

# Louisiana Office Damaged by Hurricane Katrina

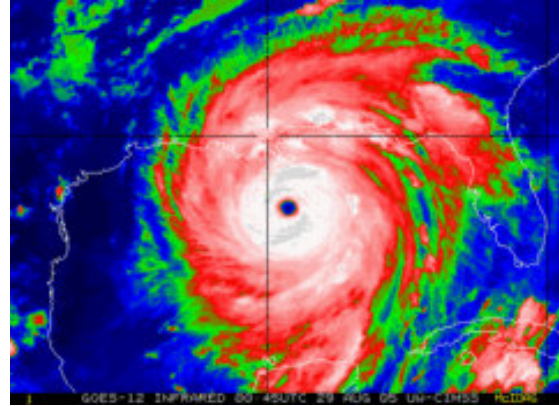
## September 2005

The Louisiana office of the Africa Education Project took a hard hit with the passing of Hurricane Katrina on August 29, 2005.

The AEP office is located west of New Orleans, just off the banks of Lake Pontchartrain in Jefferson Parish. One of the AEP Board of Directors, Dr. Simon Agolory, was able to return to the New Orleans area on Thursday, September 23, 2005, to check on the AEP office. He found a 5-foot water line on the complex's buildings. Flood waters sat in the area for two weeks before the waters receded. Wind damage had knocked many of the walls of the buildings down and completely taken off several roofs. The AEP office had no running water or electricity. Trash and other debris cluttered the building parking lot. Although AEP's third-floor office escaped flooding, it did not escape roof damage and subsequent water infiltration. Mold was found growing throughout the office area. Amazingly all the AEP documents were dry. Prior to evacuating, AEP staff had stored all of the organization's files in a closet and wrapped them with water-proof covering.

"There is no doubt that we have to relocate. We do, however, plan to stay in the New Orleans area. But we really don't know where we will go," says Kat Simon-Agolory, Executive Director of the Africa Education Project.

AEP had planned to launch the Teach Africa program in a local New Orleans elementary school in October. The program will now be postponed indefinitely as it is unknown when schools will reopen in the New Orleans area. Staff hopes to launch the program by September 2006.



**Hurricane Katrina on August 29, 2005.**

AEP's operations in North Carolina and east Africa have not been affected by the state of affairs in Louisiana.

"We are just grateful. Many of the buildings did not stand up to the storm. Many people were not able to evacuate," Dr. Simon Agolory shares.

All of AEP's New Orleans-based staff and board members were able to evacuate the day before the storm hit.

Hurricane Katrina formed over the Bahamas on August 23, 2005, and crossed southern Florida as a Category 1 storm. The hurricane made its second landfall as an extremely large Category 3 storm on the morning of August 29, 2005. Storm surge from Katrina caused catastrophic damage along the coastlines of Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. Levees separating Lake Pontchartrain from New Orleans and surrounding areas were breached by the surge, ultimately flooding about 80% of the city. The storm killed over 1,400 people. There are still over 3,000 people missing.