



Annual Report 2008

Jesuit Refugee Service



table of contents



cover photo

(Don Doll SJ/JRS)

A Sudanese refugee gathers firewood for her family in the camp of Kounougou in eastern Chad. Each family of six is allowed 20kg of wood per month.

publisher

Peter Balleis SJ

editor

Danielle Vella

designer

Malcolm Bonello



The Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) is an international Catholic organisation established in 1980 by Fr Pedro Arrupe SJ. Its mission is to accompany, serve and defend the cause of forcibly displaced people.

Jesuit Refugee Service

C.P. 6139, 00195 Roma Prati, Italy

TEL: +39 06 6897 7386

FAX: +39 06 6897 7380

servir@jrs.net

www.jrs.net

Editorial	03
Where we work	04
North America	07
Latin America & the Caribbean	11
Europe	15
Eastern Africa	19
Great Lakes	23
Southern Africa	27
West Africa	31
Middle East	35
Asia Pacific	39
South Asia	43
Glossary of project categories	47
JRS advocacy	48
JRS donors	50
JRS contact details	51

Acronyms used in this issue:

DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EU	European Union
IDPs	Internally displaced people
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

The JRS International Office has two regular publications: Dispatches, a twice monthly email bulletin with refugee news briefings and JRS project updates, and Servir, a magazine issued three times a year. Both are free-of-charge and available in English, Spanish, French and Italian. To receive Dispatches and Servir, please subscribe through the JRS website:

<http://www.jrs.net/lists/manage.php>



Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556), the founder of the Society of Jesus, invites us to see the people on the face of the earth, *so diverse in dress and behaviour, some white and others black, some in peace and others at war, some weeping and others laughing, some healthy and others sick, some being born and others dying.*¹

As JRS we see especially all those people who are forced to take refuge in another country or who are displaced in their own. We see people who spend years in camps, in Africa and Asia, who struggle to survive in urban areas worldwide, who are confined to detention centres in Australia, Thailand, the US and Europe, rejected. But just as we see refugees without hope, we see many others with great hope: the Bhutanese in Nepal and the Karenni in Thailand preparing for resettlement in a new country; the Sudanese and the Burundians returning home after years of war to build their lives and country in peace; the displaced in Goma studying in very simple conditions for a better future; Iraqi teenagers experiencing inner healing from trauma thanks to psychosocial and pastoral support.

And we see people of different faiths and cultures, who belong to many organisations, serving the refugees in difficult situations. We see them also in JRS, working with great dedication and giving their best to bring hope; to accompany and serve forcibly displaced people in more than 50 countries and to defend their rights.

When he addressed delegates of the Society of Jesus in February 2008, Pope Benedict XVI commended the work of JRS: *Taking up one of the latest intuitions of Father Arrupe, your Society continues to engage in a meritorious way in the service of the refugees, who are often the poorest among the poor and need not only material help but also the deeper spiritual, human and psychological proximity especially proper to your service.*²

Through the richly diverse stories of those we serve, this Annual Report gives an overview of all the places where JRS is at work. It is our expression of deep gratitude to all who support this great service of hope. Thank you.

Peter Balleis SJ

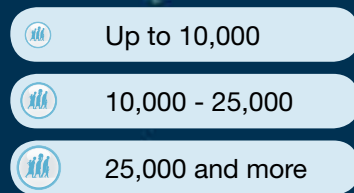
JRS International Director

¹ Ignatius makes this call to those following the Spiritual Exercises, a method of prayer for ordering one's life according to God's will.

² Address of Pope Benedict XVI to the 35th General Congregation of the Society of Jesus, Rome, 21 February 2008.

where we work

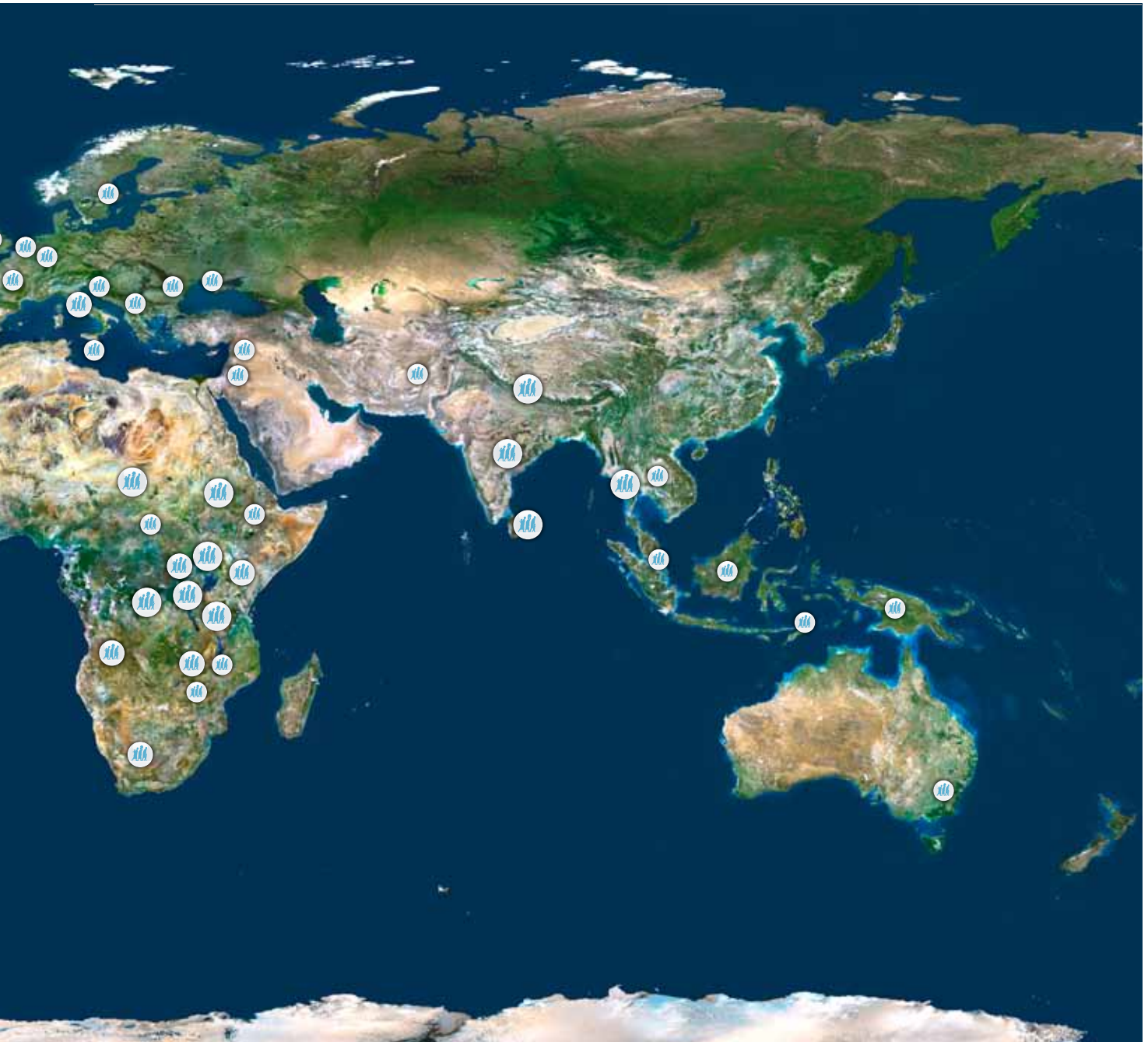
people reached by JRS by region



global overview

An estimated 40 million people are forcibly displaced across the world. The overview below presents the estimated numbers in regions and countries where JRS is at work. In all cases but two*, they pertain to the beginning of 2008 and are taken from the 2007 Statistical Yearbook published by UNHCR. They include refugees, people in refugee-like situations, asylum seekers, returnees, IDPs assisted by UNHCR, stateless persons and others of concern to UNHCR, by country of asylum. In some cases these statistics changed dramatically throughout 2008, with large-scale movements of people either fleeing or returning home.

North America			
Canada	213,254	Portugal	353
United States of America	365,103	Romania	2,180
	345,000 detainees*	Slovenia	4,048
Latin America & the Caribbean		Ukraine	67,283
Colombia	3,000,281	United Kingdom	310,823
Dominican Republic	App. 1,000,000 migrants*	Western Balkans	
Ecuador	292,322	Bosnia Herzegovina	146,586
Panama	17,422	Croatia	7,826
Venezuela	210,514	Macedonia	2,397
Europe		Serbia	326,853
Belgium	33,290	Sweden	108,372
France	183,788	Eastern Africa	
Germany	622,033	Ethiopia	85,395
Ireland	13,733	Kenya	371,495
Italy	40,454	Sudan	1,695,573
Malta	3,861	Tanzania	435,938
Morocco	1,457	Uganda	2,049,733

**Great Lakes**

Burundi	71,831
DRC	2,555,204
Rwanda	63,806

Southern Africa

Angola	27,007
Malawi	9,711
South Africa	207,601
Zambia	112,959
Zimbabwe	4,524

West Africa

Central African Republic	211,523
Chad	473,024
Côte d'Ivoire	735,686

Middle East

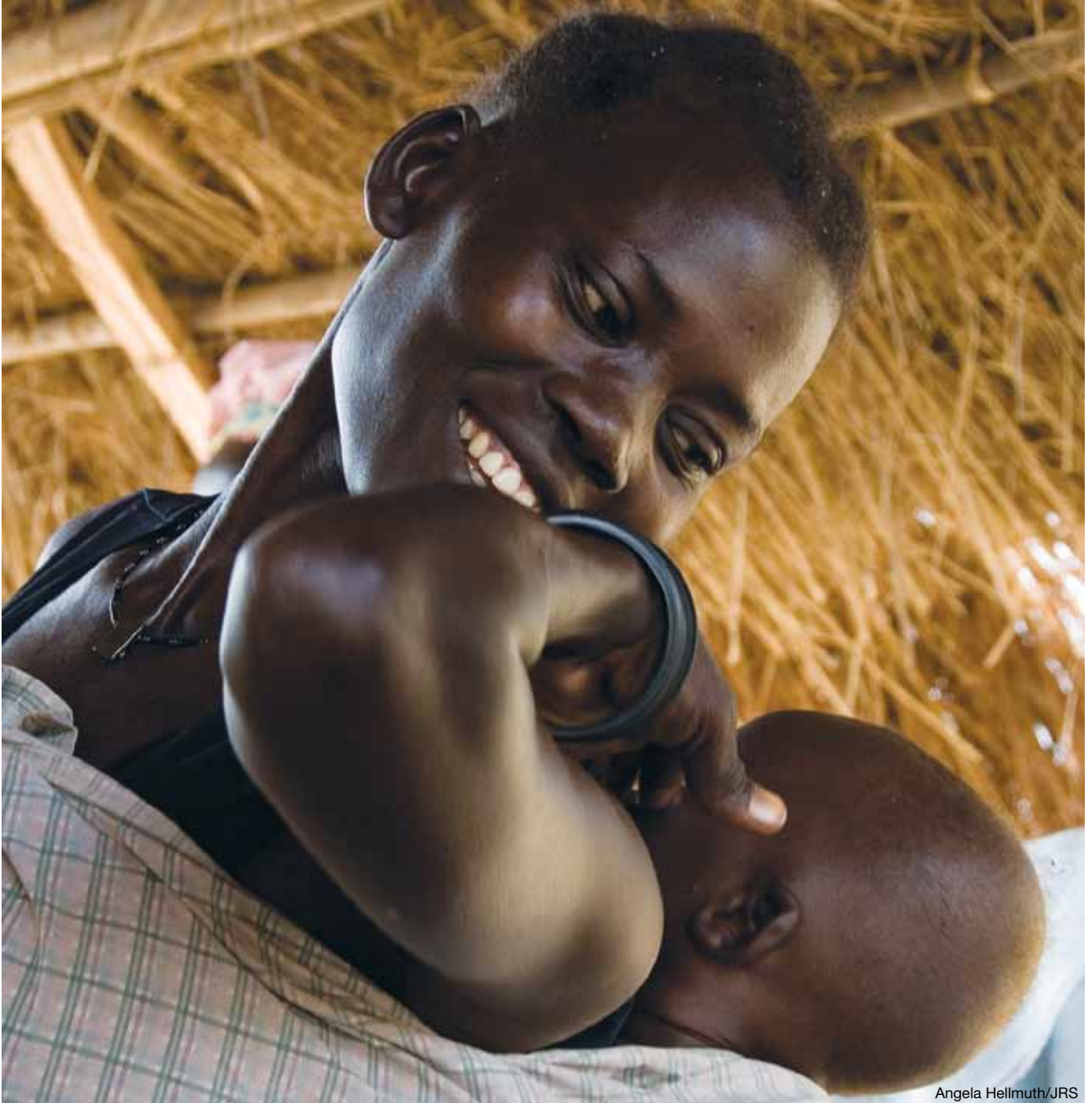
Jordan	500,658
Syria	1,809,677

Asia Pacific

Australia	23,680
Cambodia	418
Indonesia	526
Papua New Guinea	10,012
Singapore	34
Thailand	139,127
Timor Leste	72,595

South Asia

Afghanistan	535,632
India	163,966
Nepal	1,032,455
Sri Lanka	620,547



Angela Hellmuth/JRS

“Human beings need a future in which they can take hold of their full dignity; indeed they need an absolute future, a ‘great hope’ that exceeds every particular hope.”

Decree 2, no.13, 35th Jesuit General Congregation, inspired by Spe Salvi, the encyclical letter of Benedict XVI on Christian hope



☒ After being detained in the US, these men were deported to Mexico. Dumped across the border, they found a warm meal and blankets at a drop-in centre run by JRS in partnership with others as part of the Kino Border Initiative. (Peter Balleis SJ/JRS)

Witnessing to God's presence

Kenneth Gavin SJ, Director, JRS USA

The number of detained non-citizens in the US has grown dramatically in recent years. In 2008 more than 400,000 non-citizens were held in federal detention facilities throughout the country, up from approximately 225,000 in 2002. The majority of those detained have committed no criminal offence. Poverty or persecution has led them to overstay their visas or enter the country without documents. Once detained, they face the frightening prospect of permanent separation from their children and the inability to support families who remain in the US. After living and working for years in the US, they must confront the real possibility of deportation to a country where they have few if any cultural or family connections, limited language skills and little sense of home. We strongly believe in the need to witness to God's presence and love within the confining walls of the growing number of detention centres and, as of 2008, in the newly inaugurated Kino Border Initiative (KBI) along the Arizona-Mexico border. Time and again, we have seen in the eyes of needy migrant men and women the face of God inviting us to care for the poorest among us.

USA

In the heart of God

JRS USA provided chaplaincy services in three federal detention centres located in Texas, Arizona and New York and, as of 2008, in Mira Loma, a Los Angeles county detention centre in California. Our chaplains ensured that detainees could receive spiritual care within their own faith tradition. Religious activities included worship, prayer, scripture services and fellowship, and pastoral counselling and moral support were offered to all who needed.

	Florence (Arizona)	El Paso (Texas)	Batavia (New York)
Christianity	13, 720	11, 285	5,199
Islam	494	1,244	3,661
Jewish		643	83
Spiritual counselling	1,496	561	

This information pertains to three federal detention centres. For the Los Angeles county detention facility, the estimated participant population is approximately 10,000 for 2008.



“The detainees receive spiritual strength from the services we have for them. They realise they are in the heart of God, at all times... Usually they tell us that the poverty in their country is unbearable so they risk the journey to the US to work and send money to their families... A 21-year-old came in on a Thursday, he spoke to his family on a Saturday; Sunday, his little girl died. He had come to the US to earn money to send his two children to school. He told me through his tears, *Now I only have one to send to school, and most probably I won't be able to, because I am detained here, and I will be deported.*”

Maria Cañez, chaplain, Florence detention centre, Arizona



“I'm there to serve the human being, the person, because we are all children of God. One non-Catholic detainee said he loved coming to our services because the message we give is one of calmness, hope. He said it keeps him happy and positive.”

Imelda Bermejo, chaplain, Mira Loma detention centre, Lancaster, California



“I think it doesn't make any difference how many walls we build; when people want to survive and want their families to survive, they're going to keep trying.”

Rosemary Cummins OP, chaplain, Florence detention centre, Arizona



INTERNET LINK

More information about the JRS/USA detention chaplaincy programme can be found on the web at:
http://www.jrsusa.org/we_do_programs_chaplaincy.php

Canada

Welcome: the first step towards integration

The welcome extended to refugees is often a determining factor in their integration in their new society. Thanks to a sponsorship agreement with the government of Québec, the Jesuits have welcomed some 1,300 refugees since 1981. In 2008, JRS in Montreal received 28 refugees from Afghanistan, Eritrea and Ethiopia.

In Toronto, the work of welcoming asylum seekers by JRS Canada is done through our association with Romero House, a 'community of reception' for newcomers who need a home, social services and support while they prepare for their hearing. There are six or seven interns (volunteers) who spend a year or two living and working with the asylum seekers, accompanying them in good times and in bad while they wait, up to a year or more, to be called for their hearing.

Help is always offered through personal presence and understanding. On occasion, there is advocacy on behalf of individuals who have been threatened with deportation or for refugee rights ignored by the Canadian government. In this way, resettlement takes place in the context of community and accompaniment. Romero House is a happy place for JRS values and personnel to be planted to help the garden grow.



A good start

Samuel Mulatu writes: Due to the war and misery in Somalia, I had to seek refuge abroad, first in Italy and later in Canada. With the help of Sr Paolina, a Dutch Sister helping migrants in Rome, I was put in contact with Fr Louis-Joseph Goulet SJ in Canada who accepted to sponsor me. After two long years of waiting, I arrived in Québec on 20 October 1999. Fr Goulet was expecting me. He introduced me to social workers who directed me to different resources and found an apartment and furniture for me. It was a good start that allowed me to rebuild my life. Today I try to be useful to my host country and to help new arrivals myself, without distinction of origin, culture, race or faith. This is what I learned from those who welcomed me.



USA/Mexico

Welcomed with open arms

Two days before Christmas, I was pulled over while driving. The policeman asked for my license, I gave him my Mexican license, and he took it and cut it into four pieces. Then he asked me if I wanted it back. I was handcuffed and taken into custody. They made fun of me. It was four days before my family and friends knew what happened to me. I was in prison for 14 days and then deported. I had lived in Arizona for seven years. I have no family in Nogales and don't know the city; I didn't know where to go. A woman I met in church told me about the shelter. And here I am. I am so grateful to the sisters here. They've given me a roof, food, clothing; they've welcomed me with open arms.

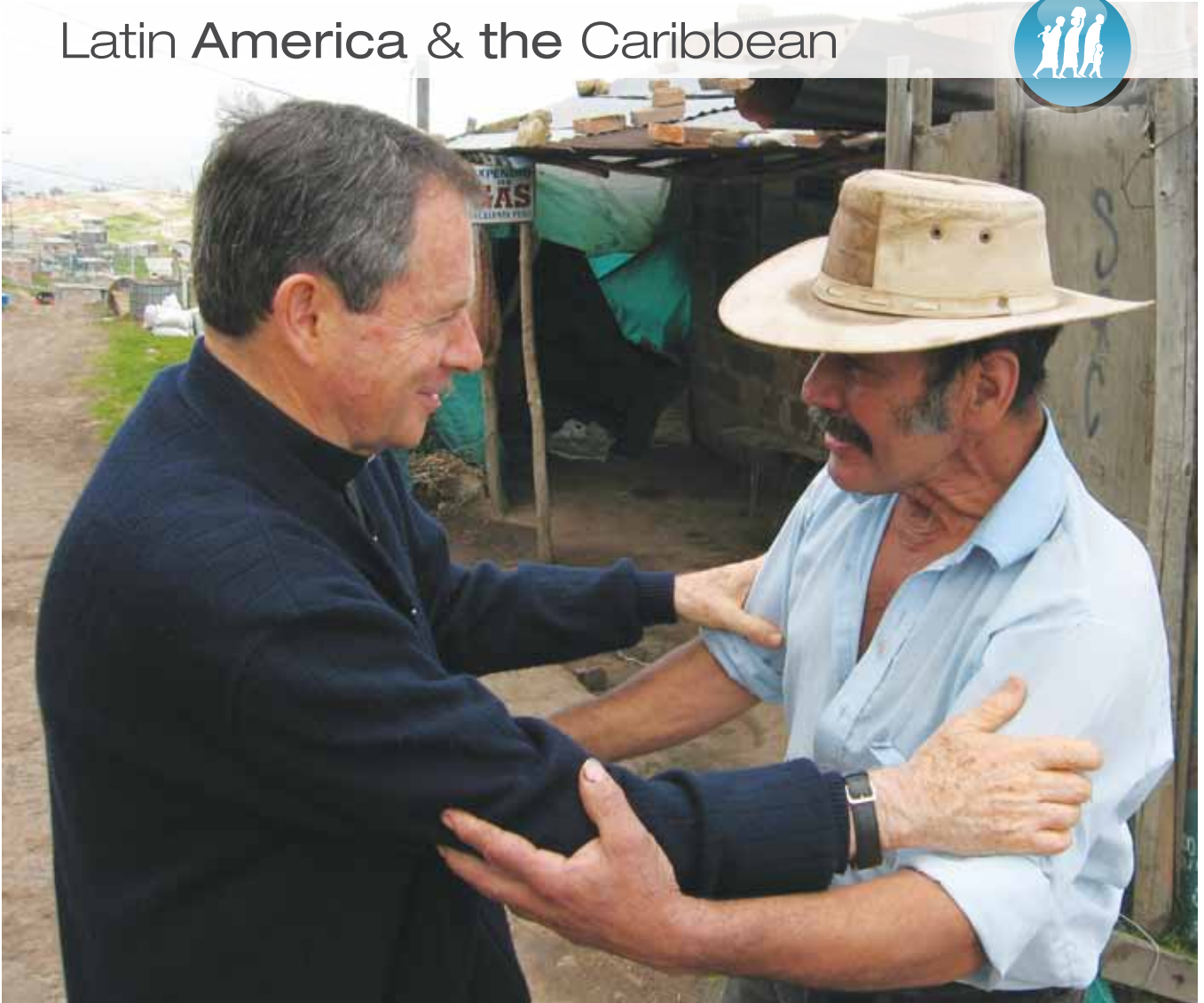


Sandra found refuge at Nazareth House in Nogales, Mexico, which takes in women and their children deported from the US. This short-term shelter is part of the Kino Border Initiative.



Colombia: A family displaced in 2007; their new home in Soacha, Bogotá, is in the background.

Peter Ballis GJ/JRS



📷 Colombia: Don Daniel Caro Borda (left) is Bishop of Soacha, a rapidly growing urban area on the outskirts of Bogotá. Here he meets a displaced man who has made his home on top of a mountain where many displaced people settled. (Peter Balleis SJ/JRS)

Listen and Learn

Alfredo Infante SJ, Director, JRS Latin America

In Latin America, the Colombian war has become a regional crisis, with hundreds of thousands of IDPs and some one million refugees in neighbouring countries. In the Caribbean, extreme poverty and political unrest in Haiti, combined with desertification and natural disaster, have prompted more Haitians to move to the Dominican Republic, US, Canada, Venezuela and Jamaica, all of which have restrictive entry policies. Host societies tend to be prejudiced by media opinion, which discriminates against and even criminalises refugees.

The priorities of JRS Latin America are to accompany forcibly displaced people, to facilitate their integration in local communities and to influence public policies to safeguard their rights. Accompaniment, being close to displaced people, is the fundamental basis of our work, the wellspring of our service and advocacy. It is by listening to a displaced woman or child, to an unemployed refugee, that we can learn the key issues to be addressed. Without this accompaniment, closeness, listening, our public awareness or advocacy makes no sense.

Integration: the focus of our work

In Latin America, JRS serves people displaced by the civil war in Colombia in the country itself and in Venezuela, Panama and Ecuador. JRS is also at work amongst Haitian immigrants in the Dominican Republic and in Haitian border towns. Accompanying, serving and defending the rights of displaced people and migrants in cities and on borders: the cornerstone of JRS in this region is integration.

Coexistence

When a refugee family arrives to El Nula, Venezuela, neighbours bring them to the JRS compound for guidance and assistance.

“When I met IDPs in Soacha, in my country, my life changed. Now I wonder what I can do to help them,” says the young headmaster of a JRS-supported school in Colombia.

The areas in Latin America where JRS is present, especially on the borders, are marked by institutional fragility. The rights of the residents are far from guaranteed. We seek to create social safety nets and opportunities for participation in community life, to promote peaceful coexistence between local residents and forcibly displaced people. JRS teams are at work in schools, health centres, churches and community-based organisations, working with displaced people and the host population to build a common agenda for coexistence. Our strategy of intervention is at once personal and communal; we help refugees to overcome the trauma they faced and continue to face, and at the same time we attempt to do away with xenophobic prejudices among the host community. Only then can the displaced people start to rebuild their lives.

Photographic exhibitions, theatre and dance were held throughout 2008 especially with children, to enhance harmony and peace-building. Through cultural expression, we use positive language to describe the phenomena of immigration and refuge.



📷 This Colombian boy is a refugee in Guasdualito, southern Venezuela; JRS accompanies and supports his family. (Sara Pettinella/JRS)

Livelihood

Our livelihood programmes nurture the productive capacities of forcibly displaced people so that their families will be self-sufficient and not an economical and social burden on the host community. In Colombia and Venezuela, programmes have been successful, while in Panama it has been difficult because refugees are not entitled to work.



With support from JRS, this Colombian asylum seeker works as a street vendor in El Nula, southern Venezuela. (Sara Pettinella/JRS)

Advocacy

Refugee organisations in Ecuador took an active part in the process to draft a national constitution, approved in 2008; JRS served as a bridge between the refugees and the Constituent Assembly.

In the Dominican Republic, organisations of Haitian workers have been strengthened in order to defend their rights.

JRS defends the rights of forcibly displaced people by seeking to influence public policy. In our advocacy, we cultivate synergies with other works of the Society of Jesus such as universities, colleges, radio stations, community centres and parishes. Sometimes we work in coalitions to address specific issues like the use of children in armed conflicts and access to education.

Other strategies, to defend the rights of the refugee and local populations and to enhance integration, consist of strengthening community-based organisations and training displaced people, asylum seekers and members of local communities and military and civil authorities. This work is generated by teachers, migrant workers, community leaders and defenders of human rights.

Individual legal support is essential to ensure that the rights of refugees and migrants are respected. We accompany people applying for refugee status and come to the aid of those threatened with human rights abuses or deportation. And we help those whose lack of proper documentation makes it difficult for them to participate in the daily life of their host community.

The advocacy work of JRS is underpinned by research into the situation of urban refugees, the status and working conditions of migrant populations, the living conditions of refugee women, sexual and gender-based violence and human rights abuses at the border.



Colombia: A girl designing a poster for a protest march against violence against women in San Pablo, Barrancabarmeja. (Peter Balleis SJ/JRS)



“ We were in detention for five months. The uncertainty made us feel very bad. We were so worried, we lost weight. We no longer had any wish to live; deprived of our liberty, locked up for a long time. It’s as if they took something from us because we lost the control over our lives. We are no longer as we were before. ”

Alexandra Pace/UNHCR



☒ Godfrey Veerasammy SJ (right) with one of our refugee friends. Godfrey was with JRS UK three days a week as part of his Jesuit regency placement. (Sarah Booker)

A helping hand through tough times

Michael Schöpf SJ, Director, JRS Europe

In 2008 JRS Europe worked to ensure that people in need of protection could still reach our territories; that a minimum of fair procedures and basic services were available to them; and that those obliged to leave Europe could find a helping hand through difficult times.

Our work was based on three regional priorities: assistance to forcibly displaced people made destitute through policies and practices that excluded minimum access to social services; advocacy against the use of administrative detention; meeting the needs of forced migrants on the borders of the European Union (externalisation of asylum). In 2008, in a significant step to accompany people at the external borders of the EU, new offices opened in Morocco and Ukraine.

Two more new projects in 2008: the Detention of Vulnerable Asylum Seekers (DEVAS) project will research the detention conditions and practices of 23 Member States towards vulnerable asylum seekers; the Advocacy Network on Destitution (ANDES) will create national coalitions of key actors on destitution, to open up a broader debate at European level.

At a glance

The JRS network in Europe grew to 14 country offices in 2008, with the setting up of projects in two new countries: in **Morocco**, JRS opened a crèche for migrant children and activities for their mothers, and in **Ukraine**, an accommodation centre for asylum seekers with legal and social services. In a further 11 countries, JRS had contact persons.

Pastoral accompaniment, social work, healthcare and legal aid in detention centres remained the mainstay of JRS activities across Europe, in **Austria, Belgium, Germany, Ireland, Malta, Romania, Slovenia, Sweden** and the **UK**. Similar services were offered to asylum seekers and refugees in the community in **Italy, Portugal** and **France** and in some of the above-mentioned countries. Other services in the community included the distribution of food and other basic items, help to access accommodation and employment, and language courses. Awareness-raising and lobbying for asylum seekers and refugees were key to the work of JRS Europe at country and regional level, often as part of coalitions and campaigns.

In the **West Balkans**, JRS assisted vulnerable IDPs and returnees, who were still struggling years after the end of war that led to the break-up of former Yugoslavia in the early 90s. In **Kosovo**, landmine survivors received support.



📍 Malta: A shop at the Hal-Far open centre. Those asylum seekers who receive protection are housed in open centres. (Alexandra Pace/ UNHCR)

Malta

Yearning for freedom

In 2008, 2,610 asylum applications were submitted in Malta, making the island the highest recipient of asylum claims per capita. Situated on migration routes between North Africa and Europe, the island has received thousands of asylum seekers in recent years, mostly from eastern, western and central Africa. The government enforces an administrative detention policy. Detention used to be indefinite; now asylum seekers may be detained for up to one year pending the outcome of their application. Rejected asylum seekers face 18 months – the maximum detention period – inside. JRS offers legal, social and pastoral services to detainees, who are housed in overcrowded centres most of which are unfit to house so many people even for the briefest of sojourns.

“ I am from Ivory Coast, and I came to Malta from Libya. We left Libya in two small crammed boats. On the way, the other boat sank and all the people in it drowned. When we reached Malta, we were put in detention. The very next day, the JRS team came and asked if we needed anything. For the four months I was inside, the JRS social worker and lawyer always came to visit, offering us phone cards to call home, clothes, legal help, whatever we needed that they could give us. Detention was very tough, especially because I was sick. I was taken to hospital, where I stayed for two months, and then I was released from detention for medical reasons. JRS helped me so much to get my freedom. I will never forget what JRS did for me.

Ibrahim Cissoko

“ Detention is a dark place. It is too much – I spent 18 months in a dark place. When I was there, I just prayed to God to set me free. The frustration was too much, especially not knowing what was going to happen. Sometimes I could have killed myself. But where there is life, there is hope. The JRS lawyer is the one God sent to me; she encouraged me, gave me hope and fought to get me released.

Geoffrey



© Ibrahim Cissoko (Malcolm Bonello)



© Malta: The 'tent village' at the Hal-Far open centre. (Alexandra Pace/UNHCR)

United Kingdom

Doing what we can

The UK government has a default policy of enforced destitution of refused asylum seekers. Its aims are to encourage people to return voluntarily to their country and to act as a deterrent to others who might be thinking of coming to the UK to claim asylum. The policy leaves thousands of people with no legal means of survival: they are not allowed to work, have no access to public support and rely on the goodwill of others. Many have been coming to us for support regularly for months, even years. Yet every week, at our drop-in centres, we meet more new people who desperately need our help. We do what we can but with an awareness that it is not enough. It can feel desperate to be faced with people who are sleeping on buses, on someone's kitchen floor, especially as we have no accommodation to offer. Then there are those times when paying for a bus fare to the hospital or simply listening and caring makes a difference.



📷 An asylum seeker from DRC who volunteers for JRS UK, and who is responsible for the distribution of hardship grants. The plastic bags hold toiletries, which are distributed monthly to asylum seekers and refugees who are destitute. (Sarah Booker)

Giving something back

Marie shares her journey from despair to hope with JRS.

I came to England in 2005, claimed asylum and was subsequently detained. I couldn't understand why. I strongly believe that people don't forsake what is familiar and comfortable for uncertainty unless there is a valid reason beyond their control.

When I was released, I was dispatched first to a hostel, with just £6 a week. The food was inedible and I became ill. After repeated visits to the GP, I was offered a flat. I felt so lonely, completely on my own and anxious about my family back home. One day a woman at the Refugee Council told me about JRS and accompanied me there. The atmosphere was agreeable and relaxed; the smile genuine, not professional.

The members of staff and volunteers were so kind and we had lunch together at the same table. At home, I cried deeply, out of joy, because JRS made me feel like a human being. I wanted to give something back and became a volunteer at JRS. My duties included welcoming people, offering a cup of tea and handing out hygiene packs.

I came to know that many people in the same situation as me had been in the UK for years, living in very reduced circumstances, subsisting on handouts. I felt fortunate: volunteering at JRS gave me a focus, a pattern of life. I gained confidence and listening skills.

Eventually, I was granted refugee status and am now studying at University. I can look to the future with assurance, boldness and hope.



Sarah Booker



📷 Uganda: Vicky Kezi stands outside her tukul (hut) primary grade classroom at Alere Nursery School, one of the schools served by the Adjumani project run by JRS until late 2008. (Don Doll SJ/JRS)

Signs of hope

Frido Pflueger SJ, Director, JRS Eastern Africa

The return home of tens of thousands of Sudanese refugees was an encouraging sign of hope in 2008. JRS supported the refugees for more than 15 years through the Adjumani project in northern Uganda, which closed down at the end of the year. Accompanying returnees in Southern Sudan, JRS is helping to rebuild the education system, a key tool to develop peace and justice. Repatriation to Burundi made for another sign of hope. The consequent decline in refugee figures in Tanzania prompted JRS to hand over one of its longest-running projects, Radio Kwizera. In northern Uganda, IDPs steadily returned home after the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) shifted further west, producing a new influx of IDPs and Congolese refugees in Southern Sudan. Huge challenges remain. Altogether, the internally displaced population of the region increased, with Sudan hardest hit. The numbers of urban refugees in Nairobi, Kampala and Addis Ababa rose, due to a lack of durable solutions in the camps and deteriorating situations in Somalia and Congo. Unfortunately, despite signs of hope in some countries, it seems like a 'natural law' that the number of forcibly displaced people in the region should remain stable at almost 8.5 million.

At a glance

	Ethiopia	Kenya	Sudan	Tanzania	Uganda
Community centre	837				
Education		106	45,745		3,129
Emergency relief	3,356	9,803			12,251
Pastoral*			1,404	4,357	1,169
Peace-building			4,824		11,580
Radio Kwizera				ca 4 million	
Social Services		6,574			

* These numbers do not take into account tens of thousands of people who attend liturgical services organised by JRS.

The escalating conflict in Somalia impacted on JRS in **Ethiopia**, which saw more urban refugees and asylum seekers in Addis Ababa in need of emergency assistance. A long-running refugee community centre in Addis continued to provide informal education, childcare and recreational opportunities.

JRS **Kenya** faced intensified demand for its services in Nairobi and Kakuma camp, where there was an increased influx of Somalis. In early 2008, JRS started a project in Kitale to meet the immediate needs of people displaced by Kenya's post-election violence and to offer livelihood and reconstruction support.

In **Southern Sudan**, home to the largest programmes of JRS in the region, we worked with the new government and local communities to develop the education system and supported the reintegration of returning refugees through peace-building.

In **North Sudan**, JRS worked with those internally displaced by the conflict in Darfur, teaching adult literacy, life-skills and helping to reintegrate young people into the school system.

With the majority of Burundian refugees in **Tanzania** repatriating or naturalising, JRS' Radio Kwizera re-oriented itself as a community radio station, and its management was taken over by the Jesuit Province of Eastern Africa at the end of 2008.

The repatriation of the Southern Sudanese led to the closure of JRS education and pastoral programmes in Adjumani, northern **Uganda**. Most schools were handed over to the government. In the Acholi sub-region in the north, JRS supported IDPs returning home after 20 years. In Kampala, the focus was on urban asylum seekers and refugees.

Sudan

Starting over

Peter (not his real name) was first displaced when he was 14, from Eastern Equatoria state of Southern Sudan. He walked to Juba where he lived for some years, and completed secondary education, before being displaced again, this time to Uganda where he met JRS.

I was directed to a camp in Adjumani District, which hosted thousands of fellow Sudanese refugees. Over the next five years, our camp was attacked by the Lord's Resistance Army and many people were captured, among them my wife. She was tortured but later released.

I first met JRS in 1993 when I started to teach in one of the primary schools initiated and run by the refugee community. JRS supported the teachers by paying incentives, offering in-service training and supervision and sponsoring our further education. With the help of JRS I obtained a Certificate in Education and a Diploma.

In my view, education is the most important tool to develop a country. It is through the assistance of JRS that we have trained teachers in Southern Sudan today. A good number were recruited to work in JRS projects and others hold influential positions in the administration of the counties or with other organisations.

After 16 years in exile, I returned home to Southern Sudan, and three months later, in September 2008, I started working as primary education coordinator with JRS in Lobone. We couldn't return earlier because the area was occupied by IDPs. JRS supported the IDPs for seven years but now, as they go back home, the knowledge is going with them. So, in many ways, we have to start all over again and there is a huge need for JRS support.



☒ Southern Sudan: Richard Dwyer SJ in Lobone, where JRS pastoral ministry enhances the capacity of Christian Community leaders and promotes peaceful co-existence. (Angela Hellmuth/JRS)



📷 In 2008, JRS Eastern Africa saw increased demand for emergency relief from urban asylum seekers and refugees. Here, Sr Mercy of the JRS Urban Emergency Programme in Nairobi registers new arrivals from South Kivu, DRC, in Divine Word Parish, Kayole. (Angelika Mendes/JRS)

Uganda

Surviving in the city

Rose (not her real name) and her children were among thousands of asylum seekers supported by JRS in Kampala.

My story is like that of many women who married across the thin and precarious ethnic divide in Rwanda and who became victims of both sides. I am a Tutsi; my husband belonged to the Hutu tribe. We lived in Butare Province with our seven children.

My husband was arrested, falsely accused of collaboration with Hutus who committed the atrocities in 1994. He disappeared and gunmen were sent to kill the rest of the family. They broke into our house, killed the guard and looted our property. I was raped and imprisoned for five days. With the help of an army officer I was released and firmly advised to leave the country.

I fled to Uganda with my children in early 2008 and applied for refugee status in Kampala. It was difficult to find my way in this big city. Asylum seekers receive extremely limited assistance in Kampala and are encouraged to wait for decisions on their status in settlements.

I had no choice but to wait in Kampala for the decision on my application and I received no help from anyone until I heard of JRS. When I approached them for help, JRS paid my rent for two months and gave me food and medication for my children. When my application for asylum was rejected, JRS advocated on my behalf, and eventually I was recognised as a refugee. When I had nobody by my side, JRS appeared and supported me. I truly cannot imagine where I would be without them.

I consider myself blessed. I have made new friends, I speak the local language reasonably well and am trying to learn English. I do casual work; I can sustain myself and don't need to go begging. Some Muslim friends contribute to the school fees of two of my children. It is my dream to send all my children to school. I'm proud that I have managed to cater for their needs so far because it's not easy being a single mother. I hope that I can continue to do so until they can look after themselves.



One of the IDP camps outside Goma (JRS Great Lakes)

Rising to the occasion

Tony Calleja SJ, Director, JRS Great Lakes

Throughout 2008, the Great Lakes region was marked by situations that were strikingly different one from the other: relative peace in Rwanda and Burundi and, at the same time, a humanitarian crisis with hundreds of thousands of displaced people due to the outbreak of widespread conflict in North Kivu, DRC. The massive population movements presented us with a great challenge and consequently, with substantial tasks to undertake. Despite our shortcomings, and with the support of our friends, we were able to respond to and be equal to the situation, to face the growing challenges that the huge displacement brought about.

At a glance

	Burundi	DRC	Rwanda
Education	1,541	ca 18,300*	11,509
Emergency aid	12,340		
Food security	22,810		
Healthcare		434	
Livelihoods	182		
Psychosocial support	21		
Reintegration (ex-child soldiers)		ca 140	
Support, vulnerable refugees	149		734
Shelter	260		
Youth/culture	778		10,987

* These numbers do not take into account tens of thousands of children who benefit indirectly from the teacher-training imparted by JRS.

With more than 95,000 Burundians returning home in 2008, JRS **Burundi** expanded its activities to support the durable reintegration of returnees. Meanwhile, once-off emergency aid was provided to people displaced by fighting between the government and last remaining rebel group in early 2008. Education and livelihood projects continued in Bujumbura.

In 2008, JRS launched a major hub of activities in North Kivu in **DRC**, with eight new projects in Goma and Rutshuru, mainly focused on education, including vocational training. A new initiative in South Kivu supported schools in areas of high return.

JRS **Rwanda** continued to serve and accompany Congolese refugees in Gihembe and Kiziba camps, most of whom have been in exile for more than a decade. Providing quality education from nursery to secondary school remained at the heart of JRS activities.



📷 Burundi: Distribution of goats in Giharo as part of the JRS food security project. (JRS Great Lakes)

DRC

Learning opportunities

Eric Sebukaire, 18 years old, is internally displaced in North Kivu. Over one million people share his predicament in this eastern province of DRC, which has been ravaged by violence and severe human rights violations for 15 years. At first, 2008 looked promising, with the signing of a ceasefire agreement, but major hostilities broke out in August, leading to the displacement of 250,000 people.

Eric left his village two years ago when two militias started fighting nearby: “One of the armed groups lost many fighters so they decided to recruit children. They came to our neighbourhood and we had to leave.” Nearly 70% of those displaced seek refuge with relatives or friends in Goma, the provincial capital of North Kivu. Eric went to stay with his uncle but soon had to move to the camps on the outskirts of the city.

Soon he knew hunger. “Very little food is distributed,” he says. “I accept what I receive: the one who doesn’t have must always accept whatever is given. Most days I eat only once. Whenever I can, I try to find daily work in Goma, to get money to eat.”

Otherwise, like other youth in the camp, Eric had little to do. This enforced idleness, he feared, led to unhappy consequences among youth, like drink and drugs. One of the projects launched by JRS in late 2008 offered vocational education in four camps. Some 480 teenagers aged between 13 and 18 enrolled in classes in tailoring, bread making, hairdressing, and bicycle repairs.

Eric signed up for the JRS literacy class – due to the war, he had attended only four years of school and still couldn’t read and write well – and bicycle repairs workshop. He is enjoying both. “My new skills will enable me to earn a living when I return home,” Eric adds proudly.



📷 Burundi: Learning embroidery in a vocational training course offered by JRS in Kiyange. (Don Doll SJ/JRS)

Burundi

Chain of solidarity

Since 2002, around 470,000 people have returned home to Burundi, which is recovering from more than a decade of recently ended civil war. Land scarcity is a major problem in this small country, where 90% of the population depends on subsistence farming. The sheer number of returnees has increased tensions over ownership of land. To make for sustainable return, JRS runs three food security projects in eastern Burundi.

One project is implemented in Ruyigi Province, home to Libérat and Mariana Cubwa. The province was hard hit during the war. “When the war erupted, we sought refuge across the border in Tanzania but I really wanted to be at home,” says Mariana. “We returned after a few weeks. Life was hard. For ten years, we slept in the bushes near our house every night, hiding from soldiers who came to pillage.”



Libérat & Mariana

In early 2008, the couple joined a JRS food security project. They were trained in modern organic farming techniques, to make their small piece of land more fertile. In a second phase, Libérat and Mariana became members of a local association initiated by JRS, which manages a “chain of solidarity”. Each farmer receives one goat, but as soon as the animals give birth, one baby goat is “reimbursed” to someone else joining the project. JRS accompanies the associations for three years, offering technical, veterinarian and social advice.

“The JRS project has helped us a lot,” says Libérat. “You know, owning an animal is a status symbol in Burundi. The goat provides us with organic fertiliser for cultivation and we can earn some money by making the male goat available for reproduction.”



A new beginning: Returnees in Giharo town, Burundi, beat the drums joyfully as they celebrate the opening of a food security project funded by JRS. The people returned from the Kibondo camps in west Tanzania. (Don Doll SJ/JRS)



☒ South Africa: New arrivals from beleaguered Zimbabwe turn up at a reception centre in the border province of Limpopo and read newspapers produced by Zimbabweans in exile. (Peter Balleis SJ/JRS)

Keeping hope alive

Joanne Whitaker RSM, Director, JRS Southern Africa

Two images remain fixed in my memories of 2008: a Mozambican man set on fire near Johannesburg and a Zimbabwean woman crawling, her baby on her back, under the fence into South Africa. The photographs went around the world. They were disturbing images reflecting the consequences of greed, corruption, disregard for life and exploitation of the vulnerable. Are these true images of Africa? Sadly, the answer is yes. Violence against foreigners did erupt in South Africa during the year. More than 60 people died. Thousands lost homes, livelihood and hope for a better future. The economic meltdown and political violence in Zimbabwe forced hundreds of thousands of people to flee in search of safety.

The answer is also no. These are not the images I see daily. Instead I see hundreds of school children collecting shoes and clothing, tins of food and money to help those who suffer. I see boxes of warm jerseys for babies knit by a woman who carried her own children on her back. I see Christians and Muslims donating food. These are the faces of most Africans and they keep hope alive that someday all will live in peace.

At a glance

	Angola	Malawi	South Africa	Zambia	Zimbabwe
Advocacy	10,157				6
Cultural/social				ca 4,500	30
Education		3,617	2,527		2,452
Emergency relief			14,252	95	
Healthcare			1,655		20
Pastoral				ca 5,000	
Psychosocial support		377			
Livelihoods			1,970		9
Unaccompanied minors			233		

In **Angola**, JRS focused on five provinces, providing free legal advice and protection for refugees and asylum seekers as well as education of public officials.

JRS in **Malawi** continued to concentrate on education in Dzaleka camp. The primary school excelled with a 100% pass rate for the Leaving Examination. JRS initiated a secondary school in the camp as well as a Women's Centre.

JRS had an extremely busy year in **South Africa** because of an outbreak of xenophobia and the influx of refugees from Zimbabwe. A new project was launched in Limpopo Province to provide emergency assistance to Zimbabweans.

In **Zambia**, much of the JRS effort was directed to providing pastoral support to Congolese refugees before and during the repatriation process. Because of the uncertainties, many of the Congolese were reluctant to embrace the idea of repatriation.

Despite political violence and hyperinflation, JRS in **Zimbabwe** continued to provide educational support and projects aimed at self-reliance for refugees at Tongogaro camp and Harare transit centre as well as to vulnerable children in Checheche area. JRS Zimbabwe also started a project assisting displaced persons in Chishawasha area.

South Africa

There for us

In 2008 the long standing xenophobic attitude prevalent in South Africa erupted into violence that displaced more than 30,000. JRS in Johannesburg and Pretoria sought to assist many of those displaced and the following is the story of one of them:

I'm a 57-year-old Ethiopian man who came to South Africa in 2005. I had my business in Tsakane Township where I used to rent a small room. I would buy blankets, curtains and duvet covers from the inner city for resale in Tsakane where I would move door to door to sell my stock to the local community.

Unfortunately, in May 2008, I was attacked by a group of men I cannot identify. They kicked me all over and one bit me on the head. Others were shouting at me, "Why did you come to South Africa? It's high time you pack your belongings and go back to your country." I was forced out of my room with only the clothes I was wearing. I asked them to let me take my belongings but they refused. One told me to disappear within ten minutes or else I would be killed. "You came with nothing. You should go back with nothing."

All this time I was crying out for help. I was very scared and confused. I rushed to town to my fellow Ethiopians for help only to find that most shops belonging to foreigners were closed. I phoned my friend, who is the owner of a shop, and asked why he had not gone to work. He told me they had heard rumours that people were coming to attack them and their shops. The inner city was to be the next target. Only later did I realise that it was a widespread attack against foreign nationals.

The attacks had a great impact on my life. I lost my belongings, which I had accumulated over three years, and needed to start afresh. Today, unlike earlier days, it is hard to start a new life. I'm still struggling. At my age it is difficult to get work. Before, I was able to look after myself but the physical assaults and trauma will take time to heal.

I survive on handouts from friends and help from JRS, which was there for us from the time we sought refuge from the attacks, first in the grounds of police stations and later when the government relocated us to safety sites. JRS provided us with basic essentials, such as food and blankets, as well as medical care and transport to and from medical centres, and made referrals for counselling.

Unfortunately, the attitude of South Africans towards us has not changed. We are still called all sorts of names.



☒ South Africa: A temporary camp for victims of xenophobia outside Pretoria. (Joanne Whitaker RSM/JRS)

Zimbabwe/South Africa

Growing in faith and confidence

2008 was a year of turmoil in Zimbabwe. The JRS team there expanded its service to assist vulnerable families displaced by the political upheaval. JRS also opened a new project in Makhado, South Africa, to assist some of the tens of thousands of Zimbabweans streaming across the border seeking means of survival. Twenty-eight-year old John (not his real name) was one of them. Married with three children, he found work in Limpopo Province. Prior to leaving Zimbabwe, John lived in a village of about 30 families and was employed in the tea industry as a mechanic. He explains why he left his troubled country:

The situation in Zimbabwe is very unsettled. The land acquisition programme has led to the disintegration of food supplies. The people who took over these large blocks of land (war veterans, Members of Parliament and army officers) had very little experience in the art of farming. Little if anything is grown and there is no money to prepare the land. It is pitiful.

After the elections in spring of 2008, ZANU-PF (the ruling party) forced villagers to attend their meetings. Every evening there was 'training', where all young people would have to listen to ZANU propaganda. If we didn't go, we were singled out as members of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC, the opposition) – nearly everyone in my village was an MDC member – and harassed, sometimes to the point of beatings and house burnings. Some were killed.

I was one of those singled out. The situation became dangerous. After ensuring that my family was in a safe place, I left one morning at 1am. With others, I made my way to the border with South Africa. I learned later that my name was immediately put on a list of people to be punished if they returned.

From the beginning of my time in South Africa, the JRS Makhado project helped me. They gave me food, money for rent, and a blanket. They were instrumental in helping me find employment and thus to support my family. Thanks to them, I have gained confidence in myself and increased my faith. I will always be grateful to JRS and its wonderful staff.

When I think about the future, I don't believe anything positive is going to happen soon. I will go home only when I know that I and my wife and children can live in freedom, without fear and violence.



Learning together

Malawi: Dzaleka camp is home to refugees from many different African countries; they come together to attend JRS classes in English, French and Chichewa, the local language. Dzaleka camp is also the site of a unique JRS project: a top-quality primary school for children drawn from both the refugee and local communities.



Peter Balleis SJ/JRS



📷 Chad: Sr Maria Luisa Solaun (right), JRS project director in Goz Beida, and her assistant, Haram Seid Abakar, who are setting up a pre-school programme for internally displaced children. (Don Doll SJ/JRS)

Education: catalyst of hope

Kapitula Nzanu SJ, Director, JRS West Africa

To educate successfully requires a sound knowledge of the environment where the educational process is taking place. For JRS West Africa, this environment is a sum of challenges and of opportunities to work towards harmony. Côte d'Ivoire, Central Africa and Chad are all searching for peace. Through its contribution of education in emergency and post-conflict situations, JRS West Africa cares for forcibly displaced people, whose surroundings have transformed them into victims of disaster. Education is the catalyst of hope through which those who have lost everything may yet inherit. Education leads to the enjoyment of other rights, it is a transforming agent, as testified by those who and with whom we serve.

At a glance

	CAR	Chad	Côte d'Ivoire
Reintegration (ex-child soldiers)		230*	
Education	248	23,167*	1,011

* These numbers do not take into account tens of thousands of children who benefit indirectly from the teacher-training imparted by JRS.



Chad: Constructing the roof of a room in Kounougou refugee camp. (Don Doll SJ/JRS)

JRS set up in **Central African Republic (CAR)** in mid-2008, following a needs assessment, to serve people displaced by civil war. Within three months, JRS was running teacher-training in Ouham and Haute-Kotto Provinces. An assessment and community mobilisation paved the way for the construction of schools in Haute-Kotto.

In eastern **Chad**, JRS ran six programmes to introduce the conditions for quality education, for refugees from Sudan in 12 camps in Abéché, and for internally displaced people and host villagers in Sila region. Another project supported the reintegration of former child soldiers. The conflict in Chad is multi-dimensional with inter-ethnic and inter-community tensions compounded by fighting between Chad and Sudan and the spill-over of the Darfur conflict.

In **Côte d'Ivoire**, JRS launched an education project in Madinani in the north, which suffered greatly during the now-ended civil war, to enhance the capacity of local primary schools to welcome returnees. Damaged school buildings were restored and children supplied with educational materials.

Chad

Building what cannot be destroyed

I am not empty like the desert that surrounds me. At home, I was a carpenter. I built the things of everyday life. But these were all destroyed three years ago when rebels and militia on horseback torched my village in the Sila region of eastern Chad. My family and I fled.


Now I build what cannot be destroyed: knowledge. My name is Abdallah Souleymane Mohammad. I am a teacher and the director of a primary school in Aradib I site for internally displaced Chadians near the village of Koukou, where I have lived since November 2006. With the support of JRS, I began training to become a community teacher in 2007. I never had the opportunity to finish school in my village so this was a rare chance for me. I want my children to have this chance too.

I was recruited by a community leader who was approached by JRS. After an initial test, I underwent training in pedagogy in Arabic, my native language. I started teaching in a school at the site. JRS staff accompanied me throughout the year as I continued taking courses to increase my knowledge in general subjects such as history and mathematics. Education has set me on a good path. I have gained awareness and a place in society.

In 2008, the children of Aradib completed a full school year for the first time. Supported by JRS, Parent Teacher Associations helped to build and maintain the schools, distribute supplies and decide about staffing.

I have seen great changes in the communities here since they began supporting education. There is respect. People listen to one another and work together. They sense the importance of their role in helping to rebuild society.



 (top) Chad: Aradib no.1 school with about 1000 students, a JRS-supported school in Goz Amir village for IDPs. After classes end at about noon, the children return the blackboard to a storage area. (Don Doll SJ/JRS)



 (right) Chad: An attentive student in French class at Habile no.1, of three schools, in Koukou for internally displaced children. (Don Doll SJ/JRS)

Chad

I believe in the future

Some may say there is no path but I know the way. I remember driving home in a white van through the desert grass, past the red mountains where armed men hide. I saw my village and my mother running in her green dress to greet me.

My name is Mahmat Abdul Ali. I am 15 years old. For one year, I served as a night guard for an armed group far from my village. It was very tiring and I wanted to stop. I was released with the help of UNICEF. I stayed at a centre in N'djamena where I recovered and met other boys who had also been released.



Catherine Lemare/JRS

In 2008, JRS helped me to find my family and to send a letter to my parents. Together we went to my village to see if it was safe. I felt ready to rebuild my life and wanted to go to school but the nearest one was a two-hour walk from my home. Without school, I wondered what I would do, what I could become.

JRS assisted my village to open a school. Within a few weeks, the villagers built the school's foundation and told families everywhere to send their children. JRS offered materials for the roof and school supplies, which the community could not provide, and helped train parents, including my father, to run the school. Since there are only a few teachers in my community, they encouraged teachers from the city to come to work in our village. JRS staff still come to meet students and teachers to address their concerns, to accompany them. Now that I go to school, I believe in the future. I can build it through education.



Rebuilding in Liberia

This woman fled from north-west Liberia in 2002 and met JRS in the Salala IDP camps. Upon returning to her home village, she joined a reconstruction team of villagers who built a new school with the guidance and support of JRS. She was thrilled to help build the school where her three children would go.

JRS went to Liberia for the second time in 2003, when civil war ended, to serve IDPs and later to accompany them home to Bomi, Lofa and Nimba Counties. We were privileged to labour with people as they pieced their lives back together, partnering with local communities to support education, pastoral care, healthcare, shelter and farming. JRS left Liberia in 2008 as stability and development took root. We hope and pray that Liberians will continue working to rebuild their country and walk the path of peace.



Peter Balleis SJ/JRS



📷 Jordan: Members of the JRS team in Amman (Peter Balleis SJ/JRS)

Learning how to accompany refugees

Paul Diab SJ, Director, JRS Syria

Some months ago, the Society of Jesus in Syria mobilised, through JRS, to accompany Iraqi refugees, our brothers and sisters, who have been dispersed by war. We opened a centre in Aleppo to come to the aid of students sitting for their Brevet and Baccalaureat certificate exams and to offer language and computer courses. Deir St Vartan is also a social centre, welcoming hundreds of teenagers, children and their mothers who have witnessed the atrocity of war and are now trying to sow the seeds of a life of freedom and humanity in Syria. The work is not easy because we are beginners. We are learning, those accompanying the refugees, the teachers and I, how to be with the refugees, how to help them overcome the misery and consequences they carry in their daily life. The youth attending the centre have expressed their gratitude for this project and for our presence among them. The Jesuits in Syria have taken a wholehearted interest in the project. They are aware of the importance of this work for the Society of Jesus and for the Near East Province in particular, for it concerns us all.

At a glance

	Jordan	Syria
Emergency aid	10	445
Family visits	300	85
Food supplies		108
Healthcare		23
Informal education, recreational activities	90	246
Psychosocial support		81



📷 Jordan: Computer classes in Amman (Peter Balleis SJ/JRS)

Five years after the US-led military intervention, Iraq remained a deeply violent and divided society, with one of the largest displacement and humanitarian crises in the world. More than two million Iraqis lived in neighbouring countries, Syria and Jordan, where they were seen as ‘guests’, living in cramped urban settings, without the right to work but having to pay for housing, food, medical care and education.

JRS started to work in the Middle East in mid-2008, in Amman in **Jordan** and in Damascus and Aleppo in **Syria**, in close collaboration with the local Jesuits, other religious congregations and Christian churches. The focus is on accompaniment, through home visits, informal education, recreational activities, psychosocial support and material aid.

Jordan

Changing our lives for the better

In Jordan, nearly all the JRS staff members are Iraqis, like Jawdat Youssef, who came to Amman with his wife Elham and their two daughters, 11-year-old Jessica and three-year-old Mina, on 8 September 2005.

The first time the JRS team visited us, they asked me what I can do. I told them I can do anything. When I met JRS, I immediately liked your way of serving refugees, and when you asked me if I wanted to be an assistant coach for a football team you set up, I immediately accepted. Now I am with the football team four days a week in the afternoon. I enjoy what I do. Sander, the coordinator, is like a brother to me and we often confide in each other. I encouraged my wife to register for the JRS English course because she can leave our two daughters, Jessica and Mina, in your kindergarten while she is learning.

I have accepted our new reality because I believe that God is walking with us. My only concern in life is my family, to maintain unity among us and to meet our basic daily needs.

Jawdat

As I attend JRS English classes, I remember what I learned in school long ago. This free education is a grace from God. The situation of a refugee is very different from her situation back home. Here in Jordan, when I hear someone knocking at my door and a guest turns up, I feel happy because I don't like to be alone. One day a Sister and two other people came. They introduced themselves as Sr Wejdan, Luay and Stev from JRS. Luay told us that he himself had arrived lately to Jordan from Iraq. I felt comfortable and happy because here were people who cared about us. Their visits changed our life for the better.

Elham



© Mina (centre) at the JRS kindergarten. (JRS Middle East)

Syria

Peace for all

Written by 15-year-old May for
English class at
Deir St Vartan

This poem is my life story
I tell it to you
not because I am proud
it is the truth, my youth

Born in Iraq, sound of war
was everywhere
same like fear,
I was unaware
that it will never disappear

War is not cool
everybody knows
my dream is to live in peace
I only know from stories

My father left
when I was eight
I wait and wait
they brought my father's shoes
I saw my mother's tears

In school we laugh
and tease the boys
we heard the noise of guns
the school bus was too late
everybody runs

I feel so pity
Baghdad my sweet city
full of dangers,
fire everywhere
from the gun of strangers

War is not cool
everybody knows
My dream to live in peace
becomes true in this school
Deir San Vartan
you make me smile
you give me hope



 In class at Deir St Vartan, Aleppo, where JRS offers informal education to Iraqi refugees and poor Syrians. (Peter Balleis SJ/JRS)



📷 Timor Leste: Rebuilding in Mauk sub-village of Comoro, one of the places where JRS facilitated the return home of people displaced by political violence in 2006. (Peter Balleis SJ/JRS)

Writing our new history

Bernard Hyacinth Arputhasamy SJ, Director, JRS Asia Pacific

“...we must write our new history in the future...the past events are like a teacher to us, teaching us not to have any hatred towards anyone...not to incite violence or new conflict...” said the Chief of Aldeia Mauk, who returned to his village with others from a camp for displaced people in Dili. The regular visits by the JRS Timor Leste team sought the support and welcome of the receiving community in order to ensure a smooth and safe passage towards reintegration. It meant overcoming differences and disputes. “From hostility lead us to hospitality.” All across the region, de facto refugees – refugees, asylum seekers, landmine survivors, people displaced due to natural and environmental disasters and by so-called development or investment projects, migrant workers and so on – are looking for a place of welcome. They share the same dreams and hopes as the rest of humanity. Could our immensely resourceful civilisation make a home of hospitality by creating political, economic and socio-cultural development policies that provide for the integral wellbeing or wholeness of millions in the region? We must “write our new history” of humanity so that people will not need to run away anymore.

At a glance

	Australia	Cambodia	Indonesia	Thailand	Timor Leste
Advocacy		125	19	3,221	
Education		27		13,567	
Emergency assistance	50			3,174	
Healthcare				14,048	
Pastoral				7,640	
Peace-building			1,436		
Psychosocial support	47			3,605	
Shelter	30		1,555	142	2,217 families
Voluntary repatriation assistance				282	

In **Australia**, JRS stepped up support for asylum seekers in the community and engaged in joint advocacy, which helped to change Australian refugee policy in 2008. Weekly visits, including Mass, continued to Villawood Immigration Detention Centre in Sydney. Research was conducted into forced displacement in Timor Leste and the Pacific Region.

In **Cambodia**, JRS social workers administered aid to asylum seekers and refugees and helped them to find accommodation and to adjust to life in Cambodia. Legal assistance was offered, the situation of Montagnard refugees was monitored and problems leading to internal displacement were researched, namely the dispossession of land by the powerful elite.

In **Indonesia**, JRS began a project of displacement prevention in South Aceh through peace education and disaster risk reduction in mid-2008, after completing all Tsunami response works.

In October 2008, in **Papua New Guinea**, an information/advocacy officer started to strengthen the capacity of diocesan staff to advocate for the rights of West Papuan refugees and to provide accurate information to the refugees.

In **Singapore**, JRS supported several projects in Nepal, Thailand, Burma, Timor Leste and Malaysia and organised awareness activities. A long-term project of advocacy to ban landmines was launched.

In **Thailand**, JRS met educational needs in the Karenni camps in Mae Hong Son, of children of Burmese migrant workers in community schools in Ranong, of the Shan and other minorities on the northern border. JRS served urban asylum seekers from Asia, Africa and the Middle East in Bangkok and Mae Sot, and provided medical care and supplementary food in immigration detention centres.

In **Timor Leste**, JRS assisted in the return of IDPs from six camps by accompanying them, facilitating dialogue with their communities and by coordinating with other agencies to ensure sustainable return, planning the areas for the reconstruction of houses and guaranteeing access to water & sanitation and livelihood activities.

Thai-Burma border

I can have an open heart

Pray Reh has lived with his wife and four children in Karenni Site 1, Mae Hong Son, since 1996. It was fear of the troops of the SPDC (State Peace and Development Council – Burma’s military junta) that forced Pray Reh to flee Burma. Whenever SPDC troops went to their village, the family hid in the jungle, so they couldn’t tend to their fields properly and grow enough rice to eat. In the end, they left for Thailand.

Pray Reh’s third child, 18-year-old Beh Reh, was born with brain damage. Beh Reh is nonverbal and has serious behavioural issues. Pray Reh says this made life hard for his family until Beh Reh joined the JRS Special Education programme:

When we arrived, we wanted to build a house in one section of the camp but our neighbours told us not to. They said, “If you build your house near us, our children may become like yours.” I moved far away but the new neighbours complained too. Some got angry with Beh Reh and stopped talking to the whole family. I knew I must be patient and never said anything but I kept a lot of feelings inside.

In 2004 the JRS Special Education (SE) programme started and Beh Reh joined. I started to feel better. Beh Reh had somewhere to go and made friends. Before, if there was a festival, people would criticise us for taking our son. Now, we can take Beh Reh to the celebrations of the SE programme. No one will complain.

Beh Reh’s mother and I saw other children with problems and their parents became our friends. Taking Beh Reh to Family Friendship Time, we learned some of the alphabet and started to read some words; we never had the opportunity to go to school. The monthly Parent Support Group is very good. We learn about how to take better care of Beh Reh and I can share my feelings, I can have an open heart.



📷 The JRS Special Education Programme supports 189 students in primary schools and 57 families whose children are ‘out of school students’ like Beh Reh (pictured).



A long-term relationship

There are over 23,000 refugees from Burma’s Karenni State in two camps near Mae Hong Son. JRS has been the principal source of support for education in the camps since 1997, partnering with the Karenni Education Department to offer primary and secondary schooling, special education, teacher-training and vocational training. Many refugees have been in exile for more than 15 years. There is no sign of improvement inside Burma and local integration into Thai society is not an option. Resettlement in the US has become an opportunity for some, usually more educated, refugees.



Peter Balleis SJ/JRS



Indonesia

From emergency to peace

Peace is not just a declared state of affairs; it is an ongoing process, sustainable only if supported by the community. In 2008, JRS embarked on a peace education programme in Aceh, the westernmost province of Indonesia until recently torn apart by decades of conflict. JRS started to serve war-displaced people in Aceh in 2001 and later assisted survivors of the Tsunami in December 2004. A peace agreement signed in 2005 was followed by local elections in 2006.

The latest JRS programme aims to prevent future displacement among the mainly Muslim villages of rural South Kluet by imparting conflict management skills and enhancing the community response to natural disasters. Through sports, JRS encourages healthy competition, self-confidence and a spirit of togetherness among young people. We offer leadership and teambuilding training in *Rangkang*, traditional community centres for youth. In schools, films, games and puppets explain the lofty principles of disaster risk reduction and peace education. And at community level, a locally managed Emergency Preparedness System (EPS) is in the making.

On 21 December 2008, a sports tournament that doubled up as a peace festival gathered youth from different villages together. On the same day, JRS held a cake-baking session in one village. For JRS Indonesia, the events were a touching highlight of this project.



“We used to be torn by conflict. It is sad to remember how we had to run to the mountains to hide. On the run, we were unable to go to school, our lives were in danger and our property lost. Now the situation is peaceful and we must protect this peace by defeating suspicion and hatred.”

Baina, Simpang Dua Village



“This tournament opened my heart because I realised that the spirit of peace remains strong among youth.”

Ariaah, Koto Indarung Village



“Attending this cake-baking workshop, we could tell jokes and have a chat. The feeling of fear from past years, which hangs over us, disappears bit by bit when we meet our friends.”

Sartika



“Although we are only making cakes, we meet to strengthen our relationship. We can talk about difficulties in the village, about women’s issues and identify solutions together. We hope the conflict will never break out again; it is so sad to be displaced in your own land.”





📷 Nepal: On 1 March 2008, fire destroyed nearly all the huts, camp management offices and disability and child play centres in Goldhap camp (pictured above some months after the fire). JRS helped some of the 900 Bhutanese refugees who were left homeless to rebuild and equip their huts. (Peter Balleis SJ/JRS)

Clinging to hope

PS Amalraj SJ, Director, JRS South Asia

2008 was a very eventful year. In Sri Lanka, the war continued and brought great suffering. In October, the government ordered all humanitarian agencies to move out of the Vanni, the northern region controlled by the militant Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). JRS and Caritas remained to accompany the people in Vanni even as civilian space shrank with the army advance.

Large-scale violent protests in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu called for intervention in Sri Lanka to protect civilians. This led to increased empathy with more than 73,000 Tamil refugees living in some 115 camps, whose hopes of returning to Sri Lanka remain a distant dream.

The Bhutanese refugees in Nepal experienced new hope as resettlement started in April. Some 8,581 were resettled by the end of the year in the USA and other countries. The stand of the government of Bhutan towards the Bhutanese refugees remained unchanged.

At a glance

	India	Sri Lanka	Nepal
Community development	16,475		
Disability centres			3,216
Education	10,792	ca 67,000	34,873
Emergency aid	290	ca 34,000	
Healthcare	1,046		
Livelihoods		12,095	
Home visits	ca 8,850 families		
Psychosocial support	1,780		
Youth centres			14,687

Much of JRS commitment in South Asia is devoted to people displaced by the civil war in Sri Lanka. In India, JRS continued to accompany and serve Sri Lankan refugees in camps in **Tamil Nadu**, concentrating mainly on children's education. JRS ran evening coaching centres in 106 out of 115 camps as well as residential life-skills training centres for young women, and facilitated admission in technical institutes for young men. Another focus was community development.

In **Sri Lanka** itself, JRS implemented education and livelihood projects in the war-affected north-east and offered emergency aid to people fleeing fierce warfare in the north. JRS accompanied those trapped in the war zone of the Vanni and reached out to others who, having left this former rebel stronghold, were confined to so-called 'welfare centres' that were de facto detention centres.

Supported by Caritas Nepal and UNHCR, JRS implemented the Bhutanese Refugee Education Programme (BREP) for the sixteenth year in seven camps in eastern **Nepal**, with primary and secondary education – incorporating inclusive education – in 42 schools, vocational training and childcare, youth and disability centres. Spoken English classes were provided for those about to be resettled.

In **Afghanistan**, JRS started to support returnee families who went to live in Taghi Naghi Returnee Township in Herat Province in 2008. The first 32 families moved in June although the township had no services as yet. JRS supplied energy by installing a 400KVA power transformer and organised healthcare and educational support for the returnees.

India

I long to return home

Twenty-year-old Malar became a refugee when she was one-year-old, when her parents escaped from the civil war in Sri Lanka. Leaving their home village of Mulliyavahai in Mullaitheevu, in the north, the family – Malar, her parents and her two elder brothers – went to Tamil Nadu by boat.

When we arrived, we stayed in Pulliyampatti camp in Dindigul District for two years. Then we were shifted to Adiyanoothu camp, in the same district, in 1992. I have lived here since. Our life is very restricted. To go to work or to another village or camp, we have to get permission from government officials; when we receive our monthly allowance from them, we stand in fear, feeling we are at their mercy.

My father was a casual labourer. His daily wage was not enough to educate the four of us: me, my elder and younger brothers. Eventually he stopped giving my mother money; he used to waste his wages on alcohol. Sometimes, he wouldn't come home for months. My mother began to sell dry fish at the market to maintain the family. Although I faced plenty of difficulties, I continued my studies up to class XII with the help of JRS.

Since my family is poor, I couldn't go for higher studies, so I joined the life-skills centre run by JRS at Mullikudy-Trichy. My time there was very happy; I learned tailoring, embroidery and other skills and this changed my life. I found a job as soon as I finished the course and, with my monthly income, I had roofing and repair work done in my family's hut. Now we have a decent place to live.

However my daily desire and longing is to return home. I feel that I am in prison in the camp. I wish that peace would return to my motherland, that I may return to live in my old home, which we left in 1990, to walk where I crawled as a baby.



(top) Malar (Sara Pettinella/JRS)

(bottom) Tamil Nadu: Scholarship students at the Little Flower Hostel (Sara Pettinella/JRS)

Nepal

By the refugees, for the refugees

Prahlad Dahal, a Bhutanese refugee who lives in Goldhap camp, was one of the founding members of the Bhutanese Refugee Education Programme (BREP). A university graduate, he is married with two sons and is an enthusiastic civil society activist.

Today I just wonder as I look back over the past 17 years of my life. I left my home to ensure the safety of my family, in the hope that one day I would return. The days passed by, the graph of hope moving up and down, the heartbeat generated by the outcome of each activity performed with the goal of returning home. Our donors, supporters and friends have been a boon to us, conveying our expectations to the rest of the world.

My family left Bhutan in August 1991. When thousands of others were evicted in early 1992, plastic tents had to be erected on the banks of the Kanakai Mai River. I spent many nights with tears flowing to heal the pain of leaving Bhutan. I used to go to the temple – my father is a Hindu priest and I was taught by Jesuit priests and by sisters – and look up at the sky, trying to get a glimpse of the Almighty looking down at us. My eyes are filled with tears now as I write. I don't know why, for what or who. But the tears are rolling down.

I joined BREP in 1994, to serve my community by creating a programme by the refugees, of the refugees and for the refugees. Planning, implementing and monitoring BREP, with the support and guidance of JRS, we felt this was ours. Today, I don't regret being a refugee. The immense knowledge and experience I have acquired is much more than a car, house or job in Bhutan. Among the rewarding experiences have been learning how to accept; the education of children and adults; and youth participation in community services.

Many of us now have opted for resettlement, for a better future for our children, finding it one of the best options to lead a decent and meaningful life.



📷 Prahlad (right) delivering footballs to a camp school. (Varkey Perekatt SJ/JRS)



📷 Afghanistan: Hello? A young woman attends a class in a mixed technical skills school supported by JRS in Herat on the border with Iran. (Peter Balleis SJ/JRS)

glossary of project categories

Advocacy

Protecting the rights of refugees starts on the ground, with legal and other support for asylum applications, access to services, registration, return or resettlement. Another aspect is training or awareness seminars, for public officials, local NGOs and refugees. Advocacy is linked to research about the causes of forced displacement and for durable solutions.

Education

The mainstay of JRS activities in most regions, education covers a wide range of formal and informal schooling, including: pre-school, primary, secondary and tertiary, special education (especially in Asia), distance education, scholarships, life-skills, vocational training, adult literacy, computer and language classes, often for adults, extra tuition and revision classes, and education for peace and reconciliation. In Africa and Asia, JRS strengthens the educational system of communities by training teachers and providing them with incentives, by engaging in the construction and equipping of schools and by supporting Parent Teacher Associations.

Emergency relief

The distribution of food and non-food items, such as mattresses and blankets, clothes, seeds and tools; medical treatment; money for transport and referrals. Shelter – tents, housing arrangements, and the rehabilitation and maintenance of dwellings – forms part of this category.

Healthcare

Healthcare includes referrals and payment for medical treatment; services in detention centres; work in clinics and hospitals; food supplementation; health education; HIV/AIDS awareness-raising; training for medical and nursing staff.

Livelihoods

This category incorporates activities geared towards self-reliance: ensuring access to employment and land; technical training and assistance; help to set up small businesses by making available funds, grants and credit, as well as tools and other resources. Such initiatives go beyond the economic (self-sufficiency, earning an income) aspect to encompass human (restoration of dignity and hope) and social (integration, community initiatives) elements.

Pastoral

Pastoral care refers to targeted initiatives – capacity-building among catechists, youth, community leaders and Small Christian Communities – and to wider ministry that reaches thousands. The latter includes liturgical services, including administration of the Sacraments, and pastoral accompaniment, especially of people who are ill, traumatised and bereaved. In detention centres, JRS offers chaplaincy services.

Peace-building

This category encompasses initiatives of peace, reconciliation and rebuilding: training seminars and workshops; community outreach and planning; cultural and sports events; rehabilitation of war-torn structures. Peace-building often – but not exclusively – takes place in the context of return with programmes aimed at developing the community at all levels.

Psychosocial support

Psychosocial support refers to accompaniment and counselling, with the degree of involvement ranging from offering a listening ear to therapy for mental health problems. Landmine survivors, victims of abuse, ex-child soldiers and those who experienced trauma are among those supported. This category forms part of a broader category, *Social Services & Community Development*.

JRS advocacy

Advocacy is one of the pillars of the JRS mandate. On borders, in camps, detention centres, cities, war zones, JRS field workers defend refugee rights as an integral part of their daily mission. Further, they share relevant information with JRS advocacy officers at national, regional and international level. This networking ensures that the reality on the ground – the abuses suffered by the refugees, their concerns, hopes and expectations – reach policy makers, up to the UN and EU in Geneva, Washington and Brussels.

However, JRS advocacy is not just a band-aid; we seek to prevent fresh wounds by influencing the shaping of policies and laws, by researching the root causes of displacement and by averting future conflict through the promotion of peace and reconciliation.

JRS has an Advocacy Coordinator in Rome, JRS Representative in Geneva, and Director for Policy in Washington, as well as advocacy officers in nearly all the regions and in several country offices too. There are four universal advocacy themes: education, food security, peace and reconciliation and integration (against xenophobia). At regional level, the issues tackled are diverse, although there are several crosscutting challenges.

NORTH AMERICA



Peter Balleis SJ/JRS

- Resettlement
- Detention
- Conflict resolution

LATIN AMERICA



JRS Dominican Republic

- Recruitment of child soldiers
- Stateless children
- Access to education
- Landmines
- Deportation
- National laws

EUROPE



Times of Malta

- Detention
- Destitution
- Externalisation of EU asylum
- Migration & development

EASTERN AFRICA



Don Doll SJ/JRS

- Sexual and gender-based violence
- Refugees with special needs
- Durable solutions
- Urban refugees
- Girls' education

GREAT LAKES



Don Doll SJ/JRS

Recruitment of child soldiers
 Food insecurity
 Advocacy for vulnerable refugees
 IDP rights

SOUTHERN AFRICA



Joanne Whitaker RSM/JRS

Xenophobia
 Unaccompanied minors
 Local integration
 Refugee status determination

WEST AFRICA



Peter Balleis SJ/JRS

Recognition of teachers in IDP camps
 Birth registration of displaced people
 Recruitment of child soldiers

ASIA PACIFIC



JRS Asia Pacific

Landmines, cluster bombs
 Displacement in the Pacific Islands
 Dispossession of land
 Statelessness
 Detention
 Return

SOUTH ASIA



Peter Balleis SJ/JRS

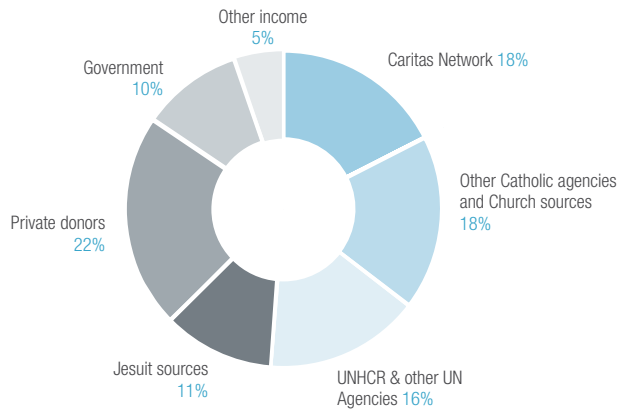
Conflict resolution
 Human rights violations
 Resettlement
 Statelessness

justice & reconciliation

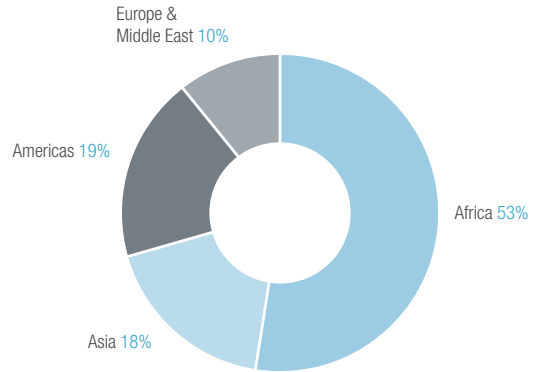
Denise Coghlan RSM writes: 2008 was a year of campaigning for countries in the region to sign the cluster bomb treaty. Of the 95 countries that signed on, 10 were from Asia Pacific. Preparations for the review of the Mine Ban Treaty with its focus on clearance of mines and assistance to survivors are accelerating before the 2009 meeting in Cartagena. The remnants of war in Cambodia are not just the landmines and the cluster bombs in the ground, hazardous as they are but also the memories and wounds that lie in the hearts of all those who suffered genocide and displacement. In 2008 some progress was made at the Extraordinary Court for trying the leaders of the Khmer Rouge. Although the Khmer Rouge era ended back in 1979 the scars that need healing and reconciliation still remain. JRS Cambodia has offered to be one of the places where hurt people can come and tell their story and receive friendship and encouragement.

JRS donors

sources of funding



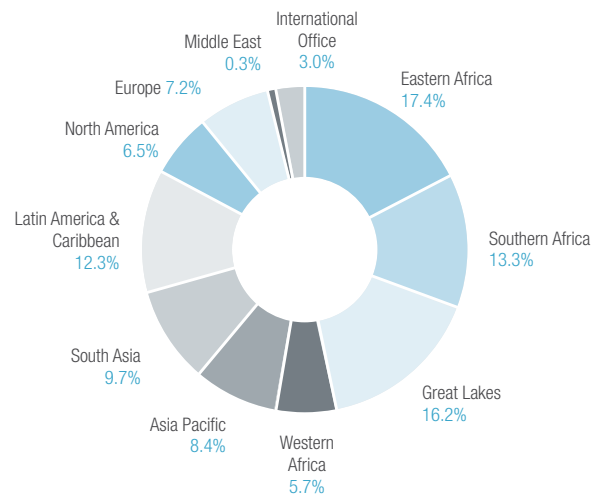
distribution of expenditure by continent



sources of funding world-wide (amount in euro)

Caritas network	4,346,702
Other Catholic agencies and Church sources	4,399,057
UNHCR & other UN Agencies	3,820,724
Jesuit sources	2,787,567
Private donors	5,444,281
Government	2,525,121
Other income	1,272,798
Total received	24,596,251

distribution of expenditure by region



Other Catholic agencies and Church sources refers to donations from Catholic Bishops' Conferences, dioceses, religious congregations and Catholic agencies other than the Caritas network;

Private donors include individuals and private foundations;

Other income refers to earning from investments, interest on bank deposits and retail sales from livelihoods projects;

Jesuit sources refer to funds from Jesuit provinces, individual Jesuits and the Jesuit Mission Offices.

“ I will never forget what JRS did for me, they do a great job, not just for me, but for people all over the world. ”

Ibrahim Cissoko from Ivory Coast, now living in Malta

It is our donors' loyal and generous support that allows us to reach out to forcibly displaced people worldwide. Thank you for joining us in this service of hope.

thank you

JRS contact details

NORTH AMERICA

Canada
41 Earl Street
Toronto ON M4Y 1M4
canada@jrs.net
Tel: +1-416 924 7904
Fax: +1-416 960 6206

USA
1016 16th Street NW, Suite 500
Washington, DC 20036
united.states@jrs.net
Tel: +1 202 462 0400
Fax: +1 202 328 9212

LATIN AMERICA

Camejo a Colón
Edificio Torre La Oficina, Piso 2,
Oficinas 2-1, 2-2, 2-4
Caracas, 1010-A Distrito Capital
Venezuela

latin.america@jrs.net

Tel: +58 212 564 6576
Fax: +58 212 564 8978

EUROPE

Rue du Progrès, 333/2
B-1030 Bruxelles Belgium

europe@jrs.net

Tel: +32 2 250 3220
Fax: +32 2 250 3229
Web: www.jrseurope.org

EASTERN AFRICA

PO Box 76490
Nairobi 00508 Kenya
(Location: JRS Mikono Centre, Gitanga
Road, opposite Ratna Fitness Centre)

eastern.africa@jrs.net

Tel: +254 20 38 73849
Fax: +254 20 38 71905

GREAT LAKES

B.P. 2382
Bujumbura, Burundi
(Location: Boulevard du 28 Novembre
n°5, Rohero 1)

grands.lacs@jrs.net

Tel: +257 22 210 494
Fax: +257 22 243 492

SOUTHERN AFRICA

PO Box 522515
Saxonwold 2132, Johannesburg,
South Africa
(Location: 158 Oxford Road, St.
Vincent's School, Melrose 2196,
Johannesburg)

southern.africa@jrs.net

Tel/Fax: +27 11 327 0811

WEST AFRICA

08 B.P. 2088, Abidjan 08
Côte d'Ivoire
(Location: Rue C13 – Bvd Washington)

west.africa@jrs.net

Tel/Fax: +225 22 446 833
Tel: +225 22 446 815
Mobile: +225 07 105 811

ASIA PACIFIC

PO Box 49, Sanampao Post Office
Bangkok 10406, Thailand
(Location: 43 Rachwithi Soi 12, Victory
Monument, Phayathai, Bangkok 10400,
Thailand)

asia.pacific@jrs.net

Tel: +66 2 640 9590
Tel: +66 2 278 4182
Fax: +66 2 271 3632

SOUTH ASIA

Indian Social Institute
24 Benson Road, Benson Town,
Bangalore, 560 046, India

south.asia@jrs.net

Tel: +91 80 235 37 742 (direct)
Tel: +91 80 235 36 189 (recep)
Fax: +91 80 235 37 700

MIDDLE EAST

Syria
Residence des Pères Jésuites
Azbakieh, Damascus, Syria
damasdir@gmail.com

Jordan
Jabal Al-Hussein, 43 Al Razi Street
PO Box 212074, Amman 11121 Jordan
jordan.director@jrs.net
Tel: +962 6 4614190 (Ext. 31)

INTERNATIONAL OFFICE (ROME)

C.P. 6139, 00195 Roma Prati, Italy
(Location: Borgo S. Spirito 4, 00193 Roma, Italy)

Tel: +39 06 6897 7386
Fax: +39 06 6897 7380

international.office@jrs.net

www.jrs.net



2008
accompany | serve | defend



www.jrs.net