

## Background sheet

# South Africa Appeal

### Introduction

South Africa has the largest population in the region, estimated at nearly 47 million. Christianity predominates and there are an increasing number of African Independent Churches. There are 11 official languages – English, Afrikaans and nine other African languages. The economy is the largest in Africa.

It is 14 years since South Africa's first democratic elections and there have been substantial changes and achievements since 1994. However, the positive effects of this have not yet reached the majority of South Africans. Despite the resources available within South Africa, life for the majority of the population is marked by poverty, uncertainty and life on the margins. Many do not have adequate water, housing or electricity. The legacy of apartheid left the majority of black South Africans with an inadequate education, few resources and skills. Nearly 40 per cent of the (predominantly black) population exists on £1 a day or less and more than 20 million people – more than the total population of any other southern African country – live in poverty. Two societies and economies exist in South Africa; one is a developed economy and society with a standard of living similar to some of the richest countries in the world. The other is an underdeveloped, poor and excluded society where the standard of living is similar to some of the poorest countries in the world.

South Africa has one of the largest numbers of people known to be HIV-positive in the world. More than five million people there are HIV-positive and hundreds of people die from HIV-related illnesses every day.

Christian Aid has worked in South Africa since the mid-70s and has always had strong church ties there. Many of the partner organisations they support are church-based and some are featured in our appeal materials. Some of South Africa's churches and their charismatic leaders played a pivotal role in the overthrow of the evil and scandal of apartheid. They now need to play their part in overcoming the evil and scandal of poverty and HIV.

### Five things to remember...

- The two big issues are HIV and economic justice
- 20 million South Africans live on less than £1 a day
- Almost half the population is under 20; a third is under 15
- There are more HIV-positive people in South Africa than any other country in the world
- And your gifts will make a difference!



We believe in life before death



Union of  
Welsh  
Independents

## Our focus partners for the appeal

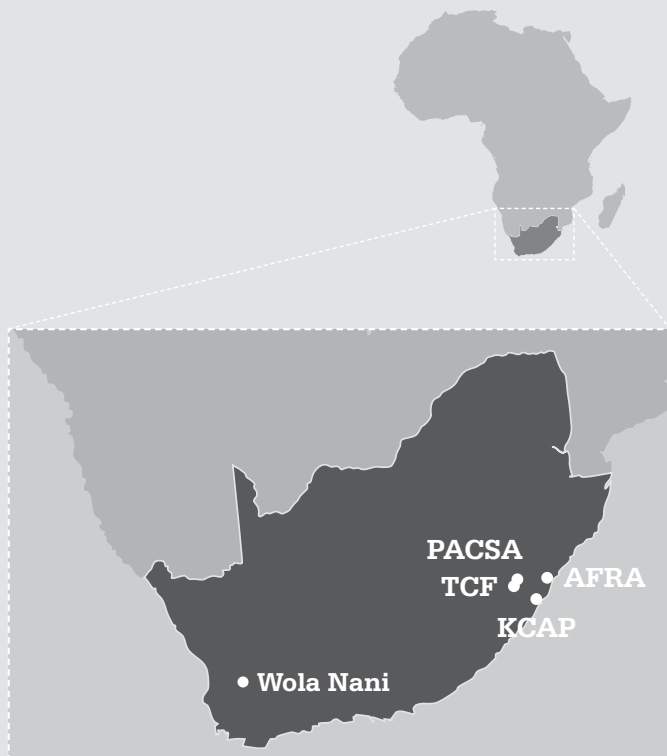
**Association for Rural Advancement (AFRA)** – works in Kwa Zulu Natal, supporting landless rural people and farm dwellers who are threatened by eviction.

**KwaMashu Community Advancement Project (KCAP)** – works with disadvantaged young people just outside Durban, giving them the chance to learn skills such as drama, dance, music and photography.

**Pietermaritzburg Association for Christian Social Awareness (PACSA)** – works to mobilise and involve Christians to promote human rights and sustainable development through research, education, spiritual reflection and action.

**Thandanani Children's Foundation (TCF)** – supports orphans and other vulnerable children in the Pietermaritzburg area so that they have food, shelter, education and emotional support.

**Wola Nani** – works in Cape Town and the nearby townships, especially supporting women who are HIV-positive and their children, through counselling and care.



## The big issues

**Homelessness and landlessness:** South Africa has one of the widest gaps between rich and poor in the world. After years of colonial and apartheid rule, most land is still owned by a wealthy minority. Many poorer people don't have any land at all. Thousands of those who live as tenants on other people's land are vulnerable to abuse and eviction, if the landowner is ruthless.

**HIV/AIDS:** More than one in five adults there are HIV-positive, and the virus has left more than a million children orphaned. Many grandparents and teenage older sisters are now taking on the responsibility of looking after them.

**Poverty, crime and unemployment:** South Africa's townships are a different world to the modern cities nearby. Here the country's poorest citizens are crammed into sprawling ghettos with tumbledown housing, few jobs and high crime.

**Reconciliation:** The brutality, violence and injustice of the apartheid years have left deep scars that will take a long time to heal.

## Special days

You may wish to use one or more of South Africa's special days of holidays as a special day for the appeal in your church, such as:

<b>Nelson Mandela's release from prison</b> (1990)	11 February
<b>Human Rights Day</b> (in remembrance of the Sharpeville massacre, which occurred on this day in 1960)	21 March
<b>Freedom Day</b> (commemorates first democratic elections on this day in 1994)	27 April
<b>Workers' Day</b>	1 May
<b>Youth Day</b>	16 June
<b>Nelson Mandela's birthday</b>	18 July
<b>National Women's Day</b>	9 August
<b>Heritage Day</b> (A day for all South Africans to celebrate their cultural heritage. Many people would hold an informal barbeque or braai on this day.)	24 September
<b>Desmond Tutu's birthday</b>	7 October
<b>Day of Reconciliation</b>	16 December