



# RIGHT TO THE CITY IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE NEW URBAN AGENDA

Nomkita Fani  
Department of Cooperative Governance  
South Africa

# Right to the city defined

- The right to the city is thus defined as the right of all inhabitants present and future, to occupy, use and produce just, inclusive and sustainable cities, defined as a common good essential to the quality of life.
- The right to the city further implies responsibilities on governments and people to claim, defend, and promote this right.

# Components of the city as a common good

- **A city free of discrimination** based on gender, age, health status, income, nationality, ethnicity, migratory condition, or political, religious or sexual orientation;
- **A city of inclusive citizenship** in which all inhabitants, whether permanent or transitional, are considered as citizens and granted equal rights;
- **A city with enhanced political participation** in the definition, implementation, monitoring, and budgeting of urban policies and spatial planning in order to strengthen the transparency, effectiveness and inclusion of the diversity of inhabitants and their organizations;
- **A city fulfilling its social functions**, that is, ensuring **equitable access** for all to shelter, goods, services and urban opportunities, particularly for women and other marginalized groups;
- **A city that prioritizes the collectively defined public interest**, ensuring a socially just and environmentally balanced use of urban and rural spaces;
- **A city with quality public spaces** that enhances social interactions and political participation, promotes socio-cultural expressions, embraces diversity, and fosters social cohesion;
- **a city where public spaces contribute to building safer cities** and to meeting the needs of inhabitants;
- **A city of gender equality** which adopts all necessary measures to combat discrimination in all its forms against women, men, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in political, social, economic and cultural terms; a city which takes all appropriate measures to ensure the full development of women

# Pillars of right to the city

## Pillar 1: Spatially just resource distribution

- The right to the city envisions a socially and spatially just distribution and planning of material resources, ensuring good living conditions across the human settlement continuum.
- These resources, accessible in both formal and informal sectors and areas, are defined by acceptable quality standards, and include: public space and the urban commons; investments in basic infrastructures and services (e.g. water, electricity, waste, and sanitation)

## Pillar 2: Political agency

- The right to the city is realized only when structures, processes, and policies enable all inhabitants as social and political actors to exercise the full content and meaning of citizenship.
- In this regard, specific policies are required to ensure that women, as well as marginalized groups, have effective access to political agency. Together with all levels of government, the inhabitants of all settlements — including temporary and transitional dwellers — are protagonists in (re)making and shaping their living environment

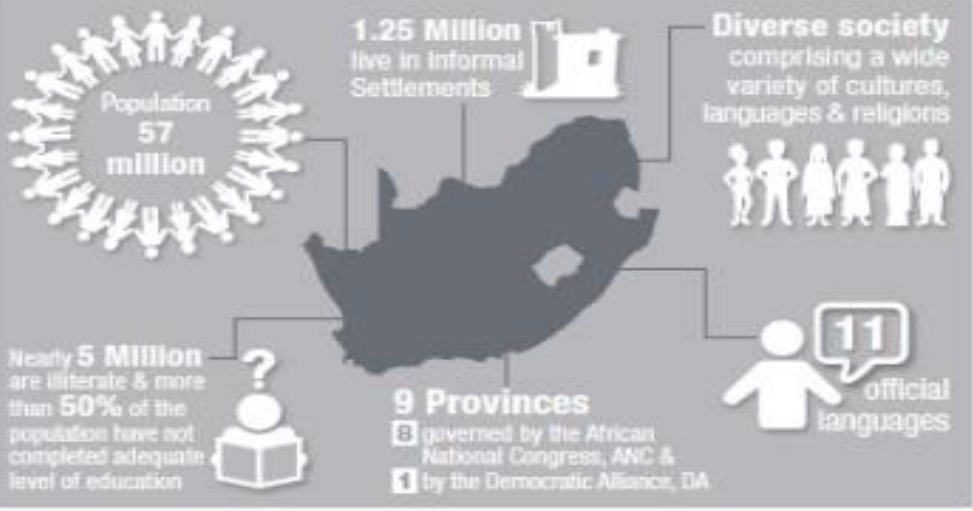
## Pillar 3: Social, economic and cultural diversity

- The right to the city fully embraces diversity and difference in gender, identity, ethnicity, religion, heritage, collective memory, cultural and economic practice, and sociocultural expression.
- This pillar calls for the recognition of culture, neighbouring, and stakeholding as a lever for social cohesion, social capital, innovation, safer cities, self-expression, and identity.
- It requires that the city create possibilities of encounter, interactions, and active connections, in which reciprocal relations and mutual understanding advances a renewed form of urban life.

# The New Urban Agenda

- The New Urban Agenda represents a shared vision for a better and more sustainable future – one in which all people have equal rights and access to the benefits and opportunities that cities can offer, and in which the international community reconsiders the urban systems and physical form of our urban spaces to achieve this.
- The world is faced with increasing urbanisation, we have come to a critical point in understanding that cities can be the source of solutions to, rather than the cause of, the challenges that our world is facing today.
- If well-planned and well-managed, urbanization can be a powerful tool for sustainable development for both developing and developed countries.
- The New Urban Agenda incorporates a new recognition of the correlation between good urbanization and development. It underlines the linkages between good urbanization and job creation, livelihood opportunities, and improved quality of life,



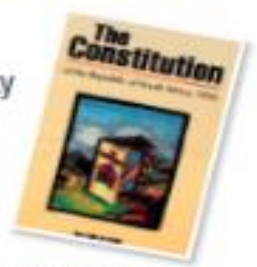


- Consolidation of democracy since 1994
- Transparent and free electoral process and pluralism
- Internationally recognised progressive constitution and policies
- High degree of democratic decentralisation
- Independent and diverse media sector
- Independent judiciary
- Large and active civil society
- Significant investments in basic and social infrastructure and services



**Struggle to fully realize socio-economic rights, which can lead to undermining democratic rights and participation**

- Millions of people remain excluded
- Extreme inequality, high unemployment and poverty
- Poor standards of healthcare and education
- The land question is not resolved
- Breakdown of local government service delivery
- Corruption
- Social norms and attitudes that legitimize/normalize violence

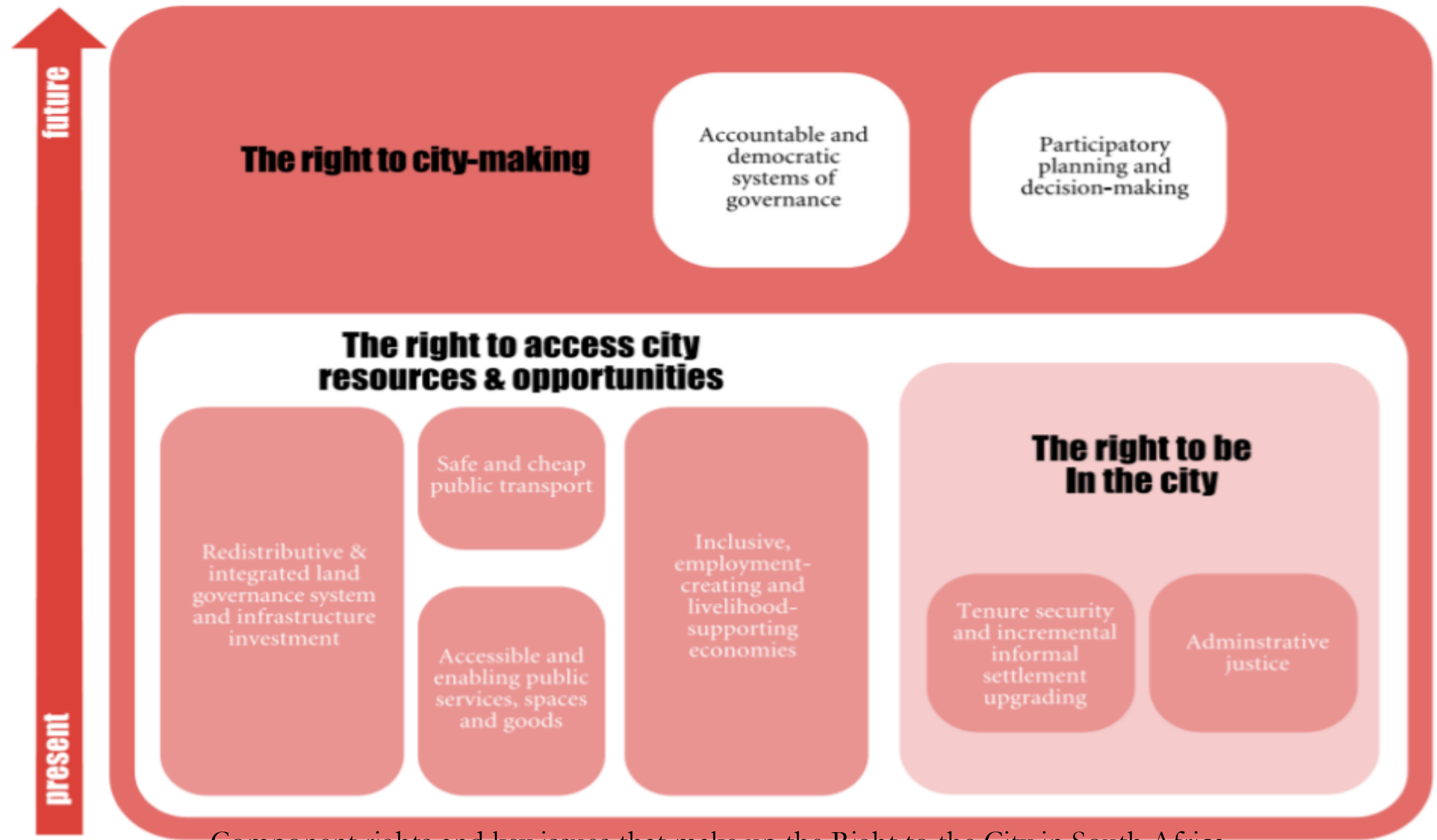




An aerial photograph of a city skyline at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright glow and long shadows. The city is densely packed with buildings of various heights and colors. The sky is a mix of blue and orange.

# CONTEXT

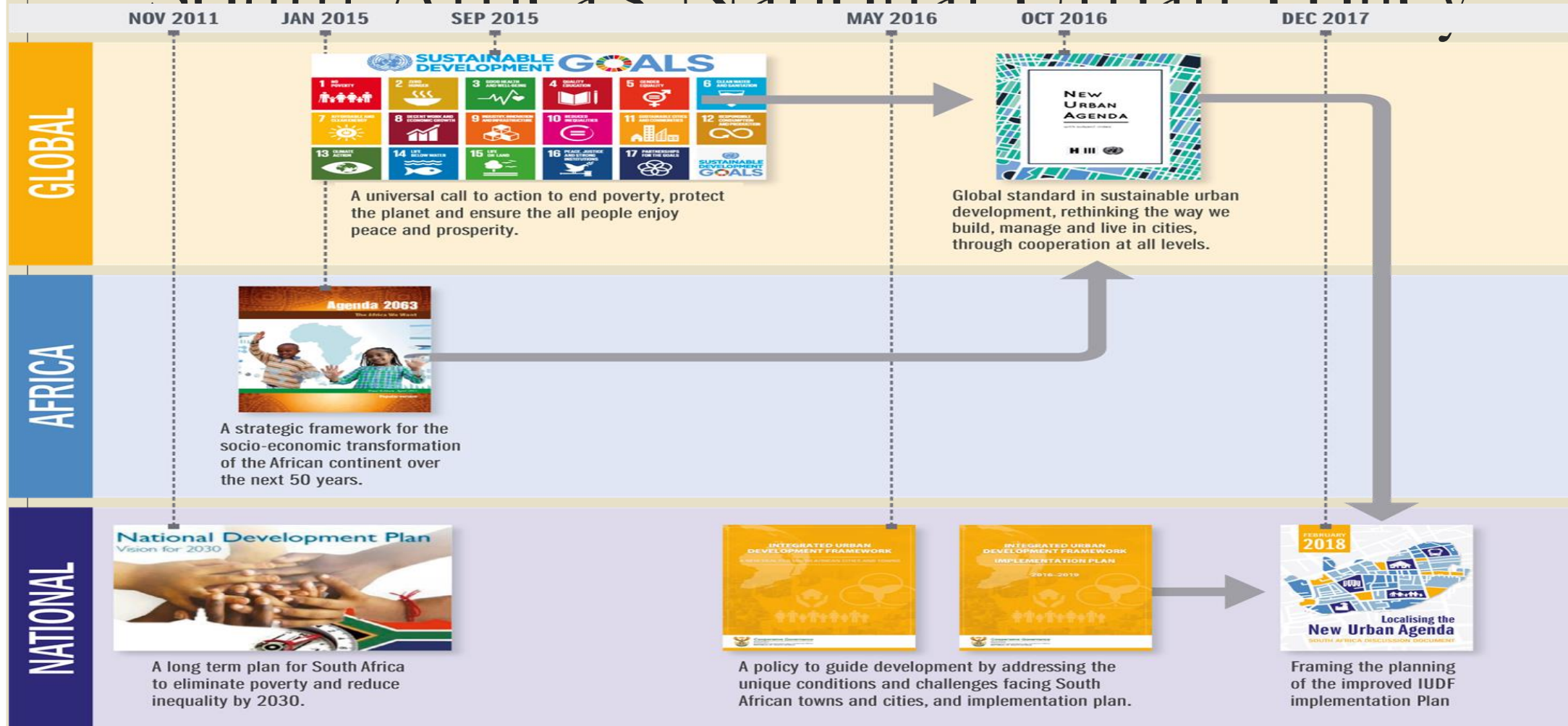
- 67% of South Africans live in urban areas and cities and will grow to 80% in 2050
- Urban dwellers initiated this trend mainly from 1987
- 15 large cities over 300,000, only Johannesburg more than 5 Mio - 3 capitals with administrative (Tshwane); legislative (Cape Town) and judicial (Bloemfontein)
- 23% of Urban dwellers are estimated to live in informal settlements
- 2/3 of SA youth live in urban areas



Component rights and key issues that make up the Right to the City in South Africa



# South Africa's National Urban Policy



## South Africa's NUP cont...

### VISION

Liveable, safe, resource-efficient cities and towns that are socially integrated, economically inclusive and globally competitive, where residents actively participate in urban life

### STRATEGIC GOALS

Inclusion and Access

Inclusive Growth

Effective Governance

Spatial Integration

### LEVERS

Integrated urban planning and management

Integrated transport and mobility

Integrated and sustainable human settlements

Integrated urban infrastructure

Efficient land governance and management

Inclusive economic development

Empowered Active Communities

Effective urban governance

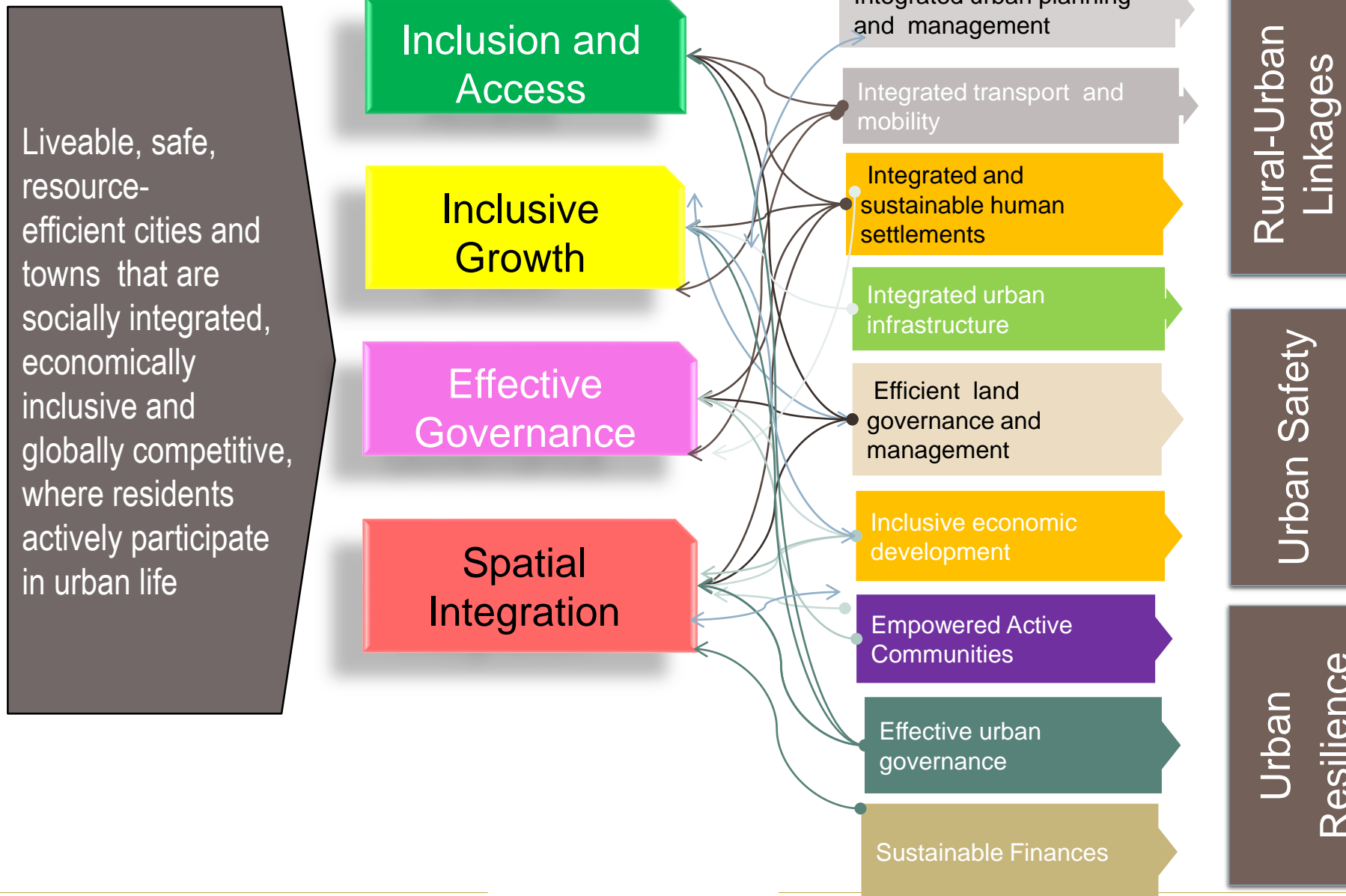
Sustainable Finances

### CROSS CUTTING PRIORITIES

Rural-Urban Linkages

Urban Safety

Urban Resilience



# IUDF Policy Levers

## Efficient land governance and management

- Access to adequate and affordable housing for all is one of the most critical challenges facing cities today. Major cities experience severe housing shortages.
- Efficient land governance and management ensures stability and predictability in the land market, and contributes to the growth of inclusive and multi-functional urban spaces
- Many post-1994, low-income developments are found on the outskirts of cities where land is cheap but also poorly located, far from economic opportunities and social amenities.
- Municipalities have little control over large portions of undeveloped and under-used land in their area). The lack of integrated data makes it difficult to find out which government department owns, or is responsible for, land.
- Land and property markets exclude the poor and exacerbate existing inequalities

## Integrated Urban Infrastructure

- The coverage of basic infrastructure and services is very uneven.
- The growth of major cities also puts a substantial pressure on their existing infrastructure, creating infrastructure shortages. Informal settlements exist, with limited or no access to basic infrastructure, although smallscale affordable community-managed infrastructure projects are being implemented across
- Cities and towns are required to work on three fronts simultaneously: to address basic services new demands and backlogs, particularly in townships and informal settlements; to invest and maintain economic infrastructure, and to reliably deliver services to underpin economic growth (e.g. supply of electricity, transport and communication to businesses); and to prioritise infrastructure projects that can catalyse new economic growth

# IUDF Policy Levers

## Inclusive Economic development

- In cities and towns, the concentration of production factors (land, labour, capital and enterprise), talent and markets provides the potential for economic growth and prosperity.
- The lack of an enabling environment for economic productivity and growth will compromise the possible positive economic gains from agglomeration economies and innovation in urban centres.
- Inclusive economic development is essential to creating jobs, generating higher incomes and creating viable communities

## Empowered Citizens

- Cities cannot succeed without the energy and investment of their citizens. In fact, the very power of cities stems from their unique capacity to bring together a critical mass of social and cultural diversity.
- Active participation in government activities and decision-making promotes the rights and responsibilities of communities.
- Empowered active communities enable cities to succeed, transform the quality of urban life.



# IUDF Cross Cutting themes

## Rural –Urban Linkages

- Rural and urban areas complement each other and coexist in production, trade, information flow and governance. They are further connected through flows of people, and natural and economic resources
- Developing solutions to benefit the whole country is difficult if rural and urban areas are seen as opposites, especially as these areas are becoming increasingly integrated because of better transport and communications, and migration.
- Strong linkages can enhance growth by facilitating the flow of resources to where they will have the largest economic and social net benefits

## Urban Safety

- Prosperous and liveable cities are urban spaces where citizens feel safe from violence and crime, and can take full advantage of the economic, social and cultural opportunities offered by cities.
- A lack of safety in urban areas directly affects the socio-economic development prospects, not only of cities and their inhabitants, but also of the entire country and its population.
- The pervasive fear of violence and crime is one of the greatest barriers to urban residents, especially women and girls, being able to take full advantage of the economic, social and cultural opportunities offered by cities



THANK YOU