

SA ~ Project Gateway

General Information on South Africa

The Union of South Africa was established in 1910. In 1948 elections the Afrikaner-dominated ultra-right National Party took over power. Under their power apartheid (racist legislation restricting black rights) flourished. Under apartheid, every individual was classified by race, and race determined where you could live, work, pray and learn. Blacks were divided into one of 10 tribal groups, forcibly dispossessed and dumped in rural backwaters called 'Homelands'. These lands had virtually no infrastructure and no industry, and were therefore incapable of producing sufficient food for the black population. There was intense, widespread suffering and many families returned to squalid squatter camps in the cities.

Black resistance developed in the form of strikes, acts of public disobedience and protest marches. This was supported by international opinion from the early 1960s after African National Congress (ANC) leaders, including Nelson Mandela, were jailed. The government reacted violently to black protests, and the United Nations decided to impose economic and political sanctions on South Africa. In the mid-1980s, black-on-black violence in the townships exploded. By 1989 economic sanctions began to bite and the Rand collapsed. FW De Klerk came to power. Virtually all apartheid regulations were repealed, political prisoners were released and negotiations began on forming a multiracial government. Free elections in 1994 resulted in a decisive victory for the ANC and Nelson Mandela became president.

Despite the scars of the past and the enormous problems ahead, South Africa today is immeasurably more optimistic and relaxed than it was a few years ago. The international community has embraced the new South Africa and the ANC's apparently sincere desire to create a truly non-racial nation, although economic inequality remains an overwhelming problem. In 1999, Thabo Mbeki, who took over the ANC leadership from Nelson Mandela, became president. He proved to be a generally competent president, but his standing both at home and abroad has not been helped by his refusal to condemn outright the inflammatory politics of Zimbabwe's Robert Mugabe and his ill-informed comments on AIDS. This health crisis, affecting 4.2 million South Africans, seriously threatens to eclipse all of

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South Africa's other domestic problems.

"Project Gateway" is a church-based, not for profit organisation, serving the city and surrounding communities of Pietermaritzburg in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. The project was formally established in 1992, when the historic old Pietermaritzburg prison became available as a base. Today, Project Gateway operates under the leadership of Pietermaritzburg Christian Fellowship, working in partnership with other local churches.

The aim of the project is to equip and empower local people through education, enterprise and care activities, addressing physical, emotional and spiritual needs.



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What you will be doing on your Team

Gateway Christian School

This school aims to provide good quality education, at affordable fees, in a Christian setting. Team members help in the library, running PE and Music lessons, hearing children read and assisting the teachers on day trips.

Enterprise Development

The aim of this project is to raise up well-equipped entrepreneurs with sustainable businesses. The programme includes training in business skills and practical job skills, marketing support and mentorship for new businesses. Participants start to generate income at an early stage in the programme with a view to channelling training into the establishment of a small business. Team members with business and mentoring skills can help on this project.

Pregnancy Crisis Centre

The centre provides assistance and support to people who find themselves in a pregnancy related crisis. A schools programme also operates, aiming to educate teenagers. Team members help by befriending the girls and running self-esteem sessions and craft activities.

Overnight Shelter

For a token contribution, homeless men and women are given a secure place to sleep and a simple meal on a nightly basis. Team members can sometimes volunteer at the shelter

Duduza Home

Offers love, care and nurture in foster families for young children who are terminally ill. Young children, especially those who are HIV positive, are looked after by their own mothers or by caregivers in a place of comfort and safety until the time of their death. Team members help with driving fostered children to school and other activities, and with practical work on foster parents' homes in the local townships.

Esther House

Provides secure, short-term accommodation for women in distress. Women and their children seeking refuge from abusive situations are cared for whilst longer term accommodation is secured. Counselling is facilitated and training in basic skills such as cooking and sewing is offered. Team members sometimes help at this project if appropriate.

Karen Millen Fashion School

In partnership with Karen Millen and the University College for Creative Arts in the UK, the Fashion School trains talented local students in fashion design, as well as mentoring them in life skills. The emphasis is on sustainable personal development.

Core Services

The central offices of Gateway are always busy fundraising and administrating the wider work of the project. Team members with administration, website and fundraising skills are always in demand!

Schooltrade

This is a partner project based in Pietermaritzburg, which Team members are seconded to. Its aim is to assist the establishment of quality schools in deprived township areas, supporting local staff and families.

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Fast Facts



Capital:	Pretoria
Currency:	South African Rand (ZAR)
Population:	42.7 million
Language:	Afrikaans, English, Ndebele, Pedi, Sotho, Swazi, Tsonga, Tswana, Venda, Xhosa, Zulu.
Religion:	Christian 68%, Muslim 2%, Hindu 1.5%, indigenous beliefs and animist 28.5%.
Climate:	Summer: November to March Winter: June to August.



Generally the climate is hot and dry, showers occur in the summer in the eastern plateau and in the winter in the western cape. During the day temperatures generally range between 15-26 °C.

Life Expectancy:	Male: 44.39 years Female: 43.98 years
Under-5 infant mortality:	62.18 per 1,000
Living with AIDS:	5.3 million (21% of population)
Literacy:	Male: 87%, female: 85.7% groups

Accommodation

The Project Gateway site itself is being developed as a centre to attract visitors, thus generating business opportunities for local people. A coffee shop and craft shop are already in operation.

The team will stay in the accommodation block at the Project Gateway Centre, which is a converted prison cellblock. The bedrooms are carpeted and furnished and have tea making facilities. There are also kitchen facilities, a living room and a dining room where you will be able to cater for yourselves as a team. There are showers with hot running water, and laundry facilities on-site.

For more information

- www.projectgateway.co.za