



Unemployment and sustainable livelihoods: Just transition approaches in the face of inequality

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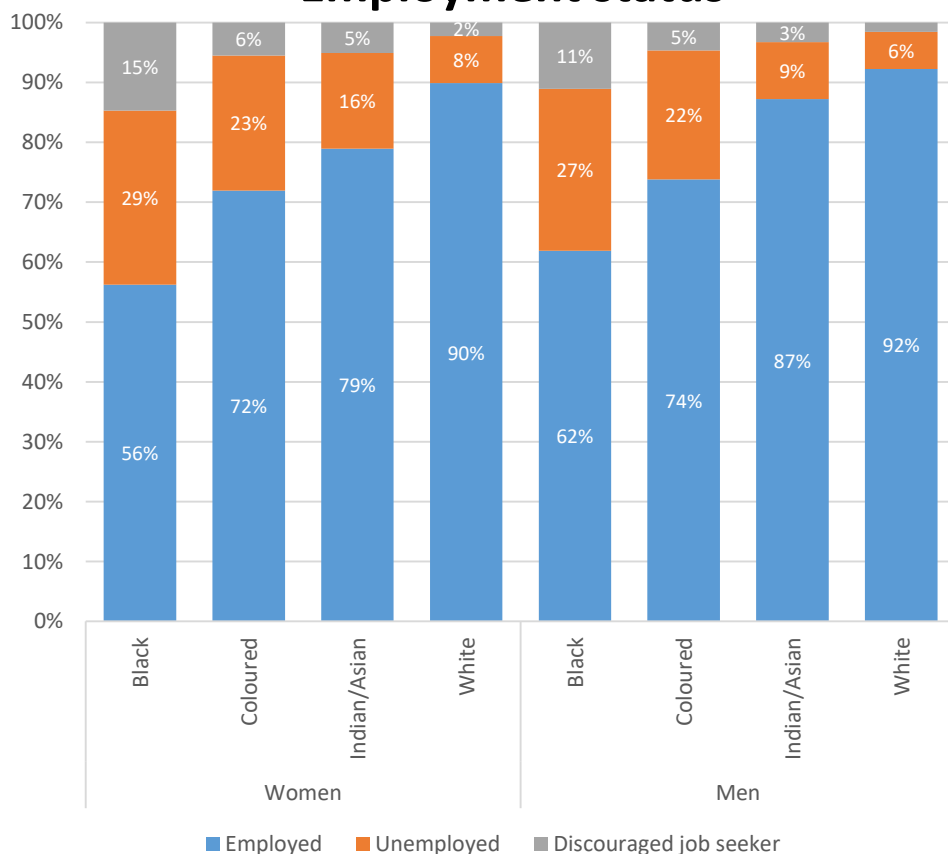
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Context

- The transition is already here, and its justness is linked to how inclusive it is in the context of SA's inequality
- Need to protect workers who stand to lose jobs as part of the transition from fossil fuels
- However, biophysical (& therefore economic) impacts will be felt by everyone regardless of job access
 - Need to, as part of the just transition, also protect the unemployed and poor households who cannot address impacts on their own
 - For this, need to understand who those who need help are, i.e. age, skills and resources
- Various studies have explored sectoral/value chain employment impacts
- Focus here is on the unemployed and poor households
- Makes the case for building resilience among these groups as part of the just transition

Who is left behind: Individuals

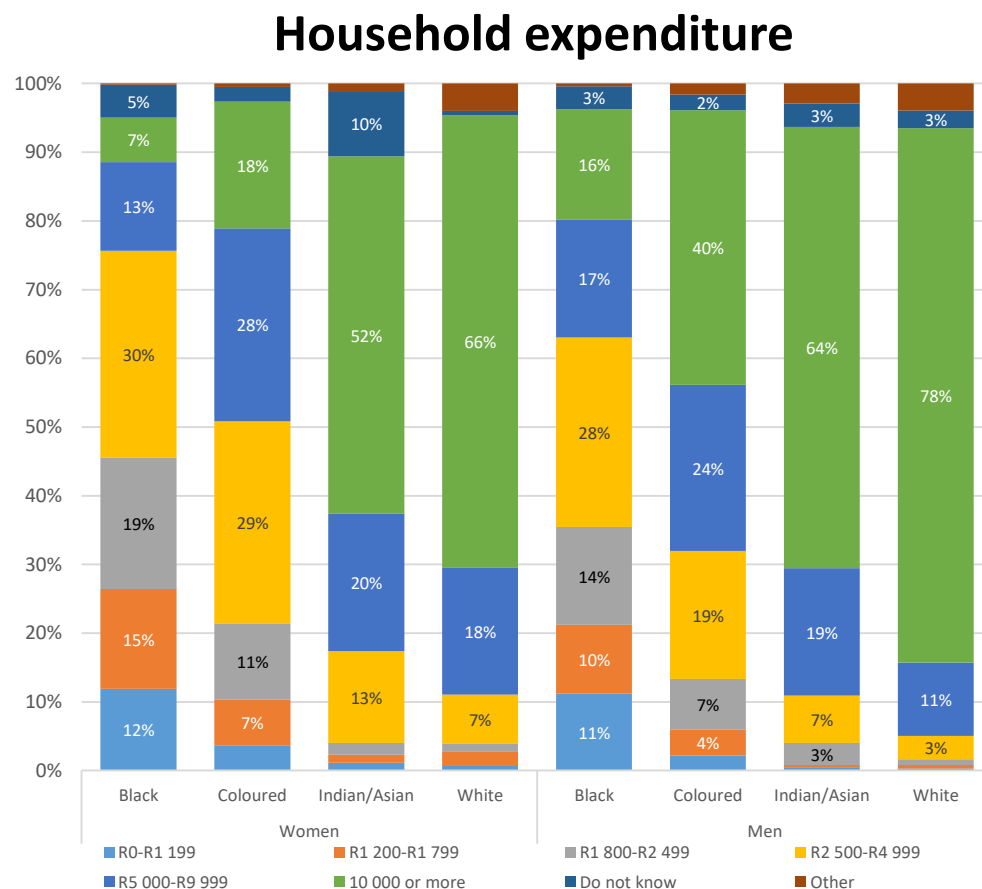
Employment status



- SA employment is lowest among Black women and men
 - Unemployment for these two groups highest among 20 – 39 year olds
 - Black women in particular are more likely to not have previous work experience, followed by Indian/Asian women
 - Otherwise, most unemployed women would have worked in trade
 - White men most likely to have been in manufacturing, while black and coloured men more likely to have been in construction
- Majority of the unemployed in Gauteng, followed by KZN and EC

Who is left behind: Households

- To understand household resources, used expenditure; source of income; dwelling ownership and value
- Most of those in Black women headed HH have expenditure \leq R5000 compared to \geq R10 000 for majority of those in white men headed HH
- Black women headed households least likely compared to other groups to have a salary/wages (40% compared to 63% for white men headed HH)
- Black and coloured women headed HH more likely than other groups to depend on state grants
- Majority of Black women headed HH fully own their homes, but have the lowest property values (\leq R500k) compared to low full ownership for white men HH whose property values likely to be above R1 million



So what?

- Need to think about how to make just transition inclusive
- Simply focusing on those who stand to lose jobs is not enough
- Climate change will affect all South Africans, but resilience depends on resources
- Unemployed people least likely to have resources to build resilience, especially Black women and Black women headed HH
- How can we build resilience for these affected groups as part of the just transition?

Proposed interventions

- Climate resilient housing & public infrastructure
 - Housing is an important part of resilience, but poor households often have unsafe houses they can't afford to climate-proof
 - Through DHS the state can fund climate resilient housing using existing budgets for low-income housing & informal settlement formalization
 - DPWI can be used to climate-proof public buildings and other infrastructure including roads etc.
 - As part of employment creation, the state can use extensive incentives programmes to drive local manufacturing of the necessary technologies
 - Some technologies are made locally, but commercialization is a problem
- Low-carbon public transport
 - Public transport is also integral
 - P-BT VC focused on proposals for taxis and private vehicles
 - Here looking at building rail infrastructure
 - Not only helps reduce emissions, but has potential to support local rolling stock manufacturing and create jobs
- Other low carbon technologies
 - Necessary to roll-out other technologies that help build resilience
 - Water efficient devices, solar energy systems etc.
 - Roll-out of smart agriculture devices particularly important, can be rolled out through existing agriculture support programmes

Proposed interventions

- Investment in community services
 - These include services like education and healthcare for example
 - Quality education is important for levelling access to economic opportunities
 - Climate change has negative health impacts
 - COVID-19 has shown how easily healthcare systems can be overwhelmed if not properly resourced and managed
 - Public health facilities must be improved and equipped to deal with possibility of rising healthcare needs due to climate change
 - However, assisting households to climate-proof homes and other building with materials that adapt to changing temperatures would also lessen the health impact
- Redistribution of investments
 - Concentration of investments and economic opportunities in Gauteng deprives other provinces of necessary investments
 - Also means Gauteng has a disproportionately larger population that needs help
 - Redistribution of private and public investments to other provinces would create economic opportunities in those provinces

Conclusions

- Inequality in South Africa is racialized and gendered
- This means certain groups can't build resilience on their own
- The state can, through existing programmes, support the unemployed and poor households to build resilience while using those interventions to also create jobs and build a stronger economy
- Success of the just transition depends on its level of inclusivity, but will also be measured by ability to build resilience for poor households at the margins of the economy
- That said, the just transition is not a fix-all bandage, thus can't address inequality without other state interventions



Re a leboha!