

The children of the Project Zulu Choir

Fact Sheet

The Project Zulu Choir is from a township called Madadeni in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.



What is a township?

A township is residential area which is situated on the outskirts of a town.

Townships began in South Africa during the apartheid and were home to black South Africans who were working in the nearby white-only town.

There is a great sense of community in Madadeni

Madadeni has grown over the years and it now has supermarkets, schools and local markets.

Despite the growth much of Madadeni is still undeveloped and many roads are unpaved.

About the Madadeni Township

- Madadeni is in the KwaZulu-Natal province of South Africa
- It is approximately 200 miles from Johannesburg, South Africa's largest city.
- Madadeni has approximately 120,000 people living in the Township.
- There is a high rate of unemployment.
- Over 50% of children will not complete secondary school and very few children will continue onto higher education.
- Some houses are built by the government using bricks; however others are built by the people themselves using materials they find such as corrugated iron.

Madadeni Children

- Children are often required to help their family with everyday chores like cooking and cleaning as well as looking after younger siblings.

- Many children live with aunts, uncles, older siblings or grandparents and it is common that several generations will live under one roof.
- Culture is regarded as important and the children continue to carry out these old traditions such as food, dance, traditional attire, Zulu language and family dynamics.



What is school like?

- The school day starts at 7:30am and ends at 2:15pm. These times are due to the hot weather, particularly in the summer months.
- Currently there are between 50 and 60 children per class, although the ideal number would be 30.
- Schools sometimes convert their libraries into classrooms to create more space.
- Most classrooms contain wooden desks and blackboards.
- Some schools have a computer classroom but other schools have no computers at all.
- There are few resources therefore opportunities for practical learning are limited
- Although the children's first language is Zulu, they are taught the entire curriculum in English from Grade 4 onwards (equivalent to Year 5+) and all exams are written in English.

Music

- Traditional Zulu songs and dances have been performed for generations.
- The children learn these dances at school and also at home from a young age.
- The songs and dances have different meanings, for example there are traditional wedding songs, gospel and folk songs.
- Often on a long journey or in their free time, you find the children practicing dances or gathering around and singing altogether.
- The schools in Madadeni regularly compete in traditional dance competitions. They spend hours rehearsing and take performances very seriously.