

Brianna de Neui

Mrs. Jibeen

English

18 April 2023

### South Africa: The Many Problems of Disabled People

According to, “Department of Statistics of South Africa” 7.5% of South Africa’s population has a disability. The disabilities can be mental health, physical, birth defects, and many more. They face a lot of problems with education, medical help, job seeking, and more. Here are some facts about South Africa and what the people are facing.

South Africa’s climate is rainfall in late September through April. Late October is their warmest month consisting of 100-degree days. South Africa's landscape consists of plateaus. According to *National Geographic Kids*, plateaus are flat and high areas. People can live and plant on the plateaus, two-thirds of South Africa’s land is a plateau. South Africa’s land is used to plant 79% of the land is used for agriculture. Their crops usually consist of grapes, corn, citrus, berries, nuts, apples, pears, sugarcane, avocados, wool, oats, and wheat. Their main exports are wine, berries, apples, and pears.

South Africa is home to 61,393,841 people, surprisingly 7.5% of those people have a disability. These disabilities can range from mental health, birth defects, physical effects, and many more. Many households have three to four people living in them, 84% of the people live in formal dwellings and 11.4% live in informal dwellings. According to *National Geographic Kids*, they speak up to eleven different languages in South Africa. Formal dwellings are housing that is not falling apart and is legal to live in. Informal dwellings are houses that are damaged, falling apart, and are illegal to live in.

Roughly about 63% of South Africans have access to piped and clean water that comes from taps in the urban areas, and the rural areas don't have any access to taps for piped or clean water. If they don't have the ability to get clean water they have to clean the water on their own. They have to use twenty-five liters of water per one teaspoon of bleach. Boil the water for at least 10 minutes, let it stand for two hours in the house, and then sit in the sun for six hours, you have to stir it every hour. This is how you make unsafe water safe to use. Not having enough clean water brings big challenges to people, they have trouble showering, cooking meals, drinking water, washing dishes, and doing other daily tasks we do without thinking. South Africa has the biggest power plant in all of Africa. Phoebe Parke says, about 93% of people that live in South Africa have cell phones. South Africans have more cell phones than they have clean water.

Education in South Africa is good for children that are "normal", but for children with disabilities that go to school have many challenges. The main challenges for children with disabilities are exclusion, discrimination, and lots of barriers that make their education harder to receive. According to *Education for Children with Disabilities in South Africa*, children with disabilities don't really get a chance to go to school with the "normal" children. Normal school's that children go to, don't give children with disabilities the help they need. South Africa is home to plenty of schools that specialize to work with disabilities, but the students need to have a referral to be able to go to the schools. It is hard for students to get referrals, so there are an estimated 600,000 children out of school because they don't get referrals. Since 2017, there are an estimated 11,500 children on the waiting list to go into these schools. Normal schools, for "normal" people, are totally free for them to attend, but people with disabilities have to pay to go to school. They have to pay roughly \$1,102 every year to attend school. They have to pay because they need extra help with learning from teachers.

People with disabilities are further excluded for health needs. They have limited access to health care because the help they need is not in the area they live. In rural areas, they lack professionals in health care, and they also lack the materials they need. Toesland says they can't afford the materials they need like crutches, prescriptions, bandaids, ointments, canes, wheelchairs, and casts for broken or fractured bones. They have to travel a far distance to see the special doctors they need, most patients can't pay to do that so they don't get the health care help they need. There are a lot of disadvantages for African Americans, but mostly for African American women that are "normal" or if they have a disability.

People with disabilities are mostly poor, they don't get enough income to pay for the essentials. They estimated 99% of disabled people are excluded from employment in the open labor market. When you apply to work at a job as a person with a disability, they don't look at your ability to work, they look at your physical appearance. Toesland says "Employers find it difficult to hire people with a disability because they rarely meet face to face." Employees that have a disability can only work as a worker, they can't become a leader or a boss. Employees underestimate what people with disabilities can achieve. In 2003, South Africa passed a law called The Disabilities Act, which requires organizations to let 5% of disabled people work at each place. Even though they passed a law about allowing disabled people to work, 1% of citizens working with a disability face stigma and financial problems they have.

According to *Disability and Health Inclusion Strategies*, a solution that South Africa is using is called Disability - Inclusive Education in Africa Program. This is a program they use in schools to help improve education for children with disabilities. This fund helps students with disabilities to pay for school. Some pros to this program are it's a \$3 million trust fund that promotes the strategic use of resources for disability, and it helps children to learn at a cheaper

cost. The downfall to this program is stigma barriers, attitudinal barriers, financial support, caregiving dynamics, welfare provisions, and not having any way to transport the supplies and children. Another solution is The Rehabilitation Act, is an act that is used to being discriminated against for their disability. The pros to this Act are that it is a federal law and it protects the individual. The cons to this Act are that not everyone is going to follow this Act all the time.

The way that I think that they could help more, is by having the government evolve. I think that the government could use some of the money they have, and evolved it into more programs. They could use the money to help bring people over that can help educate the children more, they could use the money to bring medical supplies over to the people that can't afford it, I think that the government just needs to get involved more.

In conclusion, According to, "Stats SA Department" 7.5% of South Africa's population has a disability. The disabilities can be mental health, physical, birth defects, and many more. They face a lot of problems with education, medical help, job seeking, and more. They are programs and acts that get involved with this problem but they need more help.

## Works Cited

- “Disability.” *South African Human Rights Commission*,  
<https://www.sahrc.org.za/index.php/focus-areas/disability-older-persons/disability>.  
Accessed 24 April 2023.
- “Disability and Health Inclusion Strategies | CDC.” *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/disability-strategies.html>.  
Accessed 24 April 2023.
- “Disability-Inclusive Education in Africa Program.” *World Bank*, 30 November 2018,  
<https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/disability/brief/disability-inclusive-education-in-africa-program>. Accessed 24 April 2023.
- “A double challenge for the disabled | Africa Renewal.” *the United Nations*,  
<https://www.un.org/africarenewal/magazine/december-2018-march-2019/double-challenge-disabled>. Accessed 24 April 2023.
- Mayer, DynaVox. “Education for children with disabilities in South Africa.” *Human Rights Watch*,  
[https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/accessible\\_document/etr\\_version.pdf](https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/accessible_document/etr_version.pdf). Accessed 24 April 2023.
- Parke, Phoebe. “More Africans have phone service than piped water.” *CNN*, 19 January 2016,  
<https://www.cnn.com/2016/01/19/africa/africa-afrobarometer-infrastructure-report/index.html>. Accessed 24 April 2023.

Schmidt, Luke, and Andrea Willmore. "South Africa." *National Geographic Kids*,  
<https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/geography/countries/article/south-africa>. Accessed  
24 April 2023

("Stats SA profiles persons with disabilities")