

International Labour Organisation: Future of Work Initiative

Theme 1: Work and Society

Asanda Benya, Bianca Tame, Crispin Chinguno and Mario Jacobs

**Labour and Enterprise Policy Research Group
University of Cape Town**

13 January 2016

Table of Contents

1. Introduction
2. Interrogating the concepts: Work and society
3. The age of globalisation: Theorising the changes in work and society
4. The main driver of change: The impact of technology on work and society
5. Spatial shift and flexibility: Blurring the boundaries between work and society
6. Workers on the move: Livelihoods for internal and regional migrants
7. Diversity in the workplace: Multiple generations, new skills and changing cultures of work
8. Representation in the labour market: Labour and social movements
9. Conclusion

1. Introduction

1.1 This paper elaborates on current changes taking place in the world of work and what implications they will have for the relationship between work and society. We draw from extended definitions of what constitutes work and who is a *worker*, and thus illuminate new actors and incorporate activities that are usually excluded from traditional definitions of ‘employment’. Below we also elaborate on how changes in the world of work will affect society and be affected by: technological changes; spatial shifts and flexibility; youth employment and the skills gap(s); rural-urban connections; formal and informal linkages; and internal and regional migratory connections. Our approach to work and society is that they are interconnected and interdependent, changes that happen in one sphere affect how the other sphere is configured and vice versa. Social categories such as gender, race, ethnicity, notions of citizenship, and resulting hierarchies and segmentation within society are also examined in relation to the future of work.

1.2 The paper starts by defining what we mean by ‘society’ and ‘work’, and discusses the conceptual relationship between the two; in reality society, the economy, and the world of work are all a single entity, to separate them and discuss their relationship with one another is a conceptual exercise. It then briefly engages with the time frame for the current era and the main features that characterise this era; we use a common term for the era – globalisation – but any of a number of terms could be used. In the third section we deal with what is arguably the main driver of changes in society and the world of work: technology. These technological changes permeate all the sections that follow.

1.3 Space is one of the meta concepts that is used to frame many of the changes taking place. In the fourth section we discuss how the use of space is collapsing many of the traditional distinctions between work and society as well as connecting the global and local much more firmly. The notion of space continues in the section that follows, in this case characterised in the more conventional terms of geography. One of the main features of the current era is the movement of people around the globe, in most cases in a desperate pursuit of work and a better life, but in some cases under compulsion. The new labour market is therefore becoming global, or at least regional, rather than national.

1.4 The future world of work will place new demands on society in terms of who will work, how long they will work, and what skills they will need. At the same time, the changing composition of the workforce will place demands on how work is organised and managed. These issues are discussed in the fifth section. In the sixth section we discuss how people involved in the world of work are responding to the changes taking place. The traditional mode of response by working people has been to come together in the form of trade unions for representation. But trade unions have been slow to gear themselves for the changes and other looser forms of organisation – social movements – have emerged as well as non-membership based organisations such as NGOs. Major challenges therefore face unions if they are to continue being the main vehicle through which working people are represented in

the labour market and society in future. The paper concludes with a short discussion of how some of the key trends might continue into the future.

1.5 The paper does not deal with South Africa separately. South Africa is experiencing similar changes to those taking place in most other countries, although they play out slightly differently in South Africa's because of its level of development and its social, economic, political and institutional specificity. Each section in the paper therefore deals with the changes at a general level but also identifies how changes are playing out in the context or specificity of South Africa. We hope that this will indicate both commonalities and differences in how South Africa is experiencing these changes compared to the global narrative.

2. Interrogating the concepts: Work and society

2.1 The recent changes in the world of work as described by labour researchers and others have necessitated that we interrogate the concepts used to analyse work and society. There are many, often contested, conceptions of what constitutes 'society' and 'work'. This section aims to get a nuanced understanding of the meaning of these terms in order to get a better sense of how they are changing. Although the term society is often contested, scholars tend to agree that at a minimum a society is a group of people who interact or network with each other and share some commonalities or basic features such as geographical boundaries or a common culture.

2.2 There are different types of societies. While commonality is often emphasised when referring to a society, this is not the only feature. In some instances, society is characterised by differences and is dynamic. The definition of the term must therefore have a temporal dimension: new societies are the products of old societies and in new societies one finds remnants of old societies. This is important because it allows us to appreciate continuities and discontinuities between and within different societies.

2.3 While acknowledging the many different types of societies that exist and the conceptual contestations regarding what constitutes a society, this paper adopts a narrow definition, one that is reflective of the role of work within society. By society we mean industrial and post-industrial society. What characterises industrial society is its dependence on technology for its core characteristic: the mass production and mass consumption of goods and services. In an industrial society there is a high, often gendered, division of labour and a strict separation between the production (workplace) and reproduction (home) spaces. By post-industrial society we are referring to a society in which there has been a shift from primary and secondary industry, including the manufacturing sector, as the main drivers of change, to one where the finance and service sectors are playing this role.

2.4 The second key concept to be interrogated is that of work. Unlike the narrow definition of society adopted above, we propose a wide definition of work. There is increasing recognition that work incorporates both paid and unpaid work. In the industrial era paid work generally happened at a specified workplace that was usually located outside the household. The division between work and leisure was equally sharp. Furthermore, the roles of and relations between those who participated in work were clear: there was an identifiable employer and employee, and there was a direct relationship between the employer and his (it was usually a male) employees. In recent times, however, there has been a significant shift, with the location of work becoming amorphous, working time and leisure time becoming increasingly fragmented and integrated, and the roles and relations in working arrangements becoming blurred and even involving more parties than an employer and employee. The most common of the latter arrangements is the triangular employment relationship that emerges when a labour broker acts as intermediary. Places of work are no longer necessarily separate from households, with the latter, traditionally a place of reproduction, becoming a feature in the world of work.¹ Furthermore, the shift away from the traditional factory or workplace is also seeing more work done in ‘public spaces’ such as streets and squares.² This shift often also sees work also taking on an informal character, although it can remain connected to formal value chains or production networks. The temporal dimension of work has become equally fluid.

2.5 These changes place new demands on those participating in the world of work. Whereas work in the traditional industrial workplace – the factory - involves physical and mental labour, the shift to services work increasingly incorporates emotional labour. Although invisible, emotional labour has been shown to contribute significantly to the accumulation and expansion of capital.

2.6 Paid work is becoming less formal and more insecure, with many jobs not having prospects for advancement or benefits. The precariousness that has come to characterise this shift cuts across all sectors, occupational levels and professions. Historically a flexible labour supply was associated with low-skilled work in certain sectors, but this mode of work is being adopted in all sectors, including professional jobs. This, employers argue, is to allow for changing demands and economic “downturns”.³ The implication is that a large proportion of workers has become and will continue to be insecure. Those who are most likely to be affected are young people, blacks (particularly Africans), women who must manage family responsibilities, especially child care, while participating in the labour market, and migrants. We can infer from the trend to flexibilise work that it will become more difficult to achieve decent work, and address racial and gender inequalities in the workplace. Those who do flexible work will most likely be occupationally downgraded and their skills under-utilised.⁴

¹ Federici, 2012; Ally, 2006.

² Webster et al, 2008

³ Choundry & Hlatshwayo, 2016.

⁴ Connolly and Gregory, 2008.

2.7 The relationship between society and work can be represented quantitatively in broad terms. South Africa (SA), for example, has a population of about 56 million, with females making up about 51% and males about 49% of the total population⁵. The youth (15-35 years) constitutes just over 36% of the entire population, making it a country with a significantly high number of young people. This poses challenges for the labour market and for skills development but also suggests opportunities.

2.8 The working age population in the first quarter of 2016 stood at over 36 million people, with a labour force participation rate of 58.7%, a 'narrow' unemployment rate of 27% and an expanded rate of just over 36%. The number of people in employment in the country obviously constitutes a significant group but the ratio of the employment to the economically active population is on the low side when compared to other countries. So, there should be more people in employment. Of course, unemployment is remarkably high. This group who are not working is as much a part of the world of work as those who are in employment, but is in a quite different relationship to society, making a negligible contribution to the economy. Unemployment is skewed by race (higher for Africans), gender (higher for women), geography (higher in rural areas), and age (higher for youth). Between those in 'adequate' employment and the unemployed is another relatively large group of people, the under-employed, which overlaps with the estimated 6.7 million working poor, i.e. those in employment or working who do not earn enough to lift themselves out of poverty.

2.9 Not surprisingly, given the latter categories, poverty continues to be one of South Africa's biggest challenges: almost 30 million people are living below the poverty line (R1 036.07 per month), with somewhat more females (58.6%) living in poverty compared to males (54.9%).⁶ Inequality is as much a problem: SA is one of the three most unequal countries in the world, with a Gini coefficient between 0.66 and 0.7. Unemployment and underemployment are key reasons for the high level of poverty and inequality. Work, or the lack of work or decently paid work, is therefore a critical factor in the highly segmented and divided nature of South African society; this constitutes the major challenge facing the country.

2.10 While quantitative data does show the structural divisions in society and the labour market, it does not lend itself to understand the processes that are driving shifts in the world of work. The categories used in surveys have not kept pace with the changes taking place and the complexity of some of the changes (e.g. the various forms of non-standard work that are emerging) defy the survey methodology.

⁵ Statistics, South Africa.

⁶ One of the objectives of the National Development Plan 2030 (NDP), which is championed by The Presidency, is to eliminate poverty and reduce inequality by 2030. While the NDP has been supported by business, labour has been critical of its priorities and the time frames set to achieve its key objectives. At the heart of contention is that the NDP, according to labour, emphasises development driven primarily by economic growth rather than economic redistribution as an integral part of development and economic growth. However, despite being official government policy, the commitment of government to the NDP appears patchy at best.

2.11 On the other hand, it is increasingly acknowledged that unpaid work in the home, which was traditionally thought of being outside the market, is closely integrated with work that benefits the market. While unpaid work was historically not considered ‘work’ in the sense that it did not have a commercial value, research shows that unpaid house work not only contributes to households but also the market, i.e. it not only has use value but contributes to the creation of surplus value. The ability of workers to perform productively relies heavily on the unpaid and invisible work done in the household, mainly by women. This unpaid work, known as social reproduction, is therefore a critical link in the relationship between what we term the world of work and society.⁷

2.12 When we expand the definition of work to accommodate the changing features noted above, existing definitions of employment and unemployment lose their relevance, and the related statistics no longer reflect the reality of the labour market. Such an expansion also brings into focus the different ways in which labour legislation and the courts define institutions such as employment compared to labour economists and labour market statisticians. For labour lawyers employment exists only if there is an employment relationship; all other working arrangements fall under the category of independent contractors and are excluded from the protection of labour legislation. By implication there is no informal employment, only employers who are non-compliant with labour legislation. Definitions of standard and non-standard employment are multifaceted but correspond to the basic distinction labour lawyers draw between employment and independent contracting.⁸

2.13 Labour market economists and labour market statisticians define employment quite differently, and divide formal and informal employment according to certain characteristics of the employer and employee but without reference to compliance with labour market regulation. Whether work is decent or not is therefore not a major consideration for economist and statisticians. We therefore advocate a rethinking of labour market statistical definitions.

2.14 On the other hand, neither labour lawyers or economists and statisticians recognise unpaid household labour as being work or employment, and neither do they take cognisance of the conditions under which such work is performed. Statistics on employment therefore still largely reflect a conception of work and the family that is outmoded, obscuring crucial links between work and society.

2.15 In addition, changes in the world of work are affecting the role of the household and vice versa. Whereas standard employment previously constituted the major income source for the household (usually the only source and earned only by the male head of household), insecure forms of employment now see households becoming the site for multiple (more or less precarious) income streams. And whereas the household was dependent on the income

⁷ Federici (2013); McDowell, Ward, Fagan, Perrons and Ray (2006); Castells 1978;

⁸ ???????????

from standard employment, now insecure workers are dependent on the household to support them through periods of underemployment or unemployment. So, as more and more jobs are not able to provide security, workers are looking to households or communities to provide the kinds of security that the changing labour market is failing to provide. When the household or community is unable to respond to these needs, households rely increasingly on credit, possibly solving the problem in the short-term but making the household even more vulnerable in the longer term. Because of these changes and increased pressures on households and communities, we have also seen a rise in demands by people on government to provide more and better basic services. In many cases these demands are unmet and have led to community protests.

Formal Work Space

- 1. Production sphere: formal and private factory
- 2. Public sphere (but privately owned) thus most activities are visible
- 3. Employment relationships of many kinds (SER, triangular and more)
- 4. Manual labour/physical work/ mental work/ emotional work and labour
- 5. Commodified labour
- 6. Formal and informal workers (eg. permanent workers and subcontracted or casual workers)

Informal Work Space

- 1. Production and reproduction sphere: public space such as streets
- 2. Semi-public and semi-private sphere of work -activities performed in this sphere follow the patterns of visibility and invisibility
- 3. Work relationships rather than employment with strong economic ties to work spaces and reliance on home space
- 4. Manual labour/physical work/ mental work/ emotional work and labour (tasks similar)
- 5. Disguised commodified labour
- 6. Mainly informal and precarious workers

Society/ Home

- 1. Reproduction/relational sphere
- 2. Private sphere with links to the public. Rhythms of work in this sphere are determined to a large degree by the public.
- 3. Familial and gendered relations of work as oppose to clear employment relations. Characterized by invisible work and labour (activities often disguised as housework and mainly done by women alongside part time, informal and insecure work).
- 4. Reproductive work/ emotional work, manual labour/physical work/ mental work/ emotional work and labour.
- 5. Uncommodified relationships
- 6. Invisible homeworkers including domestic workers

3. The age of globalisation: Theorising the changes in work and society

3.1 Given that we are discussing the future world of work, it is necessary to speak briefly about periods. We are in what many scholars agree is some new phase of the industrial era, although some argue that the new era is actually the start of a post-industrial phase. Most would probably agree that this era started in about 1970 when the post-war boom of sustained growth and close to full employment, at least in developed countries, began to peter out. There are many different terms to describe the current phase: post-Fordism, the 4th Industrial Revolution, the era of finance capitalism, to name a few. But probably the most common is the all-encompassing notion of globalisation. Core to all these periodisations is recognition of major changes taking place in the world of work. New technologies have probably been the main drivers of changes but the period has also been marked by economic uncertainty, sharp fluctuations and slow growth for many countries. Trade liberalisation, capital mobility and competition from developing countries, notably the Asian ‘tigers’ and more recently China, are other important features. The era, in very general terms, is characterised by global economic integration and rapid change: changes across space and in time are therefore key meta variables in the era.

3.2 Focusing on the world of work, the main change is often characterised as a shift from ‘a single job for life’ to ‘flexible short term and transient forms of work’. This, however, is only part of the story. In many countries of the global South a very large proportion of workers have never achieved ‘a single job for life’ and probably will never enter the formal labour market. Globalisation does not seem to have changed this situation. In fact, globalisation has arguably entrenched historical patterns of informality even more deeply in many developing countries.

3.3 It is, however, not just about flexible and transient forms of work. While many workers are forced to hold down a number of temporary jobs in order to survive, at the other extreme are workers who are forced - through slave like contracts or ‘sponsorships’ - to work for only one employer in almost feudal conditions. These arrangements especially affect vulnerable (undocumented) migrants.⁹ Equally, on the society side, with declining state intervention in the provision of social services, women are spending more and more time doing invisible, unremunerated reproduction work.¹⁰ With more socio-economic pressures absorbed by households, women are increasingly becoming unable to participate in waged work, whether part-time or full-time, or formal or informal. In South Africa this has resulted in a gendered increase in the number of discouraged work seekers.¹¹

3.4 The shifts in the global world of work are also characterised by a heavy reliance on cheap and easily exploited migrant workers; whether internal migrants (usually from rural to urban

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ McDowell, Ward, Fagan, Perrons and Ray (2006)

¹¹ See Statistics South Africa Quarterly Labour Force Survey (2010-2016)

areas) or external migrants (from poorer labour-sending countries to relatively wealthy labour-absorbing countries).

3.5 These changes in the world of work require that trade unions think more strategically and creatively about the increasing number of workers/potential members they currently exclude from their organisational scope. Without that strategic ‘rethinking’ on the part of labour, their power and relevance will be at jeopardy. In some countries, as a result of failing to respond to these shifts, there has been a decline in number of workers who are represented by traditional trade unions. This has resulted in a weakening of trade unions, diminishing bargaining power, and reduced collective bargaining coverage, which has meant losses for workers, even for those who are in traditional jobs with ‘security’.

3.6 What remains elusive are the implications these shifts will have for social security policies (and benefits) premised on an employment relationship as well as old forms and spaces of work?

4. The main driver of change: The impact of technology on work and society

4.1 Without wishing to be technologically determinist, technological advances have in recent years arguably been the critical drivers of the transformation of work, the economy and society. Technology impacts on how work is done, how workers interact, how people interact, and how the market and society are organized. Technological advances sweeping across the globe encounter countries at different stages of development, with unique histories, varying socio-economic structures, particular institutional infrastructures, and different capacities to respond to technological advances. The impact of technology at the national level is thus not homogeneous and will vary from country to country. Furthermore, technological innovation impacts unevenly across sectors, making a much bigger impact on some and less on others. Even within sectors the take-up of new technologies will be uneven. Small informal firms in all sectors are unlikely to have the capacity to take advantage of new technologies.

4.2 Schumpeter describes the role of technological innovation as a paradox of creative destruction.¹² In recent times his concept has been translated into the notion of disruptive innovation.¹³ The overarching argument here is that technological innovation causes the decline or destruction of old industries, business models, jobs, and economic values, but it also accounts for the emergence or creation of new industries, business models, jobs and economic values. Technological change and innovation may thus destroy jobs that are tied to old ways of doing things and at the same time create new jobs and more efficient methods of producing goods and providing services.

¹² Schumpeter, J. A. (2013). *Capitalism, socialism and democracy*. Routledge.

¹³ <file:///C:/Users/01448876/Downloads/future-of-work-report-v16-web.pdf>

4.3 The concepts of creative destruction and disruptive innovation, however, shed little light on the specifics of what will be destroyed, where the destruction will take place, and how much will be destroyed. It is even more difficult to predict what will be created, where it will be created and whether what is created will exceed what has been destroyed. For example, if old jobs are lost and replaced by new jobs the latter might be in a completely different type of job, in a different location and requiring different skills.

4.4 The business persons, workers and policy-makers that recognize technological change and its likely consequences early are in a strong position to take advantage of the potential opportunities that it offers and mitigate the disruptive effects. Society must therefore not respond passively to technological innovation: the creative part of the paradoxical process will not necessarily follow and be the equal of the destructive part. The challenge arguably lies less with the advance in technology than in how the process is managed.

4.5 The future of work in South Africa, as elsewhere in the world, is becoming more technology-driven and network-oriented. There is a growing need for both employers and employees to work across disciplines and to collaborate virtually. Increasingly the performance of work is cutting across time and space. Traditional forms of management will become obsolete. There is need for managers to develop new skills to manage these new forms of work and the people who undertake them.

4.6 Technological innovation and the changes in the organisation of work it is causing is steadily blurring the boundaries of the workplace and dissolving traditional divisions between sectors. At the same time a new geography of production is emerging. Production is being internationalised, value chains and networks are linking independent firms in the same production process, and the labour market is becoming global. The South African labour market has become more regional and international, with the result that the workforce is becoming more diverse in terms of language, ethnicity, gender and nationality. This poses challenges in the workplace and may also increase social tensions in the broader society.

4.7 The South African workplace is increasingly shaped by technological innovation. This is associated with a growing flexibilisation of work and the growth of processes of casualization, externalisation and informalisation. The market is characterized by growing volatility which will increase the pressure flexibility in the work arrangements. The future will thus continue to be characterised by a growing number of temporary workers and zero-hour employment contracts in many organizations.¹⁴

4.8 The future of work in South Africa is set to become more volatile and unstable at both ends of the hierarchy (low and high skill levels). Technological innovation will displace routine and manual jobs and create new jobs in sectors such as information technology and education. The primary and extractive sectors such as mining will continue to decline as the

¹⁴ Standing, Guy (2011). *The Precariat*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.

economy shifts to a technology high road. Certain sectors are bound to see an increase of new job opportunities. Education and training will have to expand to unlock South Africa's structural unemployment and the skills crisis.

4.9 The South African education and training system has generally not been able to keep pace with the technological changes. Many graduates coming out from the education and training system are often not able to meet the requirements of the jobs available on the market. This means that our education and training system and government policy must rapidly increase its capacity to provide the skills needed by the new jobs that emerge from the continuous innovation and technological shift.

4.10 We have noted that technological innovation has both positive and negative outcomes. On one hand, it may result in the widening income gap. Employers are prepared to pay a premium to workers with the appropriate skills. The South African labour market is characterized by a mismatch between the skills available and the jobs on the market (i.e. structural unemployment). Whilst 5.9 million South Africans are unemployed, there are more than 800 000 highly skilled positions that are unfilled because of a shortage of appropriate skills.¹⁵ The shortage of skills is an obstacle to economic growth and negatively impact job creation and expansion of businesses. This scenario is likely to persist for the foreseeable future. The highly skilled workers will be highly sought and will have more job opportunities, while the less skilled will face constraints in terms of the demand for their skills.

4.11 This inequality might reinforce existing geographical inequalities that are a legacy of apartheid. People living in urban areas will adopt new technology and innovations much more quickly than people living in rural areas. This variation in the uptake of new technology will entrench inequality within and across regions.

4.12 In order to promote job creation in the face of technological innovation, the government may be persuaded to ease labour regulations in the long term but this will face challenge from organized labour. This is because the easing of labour regulations will increase the decent work deficit in the country and will be especially detrimental to the less skilled workers who constitute most of the members of trade unions in South Africa.

4.13 Technological shifts have made communication between workers much easier, which allows them to organise themselves and mobilise support for their demands, regardless of geographical distance and resource challenges. Workers in Lesotho, for instance, and on the farms in the Western Cape have been using their mobile phones to record their working conditions and garner support from the clients of their employers in global value chains. In the past labour in South Africa, in sectors like mining, relied on the close proximity of their members to organise, but the 21st century workers and community activists are increasingly relying on good networks and mobile phones to cross boundaries previously seen as

¹⁵ Stats SA 2015

insurmountable. They can within hours send messages that reach thousands of people within hours through the use of mobile phones, thus putting greater pressure on those in power. from all sides. The internet and mobile phones have played an incredibly role in “flattening” some aspects of the world and boosting power from below, thus creating new ‘techno’ communities.

4.14 However, although the internet and mobile phones have enabled communities to create a new kind of ‘commons’, these ‘commons’ are susceptible to commodification as one sees with services such as Airbnb and UBER, which are ostensibly part of the sharing economy. Scholars argue that while technology has enabled easy access to information through open sources, it has also “empowered huge corporations like Facebook and Google to fully observe and manipulate our everyday activities, and oppressive governments to censor and surveil their citizens”. This is not only happening under oppressive governments but has been used by democratic and “progressive” governments.

5. Spatial shift and flexibility: Blurring the boundaries in between work and society

5.1 In this section we expand on how locations, spaces and places of work have shifted (spatial shift) and how they exist in multiple and contradictory ways at different times (spatial flexibility); for example home, as already indicated above, can be a space of production at specific times and a household at other times, where social relations are nurtured, maintained and reproduced. The spatial flexibility and shifts are often continuous and not clearly demarcated.

5.2 At the global level there has undeniably been an “internationalisation of the world’s production system”. This dispersion of the production system and at the same time its continued integration across space is captured in the global value chain (GVC) and global production network (GPN) concepts. The internationalisation has had winners and losers, both in terms of gender and geographies. Spatial shifts and flexibility do not occur in similar ways across the globe; they are influenced by location of countries and firms in the geopolitical economy of global production. Workers in the global North are affected differently from those in the global South, just as workers in declining industries and those in booming industries experience change differently.¹⁶

5.3 The internationalisation of work is lauded by many as progressive, with an overemphasis on the benefits it has for all players in the “global village”. The reality, as noted in research, is that some players are shock absorbers, while others reap the benefits. The regressive effects these changes have had on masses of workers, in most cases undermining basic conditions of employment for workers in the global South, cannot be overstated. With an increased focus and strong emphasis on foreign direct investment by governments in the global South, this

¹⁶ Harvey 2009

has also meant that governments are roped into undermining or not enforcing or upholding high labour standards for the sake of investments.¹⁷ Just as in South Africa, the argument is that for development to happen it is a case of jobs at any cost rather than decent jobs.

5.4 While capital and goods are moving much more freely, given trade liberalisation and deregulation of financial markets, for workers and those from the global South mobility is often limited. It is anything but deregulated or liberalised. Borders remain a real stumbling block. When workers are able to move, unlike goods, they move on unfavourable terms, thus remaining outsiders or marginal players with no security. They are often seen as burdensome, have their movement restricted and have a low status. For workers who produce the goods and provide the services, there is “securitization and militarisation” of the borders they cross.¹⁸

5.5 Workers do nevertheless move, and are doing so in growing numbers, drawn by better prospects in the global North and fleeing wars or oppression in their home countries. These workers often work under conditions that are indecent, where they are seen not as humans but as machines who have to produce efficiently for a system. These workers do not only produce tangible products in this global production system but also services and frequently perform less tangible forms of work such as the emotional work done by care workers, and domestic work and child care done mainly by women.

5.6 With an aging population in the global North and rising unemployment levels in the global South this trend is likely to continue with workers not only doing care and emotional labour, but becoming incorporated into social and familial structures of the global North. At the same time as they are incorporated they are also ‘othered’. In other words, workers are moving to the global North to do care work and emotional labour, which is mainly based in home spaces, will be the ‘othered’ family members, often with unclear work status. The worker is going to be incorporated into the family structure, thus more exploited, less secure and their labour more disguised.

5.7 While there tends to be an emphasis on the benefits of these ‘shifting’ spatial arrangements, there are the levels and types of vulnerabilities that result, especially for those on the margins of both work (informal workers and perceived unskilled youth) and society (foreign nationals, internal migrants and women). In many cases the only support that such workers can rely on is from social networks that are forged through or weakened by these shifts. To this end, inequalities and exclusions continue under the guise of a global village.

5.8 Spatial shifts not only have implications for the world of work, but also for the society. In 2015, 64.8% of the total population in SA was urbanised. Statistics South Africa reports a rapid rate of urbanisation, with current estimates standing at an annual rate of change of 1.59% since 2010. Migration from rural to urban or peri-urban places is met by

¹⁷ Rai, Hoskyns & Thomas 2011; ILO 2012

¹⁸ Choudry and Hlatshwayo 2016

municipalities, provincial and national government departments that are struggling to provide sufficient and improved services for those migrating. As a result, they tend to live in informal settlements with no or very limited services, often for long periods. This is especially the case for those who are less skilled. As noted above, not only do they live in informal settlements but they also engage in informal work or can get formal work only on a part-time and/or temporary basis.

5.9 Informal settlements, while in the city, are usually far from socio-economic amenities and services, thus reproducing the urban geography of apartheid. That means spatially, the poor continue to be located in inconvenient places, thus spending more money and time travelling from where they live to where services and work are located. This puts pressure on already stretched incomes, social grants and other resources. With gentrification and commodification, this is likely to be a continuing trend into the future. Increasingly, geography and the spatial challenges of the 21st century will become key issues facing society.¹⁹

5.10 If these spatial challenges remain unaddressed in the big cities in South Africa, the organisation of the “infrastructure of everyday life” will become a growing area of contention.²⁰ This urban spatial discontent is not only going to affect poor communities but is going to reach upper classes (land occupation movements). Informal (for those on the peripheries) and “the Commons” (for those in the un-affording middle) housing plans are going to slowly emerge. There are going to be counter-movements to occupy spaces and ‘reclaim’ cities. For this to be avoided, government and city officials have to creatively rethink urban infrastructure and attempt to connect with and incorporate the “poor” in the daily activities of the city.

6. Workers on the move: Livelihoods for internal and regional migrants

6.1 There are currently 232 million international migrants and 740 million internal migrants across the globe.²¹ Further, a UNHCR report (2015) revealed that there are more than 65 million displaced people globally, with 42 500 displaced each day.²² In Africa alone, cities grow by over 22 million people each year, with 11 million Africans entering the labour market annually.²³ By 2050 an estimated 1.34 billion people will reside in African cities.²⁴ These estimates indicate that large numbers of individuals are moving from rural to urban

¹⁹ Sayer 2001 (in McDowell)

²⁰ McDowell

²¹ Cited in IOM. (2015). World Migration Report 2015. Geneva: International Organisation for Migration.
Accessed from: http://publications.iom.int/system/files/wmr2015_en.pdf

²² UNHCR (2015). Global trends: Forced displacement in 2015. Accessed from:
<http://www.unhcr.org/statistics/unhcrstats/576408cd7/unhcr-global-trends-2015.html>

²³ World Bank (2014) cited in Cartwright, A. (2015). Better growth, better cities: Rethinking and redirecting urbanisation in Africa. Working Paper.

²⁴ Cartwright (2015: 1)

areas or from country to country, giving rise to what scholars refer to as “the age of migration”.²⁵

6.2 Human mobility is an important livelihood strategy for many and forms part of the development narrative. Migration flows that are either internal or international are often discussed in relation to the process of industrialisation and development.²⁶

6.3 Rapid urbanisation, due to population growth and internal migration is a key trend in the 21st century. According to the 2016 State of the Cities Report, urbanisation in South Africa is on the increase and unsustainable. Housing shortages, the growing size of informal settlements, lack of access to social services, the cost of living as well as health risks in overcrowded and poorly resourced areas affect the social fabric of society.²⁷ For those who cannot find employment their access to work opportunities in the informal economy is crucial for sustaining rural-urban linkages and reducing poverty. Like international migration, internal migration also requires sound management through coherent government policies that foster economic integration and social development.²⁸

6.4 What is clear among think tanks and policy experts is that migration trends within Africa will increase since there has been a notable growth in the mobility of men and women searching for work across the African continent due to political, economic and ecological crises.²⁹ In particular, the current discourse on managing migration includes the need for a holistic strategy that takes into account how migration, climate change and the environment are linked.

6.5 The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) predicts that climate change will accelerate and cause deteriorating conditions that impact on lives, livelihoods and ecosystems as internal and cross border migration increases. Rather than viewing migration merely as a survival strategy that fails to adapt to unexpected environmental changes, the IOM calls for migration to be viewed as an adaptation strategy that requires management. Critical issues such as improved water management, investing in water storage, and promoting the efficient use of water (including advances in desalination) are important, especially for the agricultural sector.³⁰ In South Africa, water shortages and the prevalence of droughts in the near future

²⁵ Castles, S., Haas, H., & Miller, M. J. (2013). *The age of migration: International population movements in the modern world*.

²⁶ ILO (2015). Report of the Director-General. International Labour Conference, 104th Session, 2015, Report 1. http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_norm/@relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_369026.pdf

²⁷ Cited in IOM. (2015). World Migration Report 2015. Geneva: International Organisation for Migration. Accessed from: http://publications.iom.int/system/files/wmr2015_en.pdf

²⁸ SACN. (2016). State of South African Cities Report 2016. Johannesburg: SACN. Accessed from: <http://www.socr.co.za/>

²⁹ Kabwe-Segatti, A. W., Landau, L. B., World Bank., & Agence française de développement. (2011). Contemporary migration to South Africa: A regional development issue. Washington, DC: World Bank.

³⁰ See IOM (International Organization for Migration). Migration and Climate Change. Accessed from: <http://www.iom.int/migration-and-climate-change> and See “Managing water is key to adapting African agriculture to climate change”. The Conversation. Accessed from:

are eminent. The 2030 Water Resources Group predicts that the demand for water across South Africa will exceed supply by 17%. Gauteng, for example, is already experiencing acute water shortages.³¹

6.6 Human mobility in South Africa therefore, also needs to be contextualised further by taking into account the rural-urban connection that many have come to rely on as a survival strategy. Rural-urban connections sustained through remittances are under strain due to high levels of unemployment and poverty, and low levels of waged income. Research reveals that rural-urban migrants are often prone to hunger and malnutrition, and that their coping mechanisms include skipping meals, relying on debt and other households to meet basic needs. For those locked into surviving on credit, many risk losing access to assets such as their homes.³²

6.7 Advances in technology provide the platform to generate and maintain social networks and will therefore make it affordable to maintain communication across distances. However, concerns have been raised regarding the potential threat to sustainable social networks, mostly because of poverty and high levels of unemployment. Yet, there are a number of advantages linked to promoting digital access among communities. These include, gaining access to educational content, broadening job-seekers' search for jobs, maintaining communication with personal networks as well as gaining access to new markets.³³ More recently, the Western Cape embarked on a collaborative initiative with Neotel to create 'free' Wifi hotspots to promote digital access. Such initiatives are considered important because research conducted by The World Bank, suggests that with a 10% increase in broadband access in developing countries, GDP grew by 1.38%.³⁴ Considering that just under 50% of South Africans have internet access, promoting digital access is important as we look to the future of work in relation to the 4th industrial revolution.³⁵

6.8 The feminisation of labour is also linked to poverty and migration trends. Internal migration by women has increased. In particular, women are leaving behind their children to seek work opportunities as households become dependent on remittances to survive.³⁶

<http://mgafrica.com/article/2016-11-15-managing-water-is-key-to-adapting-african-agriculture-to-climate-change/>

³¹ See 2030 Water Resource Group, "Water Challenges". Accessed from: <https://www.2030wrg.org/south-africa-new/>

³² Teka Tsegay, Yared, Masiwa Rusare, and Rashmi Mistry (2014). "Hidden Hunger in South Africa: The faces of hunger and malnutrition in a food-secure nation." Accessed from: <http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/hidden-hunger-in-south-africa-the-faces-of-hunger-and-malnutrition-in-a-food-se-332126b>

³³ See "MEC Alan Winde opens new Western Cape Wi-Fi hotspots". Accessed from: <http://www.gov.za/zu/node/756297>

³⁴ See "MEC Alan Winde opens new Western Cape Wi-Fi hotspots". Accessed from: <http://www.gov.za/zu/node/756297>

³⁵ See "MEC Alan Winde opens new Western Cape Wi-Fi hotspots". Accessed from: <http://www.gov.za/zu/node/756297>

³⁶ Casale, D., & Posel, D. (2006). Migration and remittances in South Africa. Background document on migration and first set of draft questions for inclusion in the National Income Dynamics Study. *University of KwaZulu-Natal, Department of Economics*.

Although women's participation in the labour market is increasing, they tend to occupy vulnerable and precarious positions in society.³⁷ Many have no choice but to take up precarious forms of work and where possible consider multiple forms of livelihood activities. At a societal level the growing trend towards fragmenting families as migration becomes the norm reproduces further vulnerabilities in society.

6.9 In Southern Africa, a region considered the most urbanised in Africa, South Africa stands out as a centre of international migration growth, attracting migrants from the SADC region as well as China, India, Pakistan and Nigeria. While there is no consensus regarding the official number of foreign nationals in South Africa, projections from the 2011 census data suggest that it could be as high as 1.7 million. In terms of migration flows, the Movement Control System (MCS) reported that 15 million foreign nationals visited South Africa in 2014, with more than 90 percent of these visits involving nationals from the SADC region.³⁸ South Africa received the highest number of claims for asylum from 2007 to 2010, and by 2015 was ranked the 10th largest recipient of asylum seekers globally, with most claimants originating from sub-Saharan Africa.³⁹

6.10 More recently, the Trafficking in Persons Report (2016) identified South Africa as a “source, transit and destination country” for male and female victims of forced labour. A range of work activities associated with trafficking are cited in the report. For example, internal trafficking of children (from rural to urban areas) for sex work, street vending, criminal activities, food service and begging. In addition to this form of trafficking, mention is made of local criminal rings that expose girls to forced labour and sex slavery; Russian, Bulgarian and Nigerian syndicates operating in South Africa's sex trade; young men or boys from neighbouring countries in forced labour in fruit and vegetable farms; and, bonded labour practices that Pakistani and Bangladeshi business owners subject their co-nationals to.

6.11 According to the TIP (2016) report, South Africa is categorised as a tier 2 country. This means that while SA does not fully comply with the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (TVPA) minimum standards to eliminate trafficking, there is an awareness of the problem and initiatives in place to meet the minimum standards. Despite government's mandate to eradicate forced labour and end modern slavery, it has limited capacity and services to respond effectively to this problem.⁴⁰ This is a growing concern given that the “absolute number of victims of severe forms of trafficking is very significant or is significantly increasing”.⁴¹ Without concerted and sustained efforts that mobilise resources to

³⁷ Casale, D. & Posel, D. (2005). The Continued Feminisation of the Labour Force in South Africa: An Analysis of Recent Data and Trends. *South African Journal of Economics*. 70(1).

³⁸ South Africa: Launch of Green Paper on International Migration. (January 01, 2016). *Mena Report*. The Green Paper on International Migration advocates for systematic research and data collection on international migration and migration patterns in South Africa to inform policy design and institutionalise the management of migration flows.

³⁹ UNHCR (2015: 40)

⁴⁰ TIP (Trafficking in Persons Report) (2016). Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons. Accessed from: <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/258876.pdf>

⁴¹ TIP (2016:39)

monitor and investigate trafficking (especially in the agricultural, mining, construction and fishing sectors), and to train law enforcers, screen vulnerable groups, protect victims, prosecute and convict traffickers, these inhumane forms of labour abuses are bound to escalate. Since these forms of work represent the underbelly of society and undermine human rights, decent work and aspirations for social justice, they require serious attention among all stakeholders.

6.12 It is widely acknowledged that migration plays a fundamental role in transforming society and work. Migration is considered a “critical driver of development in Southern Africa”.⁴² Yet the transformative capacity of migration has been disrupted by the perception among citizens that it presents a threat rather than an opportunity to host countries. As a perceived threat, migration generates social distinctions that are typically reflected through notions of ‘insiders’ and ‘outsiders’.⁴³ These social distinctions highlight the tensions associated with citizenship rights and who can legitimately claim access to paid work, public services, and entrepreneurial activities. The tensions have serious consequences for social cohesion. For example, the Green Paper on International Migration asserts that “[o]nly refugees, and not asylum-seekers, will be allowed to integrate into communities”, and that asylum-seekers will no longer have the automatic right to work or study.⁴⁴ The aim of this strategy is to deter the abuse of the asylum-seeker system and thereby protect ‘genuine refugees’. However, such a policy has the potential to promote intolerances and undermine social cohesion in communities.

6.13 Promoting social cohesion is a national imperative. There have been ongoing incidents of discrimination and violence against foreign nationals living and working in South Africa after the 2008 xenophobic attacks. This presents a serious challenge at the community level but also at the international level. Government ministers and officials as well as civil society organisations have taken a public stand against xenophobia. Part of the strategy against xenophobia includes efforts to educate society about the benefits of migration and the need for tolerance; but these efforts have been undermined by ambiguous statements from other government ministers.

6.14 The unintentional impact of xenophobia is that South Africa is perceived as a ‘violent nation’, a label that is supported by high levels of crime, the violence that accompanies many strikes, and ongoing service delivery protests. This is damaging South Africa’s image, particularly among businesses considering or pursuing investments in Africa. Uncertainty, hostility and resentment towards the South African operations of foreign companies have been noted as a concern by business. Business representatives have also expressed apprehension regarding slow economic growth and the pressure to attract and retain capital.

⁴² South Africa: Launch of Green Paper on International Migration. (January 01, 2016). *Mena Report*.

⁴³ Nyamnjoh, F. B. (2006). *Insiders and Outsiders: Citizenship and Xenophobia in Contemporary Southern Africa*. Dakar: CODESRIA.

⁴⁴ South Africa: Launch of Green Paper on International Migration. (January 01, 2016). *Mena Report*. (pp 81-82)

Despite these perceptions, there is potential to attract foreign direct investment because there is widespread interest in Africa as an emerging regional economy, with South Africa perceived by some as the gateway to the continent.

6.15 Walmart's takeover of Massmart is one such example, which immediately gave Walmart a presence in 13 African countries besides South Africa. This highly publicised development focussed attention of various actors on the impact on employment and work of MNCs entering a developing economy. Contentious issues such as the recognition of trade unions and initiatives to promote local suppliers were raised. These debates have shaped business practices and underpin the broad goal of promoting corporate social responsibility (CSR). Similarly, South African-based companies are also investing in Africa. The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) has developed a 12point guideline to ensure that South African-based companies conduct their business in Africa responsibly. Here, the goal is to promote sustainable development that boosts intra-Africa trade with the long-term goal of “cultivating and upholding positive and mutually beneficial relationships between companies and the societies in which they operate” (DTI, 2016).⁴⁵

6.16 According to the managing director of Global Migration South Africa, the issuing of work visas has not matched demand.⁴⁶ Such backlogs are considered unfavourable for business and development, especially where critical skills are concerned and technology and skills transfers are affected. In the absence of the capacity to manage migration in line with the aims of the Critical Skills Work Visa, the objectives set out to promote economic growth in the National Development Plan (NDP), Industrial Policy Action Plan (IPAP) and New Growth Plan (NGP) are undermined.

6.17 In relation to the above, concerns have been raised regarding the Department of Home Affairs' Critical Skills list and its mismatch with research on the skills shortage.⁴⁷ The call for a comprehensive framework that aggressively targets “science and mathematics teachers, technicians and researchers” forms an essential part of developing a skills foundation. This relates in part to the challenge of recognising the skills that migrants have so that they can be integrated into the labour market. The process of promoting ‘occupational licensing’ can move migrants with relevant qualifications into the necessary sector. It is not uncommon to learn that qualified teachers are taxi-drivers or domestic workers, even though they possess skills that are needed in the country. Creative measures to address this issue are required and should form part of the long-term vision to generate research and innovation to meet the requirements of South Africa’s participation in the global informational economy.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ DTI (2016). Guidelines for Good Business Practice by South African Companies Operating in the Rest of Africa. Accessed from: http://www.southafrica.info/download_files/africa/NEPAD_Guidelines.pdf

⁴⁶ See 'Stop block on foreigners' Accessed from: <http://www.timeslive.co.za/thetimes/2016/01/25/Stop-block-on-foreigners> Graeme Hosken, 25 January, 2016

⁴⁷ Segatti & Landau (2011); Khan (2015); Kahn, M. (2015). Mobility of the Highly Skilled—Towards a Non-racial South Africa. *Science Technology & Society*, 20(3), 369-388.

⁴⁸ Khan (2015: 370)

6.18 Overall the immigration regime is perceived as unpredictable, unreliable and detrimental to investor confidence. Greater efforts to align business needs with the immigration regime, in an effort to promote a stable environment that enables job creation, are important for the future of work. Strategies that attract skilled migrants to start up SMMEs, for example, can have an enabling effect on society because of the potential to create jobs and build the economy.⁴⁹ If such benefits can be observed and directly experienced by community members who are struggling for employment opportunities, the perception that migration is a threat could be reversed.

7. Diversity in the workplace: Multiple generations, new skills and changing cultures of work

7.1 The world of work has always encompassed different generations and the differences between the generations are often compounded by the variations in working experience, life stage and chronological age⁵⁰. Life expectancy in South Africa dropped sharply because of the exponential rise in the incidence of HIV/AIDS: at the peak of the epidemic in 2005 it reached a low point of 53 years. The trend, however, has reversed following the increase in the uptake of antiretroviral drugs: life expectancy was about 62 years in 2015. Without the HIV/AIDS factor, life expectancy would be 70 years, and even higher for females and high income earners, which gives an indication of what it could rise to if HIV/AIDS was defeated.⁵¹ This means that most workers will be living longer than in the past and will be active as workers for a longer period. Given that many workers will receive inadequate retirement funds it is also likely that a large number of workers will seek jobs beyond retirement. The future South African workplace will therefore reflect an increase in the diversity of generations working side by side: in some cases may mean as many as four generations in a workplace. This comes with benefits and challenges. Differences between generations impacts on organizational success, staff performance, job satisfaction, creativity, group cohesion and the reputation of the established relationship.⁵²

7.2 There are contradictory trends and it is impossible to say which will predominate. For example, if the older generation, which is usually more experienced, stays longer in the workplace, younger workers, who have less experience and limited networks, may be trapped at the low levels of the hierarchy where the work is more precarious. But rapid changes in technology also put younger workers at an advantage compared to the older generations. They have been born in and socialised into the digital age, so they tend to adjust quickly to

⁴⁹ South Africa: Launch of Green Paper on International Migration. (January 01, 2016). *Mena Report*. See comments from (CDE) Centre for Development and Enterprise (2016). Response to the Green Paper on International Migration of June 2016. Accessed from: <http://www.cde.org.za/unemployment/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/CDE-Green-paper-submission-full-document.pdf>

⁵⁰ Cennamo and Gardner (2008), Generational differences in work values, outcomes and person organization value fit. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 28(8), 891-906

⁵¹ <http://www.health24.com/News/Public-Health/SAs-life-expectancy-Why-new-report-is-misleading-20150107>

⁵² Baptiste N.R , (2009) ,Fun and well-being: insights from senior managers in local authority, *Employee Relations*, 31(6), 600-612

technological innovations, which is generally not the case for older generations. While the workplace of the future will require investment in continual learning, this will be especially necessary for the older generation of workers, who will usually need more training to keep up with technological changes in order to remain productive. At the same time, lifetime jobs are now the exception, so young workers will face a more rapid turnover of jobs, and possibly will have to take up more than one job concurrently. However, different generations of workers have different values and attitudes in respect of work. Workers in the younger generation are often risk takers and will more readily change jobs to get more experience and advance themselves.

7.3 A further challenging aspect of the younger generation of workers is their attitude to trade unions. Many older workers closely associate trade unions with the struggle against apartheid and for democratic transformation. The new generation, however, is much more individualistic and tends to focus more on direct material gain. Younger workers are also less inclined to work in primary sectors or in manufacturing, which have been the traditional bastions of trade unions. Fewer young workers are therefore joining unions. This is just one of the number of challenges facing trade unions, which is discussed further below.

7.4 Another aspect of the younger generation is unique to South Africa. The new generation of workers comprises the so-called 'born frees', who have no direct experience of apartheid. This new generation of workers has different values, attitudes and behaviour compared to older generations, which has a direct effect on social integration and interaction as well as learning, productivity levels, and performance. This is the result of the historical and social context which has shaped them. The co-existence of a diverse and multiple generations at the same workplace will demand careful management as they have different aspirations and life experiences.

7.5 Besides a number of generations, the future South African workplace will be characterized by growing diversity, with increased representation of both genders, as well as a variety of races and ethnic groups in the labour force. We have noted that the market-oriented system of production at its onset trapped women in the space of reproduction where their work, although critical to the economic system, was undervalued or not valued at all. This, however, has been changing and the labour market participation rate of women has increased significantly.⁵³

7.6 Technological advances are changing the working time and the space of work. Work is no longer limited to a given time and place. The future work will be characterized by an increase in the demand for a balance of work with other roles. The increase of women in the labour force is leading to a growing demand for a better work-life balance. Women and men will seek to be workers and fathers and mothers at the same time without biasing the burden to either of the genders. The future work in South Africa will demand an environment that

⁵³ Women are now part of the underground workers in the mining industry. See Benya, A. (2015). The invisible hands: women in Marikana. *Review of African Political Economy*, 42(146), 545-560.

allows the balancing of work and other roles. For example, demands in respect of maternity and paternity leave is bound to increase as work becomes more flexible and less space and time bound.

7.7 Technological innovation and the desire for a better work-life balance will increase the demand of some workers for more flexible work arrangements. For example, workers will demand more autonomy and flexibility to choose when, where and how to do work. This will accord with the drive by many employers for new work practices and fragmented workplaces. This new way of doing work, however, could face resistance from entrenched cultures and attitudes to how and where work should be performed. It is also more likely that most low-skilled and semi-skilled workers will not see this trend in as positive light as skilled workers.

7.8 Our education and training system will have to be more focused and responsive to employer and employee needs, which does not appear to be the case at present. Technological advances will make on-going skills development critical. Government policies, including an increase in the education and skills development budget to support a re-skilling drive, will be critical in closing the gap between the shifting demand and supply. However, delivery with regard to learning and education in South Africa is currently constrained by inadequate funding or misuse of funds. But greater orientation to on-line learning platforms and work-based skills upgrading could have a major impact. The crisis in education is highlighted by the challenge regarding fees in South African universities. The country spends less than 1% of its GDP (as of 2016) on education, which is amongst the lowest of the BRICS nations. This means the shortage of skilled workers will continue in the future, which in turn will increase the cost of such workers. At the same time the primary and secondary schools systems are not delivering anywhere near the sorts of learning that they should be doing. The education does not appear to have the capacity to keep pace with the technological shifts taking place in work and society.

7.9 The shift in technology will continue to push employers to pay a premium for the highly skilled talent as there will continue to be a severe skills mismatch in the medium-term, i.e. employers will continue to face a shortage of highly skilled workers. Future human resources management will thus be characterized by efficient in-house monitoring systems designed to collect data that ensures that the available skills are linked to tasks. The continuous shift in the technology and mode of production demands a continuous adaptation of skills for the workers and management. This will be critical for the future workplace. Those who fail to adapt will become redundant.

7.10 The skills challenge, however, is not only at the high skills end of the labour market. Arguably, a factor in the high level of unemployment, particularly the level of black and youth unemployment, is accounted for by a mismatch between the skills levels and the jobs available on the labour market. The legacies of the apartheid education system and the apartheid workplace are still present in the labour market and there are many black people

who, because of poor schooling and low skills, cannot find jobs. Government policies are needed to address the plight of these people.

8. Representation in the labour market: Labour and social movements

8.1 Trade unions are facing what has been termed a ‘crisis of representation’ but continue to play a critical role in the transformation of workplaces and society at large. It is therefore important to examine trade unions as well as some of the other movements that have emerged in recent years, partly in competition with trade unions as forms of representation for workers. To this end we reflect on recent developments that point to political tensions within and between trade unions and social movements. The contestation within the labour movement, and between organised labour and other formations of civil society, is challenging the traditional assumption that trade unions necessarily represent the ‘collective’ voice of all workers and the working class at large. Furthermore, the tensions and fragmentation within the labour movement have serious implications for work and society going forward.

8.2 The trade union movement played a significant part in bringing an end to apartheid and shaping post-apartheid South Africa. The extent to which the trade union movement can continue to contest the nature of work and the conditions under which it is performed as well as shape society in future is however questionable.⁵⁴ Answering this question requires an analysis of the labour movement and broader civil society organisations and that contested landscape both forms of organisations operate within. As the late Sir Bob Hepple pointed out in 1990:

Trade unions in a democracy can define their role as protectors of the privileges of the few, or they can themselves be democratic, breaking down the barriers of gender, race and tribe, and be the natural basis for direct participation by ordinary working people in both social and political spheres⁵⁵

8.3 The political influence of trade unions, however, can only be maintained if the trade union movement continues to fulfil its shop floor mandate, i.e. ensuring that their membership base continues to benefit from improved wages and conditions of employment.⁵⁶ With the likelihood that more unions will leave COSATU, in part because of way in which political influence has played out, COSATU will soon face unprecedented challenges in

⁵⁴ Unfortunately, literature on the South African trade union movement tends to focus almost exclusively on the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). There are various reasons for this, in particular its prominent role in the struggle against apartheid, its size, and its involvement in the Tripartite Alliance.

However, this focus means that developments in the rest of the labour movement are very poorly documented.

⁵⁵ Hepple, B. *The Role of Trade Unions in a Democratic Society* (1990) 11 ILJ 645.

⁵⁶ Buhlungu, S. and M. Tshoedi (2013). *COSATU's contested legacy: South African trade unions in the second decade of democracy*. In his foreword to *Cosatu in crisis* (Satgar et al. 2015), the then COSATU general secretary, Zwelenzima Vavi, sketches a very bleak picture of the state of some COSATU affiliates.

respect of its size and importance.⁵⁷ At the same time, the leadership of COSATU is questioning the continuation of its alliance with the ANC, a view which is shared by the leadership of the SACP.⁵⁸

8.4 This short overview is not intended as a criticism of COSATU (or the trade union movement more broadly). The intention is to highlight the challenges the labour movement is facing in the current period. The key challenge for trade unions is to maintain their organisational strength by continuing to secure improved wages and conditions of service for their members while adapting organisation to incorporate the many new categories of work being created by the changes in the organisation of work. An additional challenge, facing COSATU in particular, is to decide on the way in which trade unions address a wider range of issues facing their members and society more generally. Given questions about the efficacy of the Tripartite Alliance it is possible that an alternative for COSATU and the other major union federations could be to investment much more time and energy in a tripartite institution such as NEDLAC.

8.5 However, the size of the informal economy and number of unorganised workers (see further below) requires a re-think with regard to representation in tripartite institutions to better reflect structural and experiential shifts in the world of work and society. This should not be seen as a ‘threat to tripartism’, as suggested in an ILO (2015:2) report, but might actually present possibilities for rejuvenating NEDLAC and gearing it for the future world of work.

8.6 Trade unions and labour regulation have been slow to respond to new employment practices and categories of worker.⁵⁹ The South African labour relations and labour market regulatory framework, like many in the rest of the world, is still premised on standard employment in the traditional Fordist factory. Organisation and collective bargaining by trade unions are largely aligned with the regulatory model. Workers in the new categories of work have therefore been poorly organised, if at all, and their status in terms of labour legislation is often ambiguous. The Uber driver is a useful example of new forms of work not previously envisaged by the scope of labour law.⁶⁰

8.7 The above scenario has given rise to alternative forms of representation to that offered by trade unions. One such example is the Casual Workers Advice office (CWAO), an NGO that

⁵⁷ The National Union of Metal Workers of South Africa (NUMSA), COSATU’s largest affiliate, was expelled about a year ago and the Food and Allied Workers Union (FAWU), recently resolved to leave the federation. Amongst the reasons cited is the growing discontent with COSATU’s alliance partners.

⁵⁸ See <http://www.citizen.co.za/1267830/we-dont-know-which-anc-we-are-allied-to-cosatu/> (accessed on 30 August 2016) and <http://mg.co.za/article/2016-06-02-angry-sacp-goes-for-the-jugular> (accessed on 30 August 2016).

⁵⁹ See Benjamin P, ‘Restructuring triangular employment: The interpretation of section 198A of the Labour Relations Act’ (2016) 37 *ILJ* 28-44.

⁶⁰ Under the common law control test the employer has the right to tell the employee what to do, and how, when, and where to do their job. See Du Toit D, The right to equality versus employer ‘control’ and employee ‘subordination’: Are some more equal than others? (2016) 37 *ILJ* 1. It should be noted that in this article ‘work’ and ‘control’ is used in the context of an employment relationship.

provides support to mainly casual and contract workers as well as employees of labour brokers.⁶¹ Its website reads that it was “... *formed out of the recognition that the traditional labour movement appears incapable or unwilling to organize the new kinds of workers created by neo-liberalism*”. It, with similar organisations, recently successfully challenged the legislative prohibition against them representing workers in disputes at the CCMA and accredited bargaining councils. Unfortunately, the emergence of NGOs like CWAO is creating a perception that they are in ‘competition’ with traditional trade unions, which is an obstacle to potential cooperation. Much could be gained from trade unions working together with organisations like the CWAO but it will require a shift in thinking for that potential to be explored.

8.8 With a shrinking membership base⁶², private sector trade unions are increasingly poaching from other unions in the same sector or are organising beyond their traditional sectors. In the case of NUMSA, this advance into other sectors has a strategic underpinning, namely to move from a sectoral focus for collective bargaining to a greater value chain orientation. Its resolve to pursue collective bargaining along value chains has the real potential to alter the current structure of collective bargaining.⁶³ But this also means there is a real potential of increased inter-union conflict, particularly if other unions follow NUMSA’s lead. At the same time, with rising disaffection with the existing trade unions, many smaller unions are beginning to emerge, some of which are formed by workers breaking away from established unions.

8.9 A large proportion of the South African workforce is employed informally. Labour law applies to all workers in an employment relationship but the reality is that those in the informal economy cannot enforce their rights and have no collective voice. They are therefore extremely vulnerable. Trade unions are generally geared to organise workers in standard forms of employment in the formal economy and therefore face challenges organising workers in informal employment. In many of the cases trade unions acknowledge the significance of workers in the informal economy but nevertheless have failed to develop effective strategies to organise these workers.

8.10 Regulating and organising informal workers arguably needs a much more decentralised approach. Attention should be given to the role that local government can play as it interacts with informal employers and firms in a variety of ways, in particular informal traders that often utilise public spaces. A critical question is what form of organisation is best for bringing informal workers together; traditional trade unions are not structured in a way that suits the organisation of informal workers and alternative forms need to be explored. Co-operatives could be an avenue to pursue as could locally-based general unions, or partnerships between unions and advice offices or other types of NGO.

⁶¹ <http://www.cwao.org.za/about.asp> (accessed on 30 August 2016).

⁶² Private sector unionisation rate dropped from 36% in 1997 to 24% in 2013 (DPRU, 2014).

⁶³ See Fergus E and Godfrey S, Organising and bargaining across sectors in South Africa: recent developments and potential problems (forthcoming in *ILJ*).

8.11 As noted above, trade unions in South Africa have been significant players in the broader national politics. However, they are facing greater competition in this space from other activists, organisations and movements. Under apartheid there were always tensions between these different types of organisations but they could forge unity against a common enemy. This is no longer the case and trade unions will have to redefine their attitudes towards other organisations and movements if they are to remain relevant. This could mean adopting broader social agenda on the ground rather than at the peak level or possibly reframing labour rights as human rights.

8.12 If the trade unions fail to adapt to the changing context, the future may be characterised by their continued decline organisationally and politically.⁶⁴ This is the worst-case scenario and will have a negative impact on social dialogue and labour relations as well as the politics more broadly. The result will be that the collective voice of workers will be muted and weakened. This will give strength to those who are pushing for greater flexibility in the legislative framework for regulating the labour market (discussed further in Paper 2).⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Buhlungu, S. (2001, June). The paradox of victory: South Africa's union movement in crisis. Sage Publications Ltd

⁶⁵ Borat and Cheadle 2007, Labour Reform in South Africa: Measuring Regulation and a Synthesis of Policy Suggestions: <http://www.labour.gov.za/DOL/downloads/documents/research-documents/Labour%20Reform%20in%20South%20Africa-%20borat%20-%20cheadle%202.pdf>

Formal Work Space

- New work practices and management practices to emerge.
- More outsourcing and externalization of both core and non-core activities.
- Rise in part-time work in all skills levels and professions. Will largely affect women, migrants, young people and new entrants in the professional and highly skilled category. Following the global North trend, some women (in 2 income households) in professional and skilled category will increasingly choose part-time work in order to spend more time with families.
- Semi-skilled and "unskilled" will increasingly be part of the part-time work-force NOT out of choice and not as a temporary measure but a permanent trend, especially for women, young, migrants and blacks.
- Contrary to general employment trends, those with scarce skills and who are techno-savvy will likely experience occupational upgrading.
- Rise in new forms of organising and other civic organisations to represent and assist those in part-time work.
- Crisis in Trade unions and the rise of other alternative forms of organising.
- Rising demands for decent work; less hours, more wages, less insecurity and more contributory social schemes.

Informal Work Space

- New forms of work to increasingly become informalised.
- Pressures on the formal work space to be pushed to the informal space. This space will be the shock absorber for many industries.
- Will absorb, increasingly the retrenched workers.
- Part-time and informal work no longer be a temporary episode, rather a long-term survival strategy. More people will spend more hours on precarious work earning precarious income.
- More demands for work/employment (whether decent or not) will come from some within this group. Majority will want to be included in work that happens in formal enterprises.
- Distinction between work (public) and home (private) becomes blurry (activities and spaces).
- This will be a space where worker creativity is nurtured.
- Technological developments will increasingly be coming from this space. It will have an important, though marginalised, role to play in shaping the future of technology.
- There will also be experiences of job downgrading for those doing formal work within the informal work spaces- if they are not up to date with the rapid tech changes.
- Will continue to be characterised by less security and sometime underutilisation of people's skills.
- Alternative organisations supporting workers to emerge. No longer organising around employment but around different forms of "vulnerabilities" (eg street trade, WIEGO)
- There'll be an increasing need to start a process of formalisation and respond to the challenge of how to extend decent work to those excluded and (ILO Recommendation 204)

Society/ Home Space

- Increasingly, disguised labour will intrude on the private home space. It will not only be done by women but all those involved in labour activities.
- There will be a rise in other forms of intrusion into the private sphere by private capital eg medical aids encouraging their clients to use devices such as pedometers to track all their movements and consumption trends.
- Close monitoring of consumption (broadly; tangible and intangible) patterns and producers will remotely influence them. Eg internet searches closely monitored in order to tailor adverts to consumer patterns.
- Boundaries between work and personal life will slowly disappear.
- Downward push on households resulting in less and less people (especially women and young people) available to join the labour market. Consequently, more people falling into the category of discouraged job seekers.
- Demands for state intervention in social provisions so that people's labour power can be freed and redirected elsewhere where there is remuneration.
- Stimulate productivity that will produce surplus value.
- Accelerated commodification could be coupled by increased government intervention in provision of some services such as health care (NHI) housing.
- Urbanisation of the rural population; housing deficit in cities.
- Migrants moving into informal and overcrowded settlements.
- Working class families who are living in formal settlements will face more threats of gentrification.
- Rising transport costs for those who are moved to the peripheries of the city and are in informal work.
- Spatial and temporal pressures on the rise. Location of amenities far, travelling hours to places where services are located longer.
- Rise in cooperative housing for middle classes who no longer have full-time jobs. Informal housing for the "poors".
- Current trends suggest that big retailers will move to mass housing development communities and withdraw slowly from servicing the "poors" on the peripheries of the city. Instead more co-operative foreign-owned shops will move into these gaps.
- Threat to people's livelihoods will rise and counter responses will emerge. Emergence of "Urban Commons" initiatives such as city food gardens, shared housing.
- New forms of communities emerging and forms of organisations that are going to be community-based.
- Rise in (*radical*) urban movements and solidarity economy
- Increase in community or service delivery protests if no adequate response from capital and government.
- Increasingly this space will have to absorb those who fall outside both the formal and informal work spaces.

9. Conclusion

9.1 In the sections above we have outlined the shifts that are happening in the realms of work and society. We have argued that for many the world of work is no longer what it used to be and is likely to change further. It is evident that the scope of what constitutes employment is changing and the traditional workplace is transforming.

9.2 We have noted that technological innovation generates a process of creative destruction; this will be the case in South African where some sectors will continue to decline while others will experience a boom. Similarly, many jobs will disappear whilst new ones emerge as a result of technological change and innovation. This process will be central to driving economic growth as well as rising productivity and living standards in general. However, this may not on its own resolve the three major problems of unemployment, inequality and poverty that characterise our society. It is therefore critically important that technological advances are not resisted because they pose a threat to jobs; rather we need effective policy mechanisms to manage this change and the disruptions it causes. Measures must be in place in the labour market and society at large to enhance the mobility and employability of those whose jobs will be destroyed by technological innovation.

9.3 If the challenges of growing inequality, rising unemployment and poverty are not met, at the same time that the impact of new technologies is managed, there are turbulent times ahead. We see already resistance growing in society, on-going governance challenges, a rise in protests at universities, service delivery protests in communities, unprecedented levels of unprotected strike action by workers in different industries, and xenophobic attacks on foreign nationals in different parts of the country.⁶⁶

⁶⁶Duncan, J., 2016. *Protest Nation: The Right to Protest in South Africa*, University of KwaZulu Natal Press.
Runciman, C., Alexander, P., Rampedi, M., Moloto, B., Maruping, B., Khumalo, E., and Sibanda, S. 2016, *Counting Police-recorded Protests: Based on South African Police Service Data*. Johannesburg: Social Change Research Unit, University of Johannesburg. DOI: 10.13140/RG.2.1.1191.8962.
Von Holdt, k. and Peter Alexander, 2012, 'Collective Violence, Community Protest and Xenophobia'. *South African Review of Sociology* 43(1). Pages 104-11.
Lehohla, P. and Shabalala, N., 2014. *Inequality in South Africa*. Development, pp.497-511.
Branson, N., Ardington, C., Lam, D.
Leibbrandt, M., 2013. *Changes in education, employment and earnings in South Africa: A cohort analysis*.
Von Holdt, K. and Alexander, P., 2012. *Collective violence, community protest and xenophobia*. *South African Review of Sociology*, 43(2), pp.104-111.
Von Holdt, K., Langa, M., Molapo, S., Mogapi, N., Ngubeni, K., Dlamini, J., Kirsten, A., 2011, *The Smoke that Calls: Insurgent citizenship, Collective Violence and the struggle for a place in the new South Africa*, CSVR, SWOP
Dawson, H.J., 2014. *Patronage from below: political unrest in an informal settlement in South Africa*. *African Affairs*, 113(453), pp.518-539.
Runciman, C., 2016. *Citizenship and Inequality in Post-Apartheid South Africa: Contours and Collective Responses*. In *Understanding Inequality: Social Costs and Benefits* (pp. 383-402). Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden.
Von Holdt, K., 2013. *South Africa: the transition to violent democracy*. *Review of African Political Economy*, 40(138), pp.589-604.

9.4 As one imagines the future it is important to bear in mind that workers, households (in particular women), and communities will not be able to be social shock absorbers indefinitely. As Polanyi argues, workers and communities will seek to “re-embed” markets in society, thereby swinging the pendulum back in their favour, i.e. the so-called ‘double movement’. The protests and strikes that we have witnessed in different sectors and areas attest to the pushback, which will only intensify if the challenges remain unaddressed. These protests will likely take many and varied forms, tapping into what Scott (1985) calls “weapons of the weak” and everyday forms of resistance.

9.5 Managing migration requires sound political leadership. Consensus building among all government departments is important to ensure that there is a shift from policy commitment to the actual delivery of policy initiatives.⁶⁷ As pointed out by the CDE, a holistic approach to managing migration as well as the economy and politics of the country is necessary for realising the goals of policy initiatives. But measures that target consensus building among all stakeholders must be inclusive of citizens and voters rather than merely representing those with a public voice.⁶⁸ This approach is important for fostering social cohesion in the ‘age of migration’.

9.6 Although the current Green Paper on International Migration has shifted its policy stance towards skilled immigration, the CDE encourages further thinking and strategising around future policy initiatives, by for example: challenging the notion that South Africa is well-endowed with skills; broadening the skills profile required by not limiting it to quotas and critical skills models (i.e. recruiting rather than admitting skilled immigrants into the country); developing proposals that demonstrate sufficiently how officials will take forward their change in attitude towards recruiting skilled immigrants; and to strategise around the skills deficit in the public sector as well as the shortage of entrepreneurs in the economy.⁶⁹

9.7 In light of the AU’s proposals to create a comprehensive migration policy for Africa, South Africa’s immigration policy needs to take into account the following: measures to promote regional cooperation and integration, relaxed visa regulations (there are already steps in place to do so), align employment policies that allow for the free movement of Africa’s citizens, focus on recruiting rather than controlling access (especially in relation to skills and the brain drain encountered in Africa).⁷⁰ How borderless should Africa be? This question relates not only to the movement of people in Africa but also to how integrated the African economy should be. Here, further dialogue on the notion of a ‘common market’ is needed.

Alexander, P., 2010, ‘Rebellion of the poor: South Africa’s service delivery protests – a preliminary analysis.’ Review of African Political Economy 37(123). Pages 25-40. Also available at <http://www.amandlapublishers.co.za> and <http://www.abahlali.org>.

⁶⁷ (CDE) Centre for Development and Enterprise (2016). Response to the Green Paper on International Migration of June 2016. Accessed from: <http://www.cde.org.za/unemployment/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/CDE-Green-paper-submission-full-document.pdf>

⁶⁸ CDE (2016)

⁶⁹ CDE (2016)

⁷⁰ “Deeper Regional Integration: An Opportunity for Job Creation in Africa” Accessed from:

<https://intpolicydigest.org/2015/11/04/deeper-regional-integration-an-opportunity-for-job-creation-in-africa/>

There are already discussions underway to negotiate the terms of conditions for allowing the free movement of goods and services proposed in the Tripartite Free Trade Area.⁷¹

9.8 The transition in the world of work is challenging existing forms of organisation and representation. New forms must be found to ensure that we make visible workers who have not previously been recognised or ‘seen’. Regulation needs to develop concepts that embrace these changes in order to effectively address vulnerabilities.

9.9 Trade unions are important role players in South Africa’s post-apartheid society. However, they are at risk of losing both organisational and political power, giving way to new forms of organisations that may not be rooted in the world of work. This decline in the power of trade unions is bound to have negative impact on social dialogue and labour relations as well as politics more broadly. This is likely to strengthen the hand of those pushing for a lowering of labour standards and protections as a way to create jobs.

⁷¹ “Africa: Deal for Free Movement of Goods and People in Africa Stalls for One More Year” Accessed from: <http://allafrica.com/stories/201611160749.html>