



**CHURCH WORLD SERVICE
HOTLINE**

Church World Service Hotline for the week of November 12, 2007 – available in Spanish (linea de noticias) and in [podcasts](#) in English and Spanish--at www.churchworldservice.org

- CWS responds to **Mexico** floods
- **Filipino** farmers gain added income from pig raising
- Indigenous people in **Paraguay** tackle deforestation
- **U.S. Farm Bill** reform

Mexico--As thousands emerge from flooded homes and makeshift shelters, the residents of Villahermosa, Tabasco state, are now threatened by various ailments, and there are fears of a possible cholera outbreak.

The flooding in Villahermosa is being called one of the most catastrophic disasters in modern Mexican history, with several people reported killed and more than 800,000 people initially left homeless.

Church World Service is sending 1,000 lightweight blankets to Iglesia Cristiana Ebenezer in Los Fresnos, Texas, which will be transporting the blankets to partner groups in Tabasco for use by flood survivors.

CWS is also supporting the efforts of partner Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, who is assisting the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico in providing shelter, meals, water, and basic health services for flood survivors.

Philippines--Forty-five farmer households in Aklan Province--one of the poorest provinces in the Philippines--are learning valuable new skills to help them raise their pigs for sale at market, thanks to CWS and local partner the Developers' Foundation.

With CWS support these small family farmers are gaining access to micro-credit, business-development training, and veterinary assistance to help keep the pigs healthy and fatten them for market—all crucial to the farmers' success.

Gaining access to short-term loans, with low and affordable interest rates, as well as learning how to better care for their animals, has enabled the farmers to earn some \$22 per hog—helping them better provide for their families.

For these families, the hog project is affording them the promise of a better life.



Mexico--Residents walk in a flooded street in Villahermosa, where thousands of homes were flooded. Photo: REUTERS/Odaliz Anaya, courtesy www.alertnet.org

Paraguay--The indigenous Ayoreos Totobiegosode people of the Paraguayan Chaco region of South America are benefiting from the work of CWS Paraguayan partner CIPAE (Churches Committee for Emergency Assistance) as it provides legal assistance and advocates to stop the cutting of forests on lands claimed by the community.

Advocating for land rights and the preservation of natural resources is part of the strategy of CWS partners in the Chaco. Some 40,000 indigenous people live in the Paraguayan Chaco. The Chaco region also covers parts of Argentina and Bolivia. CWS's Chaco Initiative is supporting the work of

partners who are advocating for indigenous rights and culture, encouraging indigenous participation in government policymaking, and providing income-generation, agricultural, educational, and other types of assistance for indigenous families.

Farm Bill—"There were a few positive steps taken toward reform, but much in the way of broad reform was left undone," says CWS Education and Advocacy Director Rajyashri Waghray about the Farm Bill, which the full Senate began debating on Monday, Nov. 5.

"We are very pleased that the agriculture committee took steps to promote market opportunities for producers, to protect animal health, and to enact the kind of tougher anti-trust enforcement needed to reverse the trend toward further industrialization of the food system," she adds.

CWS applauds positive steps taken, but urges the full Senate to do more to help America's small farmers without making it difficult for small farmers in developing nations to earn income from their own locally grown crops.

As part of the Sow Justice campaign in support of Farm Bill reform, CWS regularly makes available educational resources and updates and calls citizens to action through Speak Out alerts at www.churchworldservice.org.



Philippines--A woman farmer feeds her piglets. Photo: Developers' Foundation

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