrated framework to analyse and understand relationship

Interdependency - DPSIR model (OECD)

Policy and other responses to state of human settlements

Human activities, processes, patterns and external influences

Pressures of human activities on environment and socio-economic development

Human health & environmental consequences of stare of human settlements

Current condition of human settlements

Drivers/Issues

Responses

Pressures

Impact

State

Causal flows

Dynamic relationships

Factors associated with crime:

- Drivers
- Pressures
- State
- Impact
- Response
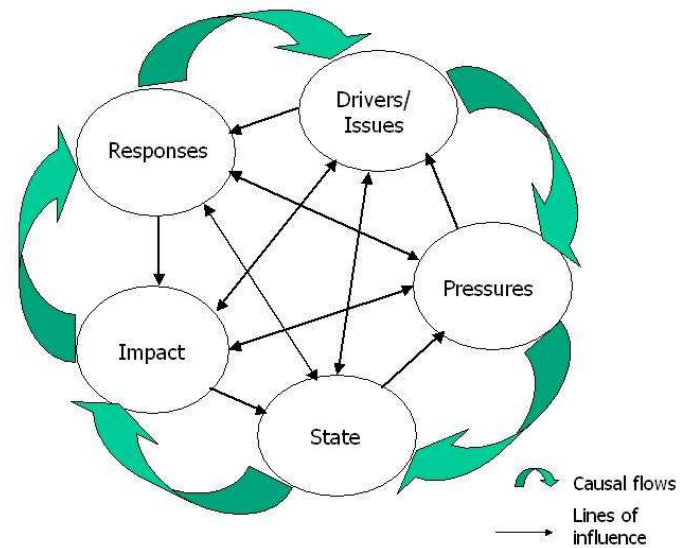
Crime increased in South Africa

Drivers

- Crime started to rise again (2008/09)
- Especially aggravated robbery
- Largest concern – trio crimes
  1. House robberies
  2. Business robberies
  3. Car hijackings
- 1 & 2 increased in all 9 provinces
- 3 increased in 7 provinces

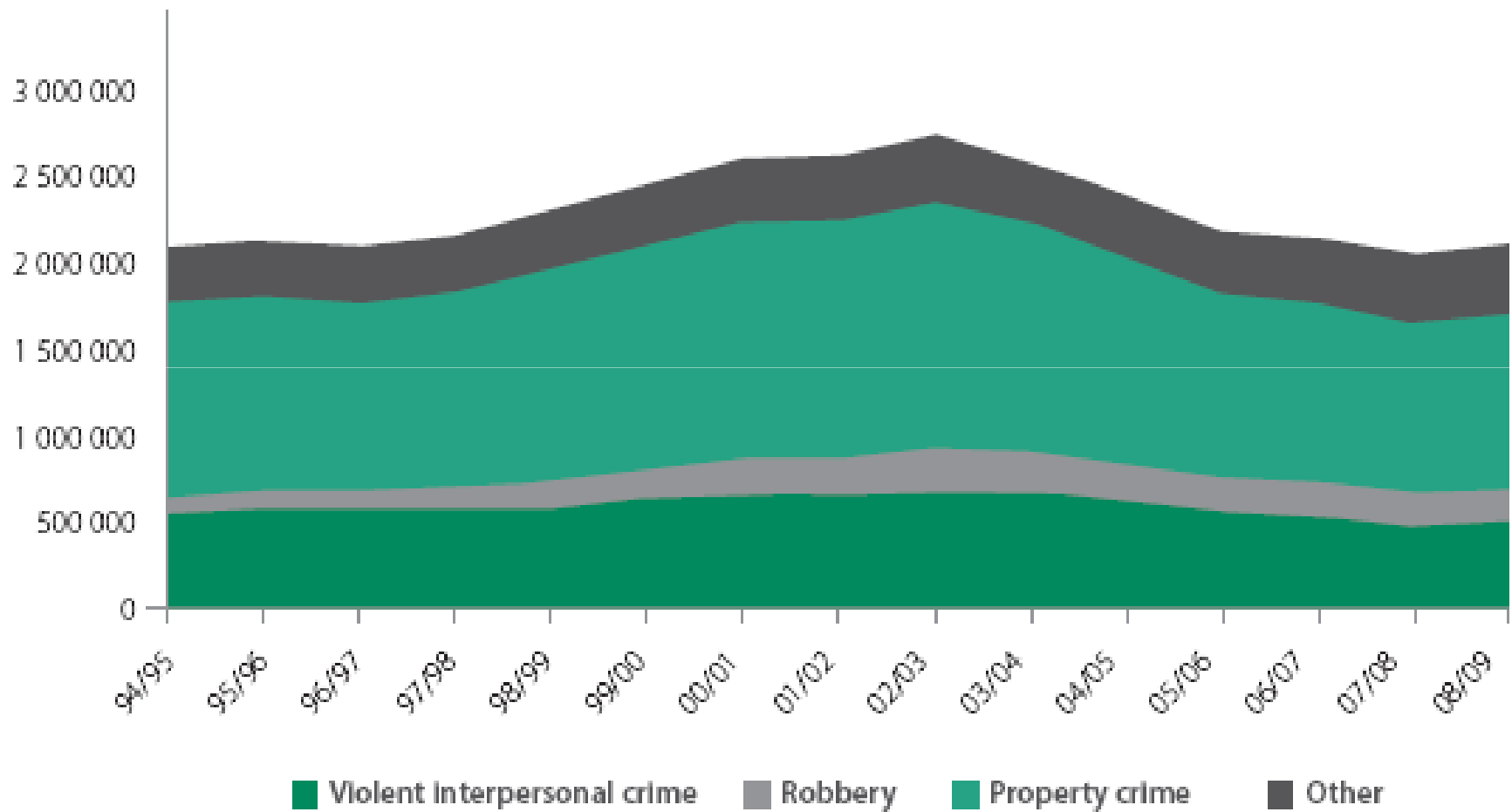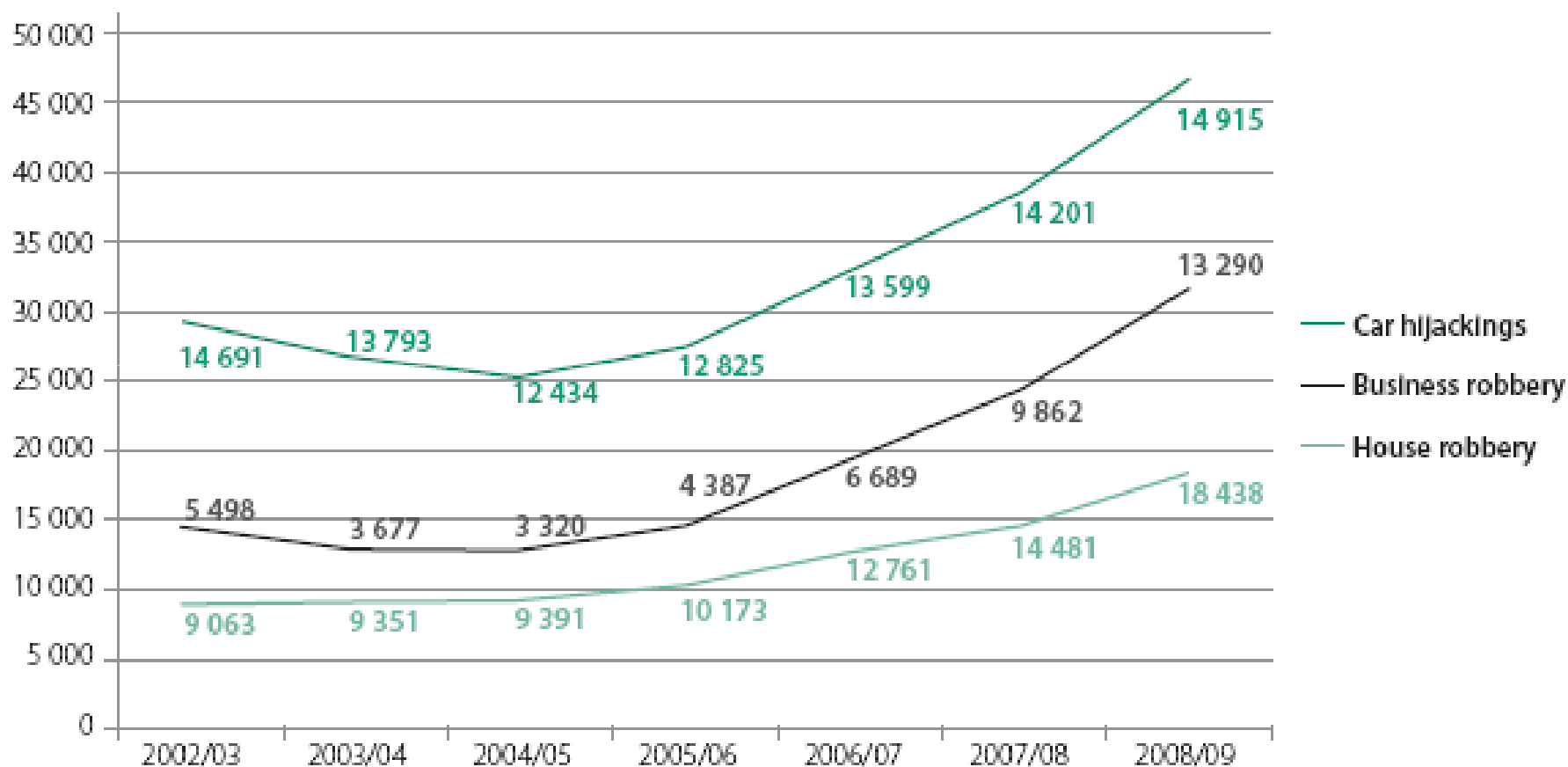**Figure 1:** Overall crime rate in SA (20 most serious crimes)   (Source: Burger 2009)

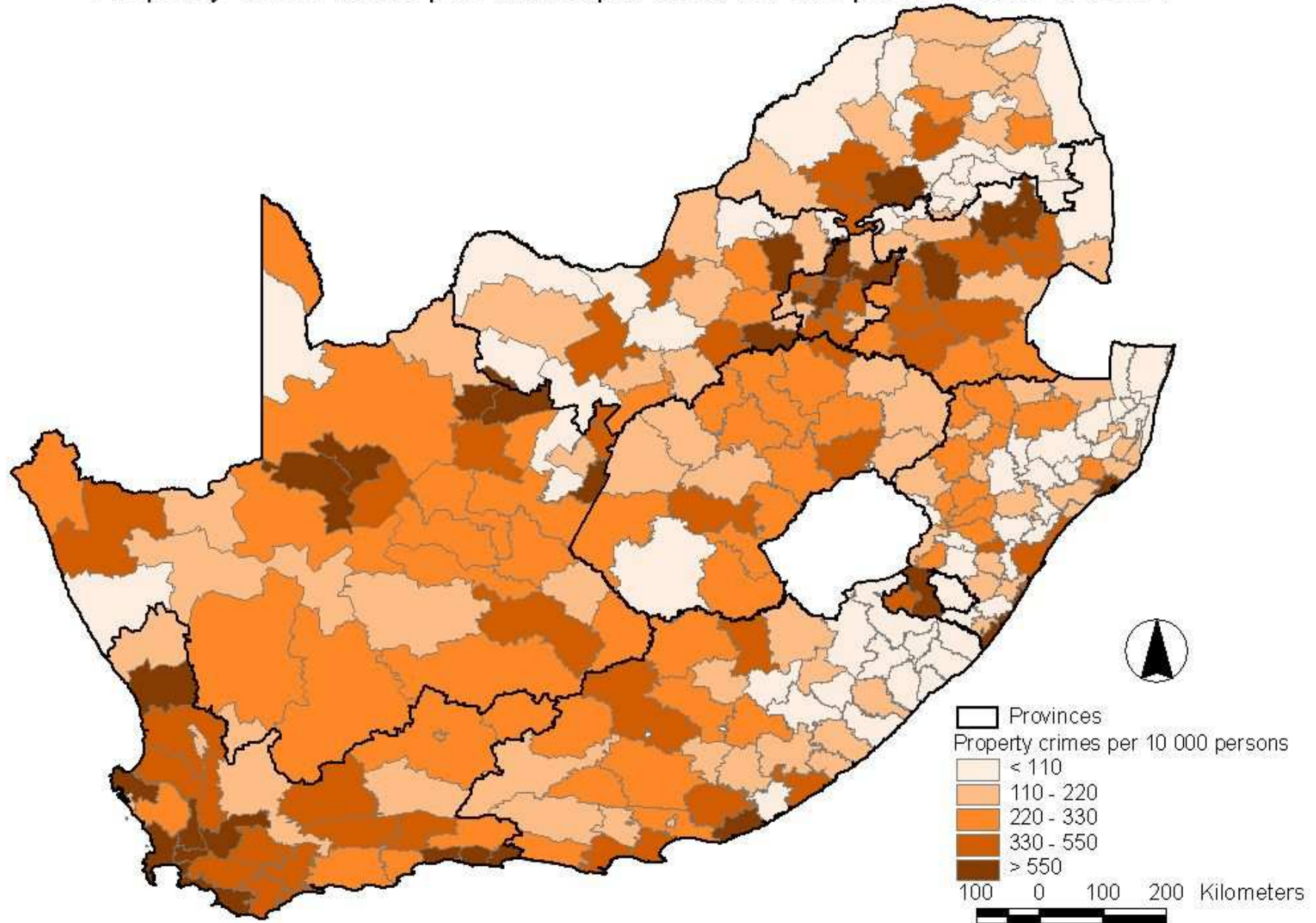Figure 5: The Trio crimes   (Source: Burger 2009)
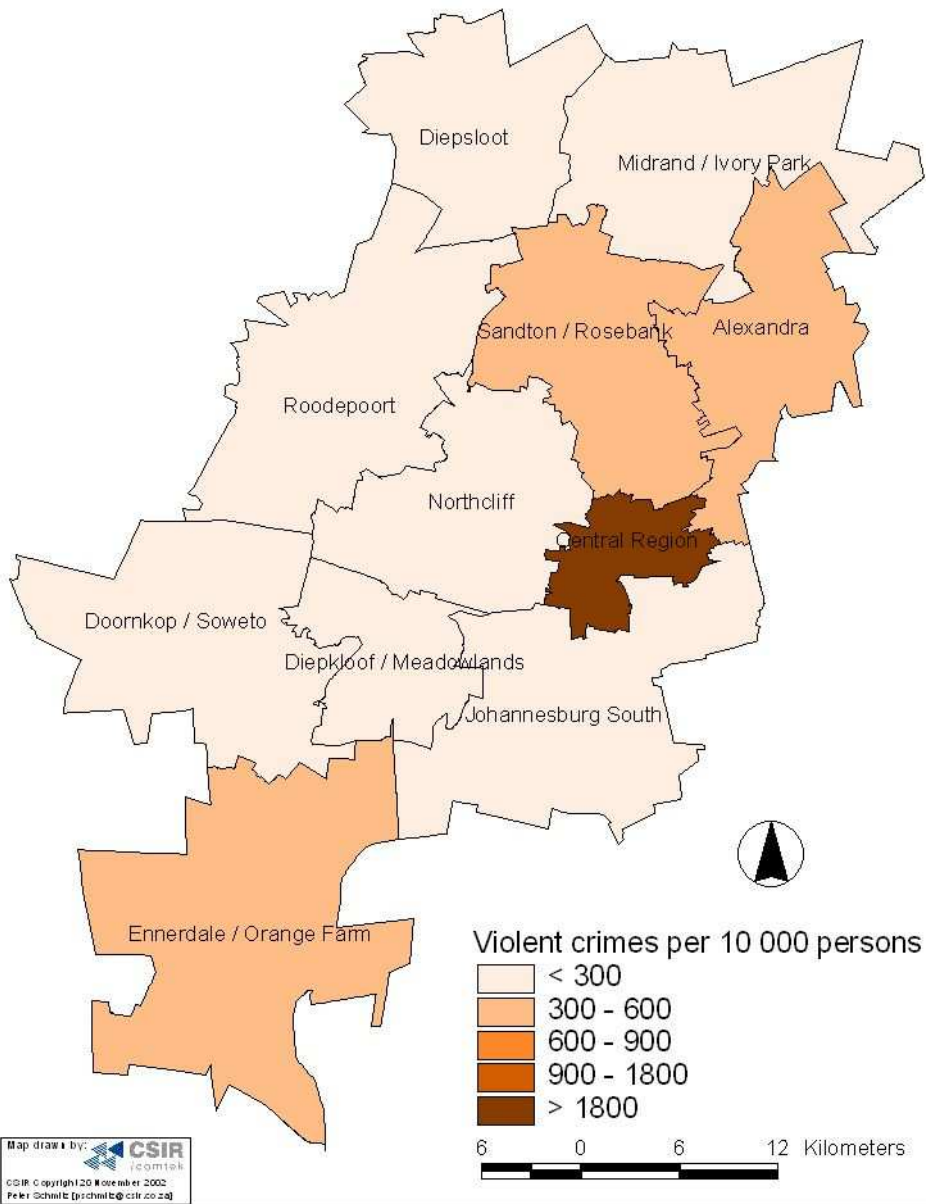
Crime affects and distribution vary

Drivers

- Crime does not affect all people uniformly

- Being victimised – influenced by age, income, place of residence or work, circle of friends

- Thus also linked to distribution of crime

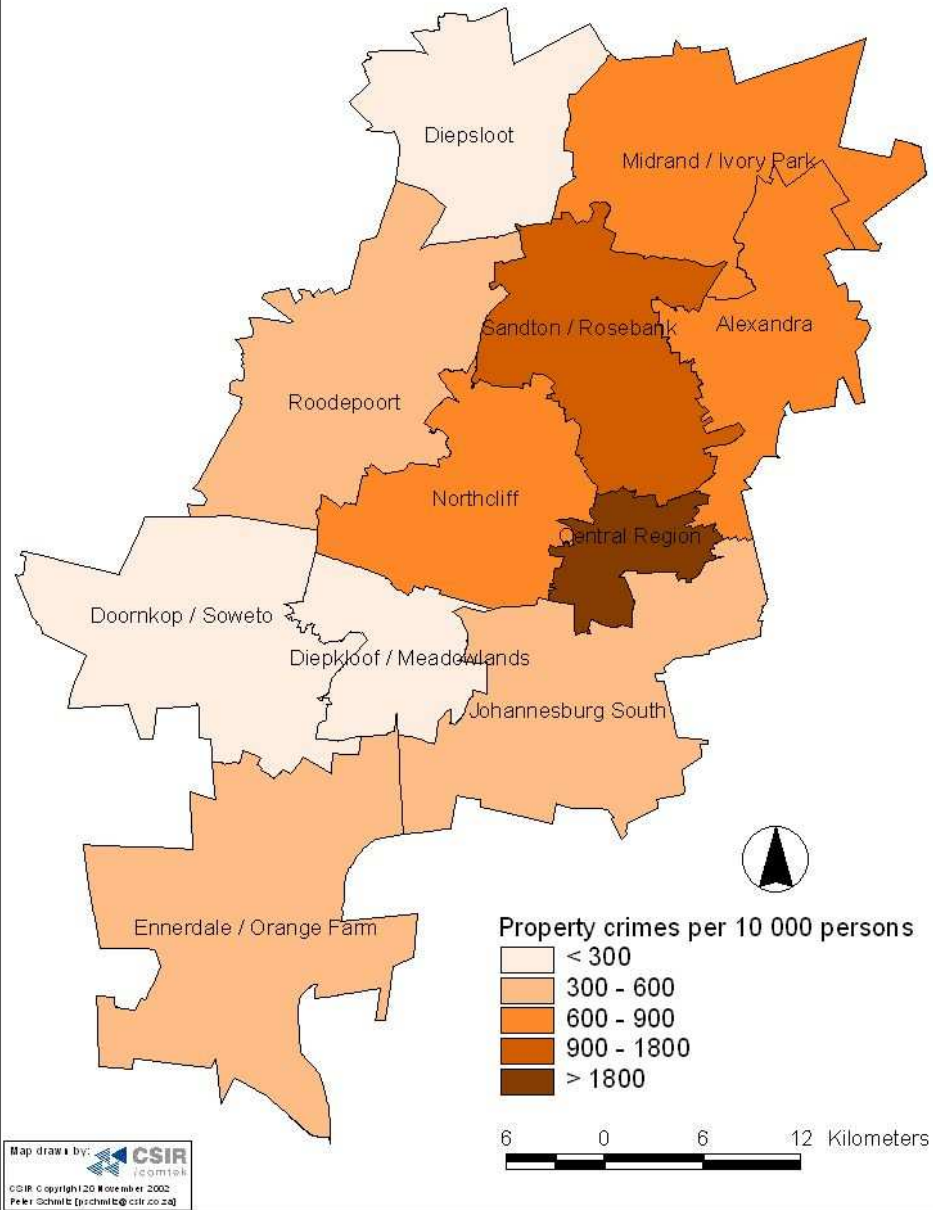- Differs between municipalities and within cities

Property crime rates per municipal area for the period 1998 to 2001
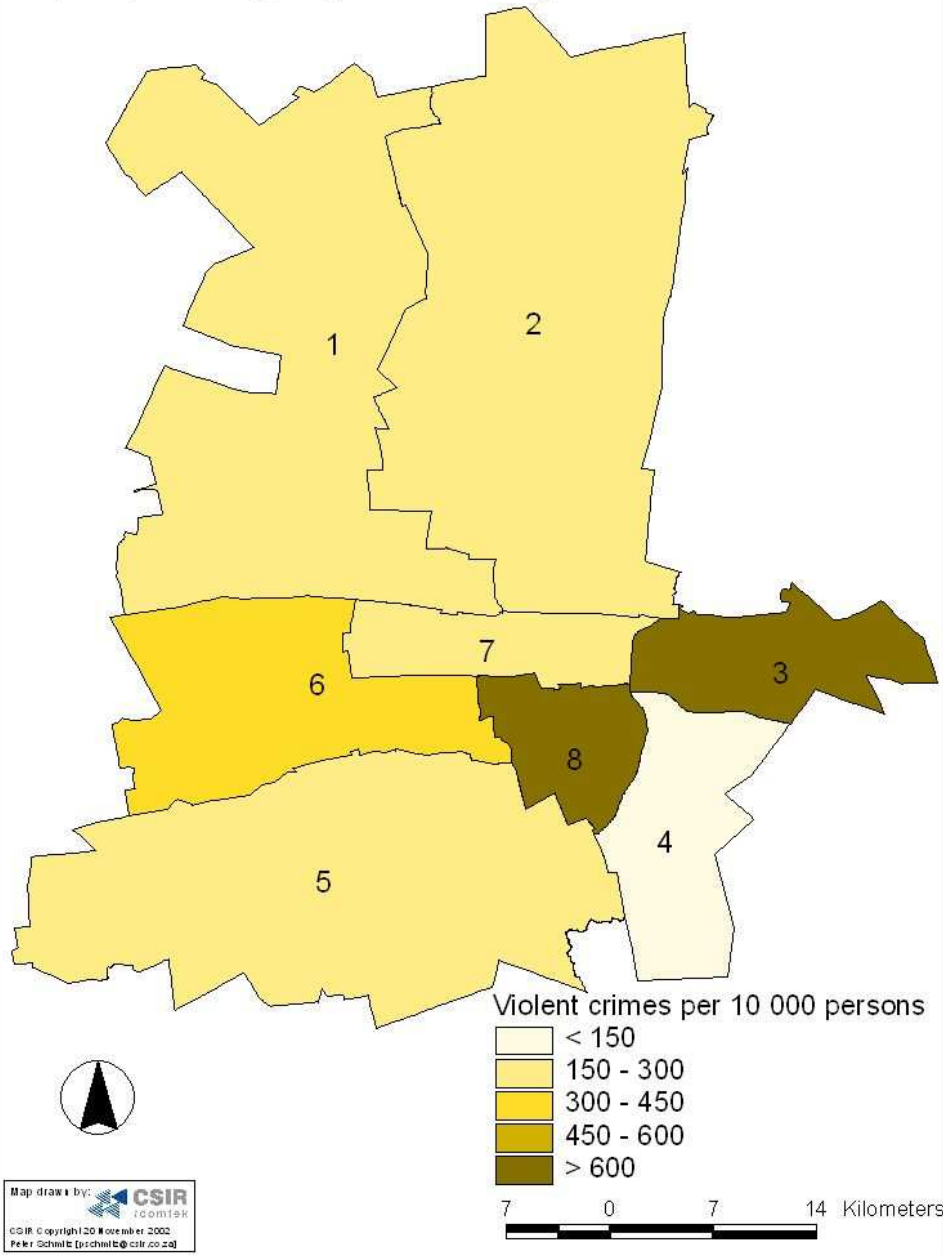
Provinces

Property crimes per 10 000 persons
< 110
110 - 220
220 - 330
330 - 550
> 550

100   0   100   200   Kilometers

Violent crime rates in City of Johannesburg per planning region for the period 1998 to 2001

Property crime rates in City of Johannesburg per planning region for the period 1998 to 2001

Violent crimes per 10 000 persons
< 300
300 – 600
600 – 900
900 – 1800
> 1800

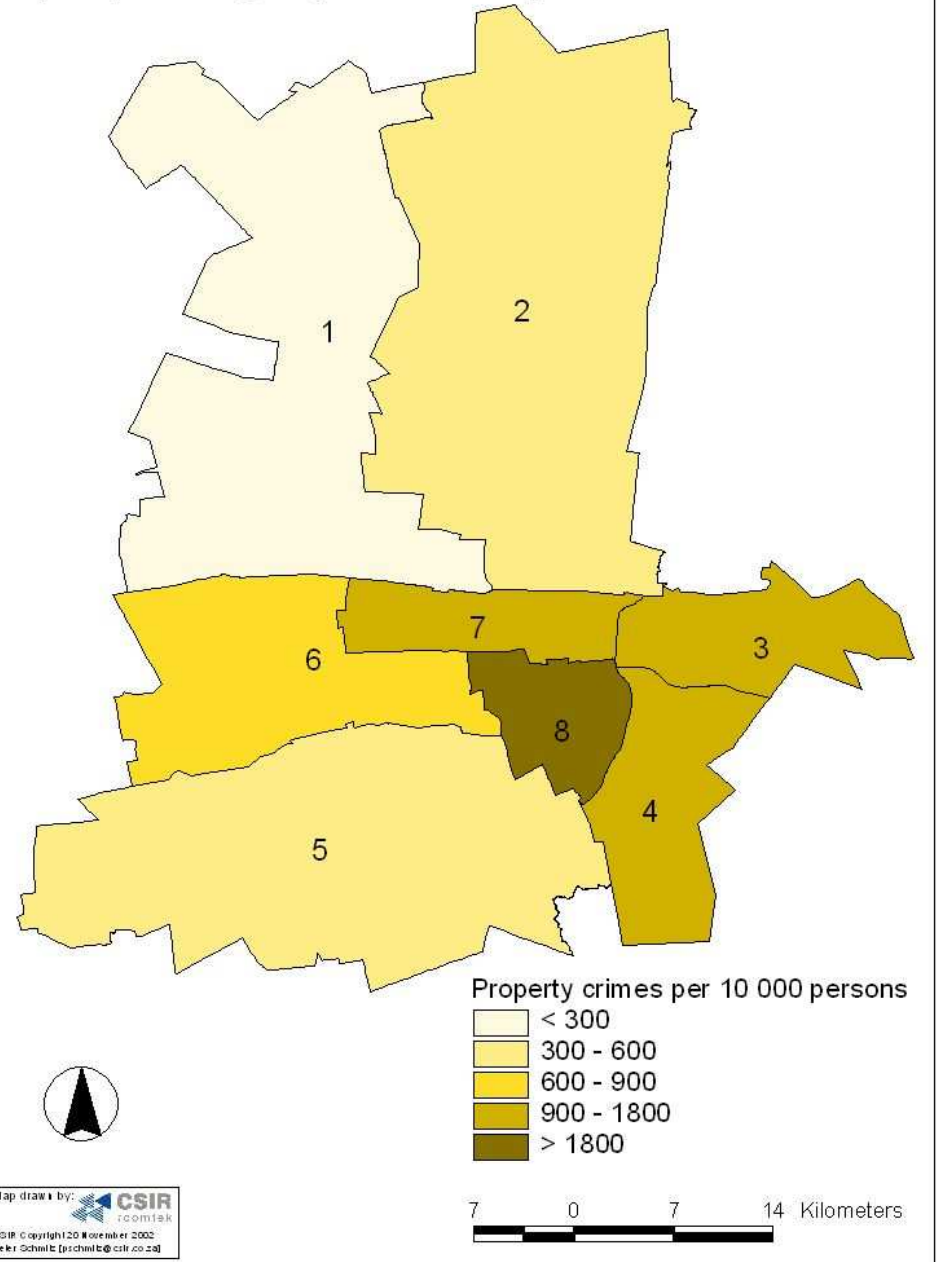Property crimes per 10 000 persons
< 300
300 – 600
600 – 900
900 – 1800
> 1800

Violent crime rates in City of Tshwane
per planning region for the period 1998 to 2001

Property crime rates in City of Tshwane
per planning region for the period 1998 to 2001

Violent crimes per 10 000 persons
- < 150
- 150 - 300
- 300 - 450
- 450 - 600
- > 600

Property crimes per 10 000 persons
- < 300
- 300 - 600
- 600 - 900
- 900 - 1800
- > 1800

Map drawn by: CSIR icomtek
CSIR Copyright 20 November 2002
Peter Schmitz [pschmitz@csir.co.za]

7   0   7   14 Kilometers

Range of pressures

Pressures

- Number of factors contributing to high crime rates in South Africa, e.g.
  - Poverty and inequality
  - Culture of violence
  - Youthful population
  - Political transition
  - Rapid urbanisation
  - Proliferation of firearms
  - Organised crime
  - Spatial patterns of the apartheid city

Spatial characteristics of SA cities

Pressures

- Dislocation of poor on the peripheries
- Separation of communities through buffer strips and undeveloped open land
- Rigid mono-functional zoning
- Degraded and poorly developed environments
- Lack of recreational facilities

Railway stations & taxi-ranks

Vacant or undeveloped land

Dormitory Areas

Undeveloped public open space

High levels of violent crime

Pressures

- Due to political history and culture of violence
- Many families suffered from "institutional violence"
- Also disruption of lives
  - Forced removals
  - Migrant labour policies
- Violence as a means of solving conflict

Transition to democracy

Pressures

- Political transition from authoritarian rule to democracy
- Similar patterns in other countries
- Link between political transition and growth of crime
- Defensive urbanism
- Vigilante groups
- Private security

Fear of crime

Pressures

- High levels of violent and property crime
- Increase in fear of crime
- Also in South Africa
- Increased between 1998 and 2003 and again between 2003 and 2007
- Most afraid in areas where they live
- Few people feel safe when walking in their neighbourhoods
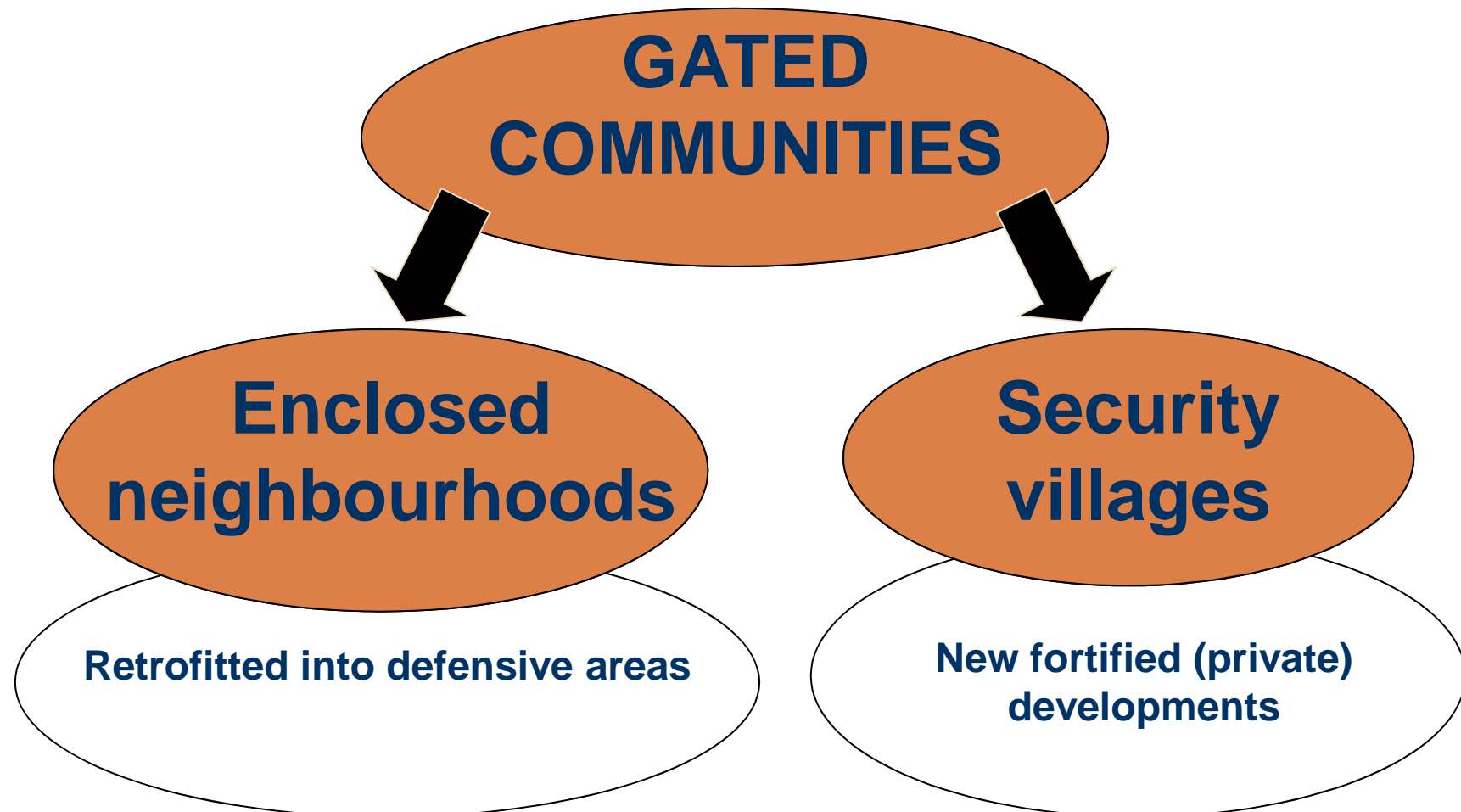
Increased urban fortification

State

Gated communities in South Africa

State

- Areas that are physically closed off from surroundings
- Either prohibiting or controlling access
- Normal public places privatised
- Use restricted
- Not only residential areas
- Also office parks or entire mixed communities

National survey: two major types

GATED COMMUNITIES

Enclosed neighbourhoods

Retrofitted into defensive areas

Security villages

New fortified (private) developments

'Privatised' road - Pretoria

Private developments with access control

Secured townhouse complexes

State

- Cluster housing of low to medium density
- Range of housing types
- Medium and high income groups
- In fenced or walled off environment
- Access control
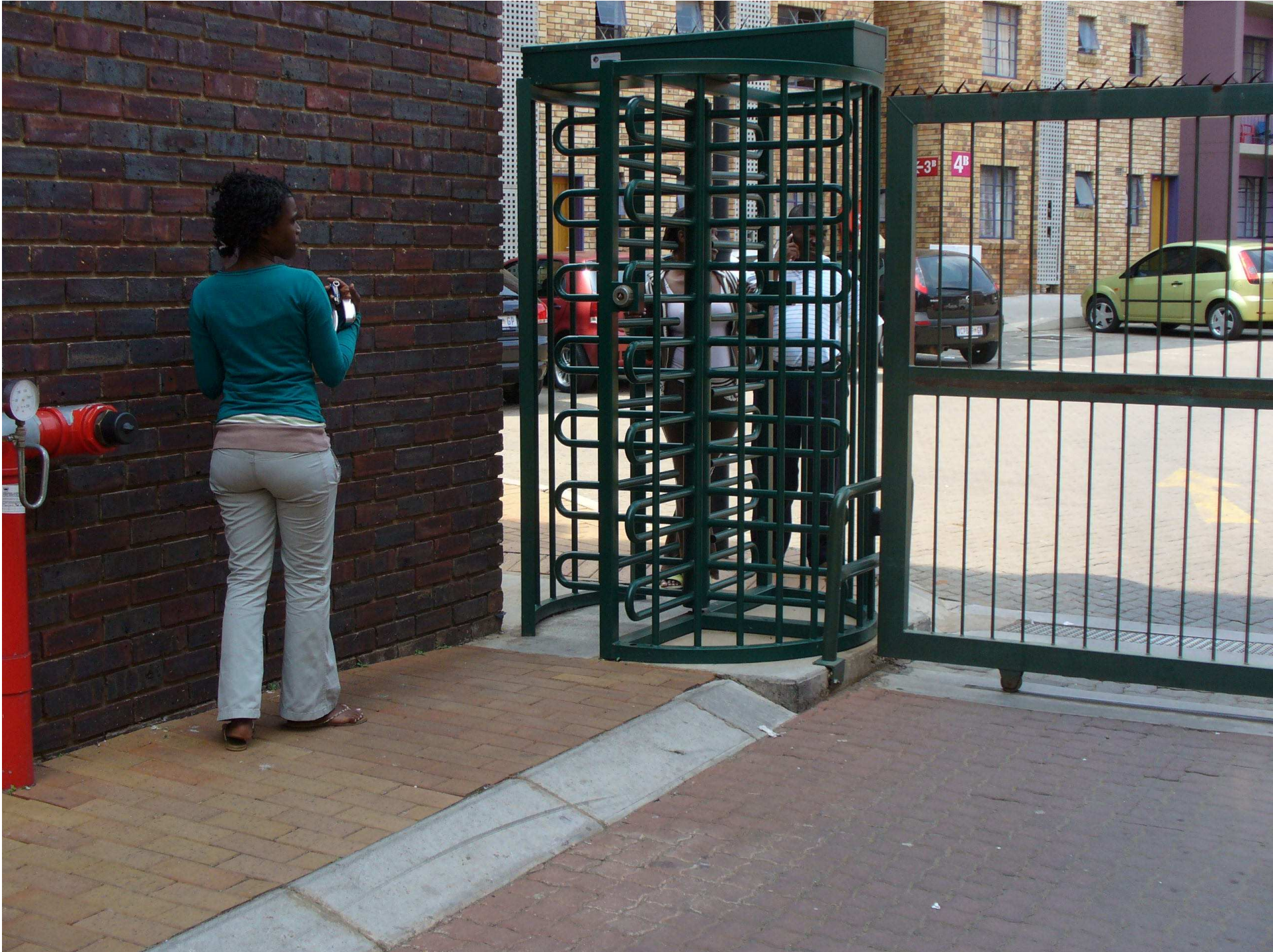- Common recreational areas / open spaces inside

Gated affordable housing

State

- Not only medium & high income housing
- Fortification also part of affordable housing complexes
- Low rise blocks with range of dwelling and tenure types
- Within walled environment
- Access control

Vigilantism & private security

State

- Increase in vigilante groups
  - Formally organised groups
  - Community watch groups – later violent
- Increase in private security guards
  - R14 billion security industry
  - 300 000 security guards
  - Whole new economic sector developing around crime
  - Contributes to GDP and tax base

Privatisation of security

Fear of crime and lifestyle changes

Impact

- Fear of crime
- Adapt lifestyles
- Avoid public spaces
- No one taking ownership
  - Degraded and hot-spots for criminal activity
- Privatisation of public space, services and security

Privatising public space - privatising control

Impact on urban environment

Impact

- Urban fortification measures also impact on environment
  - Spatial fragmentation
  - Alter movement patterns
  - Obstruct emergency access
  - Difficult for urban maintenance
  - Increase air and noise pollution
    - Impact on global carbon emissions
- Seclusion, exclusion and conflict
- New social order through spatial order

Permanent closure
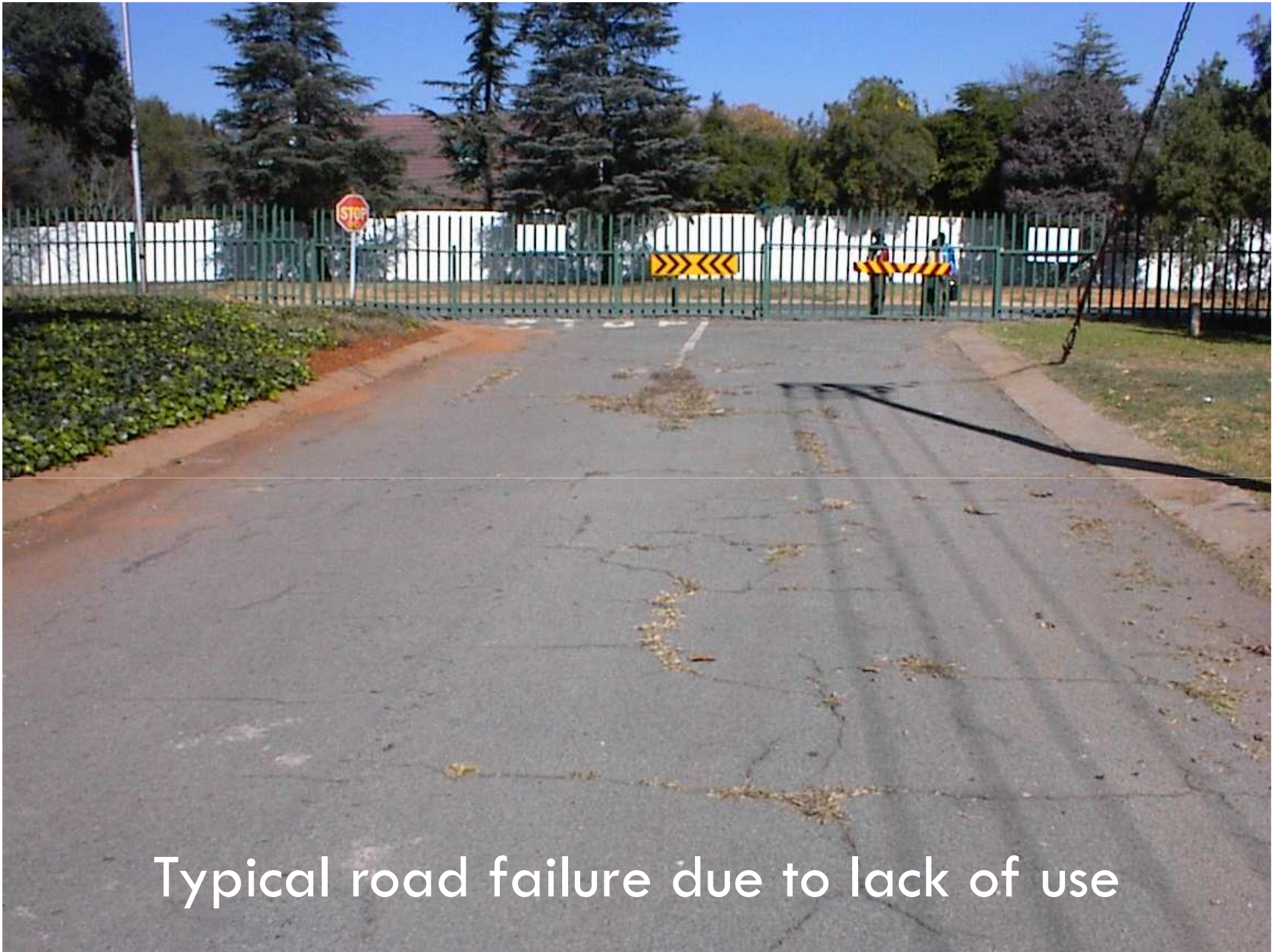
Typical road failure due to lack of use

Lack of maintenance of parks
due to inadequate access

Notice

Wapadrand
Sekuriteitsdorp
Security village

1. The Wapadrand Security Village is an access controlled area in terms of the Rationalization of Local Government Affairs Act 10 of 1998

2. Entry to access controlled area:

2.1 will be at entrant's own risk and Wapadrand Security Village (Section 21 Company) will not be liable for any loss or damage arising from any cause whatsoever;

2.2 will be subject to the Wapadrand Security Village House Rules, which rules are deemed to have been read upon entry. A copy of the house rules is available at the two guard houses.

BY ORDER OF THE DIRECTORS
WAPADRAND SECURITY VILLAGE (SECTION 21 COMPANY)

New social order through spatial control

Vulnerability of the poor

Impact

- Many people that cannot afford any form of fortification
- Vulnerable to many types of crime
- Violent crime
  - Loss of household income
  - Increased security costs
  - Worsen socio-economic conditions
  - Impacts on sustainable livelihoods potential
  - Contributes to root cause of crime: poverty
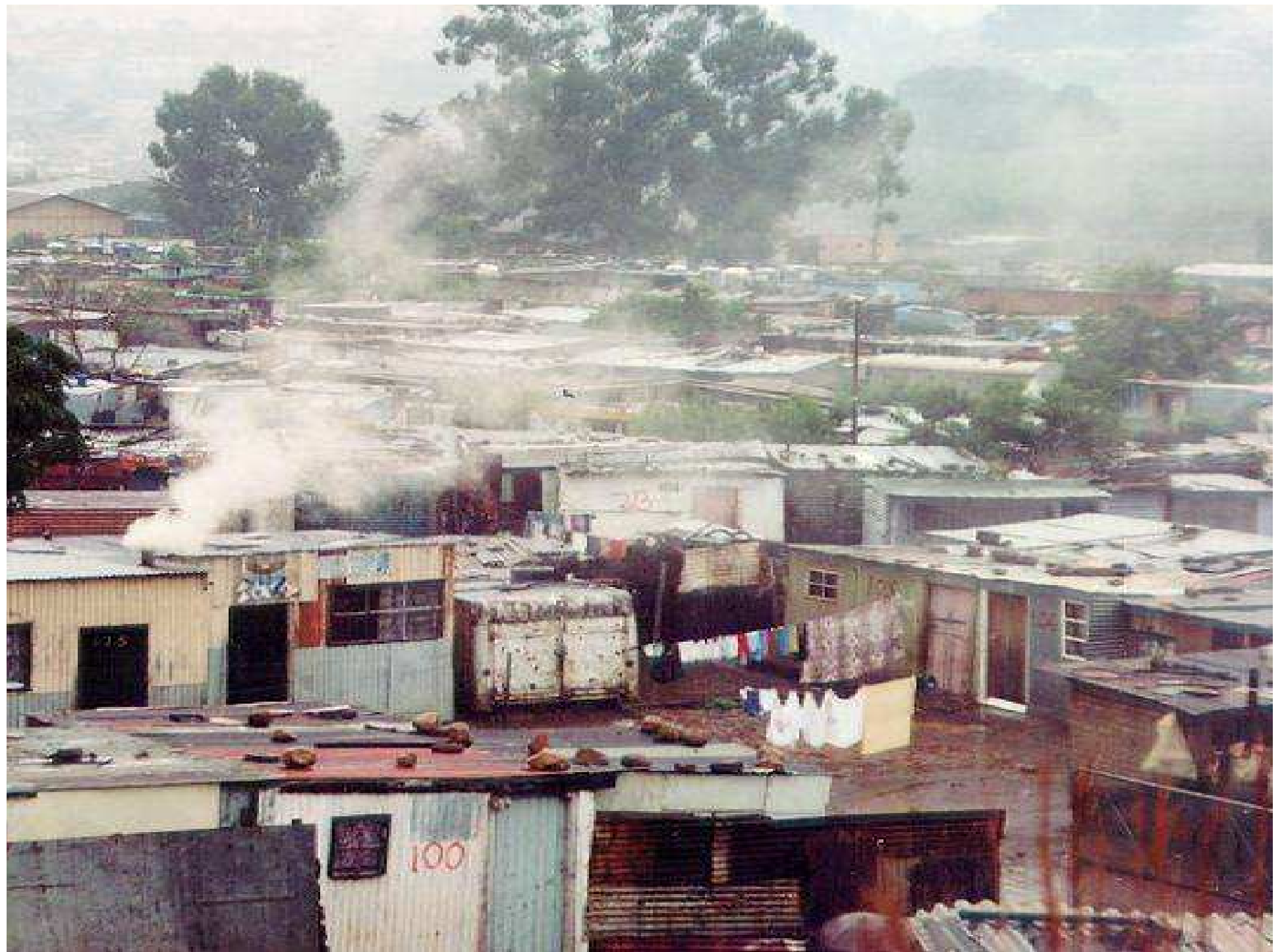
Increased segregation and violence

Impact

- Fear, trauma, high stress levels and social exclusion → more segregated and aggressive society
- Violence as way to express grievances
- Spate of xenophobic attacks against foreigners in past 2 years
- Result: need more police and more health facilities

Reiger Park Informal settlement, outside Johannesburg
(Photo: Themba Hadebe)

Pressure on local authorities

Impact

- Crime also increase pressures on local authorities
- To redesign and manage built environment to reduce opportunities for crime
- For local crime prevention strategies to be effective
- Need capable institutional structures
- Still many obstacles to good governance

Service delivery protests

- ☐ If local councils fails to deliver

- ☐ Some communities respond through violent protests

- ☐ E.g. in Mamelodi outside Pretoria in March 2010

Impact on democracy

Impact

- Increase violence and disregard of law
- Start to challenge democracy
- Democracy not atomically end to violence
- If state incapable to address violence
- Many communities mobilise against it
  - Foster separation through exclusive spatial zones and control
  - Separate 'publics' with different benefits

Accountability to whom?

Danger of going too far?
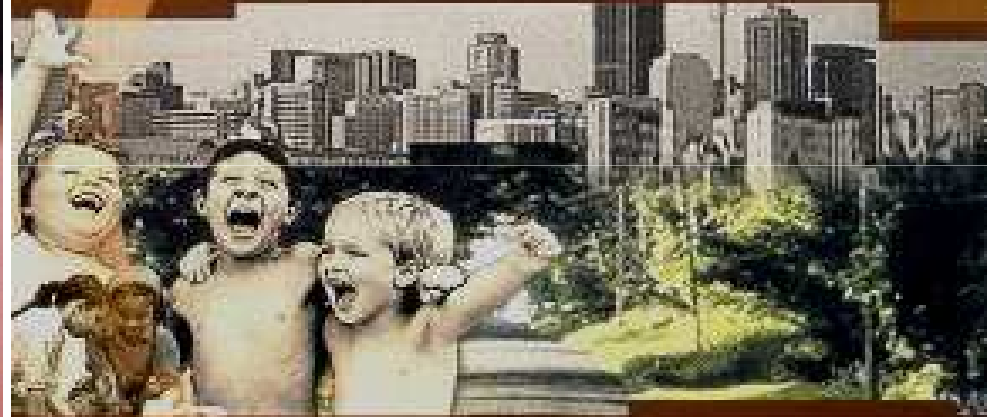
Big brother society?

Range of responses

Response

- Number of responses
- At various levels of government
- Range of programmes
  - Gun-free society
  - CPTED
- Police – commissioned manuals
  - Local crime prevention strategies
  - Crime prevention through environmental deisgn

A Manual for **Community Based** Crime Prevention

MAKING SOUTH AFRICA SAFE

DESIGNING SAFER PLACES

A Manual for **Crime Prevention** through Planning and Design

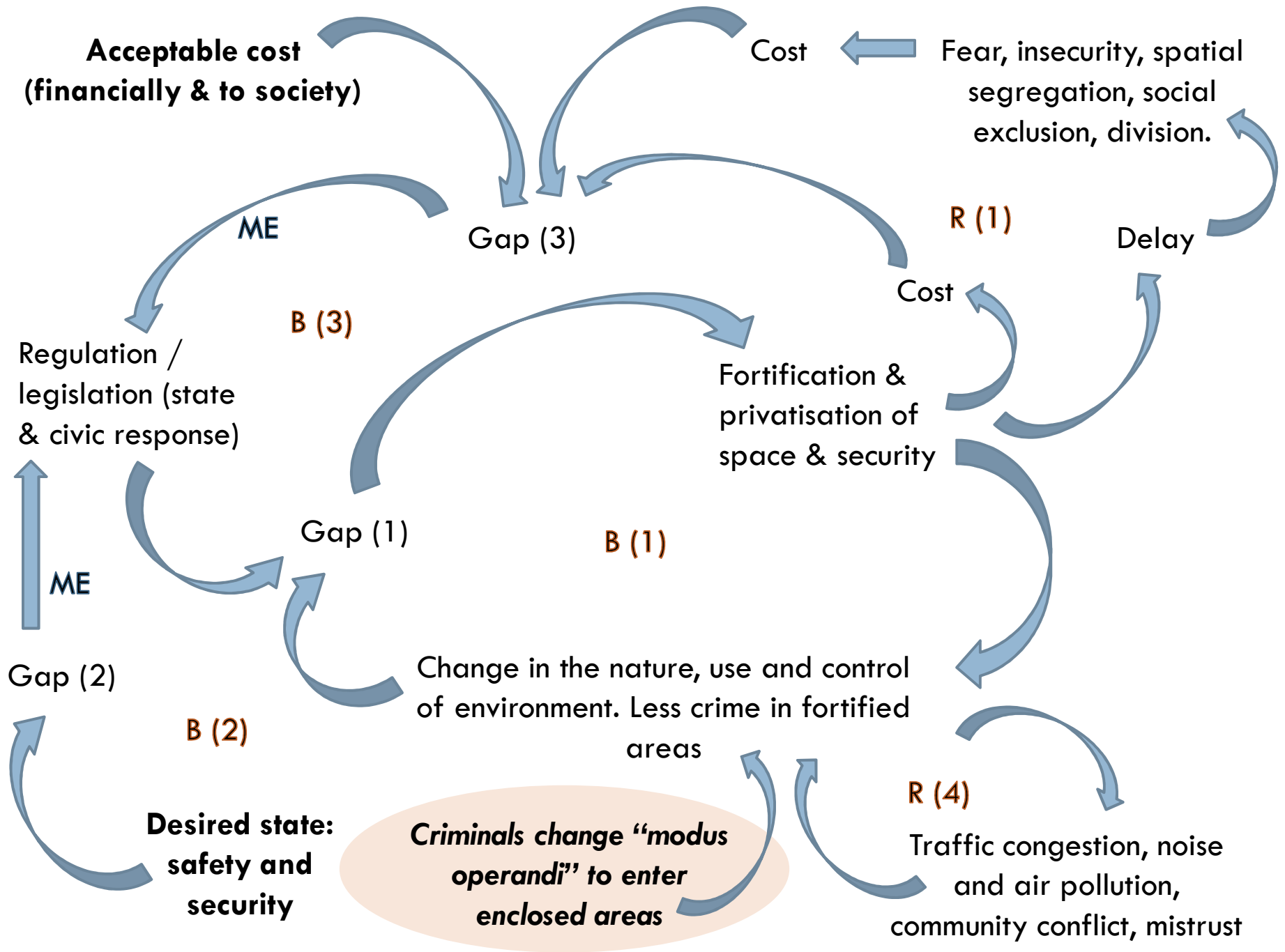# Multiple feedback loops

Multiple feedback loops

- Need for safety and security – major driver of urban fortification

- Not simple cause and effect

- To understand thought systemic approach

- Not just A affecting B, but also B affecting A

- Two types of interactions and feedback loops
  - Reinforcing (each action adds to other)
  - Balancing (to bring two things in agreement)

- Desired state interacts with current and produce gap until gap is zero and system stabilised (reaching goal)

System beyond cause and effect

- Urban fortification – system beyond cause and effect

- Thus to access implications for urban sustainability
  - To consider causal flows &
  - Internal lines of influence

- Urban fortification
  - Complex sub-system (part of larger system, the city)
  - Multiplicity of feedback loops

Urban fortification

Idealistic idea or realistic response?

Idealistic idea

- Motivations influenced by needs and desires
- Two sets of design ideas
  - Urban villages / ideal neighbourhood
  - Crime prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED)
- Enclosed neighbourhoods
  - Also idealistic idea to recreate old suburban neighbourhoods of past
- Large Security estates
  - Idealistic idea to create ideal place - "lifestyle village"

Realistic response

- Security, however main concern
- Thus realistic response to pressing need
- Even lower income communities
- Study on medium density mixed housing in South Africa
  - Residents from affordable and low income housing
  - Indicated 'safety and security' as most important category for success of this type of development in SA
  - security – target hardening measures

Questions re future of gating

- Reflection of insecurity or desire for ideal neighbourhood?

- If realistic response – who are planners to deny
  - Not accepted as working solution?

- What about uncontrolled growth and negative impact?

- Dilemma facing local authorities:
  - Short term need: safety and security
  - Longer term goal: integration and equity

Part of socio-ecological system

Urban security as critical factor in larger urban system

Collective impact

- Crime – huge impact on creation of sustainable human settlements
- Gated communities as outcome too
- Especially cumulative impact of increasing number of fortified neighbourhoods
- Similar to the "Tragedy of the Commons" (Hardin)
  - As each group claims right to improved living, collective is gradually eroded
- Thus, to understand impact – cities as socio-ecological systems

Walling in the commons

Cities as socio-ecological system

1. **complex, adaptive systems** that are

2. **integrated** across spheres of matter, life and human social and cultural phenomena (or mind),

3. structured as **nested systems** that allows interaction across scales and levels of organisation,

4. what differentiates cities from other types of ecosystems is introduction of **abstract thought** and **symbolic construction**

   □ allows for considered novelty, communication of ideas across time and space, and thus learning, and reflexive thinking (Du Plessis 2008:1).
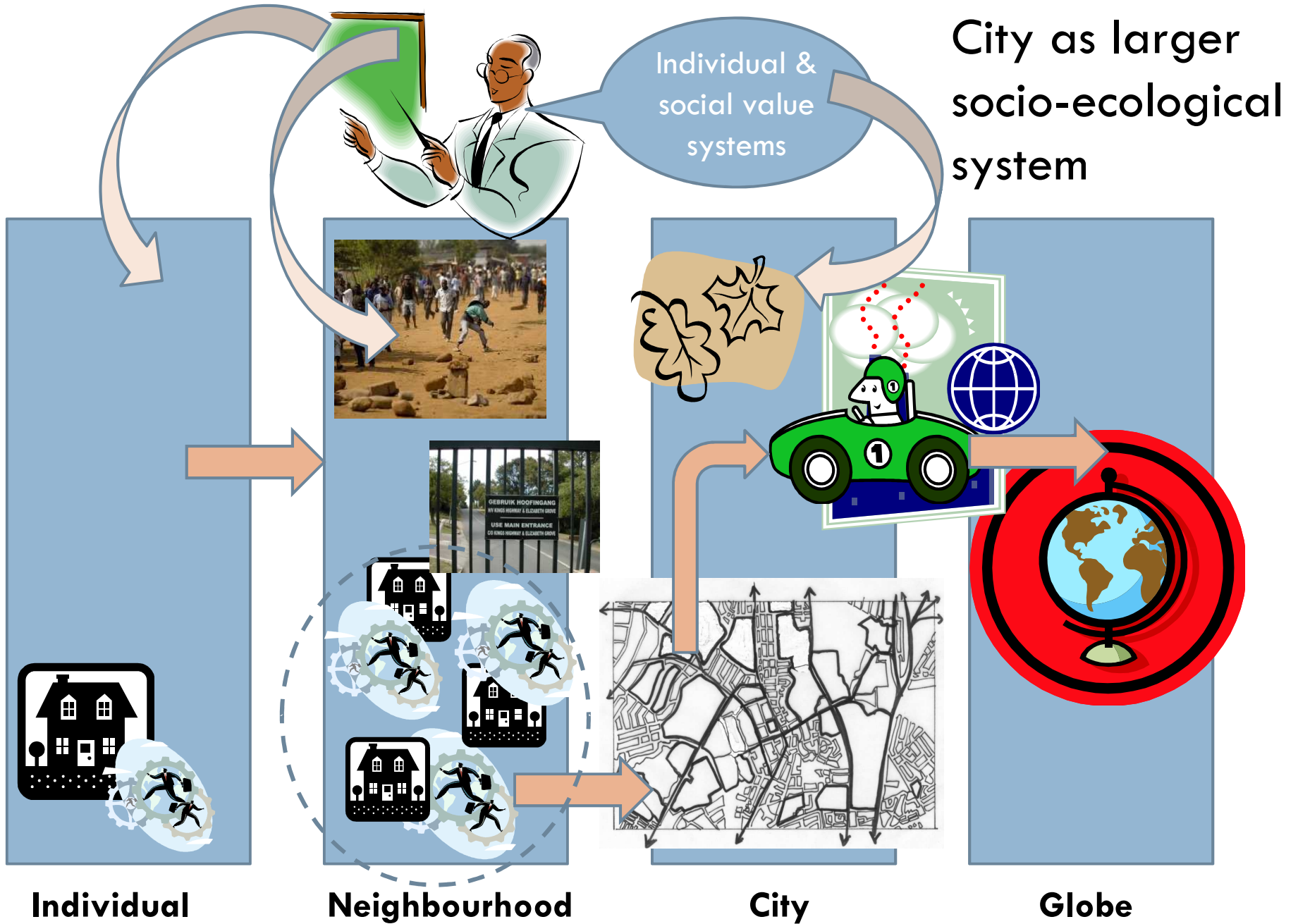
City as larger socio-ecological system

Individual & social value systems

Individual

Neighbourhood

City

Globe

Different urban systems interact as part of nested systems

Reconsidering the future

- Two possibilities
  - Fortress world
  - Alternative interventions

Fortress world

- Publication on future global scenarios
- Negative scenario – *Barbarisation*
  - Social, economic and moral underpinnings of society deteriorate
  - Overwhelm coping capacity of markets and policy reforms
- Variant of Barbarisation
  - Fortress world
    - From protected enclaves elite safeguard critical natural resources
    - Outside enclaves – repression, environmental destruction, misery
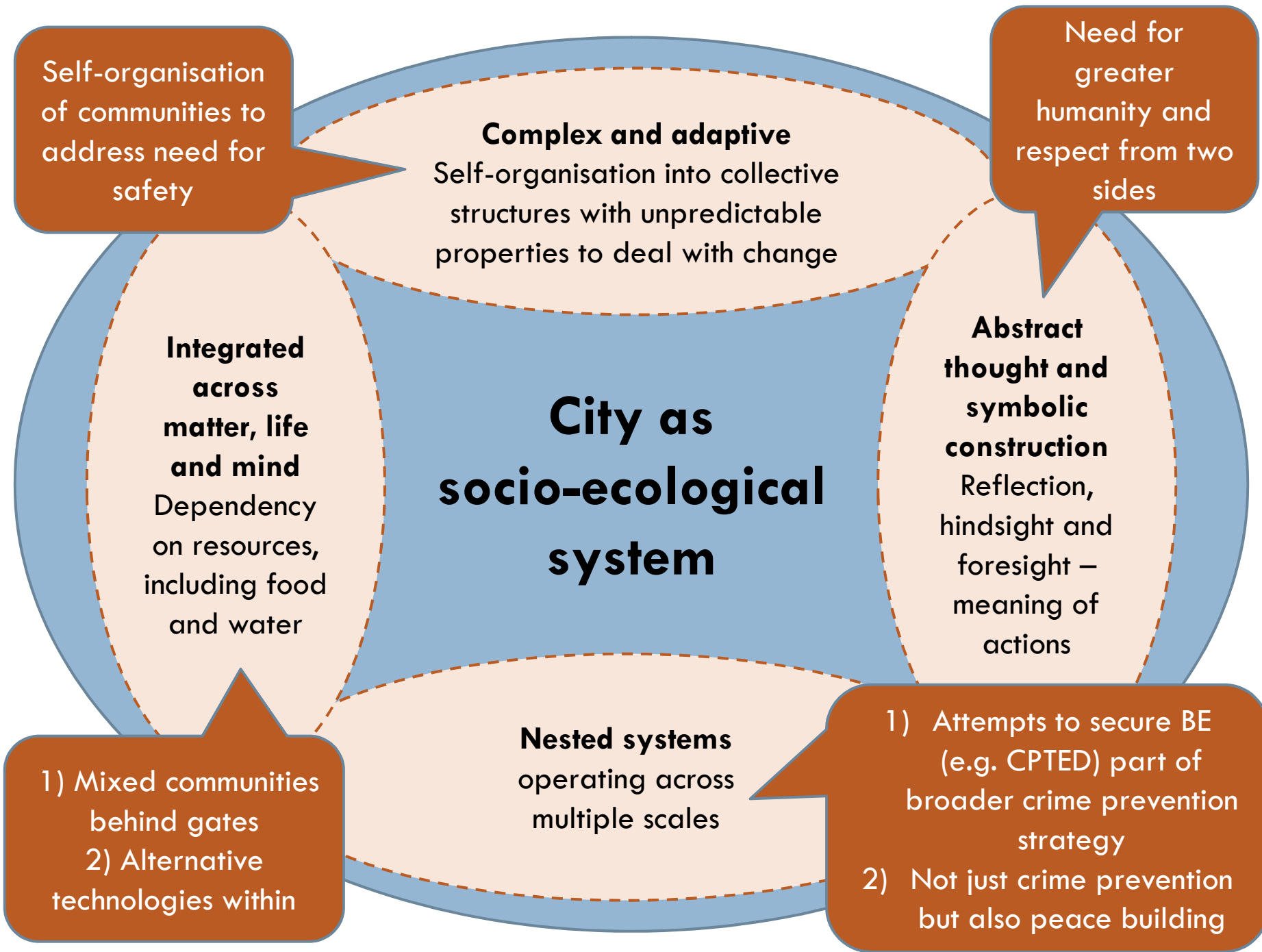
Fortress
Johannesburg

Alternative interventions

- To use understanding of cities as socio-ecological systems
  - To look for leverage points in system to intervene
  - To prevent fortress world scenario

Self-organisation of communities to address need for safety

Complex and adaptive
Self-organisation into collective structures with unpredictable properties to deal with change

Need for greater humanity and respect from two sides

Integrated across matter, life and mind
Dependency on resources, including food and water

City as socio-ecological system

Abstract thought and symbolic construction
Reflection, hindsight and foresight – meaning of actions

1) Mixed communities behind gates
2) Alternative technologies within

Nested systems operating across multiple scales

1) Attempts to secure BE (e.g. CPTED) part of broader crime prevention strategy
2) Not just crime prevention but also peace building

Conclusion

Urban fortification:

Both idealistic idea and realistic response

Need systemic approach

- Crime and fear of crime not understood in isolation
- Criminal activities → pressures → change state of environment through urban fortification → impact on people and environment
- Impact – can also have unintended consequences
- Thus dynamic relationships between drivers, pressures, state, impact and response
- Also multiple feedback loops
- Need to take into account to understand implications for urban sustainability

Cities as socio-ecological systems

- Threats to urban security and attempts to address it, e.g. urban fortification understood as
  - Complex adaptive systems
    - Self-organisation at community level to adapt to threats
  - Integrated systems across matter, life and mind
    - Efficient use of resources and integration inside gated areas
  - Nested systems allowing interaction across scales and levels of organisation
    - Relationships with larger systems – integrated strategies
  - Involves abstract thought and symbolic construction that allows communication, reflection and learning
    - To learn from hindsight, reflect and adapt