



**CHURCH WORLD SERVICE  
HOTLINE**

Church World Service Hotline for the week of October 29, 2007 – available in Spanish (linea de noticias) and in [podcasts](#) in English and Spanish--at [www.churchworldservice.org](http://www.churchworldservice.org)

- Group cooperation aids continuing Hurricane Katrina recovery in New Orleans, **Louisiana**
- CWS responds to situation in **Burma**
- Humanitarian aid continues in Darfur, **Sudan**
- **California** wildfires destroy homes, disrupt lives
- Jubilee USA Network seeks additional **debt cancellation**

**Louisiana**--Recovery from Hurricane Katrina has brought together faith-based and community groups from across the New Orleans area. Greater New Orleans Disaster Recovery Partnership (GNODRP) is a CWS-supported umbrella agency representing nine long-term recovery groups and 70 agencies.

The group serves as a roundtable where unmet needs are addressed. For example, when case manager Ron Simmons needed supplies to repair a client's home, he brought the need to GNODRP.

"We've gotten paint from GNODRP, we've gotten appliances from GNODRP," Simmons says. "They're teaching us how to write grants. Because we're new, we need the support."

The group is also planning for disasters that may be ahead. For example, GNODRP worked with the Federal Emergency Management Agency to establish what resources voluntary agencies could commit in the event a flu pandemic struck New Orleans.

**Burma**--In recent weeks, Buddhist monks and others have joined Nobel Peace Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi in the struggle for non-violent change in their country.

For many years, Church World Service has helped to provide assistance to Burmese in refugee camps in Thailand and helped to resettle refugees from Burma (also known as Myanmar) to the U.S.

In eastern Burma, government forces have displaced an estimated 500,000 civilians. Just over the border in Thailand, 160,000 refugees live in nine refugee camps. CWS is helping to meet refugees' needs through the 23-year-old Thailand-Burma Border Consortium, of which CWS is a founding member.

The U.S. government has recognized Burmese refugees as a population of special humanitarian concern and began resettlement in October 2006. Since then, Church World Service has helped some 1,200 ethnic Karen and Chin Burmese resettle in the U.S. They are among the nearly 14,000 Burmese refugees admitted by the U.S. Refugee Program over the past year.



**A volunteer installs a new door frame in a damaged home in Slidell, Louisiana.**  
Photo: Matt Hackworth/CWS

CWS anticipates that the conditions inside Burma will continue to worsen unless substantive changes occur. To that end, CWS urges that the UN remain actively engaged in the crisis in Burma, and that it meet with Burma's religious and civil society leaders to further understand the situation. CWS also urges continued support from international organizations for the humanitarian needs of the people of Burma.

For more on this story, visit the Newsroom at [www.churchworldservice.org](http://www.churchworldservice.org).

**Sudan**--Though security in Darfur continues to be a major challenge, the work of Action by Churches Together-Caritas and other local CWS partners continues in both internal displacement camps and host communities.

This past month (September), 24,595 patients visited ACT-Caritas health clinics for treatment; 2,876 children under five and 2,031 pregnant and lactating women received supplementary meals; and 5,610 community members learned about hygiene, nutrition, and disease prevention. Five borehole wells were drilled and 34 school pit latrines were being constructed; 5,720 families in displacement camps learned about hygiene; and a camp medical committee learned trauma healing skills. Many people also took part in cleaning or solid waste disposal campaigns. Others learned about peace-building, conflict resolution, human rights, and child protection. And, 15 school masters were trained in administration, humanitarian relationships, child rights, and HIV/AIDS.

**California**--More than a half million people in southern California have evacuated their homes due to wildfires. An estimated 1,800 homes were consumed by the flames. Though many people have been allowed to return to their neighborhoods, fires still threaten some areas. CWS will assess the need for long-term recovery training and project support in addition to responding to requests for assistance from member communions.

**Debt cancellation**--Seven years after the Jubilee 2000 movement (of which CWS was a leading champion) brought the issue of crushing international debt to the attention of world leaders, the Jubilee USA Network is calling for 2007 to be a Sabbath Year--an opportunity to reflect on the life-saving impacts of debt cancellation. Please urge your Senators to co-sponsor the new Jubilee Act, S. 2166, which promotes responsible lending and creditor transparency, and extends debt cancellation to impoverished countries that need it to meet their Millennium Development Goals. Visit the [Speak Out pages at www.churchworldservice.org](http://www.churchworldservice.org) to find out more.

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).