



**CHURCH WORLD SERVICE
HOTLINE**

Church World Service Hotline update for May 27, 2008 – available in Spanish (linea de noticias) and in [podcasts](http://www.churchworldservice.org) in English and Spanish--at www.churchworldservice.org

- CWS partners rush emergency aid to families in **Myanmar (Burma)**
- Severe food crisis threatens lives in **West Timor, Indonesia**
- Quake response continues in **China**; survivors thankful for supplies
- Tornadoes hit parts of **Iowa** and **Minnesota**
- **World Refugee Day** is June 20



Cyclone survivors in Myanmar receiving rice from a CWS-supported local organization. Photo: CWS-ACT

Myanmar (Burma)—"There will be another wave of deaths from cholera from drinking dirty water.... It is already starting to strike," says a CWS partner.

In cyclone-stricken areas of Myanmar (Burma), the second wave of disaster is beginning to wash over survivors with the fewest resources to cope. The elderly and children are beginning to die of dysentery because of a lack of clean drinking water, according to Church World Service and local organizations working in the region.

One local CWS partner organization is providing clean water for 25,000 people a day. The local aid teams are delivering lightweight, 975-litre water baskets that are made of plastic and easy to make and transport. Each "basket," when filled with purified water or rainwater, can provide drinking water for 450 people a day.

Donna Derr, CWS Director of Emergency Response, says local organizations have been delivering relief supplies so far, even in the face of challenges, "with materials either purchased within Myanmar or that had been pre-positioned in the country prior to the disaster."

When asked if CWS is still urging contributions from donors, Derr says, "Absolutely."

CWS is coordinating directly with local partners on behalf of the ACT International coalition to provide clean water, emergency food, and non-food items to more than 100,000 people, and is providing basic medicines to clinics to treat 100,000 people for three months. In the recovery phase, the coalition also plans to rehabilitate 5,000 water points, providing clean water for up to 1.3 million people.

West Timor, Indonesia--Against the backdrop of a rapidly worsening world food crisis, more than 91 percent of households in Indonesia's West Timor region are suffering hunger and alarming levels of malnutrition because of inadequate access to food, according to a new report by Church World Service.

"Due to continued poor food production from season to season and due to poverty, households just don't have adequate access to food in either quantity or nutritional quality," says CWS Deputy Director Maurice Bloem, of the food situation in West Timor.

"In the survey, among under-five age children, we found a very high prevalence of wasting and stunting--signs of acute and chronic malnutrition," says Bloem. The survey also found a high degree of infectious diseases, particularly diarrhea caused by poor hygiene, water and sanitation, and acute respiratory infection among small children, as a result of poor hygiene and low immune system.

Church World Service is urging immediate world attention to the crisis to prevent deaths among small children and to lessen permanent developmental damage to children under age five.

CWS began work in West Timor in 2000. Bloem says that CWS is already supporting work in West Timor. "We're urging broader and immediate support from donors and world bodies to establish income generating activities for

poor households, food- or cash-for-work initiatives, and to help provide safe drinking water." CWS is also beginning a collaboration with the H. J. Heinz Company Foundation of Pittsburgh, PA, for provision of micronutrient supplements.

CWS now supports sustainable agriculture programs, education and training in the region, including seed solutions specific to the locale, small scale irrigation, and improved drainage to improve production.

China--A strong aftershock in Sichuan province on May 25 killed six more people and added to the devastation from the May 12 earthquake. In addition, new lakes formed by rockfall from the quakes are causing fears of flash flooding.

CWS partner the Amity Foundation continues to assist the most vulnerable displaced families.

"You really helped us a lot and we can't imagine how you provided these goods so quickly," said some quake-affected villagers in Penghua and Woyun after receiving assistance from Amity. The villagers joined in unloading desperately-needed quilts and other supplies.

With more than 67,000 now reported dead, a looming rainy season, and fears of impending disease outbreaks, Amity continues to provide rapid assistance to vulnerable communities devastated by the May 12 quake.

Amity is working to provide emergency shelter supplies and quilts for some 8,000 families, and food support for 16,000 of the most vulnerable people. Following the crisis phase, Amity will assist in rebuilding 600 homes, 10 schools, and five clinics, along with water and irrigation systems.

Midwest tornadoes--At least eight people have died in tornadoes that swept through Iowa and Minnesota on May 25. The towns of Parkersburg and New Hartford, IA, received direct hits by a tornado that killed seven people and injured many others. Church World Service emergency responders are reaching out to denominational and voluntary agency partners.

World Refugee Day is June 20. For information about Church World Service response to refugees around the world, stories of resettlement in the U.S., and how you can become involved, visit www.churchworldservice.org/Immigration/.



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. 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.