

# South Africa Country Profile

<b>Population:</b>	49 million
<b>Capital:</b>	Pretoria (administrative capital) Cape Town (legislative capital); Bloemfontein (judicial capital)
<b>Languages:</b>	IsiZulu 23.8%, IsiXhosa, Afrikaans 13.3%, Sepedi, English 8.2%, Setswana, Sesotho, Xitsonga, other
<b>Religion:</b>	Mainly Christian (8% Methodist)

## The country

South Africa is a vast country. Up until 1994 there was a form of segregation of whites, blacks, coloureds and Asians. This system was called apartheid. In 1994 blacks were allowed to vote for the first time and elected Nelson Mandela as the President. 27<sup>th</sup> April is now celebrated as Freedom Day.

## A tribal country

There are many tribes represented in South Africa. Two of the largest are the Zulu and the Xhosa. The Zulu are famous for their beaded crafts. They were originally a very war-like tribe and actually inflicted the heaviest defeat ever by a 'native' army over the British army.

## The Methodist Church of Southern Africa

The Methodist Church in South Africa is actually a member of a larger umbrella church called the Methodist Church of Southern Africa. This includes 5 other national churches: Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia and Swaziland. A large proportion of the population of South Africa would claim to be members of the Methodist Church (2.5 million). The Presiding Bishop is Rev Ivan Abrahams. Irish Methodist mission partner Alan McIlhenny and his Open Schools team work in South Africa.

## Life

Life expectancy is only about 50 years and the HIV/AIDS disease affects 1/5 of the population (estimate). Unlike most African countries, very few work in farming (only 3%). Most work in industry and services e.g. health, police. Many children do not attend school but do not show up on official records as they do not officially exist as they don't have appropriate documents such as birth certificates. It is thought about 1.2 million children do not attend school. Many children do not have 2 parents looking after them.

**Quiz** – tell the children about South Africa. Try to do this in an interactive way e.g. have flag printed out and ask someone to hold it up. Have a fun quiz about Kenya e.g. spaghetti quiz, building tower of plastic cups.