



**CHURCH WORLD SERVICE  
HOTLINE**

Church World Service Hotline for the week of August 6, 2007--available in Spanish (*línea de noticias*) and in [podcasts](http://www.churchworldservice.org) in English and Spanish--at [www.churchworldservice.org](http://www.churchworldservice.org).

- Reaching out in prayer following **Minneapolis** tragedy
- CWS assisting displaced **Iraqis** in Jordan, Syria, and Iraq
- Efforts for peace in Darfur, **Sudan**
- Indigenous women in **Guatemala** push for involvement in decision-making
- CWS provides protective gear for **Kansas** flood clean-up; kits in **Texas**

**Minnesota**--Our prayers go out to the families who have lost loved ones in the collapse of the Interstate highway bridge in Minneapolis, and we join in prayer with the larger community grieving in the wake of this disaster. The tragedy is yet another reminder of the fragility of life.

This bridge collapse and the deaths and injuries are a tragic blow for the people of Minneapolis. We pray that our care and concern will somehow cushion that blow as we gather them in a collective embrace supported by faith.

Our hope is that the lessons of this fatal disaster will inform our government's actions in regard to safeguarding our nation's infrastructure.

**Iraq**--Some two million Iraqis are displaced within Iraq and more than two million have fled the country--most going to Jordan and Syria--because of ongoing conflict within Iraq.

Church World Service is 1) supporting the efforts of Action by Churches Together (ACT) partners--International Orthodox Christian Charities (IOCC), Norwegian Church Aid, and the Middle East Council of Churches--working in Iraq, Jordan, and Syria; and 2) assisting several Iraqi non-governmental organizations and hospitals.

Church World Service has sent 12,150 CWS Hygiene Kits and other health supplies to partner IOCC in Jordan to assist Iraqi refugees there, and 15,000 School Kits to meet needs in Syria.

Church World Service-supported ACT partners are also providing food parcels for some 3,100 families in Iraq and Syria; monthly food packages for 300 families in Jordan; social and psychological assistance for 115 young people in three youth centers in Iraq; a water filter system for a district hospital, which will benefit about 200,000 people in southern Iraq; shelters for some 300 Marsh Arabs in southern Iraq; medicines and supplies for a health center of the Chaldean church in Baghdad; school supplies, coats, hats, and gloves for Iraqi refugee children in Jordan; cash grants for Iraqi families in Jordan to help pay for rent, medicines, and other urgent needs; vocational training for some 100 young people and basic medical care for at least 100 children and adults in Syria.

Church World Service is also supporting partner efforts to help improve the capacity of six Iraqi non-governmental organizations that are working on various projects, including opening a computer center, equipping a school library, providing information



**George Hazou (left), President of the Syrian Orthodox Charity Association, and Father Emmanuel Al Bana, of St. Ephraim's Syrian Orthodox Church in Amman, Jordan, distribute CWS blankets and kits to Iraqi refugees there.** Photo: Steve Weaver/CWS

on household hygiene, and initiating peace awareness and conflict mitigation training.

Church World Service is undergirding efforts to provide medical supplies and equipment to hospitals in conflict zones, and to provide food baskets and locally-purchased school and hygiene kits to children in 21 institutions.

Monetary contributions are urgently needed to support these efforts.

**Sudan**--The ACT coalition, of which Church World Service is a member, is urging the international community to increase its response to the humanitarian crisis in Darfur, Sudan, and step up efforts for creating a lasting peace in the region.

This follows a resolution by the UN Security Council to send 26,000

peacekeepers to the region to provide security for civilians and aid workers in Darfur.

"Although we recognize that this force is not an end-all solution to the conflict, we do hope it brings greater stability and access to some four million people in desperate need of humanitarian assistance," says ACT mediator Sushant Agrawal.

Church World Service is supporting the efforts of ACT and Caritas Internationalis, which have been providing shelter, clean water and sanitation, as well as building health clinics and schools for people living in camps for the displaced in Darfur.

**Guatemala**--The 4,000 indigenous women members of CONAVIGUA (National Coordination of Widows in Guatemala) remain active in their pursuit of peace and justice, community development, health and education, food security, housing, and human rights for indigenous people in Guatemala.

In this electoral year in Guatemala, CONAVIGUA is holding monthly workshops to help build awareness among its members on issues impacting their communities and the importance of participating in civil society and becoming part of the decision-making process. CONAVIGUA is stressing in particular women's voting rights and their right to run for public office.

**Kansas and Texas**--Following June and July flooding in Coffeyville and Independence, **Kansas**, residents are returning to their homes to clean up, often without protection from contaminants, raw sewage, and mold. Church World Service, together with local partners and member denominations, particularly the United Church of Christ, will distribute disposable coveralls, gloves, goggles, hats, and safety information, primarily in the two communities.

CWS has sent 210 CWS Baby Kits and 810 Hygiene Kits to Catholic Charities of Corpus Christi, **Texas**, as part of CWS's efforts responding to summer flooding there.

Thank you for your prayers and support for the life-sustaining work of Church World Service. Contributions may be sent through your church or directly to Church World Service, P.O. Box 968, Elkhart, IN 46515. Credit card contributions may be made by calling 1-800-297-1516 or at [www.churchworldservice.org](http://www.churchworldservice.org). To SUBSCRIBE or UNSUBSCRIBE to the e-mail version of the Church World Service Hotline, reply to this message, or write to [jcarlson@churchworldservice.org](mailto:jcarlson@churchworldservice.org).