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Resources and Power in Post-apartheid South Africa

23.1 Introduction

The tall, gray-haired man walked up to the ballot box. At 76 years old, he looked strong, fit, and determined. With a warm smile, he pushed his ballot into the box. Like other blacks in South Africa, he was being allowed to vote in an election for the first time. This elderly man was not just anyone, however. He was Nelson Mandela. And when all the votes were counted, Mandela was the newly elected president of South Africa.

South Africa is a **multiracial** society. This is a society that is made up of many **ethnic groups**. South Africa has four major ethnic groups. South Africans call the four groups blacks, whites, coloreds, and Asians. Before that election day in 1994, black South Africans could not vote or hold office.

For nearly 50 years, whites had ruled South Africa under a policy called **apartheid**. The word *apartheid* means “separateness.” Under apartheid, whites and nonwhites lived apart from each other. This policy of racial **segregation** hurt nonwhite ethnic groups. They had fewer economic resources than whites. They also had less political power.

In this chapter, you will learn about life in South Africa under apartheid. You will find out how the **distribution**, or division, of power and resources changed after the end of apartheid. Finally, you will read about some of the challenges facing the people of South Africa today.

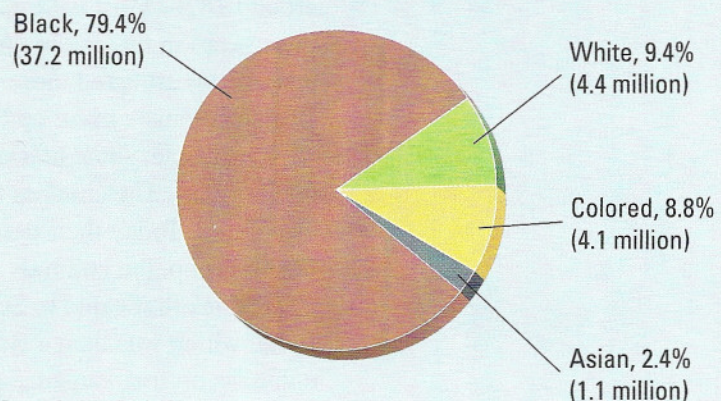
Essential Question

How might ethnic group differences affect who controls resources and power in a society?

This circle graph shows the four main ethnic groups in South Africa in 2005. Note the size of the white ethnic group. Until 1994, this group controlled most of the nation’s wealth and power. Keep this graph in mind as you try to answer the Essential Question.

Graphic Organizer

Ethnic Groups in South Africa, 2005





Farming in South Africa

South Africa has two main types of farming. White farmers raise cash crops on large modern farms. Black farm families produce food mainly for their own needs on small plots of land.

23.2 The Geographic Setting

South Africa is located at the southern tip of Africa. Compared with many African countries, it is small in land area. But it is the most developed African country. Only about 5 percent of Africans live in South Africa. Yet it produces two fifths of Africa's factory goods and about half of its minerals. South Africa also produces about a fifth of the continent's farm products.

A Land Rich in Natural Resources Much of South Africa's wealth is built on mineral resources. It has large deposits of gold, copper, and other valuable minerals. The development of these resources has made South Africa an economic powerhouse.

South Africa's mild **climate** and rich soil are also valuable resources. Many **cash crops** grow well here, including corn, wheat, and sugarcane. Cattle, sheep, and goats graze on vast ranch lands.

South Africa has a great variety of **wildlife**. In the past, these animals were important for groups of people who lived by hunting. In recent years, wildlife has become a tourist attraction. Visitors come from all over the world to see elephants, lions, zebras, and other animals in their natural **habitats**.

The Development of a Multiracial Society People have lived in what is now South Africa for a very long time. The ancestors of most South African blacks came from Central Africa. They probably migrated south about 2,000 years ago. This large ethnic group is made up of many smaller groups, each with its own language and culture.

Europeans began to settle in Southern Africa in 1652. Dutch colonists came first. They were called Boers, the Dutch word for "farmers." Their settlement was called Cape Colony. In time, settlers from other parts of Europe joined the Boers. Dutch remained the language of the colonists. But it picked up many words from other settlers and from black Africans. The result was a new language called Afrikaans. The white colonists who spoke this language came to be known as Afrikaners.

Settlers from Great Britain began to arrive in Cape Colony around 1820. Most were farmers. In 1867, a rich diamond field was discovered in the colony. A few years later, gold was found. These discoveries attracted more colonists. Descendents of Afrikaners and British colonists make up South Africa's white ethnic group.

Over time, some blacks and whites in Cape Colony married and had families. The children from these mixed marriages were described as colored. Today their descendents form South Africa's third major ethnic group, the coloreds.

Asians first came to South Africa in the 1860s. Most were from India, which was then a British colony. They came to work for British colonists on their sugarcane plantations. Their descendents in South Africa are still called Asians. They form the last major ethnic group in this multiracial society.

► Geoterms

apartheid the former official South African policy of separating people according to race. Apartheid gave most of the political and economic power to whites.

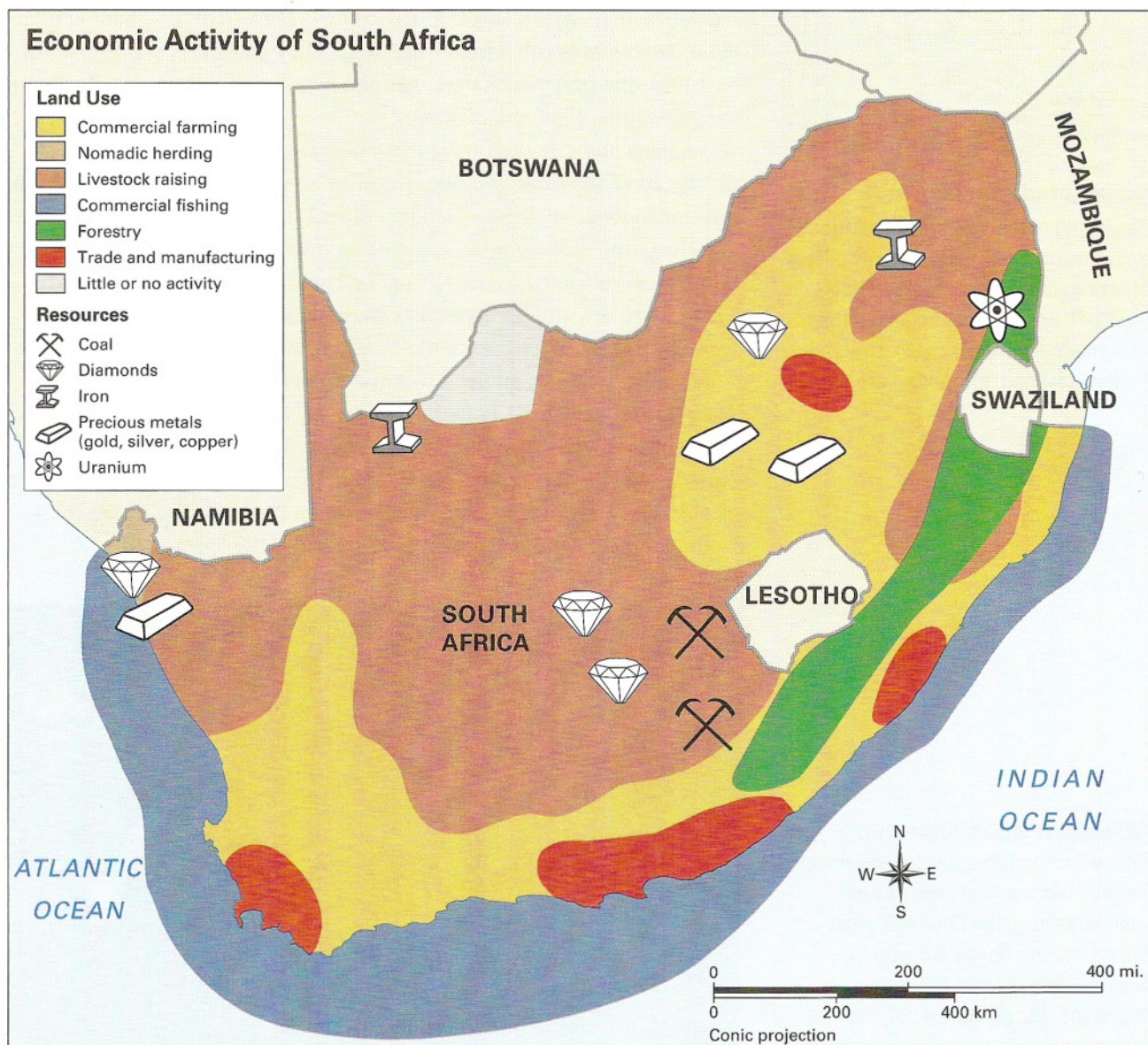
distribution the way people or things are spread out over an area or space. This term can also refer to the way resources, power, or goods are divided among people or groups.

multiracial made up of people from several ethnic groups

segregation the separation of one group of people from another, such as by race. Segregation can involve laws or customs that require different groups to use different facilities and live in separate areas.

Mines, Farms, and Factories

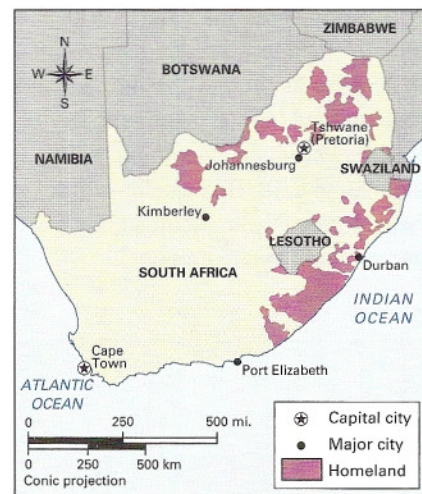
South Africa is Africa's most developed country. Its mines produce more gold than any other country. Its farms grow enough food to feed its people. Its factories produce everything from clothing to cars. This wealth is not, however, evenly distributed among its four main ethnic groups.



23.3 South Africa During Apartheid

South Africa's colonial period ended in 1910. That year, the Union of South Africa became an independent country. The new country's constitution gave whites complete power over the government.

Homelands in South Africa During Apartheid



Segregated Homelands

Beginning in the 1960s, South Africa's government forced more than 4 million blacks to move to segregated homelands. The government claimed the move was to give blacks self-rule. But for the most part, the lands were barren.

Apartheid Makes Segregation an Official Policy Segregation became a way of life in South Africa after independence. Then, in 1948, ruling whites took this practice a step further. They made apartheid an official government policy.

Under the new apartheid laws, South Africans were classified by race. Whites and nonwhites were kept separate from one another. They lived in segregated neighborhoods. They went to different schools, hospitals, movie theaters, and restaurants. They were separated on trains and buses. Signs appeared on public beaches and in parks announcing "For White Persons Only."

Apartheid Treats Each Ethnic Group Differently Under apartheid, whites in South Africa lived well. They had the best schools, the best jobs, the best health care, and the best living conditions. They ran the government and the economy.

Asians and coloreds were treated as second-class citizens. They did not have the same job opportunities as whites. Their schools were inferior to those of whites. Their political rights were limited as well.

No group, however, was treated as poorly as blacks. Many black families were forced to move to poor **rural** areas called *homelands*. There were few jobs or resources in these areas. Homeland schools were very poor. There was little access to health care.

Blacks were not allowed to move freely throughout the country. They could leave their homelands to work in distant cities. But those who did were forced to live in **townships**. These were **slums** just outside the cities. A typical township home was a shack with no water or electricity. During the day, black workers went to their jobs in the "white" cities. At night, they had to return to the townships.

Soweto: A Black Township

Soweto is the largest black township in South Africa. It is located near Johannesburg, the country's most important city. Today housing in Soweto ranges from shacks to mansions. During apartheid, the township was a center of protest.



23.4 Protests Lead to Political Change

Long before apartheid, blacks had formed groups to protest unfair treatment by whites. The most important, the African National Congress (ANC), was formed in 1912. "The white people of this country have formed what is known as the Union of South Africa," said one of the group's founders, "a union in which we have no voice in the making of the laws." It would take the ANC decades of protest to gain that voice for blacks.

The Fight Against Apartheid The ANC led the struggle against apartheid. In 1952, it began its "Campaign for the Defiance of Unjust Laws." An ANC lawyer named Nelson Mandela took charge of this fight to end apartheid laws. In 1962, Mandela was sent to jail for his protest activities. He remained in prison for the next 27 years.

The struggle continued. At times it also turned deadly. The worst violence began in the township of Soweto in 1976. On a June morning, 10,000 students gathered for a protest march. The police tried to break up the crowd. Some students threw rocks in response. The police opened fire. By the end of the day, 172 protesters lay dead. The protests quickly spread to other townships. Nearly 600 people had died by the time the demonstrations were finally crushed.

Some whites, coloreds, and Asians in South Africa joined the struggle. People around the world protested as well. Many countries refused to trade with South Africa until it ended apartheid. Mandela became the world's most famous prisoner. The United Nations called for his release from jail.

Apartheid Ends and Blacks Gain Political Power In 1989, an Afrikaner named F. W. de Klerk became president of South Africa. In the past, de Klerk had supported segregation. But later he decided that South Africa would never be at peace until apartheid ended. He quickly freed Mandela and other political prisoners. By 1991, South Africa's apartheid laws had been ended.

In 1993, de Klerk and Mandela were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. This is a prize given each year to those who have done the most to bring peace to the world. The two South Africans were honored for their work to end apartheid.

A year later, all South Africans could both vote and run for office. As a result, the distribution of political power changed. The ANC became South Africa's most powerful political party. Its leader, Nelson Mandela, became the country's first black president.

Under Mandela's leadership, South Africa established the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. *Reconciliation* means the ending of conflict between groups. The commission investigated many unjust acts that took place under apartheid. South Africans saw this as a needed step toward healing the wounds left by those acts. As Bishop Desmond Tutu, the head of the commission, explained, "You cannot forgive what you do not know."

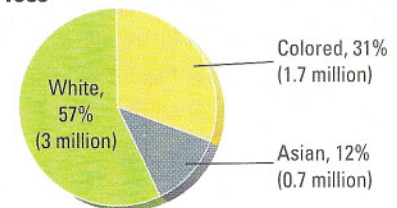


Waiting to Vote

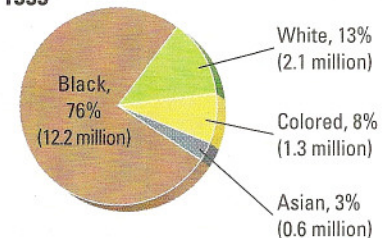
These people are waiting to vote South Africa's 1994 election. This event was the first time people of all colors could vote for their national leaders. Some new voters walked for miles and stood in line for hours to cast their first ballot.

Voter Turnout in South Africa

1989



1999



Sources: Election '99: South Africa from Mandela to Mbeki, Andrew Reynolds, ed., New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999. South African Institute of Race Relations, <http://www.sairr.org.za/>.

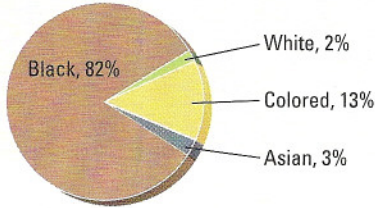
Changes in Voting

These graphs show who voted during and after apartheid. In 1989, whites made up more than half of all voters. This gave them control of the government. By 1999, all South Africans were voting. With this change, political power shifted to black South Africans.

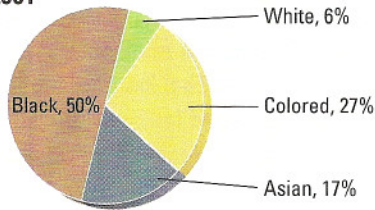
23.5 South Africa Today: Job Opportunities

Unemployed South Africans

1987



2001



Sources: *South Africa, 1989–1990: Official Yearbook of the Republic of South Africa*, 15th ed., Pretoria: Bureau of Information, 1990. PBS, "Wideangle," www.pbs.org.

Out of Work

South Africa has suffered from years of slow economic growth. This has caused a rise in unemployment, or joblessness. These circle graphs show unemployment by ethnic groups during and after apartheid. What changes do you see?

In 2001, for the first time ever, blacks took home more than half of all the income earned by South Africans. Before then, whites had always earned the most money. Yet this fact does not tell the whole story. As you know, there are far more blacks than whites in South Africa. This means that blacks still earned far less **per capita** than whites.

Government Programs Open Up Job Opportunities During apartheid, whites got the best jobs. They also earned the most money. When apartheid ended, the ANC-led government took steps to change the distribution of job opportunities. One step was to help blacks start businesses. By 2010, the government wants 25 percent of businesses in the country to be run by blacks.

In 1998, the government also passed the Employment Equity Act. This law opens job opportunities to all South Africans. It identifies groups that have been unfairly denied jobs in the past. These groups include blacks, coloreds, Asians, women, and the disabled. The law requires businesses to hire people from these groups when filling jobs. They must also pay all workers fairly.

The Employment Equity Act has opened to all groups jobs that were once limited to whites. At the same time, it has caused resentment among white job seekers. They argue that it is unfair to deny them jobs just because they are white.

Slow Economic Growth Hurts All Ethnic Groups Despite these changes, many South Africans still lack jobs. One reason for this is the slow growth of the economy. Not enough jobs are created each year to hire everyone who wants to work. In 2005, four out of 10 job seekers could not find work. Some of these job seekers were whites. But blacks, coloreds, and Asians are still more likely to be out of work than white South Africans.

Slow economic growth has also led to an increase in poverty. By 2005, half of all South Africans did not make enough money to take care of their basic needs. Many of the poor were struggling just to survive.

Poverty Comes in All Colors

This white family is part of South Africa's growing number of people living in poverty. Some South Africans, both white and nonwhite, have done very well since the end of apartheid. But the poor seem worse off than ever.





Education for All

Under apartheid, schools were segregated by ethnic group. Today such segregation is illegal. These children attend Saxonwold Primary School. It was the first all-white public school to open its doors to all children as apartheid ended.

23.6 South Africa Today: Education

Any students attending a public school in South Africa today will learn not only reading and writing but also math and science. This was not always the case. During apartheid, there were separate schools for each ethnic group. Students who attended a black school did not study much science or math. This was not an accident. The government knew that people with math and science skills could get higher-paying jobs. By not teaching those skills to blacks, the government made sure that South Africa had a supply of cheap labor.

The Link Between Education and Opportunity In general, the more years of school a person has completed, the more money he or she makes as an adult. In South Africa, more than half of the adults with no education are poor. But only 5 percent of South Africans who have gone to college are poor.

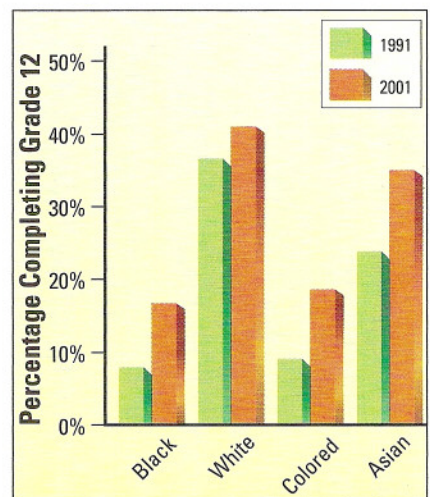
During apartheid, nonwhites had limited educational opportunities. Their schools were poorly built. Their teachers were undertrained and not well paid. Children were supposed to go to school from the ages of 7 to 16. But this law was not enforced. More than 10 million non-white adults never went to high school. Over 4 million received no schooling at all.

Schools Are Now Open to All Ethnic Groups The end of apartheid brought big changes to education. The amount of money the government spends on schools has risen sharply. Also, students of all ethnic groups now attend the same public schools.

Schools in South Africa today are teaching the skills all students will need to get good jobs. There is a strong focus on science and math. Students of all groups are strongly encouraged to stay in school. As a result, the percentage of students who finish high school has risen in every ethnic group.

The number of nonwhites going to college has increased as well. This is true despite the fact that total college enrollment has been hurt by slow economic growth. As more nonwhite children receive college educations, their opportunities for good jobs will improve.

High School Graduates in South Africa



Source: PBS, "Wideangle," www.pbs.org.

Staying in School

More South Africans than ever are finishing high school. This graph shows the percentage of each ethnic group that graduated from high school in 1991 and 2001. For blacks and coloreds, the percentages more than doubled.

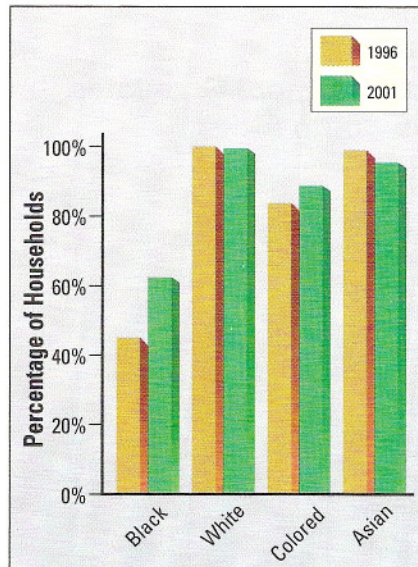
23.7 South Africa Today: Living Conditions

During apartheid, most whites in South Africa lived well. They had nice homes in the city. Their homes had electricity and running water. Many had swimming pools. Today most whites still have those comforts. But they also have something they didn't have during apartheid: neighbors who are not white. A few nonwhites now live in the nice neighborhoods of South African cities.

Cities Are Becoming Less Segregated During apartheid, many South African cities were “whites only.” Blacks could work there during the day. But they had to leave at night. After apartheid, people could live wherever they could afford housing. Some cities have become racially mixed as nonwhites have moved in.

Most nonwhites, however, cannot afford to live in nice city neighborhoods. The poor often settle in slums around the cities. Most homes in these slums are built out of scrap metal or wood. Few have running water or electricity. Often these poor areas become a breeding ground for crime.

South African Households with Electricity



Source: Statistics South Africa, <http://www.statssa.gov.za/>.

Power to Homes

As this graph shows, housing conditions are improving in South Africa. By 2001, more than 60 percent of blacks had electricity in their homes. Many blacks, however, still live in shacks on the edges of cities.

Housing Conditions Are Improving South Africa's constitution guarantees decent housing to all citizens. In the first decade after apartheid, the government provided 1.6 million homes to poor South Africans. Efforts to create more housing for the poor are continuing.

The government is also working to improve **urban** slums. Streets have been paved in some poor areas. Water systems have been built to provide safe water. Streetlamps have been installed to combat crime. The government is starting to replace shacks with better housing. It is also starting to build schools, police stations, and health clinics in poor neighborhoods.

Health Care Remains Limited Along with housing, the government is working to improve health care. During apartheid, most doctors and hospitals were located in “white” cities. People in rural areas had a hard time finding health care. Although cities are no longer segregated, 9 out of 10 doctors still work in urban areas.

Today South Africa is trying hard to bring health care to all. By 2005, the government had built more than 500 health clinics in rural areas. New doctors are asked to work for a year in a rural clinic. This helps to reduce the shortage of doctors outside cities. Pregnant women and children under six get free health care.

The need for health care has risen sharply with the spread of HIV/AIDS in South Africa. The human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) attacks the body's ability to fight disease. Acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) is the medical condition that results from an HIV infection. Victims of AIDS slowly grow weak and lose weight. Eventually, most die. There is no cure. But treatment can help people infected with the virus live longer.



South Africa has the highest number of people living with HIV/AIDS in the world. By 2003, about 5 million South Africans had become victims of this disease. Around 370,000 died from HIV/AIDS in that one year alone. The loss of so many people presents a huge challenge to South Africa's hope for a better future.

23.8 Beginning to Think Globally

In this chapter, you learned about life in South Africa before, during, and after apartheid. You saw how segregation divided a multiracial society. You learned how the distribution of power and resources in the society changed over time. And you read about some of the challenges that face South Africa today.

One of those challenges is the continued spread of HIV/AIDS. When this disease first appeared in humans, no one knew how the virus was spread. Today we know that the virus is found in blood and other body fluids. The virus is passed through the transfer of blood or other body fluids from person to person. It can also be passed from mother to child during pregnancy and birth.

South Africa is not the only country dealing with HIV/AIDS. The disease is a global health threat. In 2004, about 40 million people worldwide were living with HIV/AIDS. About 5 million people were newly infected with the virus that year. And around 3 million people died from the disease. Think about this as you look at the map of HIV/AIDS infection rates around the world in the next section.

Mobile Health Care

This mobile clinic brings health care to people living outside South African cities. Despite government efforts, health care remains poor in many areas. Because of the country's high rate of HIV infection, life expectancy in 2005 was just over 43 years.

23.9 Global Connections

This map shows the percentage of adults infected with the HIV/AIDS virus worldwide. Note the areas with no color. These are places where no one has collected information on the disease.

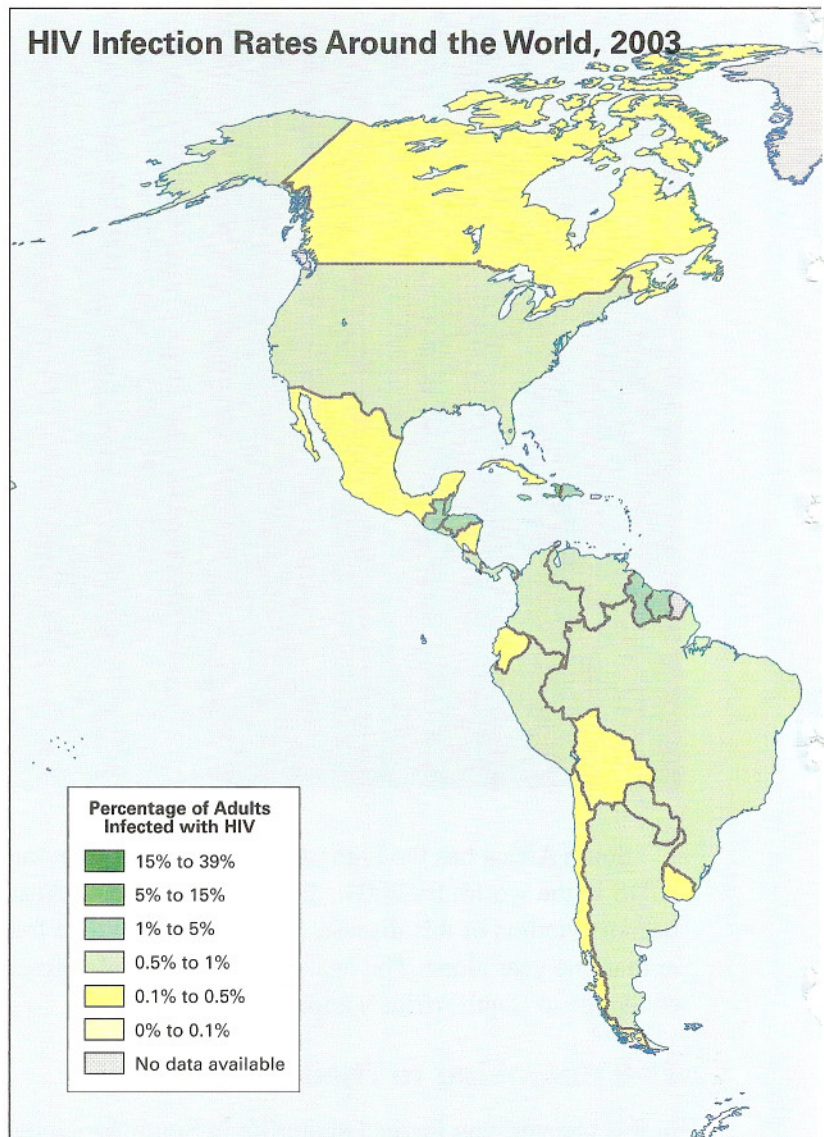
Why has Africa been more affected by HIV/AIDS than other regions?

Scientists think the disease may have begun in Africa in the 1950s. This means the virus has been infecting people in this **region** for longer than in other parts of the world. Poverty has also contributed to the spread of the disease in Africa. Poor countries lack money for education programs that might slow the spread of the virus.

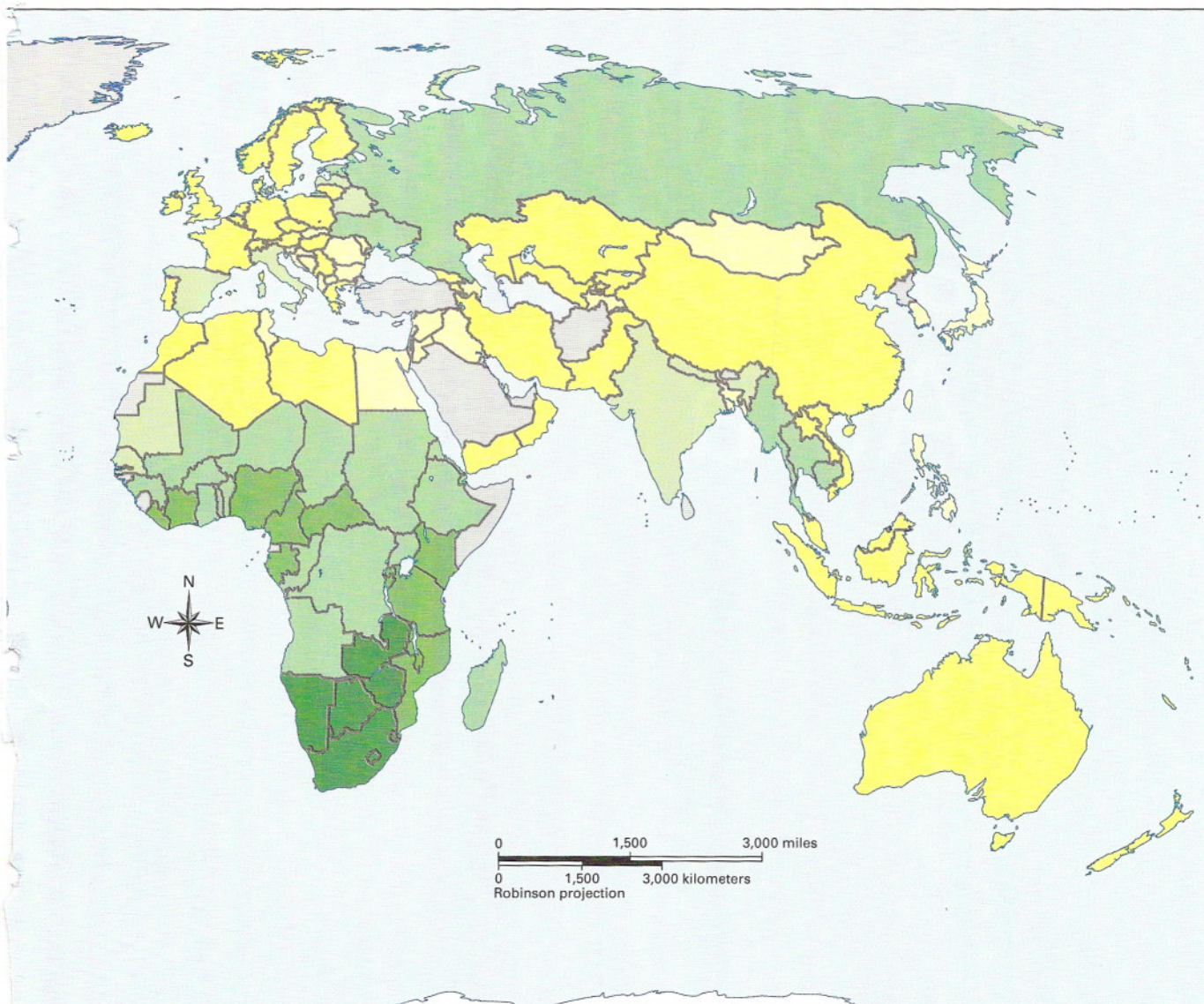
What factors have contributed to the global spread of HIV/AIDS?

Unlike many diseases, AIDS develops slowly. The virus that causes the disease can hide in the body for years without the person knowing it. As a result, victims can transmit the infection without knowing they have it. Improved transportation is also a factor in its spread. Today people travel easily from country to country. As they do so, they take the disease with them.

How might HIV/AIDS hurt the countries that are most severely affected? Most victims of the disease are working-age adults. The loss of these adults hurts a country in many ways. As people sicken and die, they leave the **workforce**. This can hurt a country's economy. They also leave children behind. Caring for many orphans is a burden for a poor country. If too many working-age people die, a country may be left with a population of the very old and very young.

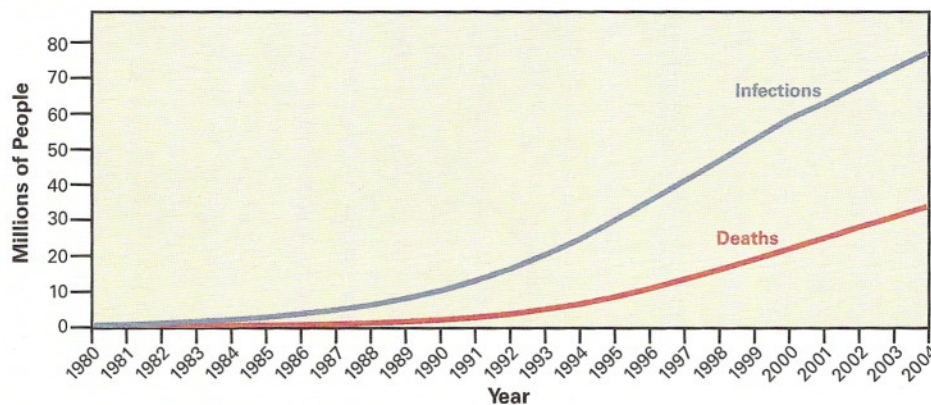


An AIDS march in South Africa



Source: World Health Organization, www.who.int.

Cumulative Worldwide HIV Infection Rates and AIDS Deaths



Source: Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS.

The Impact of HIV/AIDS

This line graph shows the cumulative effect of HIV/AIDS. *Cumulative* means becoming larger with each addition. Since 1980, the cumulative number of people infected with HIV has risen as new cases are added each year. So has the cumulative number of people who have died from AIDS.