

ASSESSING RESTORING FAMILY LINKS NEEDS

HANDBOOK FOR NATIONAL SOCIETIES AND THE ICRC



ICRC



ICRC

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CTA	Central Tracing Agency
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
International Federation	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IDP	Internally displaced persons
IOM	International Organization for Migration
Movement	International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
RFL	Restoring family links
RFL Strategy	Restoring Family Links Strategy for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement 2008-2018, Resolution 4 of the the Council of Delegates, November 2007
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WHO	World Health Organization

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of RFL needs assessments and of the Handbook

“The purpose of the assessment is not to determine whether a given activity is possible, but rather to determine if it is needed.”

It is essential to assess needs before taking action, because it is on the basis of assessments that activities are planned and programmes subsequently monitored.

Even though assessments are a vital first step in the RFL process and a crucial means of ensuring that programmes are appropriate, they are sometimes skipped for lack of awareness, willingness, tools and/or methodology. This Handbook meets a need expressed by the field and in the recommendations contained in a number of reviews¹, in particular the Restoring Family Links Strategy for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (2008-2018).

The Handbook’s purpose is therefore to provide those in charge of RFL activities with guidelines and tools for assessing RFL needs. It draws extensively on *Guidelines for assessment in emergencies (March 2008)*,² thus ensuring that the Movement’s components use a consistent methodological approach and the same vocabulary in their programmes.

The Handbook applies in international and non-international armed conflicts, in situations of internal violence, in natural and man-made disasters, in humanitarian contexts such as those caused by international migratory flows and even in non-crisis situations, or times of peace.

¹ In particular the ICRC/CTA review of its capacity to act as coordinator and technical adviser on RFL to National Societies, conducted in 2006 (p. 65) and the assessment Missing in the Balkans.

² Published by the ICRC and the International Federation, available in PDF format at <http://www.ifrc.org/Docs/pubs/disasters/resources/helping-recover/guidelines-emergency.pdf>.

N.B.: Section 3 of the Handbook focuses on assessing RFL needs in non-emergency situations, section 4 on assessing RFL needs in emergency situations.

The aim of assessing RFL needs is to be able to answer the following questions:

- What are the main RFL needs?
- Who is affected by these needs and where?
- Is the population using coping mechanisms to address these needs?
- Is the population receiving support from elsewhere to restore family links?
- Is the RFL service provided by the ICRC, the National Society or the family links network necessary?

Depending on the answers, the assessment may offer indicative recommendations on the type of response required by addressing the two following questions:

- i. If necessary, what type of service is required?
- ii. What RFL tools would be most appropriate?

The Handbook outlines the five main phases of assessing RFL needs:

- 1. Laying the groundwork for the RFL needs assessment**
- 2. Conducting the RFL needs assessment**
- 3. Analysing the information collected**
- 4. Reporting**
- 5. Planning**

The Handbook focuses on assessing RFL needs and does not elaborate on monitoring, reviewing or evaluating programmes or evaluating the RFL response capacity of the ICRC and/or National Societies.

1.2 Definitions

The definitions³ below will help avoid misunderstandings and make the Handbook easier to read.

Assessment: gaining a good understanding of a situation in order to identify the problems, their sources and their consequences. The purpose of an assessment is not to determine whether a given activity is possible, but rather to determine if it is needed.

Monitoring: a continuous and systematic process of collecting, measuring, recording, analysing and communicating information (e.g. situation monitoring, activity or performance monitoring, outcome monitoring including financial monitoring, etc.) intended to aid management.

Review of ongoing programmes: a (periodic or ad hoc) examination of the performance (or outcome) of an initiative/programme/operation/policy. In many cases a more thorough and detailed analysis entails evaluation or stocktaking, rather than review. Sometimes the terms “review” and “evaluation” are used as synonyms.

³ ICRC institutional glossary.

2 LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR THE RFL NEEDS ASSESSMENT

2.1 Introduction

Before embarking on an RFL assessment in an emergency or non-emergency situation, several important aspects need to be considered.

2.2 The objectives and terms of reference

2.3 The type of assessment to be carried out

2.4 The focus of the assessment – RFL needs only or other needs as well

2.5 The advisability of including partners

2.6 The means (human resources, time, logistics, etc.)

In addition to these aspects, this section also outlines the basic principles to be respected when conducting an RFL needs assessment.

2.2 The objectives and terms of reference

The process of setting the assessment's objectives can be broken down into the following tasks:

- identify the reasons for carrying out the assessment;
- identify the main objectives of the assessment (there may be only three or four);
- identify who will receive the results of the assessment (RFL coordinator, senior National Society management, ICRC, International Federation, donors, other organizations);
- list the information to be collected;
- identify the geographical areas to be covered, in order of priority;
- list the activities to be carried out for a successful assessment;
- list the human and logistical resources needed;
- estimate the length of time needed;

- decide if the assessment will be conducted with partners (from the Movement or outside it).

If needed, draft terms of reference consistent with the complexity of the RFL needs assessment⁴.

2.3 The type of assessment to be carried out

All assessments are based on the same principle (the identification of vulnerabilities and capacities) and follow the same process (observation, interviews and collection of information). However, the way in which information is collected depends on the type of assessment. Two types of assessment are relevant for RFL – detailed and rapid assessment⁵.

2.3.1 Detailed assessment

This is the best means of enabling the National Society and/ or the ICRC to obtain a detailed overview of the RFL needs of potential beneficiaries and of current RFL activities while identifying any unmet needs. It is particularly useful in the following situations:

- in times of peace, when there is no emergency but the National Society offers RFL services in relation to potential disasters, migration and other situations of humanitarian need;
- in countries not experiencing conflicts but hosting large populations with family ties in conflict regions (refugees, asylum seekers, etc.);
- as a first step in the RFL capacity-building process, when the assessment of needs is a basis for further planning and work;

⁴ See Annex 2 – Terms of Reference for an assessment of RFL needs (specimen).

⁵ The *Guidelines for assessment in emergencies* also mention continual assessment, which takes place after the detailed assessment, once the Movement is operational in an area. It involves regularly updating information on the situation and seeking feedback from the beneficiaries in order to facilitate decision-making..

- when a rapid assessment has been made, but a more detailed assessment is required for the formulation of an action plan, either because the information gathered initially was insufficient or contradictory, or because the problems observed require medium or long-term action;
- when a crisis has changed (in intensity or scope) and additional elements have emerged that have a profound impact on the population, the RFL needs and the response.

Several weeks and even months might be required for this kind of assessment of RFL needs, depending on the geographical area covered, the resources available, and the complexity of the issues.

2.3.2 Rapid assessment

In an emergency there is often no time to make a detailed assessment. It is essential rapidly to gather information about possible RFL needs, not only of the population in the affected area, but also of persons outside the affected area who might be anxious to obtain news of family members. It is equally important to **provide RFL services at the same time** as the assessment is being carried out. Rapid assessment is especially useful in the following situations:

- when a conflict or situation of violence suddenly breaks out;
- when a natural or man-made disaster strikes;
- when an emergency situation gives rise to significant numbers of casualties and population displacement;
- when telecommunication networks have been disabled or destroyed.

A rapid assessment serves to determine, within days and at most one week, whether an RFL programme is needed and, if so, to establish its priorities (priority areas and population

groups, types of RFL activities and the most suitable tools). A more detailed assessment should be made as soon as possible to check and adjust the initial assessment and, if necessary, correct the emergency approach.

2.4 The focus of the assessment – RFL needs only or other needs as well

In order to use human and logistical resources rationally, RFL needs can be assessed within a broader exercise that considers other needs as well (e.g. a National Society assessment of the overall needs of a refugee population, including for health care, assistance, RFL, etc.). This has the advantage of ensuring that National Society and/or ICRC teams do not visit the same places several times to interview the same people for the purpose of assessing different needs.

The disadvantage is that coordinating a multidisciplinary assessment may prove to be a very demanding exercise; it can slow the RFL assessment and impair the quality of its findings.

2.5 The advisability of including partners

National Societies and ICRC delegations can conduct RFL needs assessments on their own or with partners. The Movement's components seem to be natural partners for RFL assessments, but external partners may be relevant in some situations.

2.5.1 Partners in the Movement

Action 1.1.1 of the RFL Strategy recommends that National Societies and the ICRC/CTA “undertake, in consultation with the affected individuals, populations and other concerned parties, comprehensive RFL assessments”.

In the event of a natural disaster, joint assessments will probably be carried out by different components of the Movement (the National Society, the International Federation and the ICRC). Whatever the components involved, assessments conducted in the immediate aftermath of a rapid-onset disaster are typically multi-disciplinary (health, food, water/sanitation, shelter, etc.) and should ideally incorporate RFL specialists.

One of the measures taken to implement the RFL Strategy was to form the **RFL Specialist Pool** and thereby strengthen the Movement's RFL response in natural and man-made disasters.

The RFL Specialist Pool comprises approximately 60 staff from the ICRC (expatriates and delegation employees) and National Societies who have a mix of skills, backgrounds and languages and were selected and trained to respond rapidly in disasters. It is maintained by the CTA, which may deploy the pool members when the ICRC, the International Federation or a National Society has the lead agency role.

The Pool's essential role is to respond rapidly and provide specialist input, including assessment of RFL needs, especially in large-scale disasters.

Optimal planning of RFL needs assessments conducted with one or more Movement partners (National Societies and/or the ICRC)⁶ means:

Primary (or direct) sources of information include the following:

- i. making sure that the National Society's role in RFL activities is duly recognized by its management and the authorities;
- ii. specifying each component's individual assessment role and ensuring that it is consonant with the existing cooperation policy between the host National Society, any other National Societies involved and the ICRC delegation.

⁶ If the disaster affects several countries and/or there is an international response, several National Societies (the host National Society and other National Societies) may be involved in the assessment of RFL needs.

2.5.2 External partners

Depending on the context and the RFL issues that have come to light (for example, unaccompanied and separated children or child soldiers), it may be decided to plan a joint assessment with other organizations or, circumstances permitting, with representatives of certain government institutions.

i. Advantages

- a. A coordination and cooperation mechanism can be set up straight away and responsibilities clearly divided.
- b. Optimum use is made of time and resources.
- c. The population is less subject to assessment fatigue.

ii. Prerequisites

- a. The National Society, the ICRC and the other organizations agree on the roles and responsibilities of each participant (for example, one organization may be in charge of assessing the situation in children's homes).
- b. The National Society and/or the ICRC play(s) the lead role.
- c. The methodology applied by the other organizations is compatible with that of the National Society and the ICRC.
- d. The authorities are in favour of the principle of a joint assessment.
- e. Such an approach is in the beneficiaries' interest.

iii. A joint assessment with external partners would be deemed inappropriate:

- a. if it compromised the Movement's principles of neutrality and independence;
- b. if it fell within the Movement's specific mandate and was to be conducted in a sensitive context where security is a prime consideration.

2.6 The means (human resources, time, logistics, etc.)

Structure the assessment team to fit the context, taking due account of the need to:

- ensure that a team leader with appropriate RFL experience is put in charge of managing the team and the assessment process;
- include people speaking the language(s) of the area to be assessed;
- make sure that the team consists of men and women;
- include representatives of the local National Society branch or ICRC sub-delegation in the area where the assessment is taking place;
- ensure that the ethnic origin of some members of the team does not pose a security risk or hinder contact with the affected population.

Once the team has been picked, the duties and responsibilities of each member must be clearly defined and the objectives of the assessment explained in detail at a briefing session, during which the following points must also be clarified:

- the list of materials the team will need, including dissemination material, stationery, telecommunication equipment, etc.;
- logistics (transportation, accommodation, advance on field expenses);
- the length of the assessment;
- security rules (situation, procedures), if necessary;
- communications – equipment, contact details and protocols;
- any other aspects of relevance to the assessment's success (decision-making, reporting line, coordination, respect for the Movement's principles, cultural sensitivity, etc.).

2.7 Key principles to be respected when carrying out RFL needs assessments

- **Consult the beneficiary population.** Always sound out the population benefiting from the RFL services.
- **Bear in mind the reliability of the information.** Information can be based on real observed “facts” (for example, the fact that the population fled in a disorganized manner), opinions (reflecting the viewpoint of the informant) or rumours resting on unchecked assertions (for example, a community leader says that no families have been separated, but admits that the question has not been asked).
- **Watch out for bias!** No one is entirely objective. Take account of the viewpoint of informants and assessors.
- **Understand the circumstances and reasons behind separation.**
- **Look out for the unexpected. Be prepared to have your assumptions challenged.**

3 ASSESSING RFL NEEDS IN NON-EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

3.1 Introduction

Non-emergency situations call for detailed assessments. This section therefore focuses on detailed RFL needs assessments conducted in the following suggested chronological order of steps:

- 3.2 **Analysis of the secondary information available**
- 3.3 **Deciding on the areas to visit and the target population**
- 3.4 **Defining the type of information to be gathered**
- 3.5 **Choosing the method for gathering information**
- 3.6 **Organizing the collection of information**

N.B.: The content of this section is also relevant for assessing RFL needs in emergency situations and should therefore be consulted even if a National Society or the ICRC delegation is undertaking a rapid RFL needs assessment.

Whether an assessment in a non-emergency situation should be conducted with or without partners and as a multidisciplinary or separate RFL assessment will depend very much on the context, situation and environment. As there is no perfect formula, this section does not elaborate on the pros and cons of each option.

3.2 Analysis of the secondary information available

Once the decision to conduct an RFL needs assessment has been taken, one of the first tasks of the person or team in charge of the assessment is to **draw up an inventory and detailed analysis of the secondary information** available.

Secondary information is information that has already been collected, either by the Movement or by other organizations. Secondary information can relate to an earlier or current situation and it can be in written (reports, etc.) or oral form (discussion).

Bearing in mind the quality of the data, the following questions must be asked in order to determine the relevance of the secondary information obtained:

- How was the information gathered and by whom?
- For what purpose?
- Is the source reliable or biased?
- Is the information recent?
- Is it based on facts or opinions?

It is wise to include details of secondary information sources in the assessment report.

There are four main sources of secondary information.

i. Online resources

- a. Websites of government institutions, research bodies, international organizations, etc., can provide valuable data and statistics (e.g. census information) and should be compiled in a list.

ii. Stakeholders

- a. Central, regional and local government officials (relevant ministries, departments, etc.)
- b. UN agencies (UNHCR, UNICEF, IOM, etc.) and NGOs (charities)
- c. Media used by potential beneficiaries (newspapers, radio stations, newsletters and television channels)
- d. Universities (academic researchers, foreign student clubs)
- e. Relevant embassies and consulates

Important

Besides being an indispensable source of information about RFL needs, stakeholders (in particular government authorities, UN agencies and NGOs) may also be involved in activities pertaining to RFL services or even offer such services themselves. Their activities and potential RFL responses will therefore have to be taken into consideration and assessed as well.

iii. Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

- a. Colleagues from other departments within the National Society and/or ICRC delegation
- b. Other National Societies and/or ICRC delegations
- c. Representatives of the International Federation

iv. Service providers and institutions for vulnerable individuals

- a. Emergency/crisis accommodation centres
- b. Reception centres
- c. Domestic violence shelters
- d. Reception and foster homes for unaccompanied minors
- e. Language schools/centres (attended by migrants, asylum seekers, refugees, etc.)
- f. Religious groups/organizations (e.g. churches, mosques, synagogues, temples, etc.)
- g. Day/drop-in centres
- h. Restaurants and soup kitchens for the homeless
- i. First-aid centres
- j. Hospitals and nursing homes
- k. Places of detention/removal centres.

3.3 Deciding on the areas to visit and the target population

It is not feasible to visit every region of the country and ask every single person with the right profile about their individual RFL needs. Instead, a decision needs to be made as to which populations, and which people within particular populations, will be studied in the geographical region in question.

Good starting points when deciding which areas and which populations to study are country of origin and individuals with additional vulnerabilities, as these factors can greatly influence the need for RFL services.

It may be useful to analyse past and present caseload records for a particular region to determine what populations use or have used RFL services. The analysis may also indicate whether the RFL needs of certain groups were not addressed in the past (e.g. absence of RFL cases related to a known population of irregular migrants).

Target populations should not be chosen solely because they are the most accessible.

Questions that can help when deciding target populations include:

- What are the largest populations in this region?
- What populations have not been studied yet and on what populations is only limited information currently available?
- Which populations are particularly vulnerable? Are there particularly large populations with additional vulnerabilities in this region?
- Do the caseload records indicate that certain populations have a history of using RFL services?
- Do the caseload records indicate that certain populations do not have a history of using RFL services?
- Are there any known barriers impeding access by certain groups to RFL services (language, distrust of the authorities, low level of acceptance of the Movement or of one of its components, low awareness of National Society and/or ICRC RFL services)?

3.4 Type of information to be collected

The different types of information to be collected when assessing the RFL needs of the population in a specific country/area are listed below.

(a) Population living in the country/region/area where the RFL needs assessment is taking place

- i. Profile of the population (sedentary, nomadic, with a large community of emigrants/immigrants, notion of nuclear versus extended family, literacy level, social structures such as clans, tribes, castes, etc.)
- ii. Identified vulnerable individuals within the population:
 - refugees
 - IDPs
 - asylum seekers
 - migrants (in particular irregular migrants and those in detention)
 - street children
 - unaccompanied minors
 - victims of human trafficking
 - the elderly
 - persons without a fixed abode (the homeless)
- iii. Countries of origin of refugees, asylum seekers, migrants and victims of human trafficking
- iv. Reasons for separation of families (e.g. vulnerable individuals in locations where there are no means of communication). Identifying the reasons for separation will help to identify potential RFL needs and subsequently chose the most appropriate approach to addressing them.

(b) Communication and infrastructure - availability, accessibility and affordability of different forms of communication and infrastructure

- i. **Telephone**
 - a. fixed line (coverage in urban/rural areas, penetration rate)

- b. mobile (coverage in urban/rural areas, number of providers, costs, penetration rate)
 - c. kinds of communication mobile telephones are most often used for (voice calls, SMS, MMS, Internet)
 - d. satellite telephones (are they used in the country and who is allowed to use them, number of providers, costs)
- ii. Internet**
- a. type of access (dial-up, ADSL, satellite)
 - b. place of access (home, Internet café, etc.)
 - c. coverage across the country
 - d. penetration rate
 - e. cost and general affordability of connectivity
 - f. For what kind of communication is the Internet most often used (Skype, chat, social forums, etc.)?
 - g. Is access to certain (kinds of) websites limited? If yes, what are the limitations and who are they imposed by?
- iii. Postal service**
- a. coverage and reliability
- iv. Existence of alternative means of communication**
- a. exchange of oral and/or written messages using alternative channels (e.g. through community associations, social gatherings, bus and taxi drivers)
 - b. communication through radio amateurs
 - c. frequency of use
- v. Media**
- a. media used by the population (radio, TV, newspapers and magazines, websites, other) and access thereto
 - b. existence of media for the foreign/migrant communities
 - c. possibility of using media to promote RFL services and/or as a tracing tool
- vi. Transportation**
- a. most frequently used means of transportation
 - b. affordability of transportation to means of communication

(c) Needs outside the area of assessment⁷

- RFL needs of those who have sought refuge in neighbouring countries
- RFL needs of the diaspora
- RFL needs of families of refugees, asylum seekers, migrants, tourists, students, etc. in their countries of origin

(d) Role and potential capacity of the National Society tracing service⁸

- i. Support from the National Society's senior management and its willingness to undertake or expand RFL activities
- ii. Consonance of RFL services with National Society operational priorities and institutional strategy, including its role in implementing the RFL Strategy
- iii. Authorities' recognition of the National Society's role in the RFL sphere
- iv. The population's perception of the National Society
- v. Incorporation of the RFL response into the National Society's emergency response procedures
- vi. Information about the person in charge of the National Society tracing service (name, title, training, experience, hierarchical status)
- vii. Number of volunteers with RFL training/experience and without RFL training/experience (at National Society headquarters, in branches in affected/unaffected areas) and possibility (or otherwise) for their rapid mobilization

(e) ICRC potential role and resources

- i. Number of expatriates available for RFL activities (in the delegation or at regional level)
- ii. Number of national employees available
- iii. Available logistics and communication set-up
- iv. The population's perception of the ICRC
- v. Consonance of RFL services with the delegation's overall operational priorities and institutional strategy, including its role in implementing the RFL Strategy

⁷ Examples of questionnaires for assessing the RFL needs of people living abroad can be found in Annexes 4-6.

⁸ When conducting a detailed assessment, the National Society's RFL capacity will naturally have to be appraised. When conducting a rapid assessment, however, only a brief appraisal is required. See the capacity appraisal tool (Annex 8) used when launching the RFL strategy.

3.5 Methods of collecting information

Methods of collecting information include, but are not limited to:

3.5.1 observation

3.5.2 interviews

3.5.3 surveys

Factors that may influence the method(s) chosen include:

- the type of information sought;
- the human and logistical resources required;
- the geographical area to be covered;
- the length of time available for the assessment, both before and during field research;
- possible partners (other organizations, authorities);
- the depth of information sought (overview or in-depth);
- the people carrying out the assessment and how comfortable they are with the various methods.

A combination of methods can be used, such as individual interviews with a small number of individuals who know the subject in depth (key informants), a group interview with a particular group within the population, and a survey of the broader population.

3.5.1 Observation

On-the-spot observation is an important source of direct information that allows the observer quickly to:

discover the location of target populations (e.g. displaced persons, street children) and the prevailing conditions;

- ascertain whether target populations have means of communication at their disposal (telephones they can use, persons with mobile telephones, etc.);
- pinpoint places where vulnerable persons (e.g. unaccompanied children, irregular migrants) congregate and find out if some groups have been marginalized;

- become acquainted with the situation and aware of the general mood of target populations (fear, anxiety, anger, etc.);
- validate preliminary assumptions made during the analysis of secondary information or during a rapid assessment;
- cross-check information collected later during interviews.

Important

Observers must use all their senses! Direct observation allows the observer to be aware of any change in the environment. It is essential for comparing other sources of information and for validating hypotheses.

3.5.2 Interviews

Interviews are central to the RFL needs assessment. This section covers the following aspects: what type of interview to choose, how to conduct the interview, and what techniques to use.

3.5.2.1 Choosing the type of interview

- semi-structured interview:** list comprising only essential questions (checklist)
- structured:** list of precise questions (questionnaire)
- unstructured:** no questions prepared in advance

For the purpose of assessing RFL needs, a semi-structured interview is often the best means of obtaining the desired information, because it allows for flexibility while at the same time ensuring that important points are not forgotten. A simple checklist is clearly appropriate for rapid assessments in emergencies, but it must be fleshed out for detailed assessments.⁹

⁹ It was decided to use questionnaires to review RFL programmes for Somalis in 2006, as the assessment had to be done by “remote control” for reasons of security, but in detail.

3.5.2.2 How to conduct an interview

- a. It is best to start by introducing yourself, explaining the reasons for the interview and providing basic information on RFL services. At the same time, be careful not to raise false hopes by making promises that will be difficult to keep.
- b. Proceed with a discussion of the general living conditions in the region concerned/affected, to allow people to bring up their main problems themselves.
- c. It is preferable to formulate open-ended questions so as not to introduce any bias into the answers. The techniques used can have a great impact on both the quality and quantity of the information collected. Open-ended questions are not only friendlier, they obtain the desired result – information - more rapidly and are easier on the person answering. Example: instead of asking, “Do you use a mobile telephone to contact your family abroad” (a close-ended question to which the answer will be “yes” or “no”), ask an open-ended question like, “How do you maintain contact with your family abroad?”
- d. If possible, choose a quiet spot where people feel at ease.
- e. If available, it is useful to have a list of contacts, so that you can refer the people being interviewed to other departments or organizations for problems other than RFL.

3.5.2.3 Group interviews

Group interviews facilitate dialogue. Fostering an atmosphere of constructive debate makes it easier to cross-check information and probe issues in depth. For example, the fact that the members of a group disagree as to priority RFL needs or provide contradictory explanations for these needs will point to a diversity of situations/opinions and should prompt you to nuance your conclusions.

Some people are likely to be shy about expressing themselves in a heterogenic group (women, children or people with a low social status in very hierarchical societies), and it is therefore preferable to organize a group interview for them specifically, or to plan individual interviews.

3.5.2.4 How to select people for a group interview

The people making up the group(s) must be carefully selected. Ideally five to ten people from different backgrounds and with varying viewpoints should be chosen. There should be a good balance of men/women and adults/elderly people/youths. There are three ways of selecting the people in a group:

- a. **consult community leaders** and ask them to supply a list;
- b. **spontaneously**, in other words a few people start a discussion and others join in spontaneously because the discussion interests or directly concerns them;
- c. **key informants** propose a list of persons. This solution is ideal, provided the informants really know the community well and the interviewers have enough time at their disposal.

3.5.2.5 Individual interviews

Individual interviews are recommended when dealing with sensitive questions (complex family situation, RFL problems linked to matters of protection/security) and are particularly appropriate for obtaining a maximum amount of information from a key informant. Depending on the profile of this key informant, questions may concern the general RFL needs of the population, or be aimed directly at specific aspects (for example, a refugee camp manager will be asked questions directly related to the refugees and their RFL needs).

3.5.2.6 How to identify key informants for individual interviews

Key informants are people with specific knowledge of certain RFL-related matters. They are especially useful in emergencies when time counts and information must be gathered as speedily as possible. Besides the sources of secondary information listed under point 3.2, the following primary sources are likely to be key informants for RFL purposes:

- **representatives of target populations** (displaced or resident, belonging to diverse social and ethnic groups);
- **particularly vulnerable sectors of the population** (people belonging to a group that is marginalized for ethnic, political, religious or sexual reasons, unaccompanied minors/separated children, women on their own with children, the disabled, the elderly, persons suffering from serious or chronic diseases who are without family support, irregular immigrants and victims of human trafficking).

Depending on the situation (time constraint, access, etc.), interviewers select the most appropriate informants who are presumably able to provide relevant information. It is also useful to identify a focal person to whom the National Society and/or the ICRC can return should there be a follow-up visit to the group of persons interviewed during the assessment. How should one go about interviewing the various categories of key informants identified? The following five categories have been selected because, in our experience, they are the groups who traditionally have been able to supply useful information regarding the RFL needs of the population concerned. This list is not exhaustive and categories should be added or removed according to the circumstances.

(a) National Society and ICRC staff

Obviously, National Society and ICRC (expatriate and local) staff working on RFL activities in the country concerned must be interviewed in order to elicit detailed information on:

- i. RFL activities prior to the beginning of the assessment;
- ii. the RFL response in the wake of specific past emergencies (conflict, natural disaster);
- iii. the data needed to obtain a complete picture of the situation (doubts, unknown factors);
- iv. other participants in the RFL sphere (other organizations, State partners), in other words, potential key informants;
- v. their individual recommendations and suggestions.

Questions enabling the assessment team to gain a more up-to-date picture of the National Society's capacity to provide an RFL response and of its strong and weak points must also be asked.

It is also wise to obtain what may be a fresh perspective by asking colleagues from other departments (disaster management, assistance, communication) to supplement the information obtained.

(b) Other National Societies and ICRC delegations

In situations where people from one country are being dispersed across several other countries, the tracing services of the National Societies in those countries should be approached in order to find out what RFL needs the diaspora might have. The same applies for countries hosting significant numbers of people from other countries, especially if those countries are affected by conflict, internal violence or some other situation of humanitarian need

Example

In the scope of the tracing survey conducted in Somalia in 2006 and 2007, five European National Societies, the American Red Cross and six National Societies of countries bordering Somalia were invited to take part by (1) replying to the questionnaire sent to them, and (2) submitting another questionnaire to a sample of members of the Somali diaspora.¹⁰

¹⁰ Examples of the forms used during this evaluation may be found in Annexes 5 and 6. It should be noted, however, that these questionnaires covered not only needs assessment, but also ongoing programmes.

Information gathered from the diaspora or families living abroad, through other National Societies and ICRC delegations, will be invaluable in making sure that all needs, including those outside the country, are accounted for.

If information is needed from National Societies that would be hard to interview, questionnaires will have to be drafted that can be sent and answered by post or by e-mail.

(c) The beneficiary population

These interviews are crucial and must therefore be carefully prepared. The questions will be more or less detailed and numerous, depending on the context and situation, but the following must be noted:

- i. date and place of the interview;
- ii. name and function of the interviewer;
- iii. age, sex and status (resident, displaced person, refugee, immigrant, vulnerable person, etc.) of the interviewee;
- iv. family situation (extended, nuclear, single-parent family, etc.);
- v. when and in what circumstances contact was lost with a family member;
- vi. whether any attempt has been made to restore contact, how and why it was unsuccessful;
- vii. whether help has already been requested, and from whom;
- viii. how contact was restored, if at all;
- ix. what family members live outside the particular region or abroad, and whether they have been able to send/receive news;
- x. the means and frequency of contact with family living elsewhere.

(d) Authorities

Some ministries may possess data of decisive importance for supplementing information on RFL needs. Contact persons within ministries who have been identified as possibly holding RFL-related information should be consulted about their

specific area. Persons in charge of camps or reception centres for displaced persons or refugees must not be overlooked as sources of information.

When re-assessing RFL needs in the course of an operation and thus contacting the authorities, questions should relate to the ongoing cooperation between the ICRC and/or the National Society and the authorities, things that could be improved, future plans for offering RFL services, etc. A list of questions aimed at supplementing or updating available information in the area of activity concerned must be drawn up for each ministry to be contacted.

Interviews with authorities are also an important vector for presenting RFL activities and positioning the ICRC and/or the National Society.

(e) Other organizations

Irrespective of whether they are involved in the assessment, other humanitarian and social organizations (charities, faith-based groups, etc.) that are well-established in the country might be a valuable source of information. Consulting them from the outset can facilitate collaboration once RFL activities have been launched and avoid friction when duties and responsibilities are allocated. Lists of questions can be prepared targeting their area of activity, as for contact persons.

Which organizations are contacted in the course of an assessment will largely depend on the country, the situation, the presence of international and other NGOs, their activities, etc. Usually organizations dealing with the same target population and problems as the National Societies and the ICRC are the best sources of information (e.g. UNHCR, UNICEF, Save the Children, MSF)¹¹. It is very important to consider the role and capacities of other nationally based actors (child-protection organizations, faith-based organizations) as well.

¹¹ When people were displaced in Pakistan in 2009, the ICRC maintained contact with UNICEF and its implementing partners, creating a referral system for cases of unaccompanied and separated children requiring RFL services.

3.5.3 Surveys

Surveys are a means of gathering information, without detailed verification, on the activity being examined and entail questionnaires being completed by the survey participants. The practicalities of the survey should be organized and the survey itself prepared before people are asked to respond, so that all the information can be sent out at the same time.

It is absolutely essential to test the questionnaire among a few individuals or organizations before it is used for a broader survey. It is equally important to plan how the information gathered will be processed and analysed before using a survey tool.

a. **When?**

Surveys are completed individually at a time convenient to the respondent. The researcher need only decide on the deadline for completing the survey, and whether to send a reminder at a certain date (this is advisable in order to increase response rates).

b. **How?**

Surveys can be administered by mail¹² or online¹³. The medium chosen will depend on the time and resources available, the level of literacy, computer skills and access to the Internet.

c. **Who?**

Who to target will depend on whether the survey is aimed at people in organizations, people who have previously used RFL services, those who have not, or a combination thereof.

- i. If the survey is targeted at people in organizations, it can be sent by mail or online to all relevant organizations identified.
- ii. If the survey is targeted at people who have previously used RFL services, it can be sent by mail or online to people registered in the RFL case files.

¹² See Annex 7 for a survey template used by the Canadian Red Cross during an RFL needs assessment project.

¹³ Telephone surveys are possible, but extremely resource and time-intensive.

- iii. If the survey is targeted at those who have not previously used RFL services, it can be sent via key informants and community organizations, advertised through community organizations and forwarded by previous respondents to people they think may be interested in responding.

Surveys are an economical way to get feedback from a large number of people. On the other hand, they may elicit ambiguous answers, and the questions set predetermine the types of answers that will be given.

3.6 Organizing the collection of information

3.6.1 Initial checklist

In order to ensure that no crucial information is missed, it is wise to draw up an initial checklist comprising:

- the questions to be put (see the list in section 3.3);
- the method of gathering the information;
- the informants (groups or individuals);
- the locations to be visited (e.g. camps/shelters for displaced persons, hospitals);
- the duties of each member of the team;
- the materials and equipment needed (including for telecommunications);
- logistics and administration (transportation, accommodation, cash advance, etc.);
- security rules (if required).

A checklist is not a questionnaire. It serves to jog the memory, but it should not prevent the interviewer from being receptive to any new items of information that might emerge during the interview. Moreover, it must be revised regularly, and adjusted and supplemented as needed, in the light of initial on-the-spot observations. Using a standard list is not recommended, because each situation is different.

3.6.2 How to gather information and from whom

By analysing secondary information, it is possible to determine which target regions and sectors of the population should be visited first. In the context of assistance programmes, two information-gathering approaches are suggested:

- random sampling (persons are selected by chance);
- purposive sampling (persons are chosen because they belong to a particular group, or because they live in a particular location, for instance an IDP camp).

When assessing RFL needs, the second approach is the most efficient, as it saves time by directly focusing on people who could potentially have RFL needs, such as IDPs. When there is little time available, it might be best to turn first to local leaders (heads of communities or persons in charge of IDP camps) to obtain a list of persons to be interviewed.

While the opinion of community leaders is certainly important, it is not conclusive evidence of the existence or absence of RFL needs. It is always essential to consult the population concerned directly.

In some contexts, community leaders reply negatively because:

- a. they do not understand the RFL services on offer;
- b. the population in question is not aware of RFL services and therefore does not report problems of that kind.

In such circumstances, once the population receives a direct explanation of what can be done in terms of RFL (during a camp visit, for example), a demand for RFL services is sometimes swiftly voiced.

Example

After encountering difficulties in reaching the Afghan community in the United Kingdom, the British Red Cross commissioned research in 2006 so as to:

- develop a detailed and thorough understanding of that community;
- identify one or several route(s) by which the British Red Cross could engage more successfully with the Afghan community to deliver RFL services;
- develop a (successful) “model” or method of operating that could be applied to other communities when engaging with them or while developing channels of communication.

A combination of both quantitative and qualitative research methods was used, including 92 face-to-face multilingual interviews with community members

4 ASSESSING RFL NEEDS IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

4.1 Introduction

Every conflict, disaster or other situation of humanitarian need can give rise to RFL needs which differ according to the context and the circumstances in which family members have been separated or have lost contact with one another.

Important

When the assessment is to be conducted in a conflict situation or in a disaster that has hit a conflict-affected area, security and protection concerns will prevail over all others.

In order to ensure staff security and obtain access to the beneficiaries, the National Society and/or the ICRC must understand the general characteristics of the conflict, its trends and the factors influencing it.

It is also crucial for the National Society and/or the ICRC to know on what **legal basis** it is to provide humanitarian assistance and protection, including RFL services, in a particular conflict.

Under the Movement's Statutes, the National Societies "carry out their humanitarian activities in conformity with their own statutes and national legislation" (Article 3.1). "They organize, in liaison with the public authorities, emergency relief operations and other services to assist the victims of armed conflicts as provided in the Geneva Conventions, and the victims of natural disasters and other emergencies for whom help is needed" (Article 3.2).

The ICRC is the "guardian" of international humanitarian law. Its work is based on the four 1949 Geneva Conventions and their two Additional Protocols of 1977, which entitle it to carry out

activities such as re-establishing contact between members of families separated by conflicts.¹⁴

RFL needs depend on the impact that a conflict or a natural or man-made disaster has on population groups, as the following diagram shows.

Assessment is key to responding in the best possible way to the beneficiaries' actual needs throughout the various phases of the emergency. An initial assessment is also essential in order to have baseline information against which to monitor and evaluate progress towards achievement of results. In reality, in emergencies, only a rapid assessment is feasible. This section therefore focuses on how to arrive at the best possible rapid assessment and plan of action under pressure of time and lays out logical steps to help those making operational choices in a situation of emergency:

- 1. Analyse the secondary information available**
- 2. Decide on the areas to visit and the target population**
- 3. Define the type of information to be gathered**
- 4. Choose the method for gathering information**
- 5. Organize the collection of information**

N.B.: Many segments of the assessment process in an emergency are similar or the same as in the assessment process in time of peace. They are therefore not repeated here. Instead, the reader is referred to the previous section, "Assessment of RFL needs in non-emergency situations".

This section draws heavily on the *RFL in Disasters Field Manual*, particularly section 5, "Assessment and planning".

¹⁴ The ICRC's role with regard to RFL is defined by the Third Geneva Convention (GC III), Art. 123 and GC IV, Art. 140. The four 1949 Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocol I of 1977 (AP I) address the protection of persons affected by international armed conflicts. Additional Protocol II of 1977 (AP II) and Article 3 common to all four Geneva Conventions concern the protection in situations of non-international armed conflict of persons who are not, or are no longer, taking part in hostilities. In other situations of violence, the provisions of GC I-IV can only be applied by analogy. The RFL activities governed by GC I-IV and AP I and II are: **forwarding family news** (GC III, Art.71 and GC IV, Arts 25 and 107); **Tracing missing persons** (AP I, Arts 32-34, GC III, Art.120 and GC IV, Art.130); **Family reunification** (AP I, Arts 74 and 78, GC III, Art. 119 and GC IV, Arts 26, 128, 134 and 135).

4.1.1 RFL specificities of emergency situations

a. **Means of communication are destroyed or disabled in the stricken area**

The destruction or disruption of means of communication prevents families from contacting their relatives either in the stricken area or outside it. In both cases, people urgently need to get back in touch with other family members. This is particularly true of vulnerable persons (children, the sick, the disabled, etc.).

b. **Displaced persons or refugees**

Displaced persons or refugees need to reassure their relatives who may have remained within the stricken area, or who are living outside it. People in shelters or camps often have no opportunity to inform relatives of their whereabouts and families are frequently scattered among several shelters.

c. **Injured persons who have been evacuated**

When a conflict erupts or a serious disaster hits a region, injured persons are often evacuated, without their families necessarily being informed or knowing to which hospital they have been taken.

d. **Vulnerable persons who have been separated from their families**

In any type of situation, there are usually individuals or groups who are vulnerable – even if there are only a few of them. “Vulnerable” means any person or group of persons who cannot survive without the support of their family or of a specialized institution (home or hospital). The term covers children, the disabled, the sick, the elderly, etc. If these people become separated from their families owing to a conflict or a disaster, they are potentially in substantial need of protection and assistance until they can be reunited with their family or source of support.

e. **Persons deprived of freedom**

In conflicts, people can be arrested or detained unbeknown to their relatives. After a natural disaster or in a conflict situation, prisoners who have no or limited or very slow access to means of communicating with the outside world require reassurance about the safety of their relatives. If they are being held in an area affected by a disaster, they also need to reassure their families of their own well-being.

f. **Missing persons**

Persons who do not return home after a disaster or fighting and who do not contact their family once means of communication have been restored are deemed to be missing. They may be lost, wounded or in a state of shock, they may be held incommunicado, or they may be dead; their families are desperate to know what has happened to them.

g. **The dead**

Conflicts, disasters of any kind and other humanitarian crises (migration in hazardous conditions) can cause many deaths. Depending on the circumstances and the number of victims, the deceased may be abandoned, buried on the spot, or transferred to hospitals or mortuaries. In many cases, families are not notified of the fate of their relatives. Furthermore, insufficient or unsuitable management of human remains may jeopardize subsequent identification.

4.1.2 Urgency of conducting RFL needs assessments

It is commonly held that RFL needs are less pressing than others (food, shelter, clothing and medicines), but a mother desperately searching for a child she lost while fleeing might question the validity of this statement.

A distinction must be made between the degree of urgency and the scale of RFL needs in various situations. For example, after a natural disaster, RFL needs generally tend to be acute for a few days and then tail off swiftly (means of communication are often restored quite quickly, the authorities organize transport and set up shelters, or the people affected return to their homes). In contrast, in conflict-related situations, RFL needs may vary in intensity for an unforeseeable period.

The following criteria can be applied to provide a rapid initial response to the most urgent RFL needs, notwithstanding any constraints that may exist:

- **seriousness of the needs and possible consequences of not intervening;**
- **urgent nature of the needs and possible consequences of a late response;**
- **vulnerability of the beneficiaries in terms of their protection and assistance needs;**
- **number of persons affected;**
- **logistical, practical and security constraints.**

Balancing these criteria requires judgement; there is no simple formula for setting priorities.

Important

It is vital, while the assessment is being conducted, to offer emergency services to restore and protect family links via mobile or satellite telephones, messages such as “I am safe and well” or “I am anxious for news”, Family Links website and the registration of unaccompanied children.

4.2 Analysis of the available information

To identify the RFL needs of the affected population, primary information (information from direct sources, based on observations made on the spot or gathered directly from the affected population by staff or volunteers) and secondary information (information from indirect sources such as reports

from the media, the government and other organizations) have to be collected and analysed. If there is no direct source (which is often the case at the very start), secondary information and past experience of similar situations will have to be used to make assumptions on the expected RFL needs.

A preliminary analysis of the information available on the general situation in the affected area(s) provides the basis on which to decide whether an RFL response is required and what kind of assessment should be carried out.

For the list of principal secondary sources of information, see section 3.2.

4.3 Deciding on the areas to visit and the target population

It is rarely possible to visit the entire region of interest. Representative areas must therefore be selected. Statistical methods for doing this are not normally feasible because of time and access constraints. Use the review of secondary information to identify areas and populations that fit the criteria below.

- **Priority 1: Area and/or population directly affected**

For example, an earthquake zone, an area of armed conflict or a population forcibly displaced from their homes.

- **Priority 2: Population outside the affected area**

Population living in regions/countries not affected by the emergency but having close family ties with the population in the affected area.

In a rapid assessment, there is normally only time to visit locations and populations in the Priority 1 category. Sometimes it is impossible to gain access to Priority 1 areas. If this is the case, try to talk to people who have come from these areas.

4.4 Type of information to be collected

Besides the information listed in section 3.4, the following are crucial for assessing RFL needs in emergency situations.

(a) Directly affected regions and populations

- i. Identification of affected regions/villages (in as much detail as possible)
- ii. Administrative structure of the affected regions
- iii. State of the available communication infrastructure (landlines, mobile telephones) accessible to the population (geographical area covered, installed in shelters or IDP camps, affordable or free of charge, etc.); if it is damaged, are repairs under way and, if so, approximately how long are they likely to last?
- iv. Has media coverage in the region (TV, radio, newspapers) been affected by the emergency? If not, does the population have access to it and what are the most commonly used media?
- v. Are the authorities helping to inform the public of RFL possibilities (by radio, television, newspapers or posters)?

(b) Registration of / information about the victims

- i. Number and kinds of victims (displaced persons, persons who have been arrested, casualties, persons who have disappeared)
- ii. Places where the victims have congregated or have been assembled (camps, shelters, hospitals, prisons, police stations, etc.)
- iii. Displaced population accommodated in community shelters, by family or by private persons
- iv. Profile of vulnerable persons identified among this population (for example, unaccompanied children, the elderly, the disabled or the injured without family support, etc.)
- v. Address and telephone number of the authorities/ organizations in charge of registering casualties; address and telephone number of the authority (if operational) in charge of centralizing this information

- vi. System used by the authorities to check, update and publish information related to the affected population
- vii. Characteristics of population movements (controlled and organized or spontaneous and chaotic)
- viii. Sick and injured evacuated out of the affected region
- ix. Address and telephone number of the authorities/ organizations (if operational) in charge of registering and caring for these vulnerable persons
- x. Potential risk of further displacement (change in location of shelter owing to security or political risks)

(c) Management of the dead¹⁵

i. Regarding the dead

- a. How many people died? Where? Are their remains accessible?
- b. How are dead bodies recovered and managed?
- c. Are dead bodies cremated or hastily buried?
- d. Are dead bodies treated in any other way that could prove traumatic for the families? How? Where?
- e. How are human remains stored? Where?
- f. How are they identified (visual recognition, comparison of ante-mortem and post-mortem data, DNA)? Where? By whom?
- g. How are dead bodies disposed of or released to the families?
- h. How are unidentified bodies disposed of? Where?

ii. Regarding the system: responsibilities and capacities

- a. Which authority is responsible for managing and identifying the dead at the local, regional or national level?
- b. How is this organized? Who is in charge of coordination?
- c. What is the Movement's role, if any?
- d. Communication: what information is transmitted to the population regarding the dead (recovery, handling, storage, identification)?

¹⁵ For practical and simple advice on the management of the dead by non-specialists and first responders, refer to *Management of Dead Bodies after Disasters: A Field Manual for First Responders*, a 2006 publication issued jointly by PAHO/WHO, the ICRC and the International Federation, available at www.icrc.org.

iii. Regarding the families' specific needs

- a. Is there a family liaison focal point to help the families?
- b. Is psychosocial support available?
- c. Are bereaved families informed about procedures and developments relating to the recovery and identification of their loved one(s)?

(d) Coordination

- i. Which Movement component has the lead role in the situation (ICRC, National Society or International Federation)?
- ii. Presence of other National Societies
- iii. Coordination mechanism in place within the Movement
- iv. Coordination mechanism with other players
- v. Integrated approach with other Movement components and/or other possible players
- vi. Acceptance of the Movement's components by the authorities and the population (in particular by the parties to the conflict in a conflict situation)

When collecting information about potential RFL needs for which the population has been unable to devise a coping mechanism, take stock of available resources and ascertain whether preventive measures are required, for example if further displacement is to be expected.

Example

If further displacement is announced or suspected, preventive measures will have to be taken such as identifying and registering very young children (e.g. by means of a bracelet or identity card).

4.5 Methods of collecting information

If only a rapid assessment seems possible, obviously not all the relevant/required data mentioned in sections 3.4 and 4.4 can be collected and it will therefore be necessary to determine, realistically and practically, what information can be gathered rapidly and is essential for planning an RFL response within an optimum deadline. Assumptions have to be made about RFL needs and the most appropriate response and then tested against the actual situation and needs.

Besides analysing the secondary information available, a rapid assessment must consider at least the following methods of collecting information:

- a. On-the-spot observation, which allows the RFL team to obtain rapid answers to questions such as:
 - i. Are telecommunications available for the affected population (e.g. displaced persons in camps or shelters)? Are they easy to use (access, cost)?
 - ii. Has the population spontaneously put up posters, with pictures or messages, in order to look for relatives?
 - iii. Are certain groups of vulnerable or marginalized persons lost or not taken care of?
 - iv. Are the dead being collected or not?
 - v. Can the assumptions made prior to assessment be confirmed by direct observation?
- b. Interviews with a sample of people from among the affected population, or from the affected area
- c. Interviews with National Society/ICRC RFL personnel
- d. Interviews with other main players

Important

In situations of conflict, involving the affected population in the RFL needs assessment can present an **advantage** and be a **security risk** for National Society / ICRC staff and the population's protection.

Advantage – Consulting the affected population can enhance understanding of RFL needs and the general situation, facilitate recognition of advance warning signs and help avoid potential dangers.

Risk – Asking questions about the needs of a particular group (the victims, refugees, the displaced, etc.), whether during individual or group interviews, can be interpreted, in certain contexts and by certain parties to the conflict, as subversive and can put informants and National Society / ICRC staff in danger.

It is important to be aware of the advantages and risks and to assess how they can be dealt with in a specific context.

The methods of collecting information are described in section 3.5 and should be consulted. In emergency situations an additional category has to be added to the list of key informants: the **population living outside the affected area**.

When an emergency occurs, families living outside the affected area or abroad who have no news of relatives in the affected zone are often the first people to express anxiety and to feel a need to restore family links. They therefore contact the National Society of their country of residence, the National Society or the ICRC in the country concerned, or their embassy if there is one in their country of residence. Even if their requests are hard to deal with during the initial phase of the emergency,¹⁶ they should be logged and included in any calculation of RFL needs. Any reports from a National Society of requests from the diaspora of the affected country must therefore be incorporated into the assessment.

¹⁶ This is why, in general, the affected population is encouraged rapidly to contact and reassure family members outside the affected area.

4.6 Organizing the collection of information

For details on the “Initial checklist” and “How to gather information and from whom” see sections 3.6.1 and 3.6.2.

Pick the right moment to make field visits. Try to avoid times when people are busiest. In some cases, the assessment of RFL needs is easily combined with other activities (during preparations for a food distribution but not during or immediately after the distribution; in the tent/waiting room of a health centre, etc.).

5 ANALYSING THE INFORMATION COLLECTED

5.1 Introduction

Analysis is the process of breaking down and examining the information collected during the assessment, with a view to obtaining a clearer picture of the needs and drawing conclusions. It should serve to identify patterns and similarities that need to be documented (e.g., whether refugees and asylum seekers from a particular country tend to express similar RFL needs).

The analysis should provide answers to the questions listed in the introduction, namely:

- What are the main RFL needs?
- Who is affected by these needs and where?
- Is the population using coping mechanisms to address these needs?
- Is the population receiving support from elsewhere to restore family links?
- Is the RFL service provided by the ICRC, the National Society or the family links network necessary?
- If yes, what type of service is required?
- What RFL tools would be most appropriate?

Analysis starts during the initial phase of the assessment, when the information from the available secondary sources is collected and examined.

Important

The information must be **continuously analysed** throughout the assessment. Do not leave analysis until the end of the assessment.

The information collected is summarized, and this lays the foundation for the operational or development plan. First, however, it must be checked for consistency, in other words contradictory information must be identified, especially:

- information collected through on-the-spot observation or from interviews that contradicts secondary information;
- contradictory information obtained from different key informants.

If there are major contradictions, other sources of information may have to be sought or further field observations conducted. If the contradictions are of no relevance to the assessment's findings, you can try to resolve them, but without taking too much time. All contradictions, whether large or small, should figure in the assessment's findings.

Important

- There is not always a "right" answer. A person's situation colours his or her interpretation of events.
- Not everyone has access to the same information. Some people are better informed than others about a particular subject.
- Beware of misleading statements – people sometimes deliberately give incorrect information in the hope of receiving assistance.

5.2 Summarizing the information collected

The first step is to summarize the information collected from various sources, so that the assessment findings can be presented in a practical format that facilitates planning. The summary must cover the points below.

5.2.1 RFL-related problems — prioritization

RFL-related problems must be listed in order of importance/urgency according to the information obtained from direct and indirect sources on the various areas concerned. As mentioned in section 4.1, urgency is determined in the light of the impact of separation/loss of family contact on the living conditions (or the preconditions for survival) of the affected persons. In reality, the most seriously affected and vulnerable persons are often:

- unaccompanied children;
- separated children (children separated from their parents or legal custodian but taken care of by other adult family members);
- elderly people living on their own;
- the chronically ill;
- those with disabilities requiring support;
- those who rely on institutions for their material conditions of life (prisons, orphanages, homes for the elderly, etc.) or who have become dependent as a result of the disaster, particularly those who are hospitalized;
- pregnant women;
- households headed by women with young children;
- single women, when at risk of sexual or other abuse;
- foreigners without diplomatic representation or the means to access it;
- migrants, in particular irregular migrants, and their families;
- others group of individuals who are vulnerable in the specific context.

The need to reunite vulnerable persons with their family must also rank as a priority, security conditions permitting.

Case study: Post-electoral violence in Kenya, January 2008

RFL-related problems identified during the needs assessment:

- children or other vulnerable persons who have no one to care for them because they are lost or were left behind when their families fled;
- loss of contact between immediate family members during a disorganized escape/ displacement, family members scattered among various camps or in private accommodation, some of whom have no means of communication;
- mortuaries that are overwhelmed, cannot preserve corpses properly and therefore cannot identify those killed in the post-electoral violence (security concerns keep many families from leaving IDP camps and going to mortuaries to identify their deceased family members, who may be buried without being identified and with no means of subsequent identification);
- no news exchanged between families displaced within the affected areas and those living elsewhere (other regions of Kenya or abroad).

Population groups listed in order of priority according to RFL needs:

- Unaccompanied children, the elderly and the disabled, women on their own with children in the worst affected areas
- Families trapped in their homes or displaced within areas directly affected by the violence and disasters, who are no longer able to communicate with members of their family in other camps or living outside the affected areas
- Displaced families or families who cannot make their way to hospitals or mortuaries because they have been trapped in their homes and who are without news of relatives who have been injured or killed
- Members of these families who live outside the affected areas or abroad

5.2.2 Ability to develop coping mechanisms

From experience in a variety of contexts, we know that target population groups often manage to find alternative means of communication when normal channels no longer function or are not sufficient for restoring family links. These alternatives must of course be borne in mind when analysing information.

If people have tried in vain to find other solutions, this should also be mentioned and explained. If no such initiative has been taken, this should also be recorded. In all cases, it is necessary to ascertain whether all categories of the affected population can use this alternative.

Examples

- **Kenya**, January 2008: many displaced persons in the worst affected areas own a mobile telephone, but some have left it behind, others have no more credit and others do not know how to contact family members (children, the elderly) who have no telephone → partially accessible means of communication which can be used for RFL
- **Lebanon**, June 2006: scattered, isolated or displaced families send news to a member of the family living abroad who serves as a focal point¹⁷ → positive response (provided all families have this possibility)
- **Darfur**: displaced persons keep in contact with those who have remained in the affected area through haulers (lorry drivers) → positive response (provided that this means of communication is accessible to everyone everywhere)

5.2.3 Other actors providing RFL services

Not only may the population develop coping mechanisms, it may also receive aid from governmental or non-governmental organizations. As in the examples supplied in section 5.1.3, it is necessary to ensure that the response furnished by the authorities or other organizations meets the population's RFL needs satisfactorily before concluding that the ICRC and/or National Society do not have to offer their services. If the findings are negative or inconclusive, the assessment should focus on needs that are not covered or poorly covered, and how the ICRC and/or National Society might take the place of, or support, the system in place.

¹⁷ During the 2006 conflict in Lebanon, there was a very sizeable Lebanese diaspora; almost every family had someone living abroad, who acted as a focal point for receiving news of the various members of the family.

Examples

- **Mexico, October 2007**, floods: the authorities rapidly install free telephones in the largest shelters → what about smaller shelters, or people given shelter by private individuals? A Mexican television channel decides to broadcast the names of people who have been evacuated and who are safe and sound → have all the shelters been covered? What about people given shelter by individuals?
- **Peru, 2006**, the authorities publish the names of the injured and dead → are the lists complete, updated and easily accessible to the public?
- In various contexts: one or more organizations have taken charge of unaccompanied children → Have the children been duly registered? Has an attempt been made to find their parents? Has an attempt been made to reunite families?

5.2.4 Need for National Society/ ICRC action and capacity to respond

The information distilled from sections 3.4 and 4.4 (Type of information to be collected) will highlight unmet RFL needs that appear to require action by the ICRC and/or the National Society.

Example

Excerpts from the RFL assessment report following Cyclone Sidr in Bangladesh, November 2007:

a. Need to restore contact between family members?

Very few such needs, as the telephone network was repaired two days after the disaster and in each village at least one person has a mobile telephone which the neighbours can use, no diaspora abroad among families in the stricken area.

b. Need to register unaccompanied children or children who have been separated from their families, or other vulnerable categories?

No, or very few cases reported by the population (families did not have to go far to shelter, they remained together and were able to return home quickly).

c. Tracing requests?

Yes, as thousands of people went missing during the cyclone and the authorities' lists are incomplete and out of date. No other players providing assistance, so action required from the National Society and the ICRC.

d. Information about the dead?

As indicated above, the authorities' lists are unreliable and need to be revised by the National Society and the ICRC. Immediate burial of corpses (as required by Muslim custom), hence risk of unidentified and unidentifiable corpses in the future. Authorities overwhelmed and unable to verify the lists of the dead, missing or survivors by individual checks → role for the National Society and the ICRC.

At the same time, the information collected on the National Society/ICRC capacity to respond to unmet RFL needs (see section 3.4 (d) "Role and potential capacity of the National Society tracing service" and (e) "ICRC potential role and resources") will bring to light failings and weaknesses that must be corrected if an adequate response is to be supplied to RFL needs.

5.3 Summary/short memo

The information gathered from the various sources is summarized with a view to presenting the findings in a format that is clear and easy to read. The findings will enable the National Society and/or the ICRC delegation to decide whether particular RFL activities should be launched or continued. The data summarized in the two tables below is essential for reporting and planning.

5.3.1 Summary of the information collected by region

Time and place of visit	
Assessment team	
RFL problem(s) identified on the basis of prior assumptions	
Number and type of interviews conducted	
RFL problems noted during interviews (in order of importance)	
Estimated number of persons concerned by RFL problems*	
Coping mechanisms adopted by the population (yes/no, if yes what mechanisms)	
Others providing RFL services	
Information collected through direct observation	
Unmet RFL needs identified	
Suggested RFL tools	
Local capacity of the National Society and/or the ICRC to meet these needs	

*If it is difficult to assess the number of potential beneficiaries specify, for example, the number of IDP camps listed and the number of persons in them.

5.3.2 Summary of the information collected from all regions/areas and action proposed

Example

Unmet RFL needs*	Beneficiaries	Regions concerned	RFL action by the National Society and/or the ICRC	Suggested RFL tools	Proposed National Society and/or ICRC set-up

* By order of scale/urgency

It might be helpful to supplement this table with a map of the region, to draw attention to and visualize the problems in each area.

6 REPORTING

A report is compiled after every RFL needs assessment. Its contents and length naturally depend on the objectives and circumstances of the assessment. In an emergency, the report will be more in the nature of a brief summary, whereas in the case of a detailed assessment it will be longer and exhaustive.

Ideally, the assessment report should comprise:

- a clear, concise title;
- an introduction outlining the objective(s), the geographical context, the timeframe and the persons for whom the assessment is intended;
- a description of the methodology used (persons taking part, assessment carried out with or without other partners (National Societies or other organizations), persons or documents consulted, organization and conduct of the assessment, etc.);
- an executive summary (in the case of long reports);
- findings (based on field observations and interviews with key informants);
- an analysis of indirect sources and indicators (and a comparison with field findings);
- proposals / recommendations (possibly a proposed plan of action);
- annexes containing statistical data, tables, maps, lists of persons interviewed, reference documents, etc.

7 PLANNING

7.1 Introduction

Planning does not always take place at the same time as reporting, especially in non-emergency situations. The plan of action produced during the planning exercise therefore does not always appear in the body of the assessment report; depending on what the National Society or the ICRC delegation decides, it can be either included in the final section of the assessment report or drafted separately.

Emergency and non-emergency situations require different responses – operational vs. development – and therefore a different approach to planning.

- a. **Planning in emergency situations** has short-term goals that focus on meeting current and potential RFL needs by mobilizing current and, when necessary, additional Family Links Network tools and resources.
- b. **Planning in non-emergency situations** has medium and long-term goals that focus on meeting current and potential RFL needs by mobilising and developing appropriate resources and tools in line with a medium and long-term capacity-building strategy.

7.2 SWOC analysis

SWOC analysis is a strategic planning method used to evaluate strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints. It supplements earlier analyses and serves to devise a strategy and a plan of action. It involves identifying the internal and external factors that promote or hinder the achievement of objectives. The SWOC analysis is a useful reality check throughout the planning process, whether in an emergency or not.

Example

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Society volunteers who can be easily and speedily mobilized • Good contacts with persons in charge of certain IDP camps and with the managers of hospitals and morgues 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No (ICRC/National Society) staff with RFL training available in the worst affected regions • No logistical resources available on the spot
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorities willing to cooperate with the ICRC or the National Society to compile and update lists of victims (injured/dead/missing) • The population has a traditional system of circulating information (notice boards near markets) that could easily be used 	<p>Constraints</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The affected population does not trust the local media • No coordination among the various ministries managing the crisis • Lack of security hinders access to some of the affected regions

7.3 Strategy and objectives

The **strategy** adopted represents the choice of an optimum combination of methods of action (substitution¹⁸, support¹⁹, mobilization or persuasion²⁰), partners, tools and resources for securing the best possible response to RFL needs.

Example of a strategy in an emergency situation: Provide substitute services to restore contact between families separated by displacement.

Example of an objective in a non-emergency situation: Building on the existing RFL network, to further strengthen the National Society's capacity to address the RFL needs of the newly identified target populations – street children, rescued victims of human trafficking and migrants in reception centres.

On the basis of the RFL needs as assessed and the priorities set, a framework for action may be established by listing **objectives** and the activities, resources, budget and timeline needed to attain them.

¹⁸ Direct provision by the National Society of services that the authorities are unable to provide (owing to lack of means, or unwillingness, or when no such authorities exist).

¹⁹ Aims to reinforce the capacity of the authorities and existing structures so that they are able to assume their responsibilities and fulfil their functions.

²⁰ Aims to convince the authorities and other actors, through bilateral confidential dialogue, to do something (protect people at risk, for instance) that falls within their area of responsibility or competence.

The **objectives** must be **SMART** - Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-limited.

Example of an objective in an emergency situation: To identify unaccompanied and separated children in IDP and refugee camps in x region, to inform the family of their whereabouts and, conditions permitting, to reunite them with their family.

Example of a National Society objective in a non-emergency situation: To organize, train and maintain a mobile RFL emergency response team equipped with the necessary IT and communication tools, able to deploy rapidly in situations of disaster, collect information pertaining to tracing and coordinate the immediate tracing response.

7.4 Plan of action

Having set the strategy and objectives, it is important to identify how they will be achieved by drawing up a **plan of action** describing:

- **activities** - the choice of approaches and tools;
- **the human resources required** - roles and tasks for RFL staff and volunteers;
- **the resources required** - material, logistical, financial;
- **the timing of activities** - when they will start and finish, if time-bound;
- **assumptions** - key assumptions must be made and regularly monitored;
- **risk management** - risks to individuals or the National Society and steps to manage them;
- **monitoring indicators** - key indicators to monitor activities and results.

National Societies and the ICRC have their own specific planning tools and formats, therefore the two example action plans on the following pages (for emergency and non-emergency situations) are more indicative than anything else.

7.5 Monitoring

Monitoring data must be incorporated as soon as preparations are made for the action plan. This should be done by identifying basic information and indicators that can be used to measure the progress of an RFL activity (see Table 1 on the following page).

The list supplied in Annex 9 suggests statistics that can be taken from databases (e.g. ICRC Prot 5) as quantitative indicators, but also other useful information for measuring results qualitatively. Each National Society or ICRC delegation can select the data and statistics of relevance to the objectives it has set and the RFL activities it is going to carry out, in order to set up an efficient monitoring system. As stated in the introduction, separate monitoring guidelines will be issued.

**Table 1 –
Example of a plan of action for an EMERGENCY situation**

Specific objective	Activities	Indicators	
		Initial situation	Desired outcome
<p>1) To identify unaccompanied and separated children in IDP and refugee camps in x region, to inform the family of their whereabouts and, conditions permitting, to reunite them with their family.</p>	<p>Visit IDP and refugee camps to identify and register unaccompanied and separated children.</p>	<p>No. of unaccompanied and separated children registered</p>	
	<p>Actively search for the parents in order to restore contact.</p>	<p>No. of families located</p>	
	<p>Organize family reunifications as soon as possible.</p>	<p>No. of families reunited</p>	
<p>2) To enable separated families without news of their relatives to restore contact and exchange news.</p>	<p>Deploy RFL teams in IDP and refugee camps in x region with n mobile telephones, n satellite telephones to offer 2 minutes communication to restore contact between separated families.</p>	<p>No. of mobile telephone communications</p>	
		<p>No. of satellite telephone communications</p>	
	<p>Offer “Safe and Well” messages and RCMs to vulnerable persons.</p>	<p>No. of “Safe & Well” messages collected or distributed</p>	
		<p>No. of RCMs collected or distributed</p>	
<p>3) Etc.</p>			

Timeline	Assumptions	Risk management	Resources (HR – equipment)	Cost
<p>Between (date) and (date)</p> <p>Between (date) and (date)</p> <p>Between (date) and (date)</p>	<p>Good cooperation with authorities and access to IDP and refugee camps</p>	<p>Ensure all unaccompanied and separated children are registered</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 tracing officers or delegates, 4 RFL volunteers or field officers • 2 vehicles • RFL equipment (see RFL field kit) 	<p>CHF</p>
<p>Until telephone lines are repaired and thereafter for the most vulnerable people.</p> <p>Ditto</p>	<p>Good cooperation with authorities and access to IDP and refugee camps</p> <p>Normal telephone service will be restored within one week</p>	<p>Ensure equipment safe-keeping and accountability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as above + 10 mobile telephones and 4 satellite telephones 	<p>CHF</p>

**Table 1 –
Example of a plan of action for a NON-EMERGENCY situation**

Specific objective	Activities	Indicators	
		Initial situation	Desired outcome
<p>1) To organize, train and maintain a mobile RFL emergency response team, equipped with the necessary IT and communication tools, able to deploy rapidly in situations of disaster, collect information pertaining to tracing and coordinate the immediate tracing response.</p>	Select suitable candidates for the emergency response team	No. of team members selected	
	Train team members and organize annual mock drills (four persons)	No. of team members trained	
	Equip the team with the necessary tools	No. of items/tools supplied	
<p>2) To streamline RFL tools so as to standardize procedures and criteria for offering RFL services to identified beneficiaries</p>	Adapt existing National Society RFL guidelines, handbook for volunteers, training manual and training material	No. of materials adapted	
	Print the adapted material	No. of materials printed	
	Distribute the adapted material	No. of staff/volunteers receiving new material	
3) Etc.			

Timeline	Assumptions	Risk management	Resources (HR – equipment)	Cost
One month	RFL emergency team is integrated into the National Society Disaster Management structure and plans	Ensure accountability and allocated use of the equipment	• 1 4x4 vehicle for rapid deployment	CHF
One month		Ensure the team is properly managed and deployed in a timely manner in situations of need	• Annual running costs of the vehicle	CHF
One month		Ensure team members are retained	• 2 laptop computers	CHF
One month			• 1 portable generator	CHF
One month	The adapted material will improve the efficiency and quality of RFL services for beneficiaries	Ensure the adapted material reflects assessed RFL needs	• Designing and editing costs	CHF
One month			• Printing costs	CHF
One month		Ensure the adapted material is promoted, used and procedures respected	• Distribution costs	CHF

ANNEXES

Annex 1 - ERU and FACT descriptions

Emergency Response Unit (ERU)

Emergency response units are self-contained teams of specialist professionals and pre-packed sets of standardised equipment. The personnel guarantee to make themselves available within 48 hours, and the full unit aims to be operational on site within one week.

Emergency response units were developed to improve the speed and efficiency with which the Federation is able to respond to disasters. ERUs reduce the burden on a National Society and Federation delegation facing a major disaster. They can also move rapidly into a disaster area where no Federation delegation or National Society structure is present.

Emergency response units are sponsored by individual National Societies, currently Austria, Belgium, Finland, Germany, Japan, Norway, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom. These sponsoring National Societies not only cover the costs of the equipment and personnel during training and operations, they are also responsible for bringing each team together, guaranteeing the professional qualifications and respecting the composition of the ERU. Each team member has to have a good working knowledge of the language agreed upon for the unit, and all adhere to Federation rules of conduct. ERUs are also supported by other National Societies such as the American, Australian and Swiss Red Cross as well as the Palestine Red Crescent.

Field Assessment and Coordination Teams (FACT)

The International Federation has, through members of the Secretariat staff and representatives of the National Societies, developed the Field Assessment and Coordination Teams (FACT) concept. The methodology has been developed in close cooperation with the UN's OCHA, and the assessment and coordination systems are compatible with OCHA's UNDAC system.

A core group of experienced Red Cross/Red Crescent disaster managers from within the Federation and from the National Societies - 320 at the end of 2004 - with different expertise in relief, logistics, health, nutrition, public health and epidemiology, water and sanitation, finance, administration, psychological support, as well as language capabilities - have followed the ten days of training to become members of FACT teams, able to support national Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in major disaster response. They are ready to participate in a FACT team deployment with 12-24 hours notice for 2-4 weeks anywhere in the world.

Annex 2 - Terms of reference for an assessment of RFL needs (specimen)

Title	Indicate the context and date of the emergency in question. For example, "Assessment of RFL needs in countries affected by Hurricane Wolfgang, 1-3 April 2005"
Introduction	Specify the geographical area and time frame for the assessment, as well as its main objectives (no more than 3 or 4)
Objectives of the assessment	State the specific objectives of the assessment
Methodology	Explain what method has been chosen to conduct the assessment (on-the-spot observation, what type of interviews, with whom, multidisciplinary or separate assessment, whether it involves other partners, what documents or secondary sources should be consulted)
Estimated length of the assessment	Date of departure – date of return
Places to be visited	List of places to be visited as a priority
Action to be taken	Information to be gathered, interviews to be conducted, analysis of the information collected, etc.
Human resources required for the assessment	Names of the persons responsible for the assessment, members of the team (how many people, with what profile, brief description of each team member's duties)
Logistic resources	Transport, equipment required (to be taken with the team or bought on the spot, etc.)
Budget	Estimated budget
Reporting	Type of report which will be supplied at the end of the assessment and to whom it will be sent

Annex 3 - 2009 RFL assessment in Afghanistan

Questionnaire for community representatives and leaders

Name:

Ethnic group:

Place of origin:

Occupation:

Category (resident, displaced, refugee returned, foreign worker):

Date:

Place:

1. Are all the people in your community in contact with their relatives?
2. What are the traditional ways, in your region, to keep in touch with one's family?
3. Is your area prone to natural disasters? What natural disasters have occurred? Is your area affected by the conflict? If yes, in what ways?
4. Has anyone you know ever been in a situation where they lost contact with a relative, or when they had no more news about where and how relatives were?
5. If yes, do you know in what circumstances these people lost contact?
6. What happened then? Was there an RFL response? How efficient was it?
7. If it is the case, do you know why people are still unable to re-establish contact with their relatives?
8. Do people seek help from any organization to re-establish contact?
9. Do you know that the Red Cross/Red Crescent has a service that helps people re-establish contact between relatives, or tries to find out news about people who have been arrested or have disappeared?

Does your community know about these services?

10. If yes, how did you/your community hear about the Red Cross/Red Crescent RFL services?

11. Have you ever heard about or used the following services?

Tracing means	Have you heard about them?	Have you already used them?
Red Cross Messages	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Salamat to and from detainees	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Telephone call programme from detainees in Guantanamo	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Family visits to detainees in Bagram	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Video telephone call programme to detainees in Bagram	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Tracing Request	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Allegation of Arrest	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Family Reunification	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

12. **If you know about any of these services**, do you think they help people? Do you think they are useful, and why? If not, why, and what would you recommend to the Red Cross/Red Crescent?

13. **If you have already used any of these services**, in what circumstances did you use them?

14. Did it help you? If yes, how? If not, why, and what would you recommend to the Red Cross/Red Crescent?

Annex 4 - 2009 Afghanistan RFL Assessment

Tracing Questionnaire for the National Societies with Nationals in Afghanistan (including detainees)

(Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka)

Methodology

The following questions should be answered by the tracing departments of the National Society and/or ICRC delegation. In case both the ICRC Tracing Coordinator and the NS Tracing Coordinator are responsible for parts of the tracing services, they should each answer this questionnaire separately.

Please provide the following information:

Name of the National Society (NS)	
Name of the person(s) who answered the questionnaire	
Function in the NS of the person(s) who answered the questionnaire	
Place & Date	

Please fill in this form online.

Tracing needs of Nationals in Afghanistan

- 1) According to you, what are the main migration waves of nationals out of your country (large influx of nationals leaving at a given period of time)? Do you know the percentage of migrants who left for Afghanistan?
- 2) Has your NS previously carried out an assessment of the tracing needs of your national communities living/detained in Afghanistan? If yes, when? Can you share it with us?
- 3) According to you/the assessment done by your NS, how do the nationals of your country usually try to re-establish contact with their relatives living/detained in Afghanistan, when they have lost track of them (apart from the tracing services of the NS)?
- 4) Do some groups have difficulties accessing these communication channels? Which ones? Why?

- 5) According to you/ the assessment done by your NS, how do the nationals of your country usually *maintain* communication with their relatives living/detained in Afghanistan (apart from the tracing services of the NS)?
- 6) Do some groups have difficulties accessing these communication channels? Which ones? Why?
- 7) According to you/ the assessment done by your NS, in what circumstances and for what reason do your nationals usually request the tracing services of your NS? To your knowledge, are there any reasons why they would not wish to benefit from the Movement's RFL services?
- 8) Are there other organizations or other media offering tracing services to these communities? If yes, which ones? Are they free of charge?

Cooperation within the Movement

- 1) There are currently several different tracing tools available to trace people living/detained in Afghanistan, among them:
 - Red Cross Message (RCM)
 - Salamat
 - Tracing request
 - Allegation of Arrest
- 2) Do you think that the current tracing tools are adapted to the needs of your nationals who want to restore/maintain contact with their relatives in Afghanistan? Which ones are the most adequate, according to your experience? Why?
- 3) *All the Tracing Requests, RCMs, etc. for Afghanistan go through the ICRC delegation in Kabul before being dispatched to the ARCS (Afghan Red Crescent Society). The replies to the Tracing Requests, RCMs, etc. from Afghanistan also go through the ICRC delegation in Kabul before being dispatched to the NSs in the rest of the world.*

When you send a Tracing Request, RCM, etc. to the ICRC in Kabul, are you satisfied with the feedback? If not, why?

- 4) How would you suggest the ICRC/ARCS improve the tracing services for your nationals in Afghanistan? (improvement of the existing tools, new tools, change of procedures, etc.)

- 5) Do you keep statistics of cases involving your nationals in Afghanistan? If yes, could you please enclose them for the years 2007, 2008 and 2009.

Additional Remarks

Please feel free to add any further comments on the tracing services offered to your nationals regarding their relatives in Afghanistan (suggestions, new relays, communication channels, procedures...).

Annex

Please enclose, if available, the following information:

- Assessment of the tracing needs of your nationals living/detained in Afghanistan
- Tracing statistics of nationals in Afghanistan (years 2007, 2008 and 2009).

We will provide you with feedback once the review has been completed.

Thank you very much for your time!

ICRC KAB / ARCS

Annex 5 - SOMALI TRACING REVIEW

Questionnaire for Somali communities in the diaspora countries

Methodology

The tracing coordinator / department of the NS should organize five individual interviews with Somali representatives from different categories. We suggest discussions with:

- Asylum seekers
- Long-term residents
- Representatives of women's associations

If possible, please try to target Somalis from different clan affiliations.

If possible, please try to target Somalis who have previously benefited from the tracing services, as well as Somalis who have never used the services.

Please provide the following information about yourself:

<i>Name of the interviewer</i>	
<i>Function of the interviewer in the NS</i>	
<i>Place of the interview</i>	
<i>Date of the interview (day/month/year)</i>	

Please fill in this form online.

Identity of the interviewee

Please provide the following information about the interviewee:

<i>Full Name</i>	
<i>Category (asylum seeker, resident, refugee, etc.)</i>	
<i>Age</i>	
<i>Gender</i>	
<i>Date of departure from Somalia</i>	
<i>Place of origin in Somalia</i>	
<i>Tribe, clan, sub-clan, family lineage</i>	
<i>Date of arrival in this country</i>	
<i>Family status in this country (living alone, living with close family, living with extended family...)</i>	

Tracing Needs

- 1) How many Somalis live in this country?
 - Are they mostly single?
 - Are they mostly living with immediate families (wife & children)?
 - Are they mostly living with extended families?

- 2) What are the main places of origin of the Somali communities living in this country?

- 3) What are the main clans and sub-clans represented in this country?

- 4) How do you mostly keep in touch with your relatives in *Somalia* (communication means and/or channels)?

- 5) How do you mostly *keep* in touch with your relatives in *Somalia's neighbouring countries* (communication means and/or channels)?

- 6) Are you aware of people in your community who are still unable to contact close relatives in *Somalia*?

If yes, in what circumstances did they lose contact with them? Why are they still unable to re-establish contact with their relatives?

- 7) Are you aware of people in your community who are still unable to contact close relatives in *Somalia's neighbouring countries*?

If yes, in what circumstances did they lose contact with them? Why are they still unable to re-establish contact with their relatives?

- 8) When Somalis have lose contact with relatives in *Somalia* or its neighbouring countries, how do they *re-establish* contact with their relatives?

- 9) Are you aware of associations and/or media helping Somalis to re-establish/maintain contact with family members? If yes, which ones? What is the cost?

- 10) Do you have relative(s) who disappeared after having been either abducted, detained or killed, and whose fate is still unknown to you?

Knowledge of the tracing services

- 1) Do you know that the Red Cross/Red Crescent from this country is running a programme to help people re-establish/maintain contact with their family members abroad? If yes, how did you hear about it?

- 2) Have you ever heard of and/or used the following services?

Tracing means	Have you ever heard about them?	Have you already used them in this country?
Red Cross Messages	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The BBC's Missing programme	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
The ICRC Family Links Website	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

- 3) **If you know these services**, do you think that they answer to the needs of the Somali communities in this country? Why? If not, how would you improve them? What other communication channels would you recommend to the RC/RC?

- 4) **If you have already used any of these services** in this country, in what circumstances did you do so? What was the result?

Additional remarks

Please feel free to add any further comments on the tracing services offered to the Somali communities (suggestions, new relays, etc.).

Thank you!

Annex 6 - SOMALI TRACING REVIEW

Tracing Questionnaire for the National Societies in the diaspora countries

Methodology

The following questions should be answered by the tracing department of the National Society.

Please provide the following information:

<i>Name of the person(s) who answered the questionnaire</i>	
<i>Function in the NS of the person(s) who answered the questionnaire</i>	
<i>Place & Date</i>	

Please fill in this form online.

Set-up

- 1) Is your National Society (NS) in charge of specific tasks that put it in direct contact with the Somali communities (e.g. work within camps for asylum seekers or refugees)? If yes, which tasks?
- 2) Are there any staff members/volunteers (at headquarter and/or branch level) with a specific knowledge of the Somali communities, responsible for the tracing services dealing with these communities? If yes, what positions do they hold, and what experience do they have?

Tracing needs of the Somali communities

- 1) According to you, what are the main migration waves of Somalis to your country (large influx of Somalis at a given period of time)? What is the size of the Somali communities in your country, and what is their status (asylum seekers, illegal migrants, residents, etc.)?
- 2) Has your NS previously carried out an assessment of the tracing needs of the Somali communities? If yes, when? Can you share it with us?
- 3) According to you/the assessment carried out by your NS, how do the Somalis in your country usually try to re-establish contact with their relatives in Somalia, when they have lost track of them (apart from the tracing services of the NS)?
- 4) Do some groups in these communities have difficulties accessing these communication channels? Which ones? Why?
- 5) According to you/ the assessment carried out by your NS, how do the Somalis in your country usually maintain communication with their relatives in Somalia (apart from the tracing services of the NS)?

- 6) Do some groups from these communities have difficulties accessing these communication channels? Which ones? Why?
- 7) According to you/ the assessment carried out by your NS, in what circumstances and for what reason do the Somalis usually request the tracing services of your NS?
- 8) Are there other organizations or other media offering tracing services to these communities? If yes, which ones? Are they free of charge?

Network

- 1) In the framework of this survey, would you be able to provide us with information regarding the geographical mapping of the Somali clans/places of origin in your country? Can you share it with us?
- 2) When tracing a member of the Somali communities, do you rely on a network of contact persons/relays within these communities?
- 3) Does the clan structure of the Somali communities facilitate the tracing process for you? If yes, how?
- 4) Does your NS have a specific outreach tracing programme to these communities? If yes, does your NS target specific groups within these communities?
- 5) Does your NS tracing department (at headquarter and branch level) receive regular visits from Somalis? How did they become aware of the existence of the tracing services?
- 6) What are the main constraints/challenges that your NS faces when carrying out tracing work with the Somali communities?

Tracing Tools

- 1) Is the extranet a useful tool for your tracing activities linked to the Somali communities? If not, why? Do you have any suggestions as to how this tool could be improved?
- 2) Following the criteria set up on the extranet, do you have to refuse many tracing demands from the Somali communities? If yes, what are the main reasons for refusal?
- 3) There are currently four different tracing tools available for the Somali communities (see extranet):
 - Red Cross Messages (RCMs),
 - Tracing requests,
 - ICRC/BBC Missing programme,
 - ICRC webpage (www.familylinks.icrc.org)

Did you get enough information from the ICRC – CTA (Central Tracing Agency) regarding these four tools? If not, what information is missing?

4) Do you think that the current tracing tools are adapted to the needs of the Somali communities in your country? Which ones are the most adequate, according to your experience? Why?

5) *All the Tracing Requests and RCMs for Somalia go through the ICRC delegation in Nairobi before being dispatched to the SRCS (Somalia Red Crescent Society). The replies to the Tracing Requests and RCMs from Somalia also go through the ICRC delegation in Nairobi before being dispatched to the NSs in the rest of the world.*

When your NS sends Tracing Requests initiated by Somalis to the ICRC in Nairobi, are you satisfied with the feedback?

6) To which other countries (National Societies or ICRC delegations) do you mostly send RCMs or Tracing Requests for Somalis to (apart from Somalia)?

7) How would you suggest the ICRC-CTA improve the tracing services for Somali communities (improvement of the existing tools, new tools, change of procedures, etc.)

8) Do you keep statistics of Somali cases? If yes, could you please enclose them for the period August 2005 - July 2006?

Additional remarks

Please feel free to add any further comments on the tracing services offered to the Somali communities (suggestions, additional information helping the services, new relays, communication channels, procedures...).

Annex

Please enclose, if available, the following information:

- Assessment of the tracing needs of the Somali communities in your country
- Geographical mapping of the Somali clans in your country
- Tracing statistics of the Somali caseload (August 2005 - July 2006).

We will provide you with feedback once the review has been completed.

Thank you!

Annex 7 - Canada RFL needs assessment project

Template survey

(Address block)

(date)

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Canadian Red Cross Restoring Family Links service is currently working on a project to gain understanding from the perspective of migrants on what needs there are in Canada related to Restoring Family Links. As part of this project we are collecting information from past Restoring Family Links clients in (location of survey). We feel that by hearing about your experiences we can learn a lot from you about how the program could be improved.

We would be extremely grateful if you could spare about 15 minutes to answer some questions about whether you, and people within your community, have any needs related to Restoring Family Links. The information we collect will be used to write a report on how to improve the Restoring Family Links program.

You can choose from two different ways to fill in the survey:

- 1) Fill in the paper questionnaire attached to this letter and return it by mail in the envelope provided. If you cannot fit all your comments on to the survey, please attach a separate piece of paper.
- 2) Fill in the survey online. The survey is available at [\(link to survey\)](#). You may withdraw at any time during completion of the online survey, by exiting the program.

The questions are exactly the same in both formats. All answers that you provide will be treated as strictly confidential. You may skip any questions that you feel uncomfortable answering. We will be collecting responses until (deadline for survey).

A report on the findings of the study will be available to you by contacting (local RFL coordinator). If you have any questions, please feel free to contact (needs assessment coordinator).

Thank you again – your help is greatly appreciated

(signature block)

Please place an X in the box next to your answers and give details in the space provided.

1. Does any of your family still live in your home country? Yes No
If yes, which country is this? _____ If No, please go to question 6
2. How do you stay in touch with family who live in your home country?
Internet Telephone Letters Red Cross Messages
Other (please describe) _____
3. Do you find it difficult to keep in contact with family who live in your home country?
Yes No If yes, why? _____
4. Have you ever lost contact with family who live in your home country? Yes No
If yes, please describe how you lost contact: _____
5. How do you try to restore contact with family members in your home country?
Internet Telephone Regular mail Talking to people
Private Agency Red Cross Other organization
Other method (please describe) _____
6. Does any of your family live in another country (not your home country or Canada)?
Yes If yes, which country? _____
No If No, please go to question 12
7. How do you stay in touch with family members in this country?
Internet Telephone Letters Red Cross Messages
Other (please describe) _____
8. Do you find it difficult to keep in contact with family who live in this country?
Yes No If yes, why? _____
9. Have you ever lost contact with family who live in this country? Yes No
If yes, please describe how you lost contact: _____
10. How do you try to restore contact with family members in this country?
Internet Telephone Regular mail Talking to people
Private Agency Red Cross Other organization
Other method (please describe) _____
11. If you know other organization(s) that can help you restore contact with your family members:
Do you have to pay? Yes No
What is the organization? _____

12. How much do you know about the following Restoring Family Links services?	I have used it	I have heard about it	I don't know anything about it
Red Cross Messages	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Regular Tracing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health and Welfare reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Travel Documents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Confirmation of Detention	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Safe and Well Messages	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
World War II cases	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

13. When you think about your most recent request, how happy were you with the following?	Very unhappy	Unhappy	Happy	Very happy
Red Cross Messages	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Regular Tracing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health and Welfare reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Travel Documents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Confirmation of Detention	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Safe and Well Messages	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
World War II cases	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

14. How long did it take to receive a response to your most recent request?

15. Is there any reason that may stop people from using Restoring Family Links services?

Yes No If yes, what? _____

16. Do you have anything else to say (good or bad) about your experiences with the RFL program?

Please return to the Canadian Red Cross in the envelope provided. **By returning this questionnaire you confirm that you understand and agree to the analysis of your responses as outlined in the letter of introduction.**

Thank you for your help!

Annex 8 - Assessment tool for tracing services of National Societies

1– Ownership	Response (circle Y/N and/or comment)	Main problem & issue	Proposed objective	Suggested action (and by whom)
1. The TS is recognised by the NS leadership as a NS responsibility, part of a global network requiring national/ local service delivery capacity and international liaison	Y/N Comments			
2. An assessment has been made of Tracing Service/RFL needs and NS role/ capacity to meet these	Y/N Comment: when/who/ main findings/ action			
3. RFL activities are included in the NS's -				
A. annual plan and budget	Y/N			
B. development /disaster preparedness and response plans	Y/N			
C. dissemination and promotional activities	Y/N			
2– Structures and Organization				
2– Structures and Organization	Response (circle Y/N and/or comment)	Main problem & issue	Proposed objective	Suggested action (and by whom)
A. NS structure and activities				
1. The NS's organizational chart indicates the position of the TS and ensures good interaction with and support for TS staff and activities (indicate Department on which it depends)	Y/N			
2. Reporting on TS activity is integrated into NS reporting systems	Y/N			

2– Structures and Organization	Response (circle Y/N and/or comment)	Main problem/issue	Proposed objective	Suggested action (and by whom)
B. Tracing Structures				
1. Who is responsible at HQ for management of the TS? - is it a paid post? - full or part-time - does the post holder have other responsibilities? If so, what and how does this impact on service delivery/development	Name / title post Y/N Y/N Comment			
2. Indicate if other (number) HQ based staff or volunteers are available for TS activities				
3. The TS has clear goals and an implementation plan	Y/N			
4. There is a formal and active structure and means to ensure that tracing/RFL activities are accessible at HQ and branch level to meet needs (indicate if covers whole country)	Y/N			
C. Financial organization				
1. Is there an allocated budget to support TS development and delivery?	Y/N			
2. What is the source of current/potential funding?	Post/dept.			
3. Who is responsible for expenditure/monitoring of budget?				
4. There are appropriate accounting procedures in place	Y/N			

3– Competencies	Response (circle Y/N and/or comment)	Main problem/ issue	Proposed objective	Suggested action (and by whom)
A. Personnel				
1. What training has the person responsible for and others involved in the TS received - indicate what type of training when and from whom? (internal, ICRC, other NS).				
2. Have they received any other relevant training/ experience? (visit to another NS, experience with a relevant organization etc and when/where).	Y/N			
3. Who delivers tracing/RFL services in the branches? Branch staff, volunteers, others and do they receive appropriate training/ support?	Post			
B. Handling of Enquiries, Records & Statistics				
1. There are clear, well established procedures (in writing) for registration, action and review of RCMs and Tracing case files.	Y/N			
2. In what form are records maintained (e.g. computer, card index, etc.) - for how long are records kept (in durable/ accessible form?)				
3. Indicate how often TS statistics are produced and indicate any trends.				
4. Is there a national personal data protection law in force and is the NS registered/compliant within the current legislation?	Y/N			

3– Competencies	Response (circle Y/N and/or comment)	Main problem/ issue	Proposed objective	Suggested action (and by whom)
C. Training				
1. HQ regularly organizes training for those involved in service delivery	Y/N			
2. Are standard materials available? - are these based on the RFL Guide for NS (to ensure comprehension /coherence for national/ international good practice)? Are Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) available?	Y/N Y/N Y/N			

4– Working Tools and Resources	Response (circle Y/N and/or comment)	Main problem/ issue	Proposed objective	Suggested action (and by whom)
A. Tracing/ RFL needs				
1. Indicate current/past situations/ communication problems, existing at a national/ international level for specific resident populations, or for new arrivals who require special Movement TS assistance. Indicate workload linked with natural disasters, conflicts, other cases such as migrants, welfare tracing, women, ...	Y/N			
2. Has the TS identified particularly vulnerable groups requiring special tracingaction - indicate medical cases, unaccompanied minors, frail elderly, women, persons detained, etc.	Y/N			

4– Working Tools and Resources	Response (circle Y/N and/or comment)	Main problem/issue	Proposed objective	Suggested action (and by whom)
A. Tracing/ RFL needs				
3. For each target population, what type of services (tracing, RCMs, travel documents, family reunions etc.) are offered?				
4. Was a mapping exercise done for target populations in need of RLF services? If yes, please provide copies.	Y/N			
B. Office Facilities/ Equipment, Materials				
1. Regarding facilities/premises available for the TS - are these suitable for functions carried out at HQ/branches (eg confidentiality when interviewing/ security of staff, security of files, list displays etc).	Y/N - Comment			
2. Are appropriate transport means available for HQ/ branch staff to carry out field visits (specify - public, with other organizations, NSs etc)	Y/N			
3. Are the required basic office equipment, stationery, promotional materials and supplies of appropriate forms available to ensure national/ local service access, delivery, reporting and follow-up?	Y/N			
4. Is written guidance available re National TS policy/criteria/ working procedures and tools and disseminated to all of those involved in service delivery?	Y/N			

5– Relationships	Response (circle Y/N and/or comment)	Main problem/ issue	Proposed objective	Suggested action (and by whom)
A. With authorities				
1. The TS is recognised as a part of the Movement’s international tracing network (it receives the necessary access to information and beneficiaries)				
2. The TS has a specific role in the country’s disaster response plans - to register victims - to receive information to be able to respond to relatives’ enquiries - other (please specify)	Y/N Y/N			
3. The TS is a government designated National Information Bureau (NIB)				
4. The person responsible for the service has a clear understanding of where the authorities’ responsibilities lie (ministry, department, etc) in relation to tracing of the country’s nationals/ residents following: - national disaster/ major incident - emergency situations abroad				
B. Within the Movement				
1. What are current or past operational or capacity-building activities with the ICRC for Tracing/RFL activities?				
2. Have they been formalised by an agreement?	Y/N			

5– Relationships	Response (circle Y/N and/or comment)	Main problem & issue	Proposed objective	Suggested action (and by whom)
B. Within the movement				
3. Indicate any current or past (with or without formal agreements) cooperation with other components of the Movement in support of tracing/RFL activities.				
4. Indicate other (main) NS TS contacts				
C. Other organizations				
Indicate any current or past agreements or relationships (with or without formal agreements) with agencies operating nationally /internationally - UNHCR, ISS, SCF, Disaster Victim Identification (DVI). Indicate what support was received for which activities				
D. Public/relevant communities				
Indicate evidence of TS liaison/ relationships with relevant public/community groups to ensure service access/delivery to current/potential beneficiaries				

Strengthening National Society Programme Capacity in Tracing and Restoration of Family Links

In its cooperation with National Societies, the ICRC seeks to strengthen the following five dimensions¹ of the Tracing Services:

¹ The five dimensions of capacity building shown here fall within the International Federation's 'Framework for National Society capacity building' (Institutional development, Human resource development, and financial resource development).

1) Ownership

Includes –

- the perception of the National Society (governance, management etc) of responsibilities and need to set up and resource tracing services
- whether the National Society conducted an assessment of national needs and capacity which included tracing and RFL
- whether the National Society dissemination activities, statutes, strategy, development plan and budget include the tracing service/RFL activities.

2) Structures and Organization

Includes –

- management capacity for RFL programmes at HQ (and other levels as appropriate) to support effective, functioning network
- designated person responsible at HQ with appropriate training, systems, tools and resources and support
- internal management guidelines and/or operating procedures for National Society service delivery
- interaction between various National Society units providing different services to common target/beneficiary groups

3) Competencies

Includes –

- capacity for developing , delivering and evaluating tracing/RFL training
- staff/volunteers at HQ and other appropriate levels have the awareness, knowledge and skills to provide services and support enquirers
- ability to plan, monitor, report and review service needs, activities and expenditure

4) Relationships

Includes –

- recognition by national and local authorities of the National Society's role in tracing/RFL activities
- interaction with national authorities, other national institutions and organizations to ensure access to information and beneficiaries and to make appropriate referrals
- relationship with the beneficiaries to ensure service access/delivery within local communities, refugees camps etc.
- relationship with other National Societies' TS and other international bodies (UNHCR, UNICEF, IOM etc).

5) Tools and Working Resources

Includes –

- centralized system (card index/computer) to collect and maintain information, monitor, review and report on tracing/RFL work in progress
- resourced (including financial) and equipped national tracing network extended to branch levels (as appropriate) with basic tools, i.e., tracing manual/procedures, forms (standard tracing and RCM forms in national/local languages) information leaflets, etc
- systems and procedures to motivate and support volunteers

The examples given under each heading are not exhaustive and remain flexible in that an objective can be set under a different heading, if that is where the emphasis is required.

Annex 9 - RFL indicators

Red Cross Messages (RCMs)

Statistics on

- nr of “first go” and “maintain family links” (percentage)
- nr of RCMs collected
- nr of RCMs distributed
- nr of RCMs exchanged between civilians
- nr of RCMs exchanged between detainees and civilians
- nr of RCMs from Unaccompanied / Separated Children
- nr of back to sender (BTS)

Information on

- the countries of origin
- the countries of destination
- reasons mentioned on the BTS
- time elapsed during collection and delivery
- content of the RCMs (what kind of information: bad/good news, request for support, other)

Anxious for news / I am safe and well / Salamats

Statistics on

- nr collected
- nr distributed
- nr exchanged between civilians
- nr exchanged between detainees and civilians

Telephone calls (land lines, mobile, sat.)

Statistics on

- nr phone calls from civilians to civilians
- nr phone calls from detainees to civilians
- nr phone calls from civilians to detainees

Tracing Requests (TC)

Statistics on

- nr of new persons sought by their relatives
 - of whom women
 - of whom minors
- nr of persons located (closed positively)
 - of which thanks to the RC/RC RFL network
- nr of persons not located (closed negatively)
- nr of cases still pending
 - of which women
 - of which minors at the time of disappearance

Information on

- the period covered
- the geographical area covered
- percentage of men and women
- age
- origin of the requests (ICRC, NS, other), from where (geogr. area)
- frequency of the contact before the separation
- nr of requests for which publication is authorised / not authorised
- analysis of the *démarches*: done / not done / why / to whom
- regarding closed cases, analysis of the reasons (type of closure, by whom)
- for the RECA cases: on the basis of which criteria (ex. inquirer not located)
- relationships between the inquirers and the sought persons
- how many sought persons from the same family
- how long it takes for the families to approach the ICRC to lodge a TC
- how long between opening and closing of a case
- how long between the collection of the requests and updating PROT5

Registration of Unaccompanied (UAC) / Separated Children (SC) / Demobilized (DDR)

Statistics on

- nr of registered UAC, SC, DDR
- of whom registered by the ICRC or the NS
- nr of UAC, SC, DDR reunited with their families
- of whom by the ICRC or the NS
- nr of UAC, SC, DDR whose cases are being processed
- NV

Information on

- percentage of UAC, AC, DDR
- age, gender
- follow-up (rhythm of the follow-up visits)
- time elapsed during separation and registration of the children
- time elapsed during registration of the children and localisation of parents
- registration done by whom (ICRC/NS/other)
- pictures (yes/no)
- geographical areas concerned (location of camps, orphanages, etc.)
- organization or authority in charge of accommodation places
- RECA: what are the criteria, the reasons, percentage among total registrations cases
- for cases closed positively: how, percentage among total registrations cases
- information on the parents (who are they, where are they living, other personal data)
- young girls with baby(ies)
- how many cases registered with brothers and sisters
- follow-up after family reunification (how many cases, where, how), how many located and not located after the family reunification, percentage

Family reunifications (FR)

Statistics on

- nr of family reunifications carried out
- nr of persons reunited with their families

Information on

- type of family reunifications (age, gender, vulnerability)
- time elapsed between registration of the case and FR
- geographical area concerned
- other organization(s) involved (NS, IO, NGO, Embassies)
- notifications to the authorities (yes/no – if yes, how)

Other

- medical evacuations (number, geographical area concerned, etc)
- repatriations (number, geographical area concerned, etc)
- transfers (which type, number, geogr. area, etc.)
- transfers or repatriations of dead bodies
- family visits to detainees (number, geographical area concerned, etc)
- nr of names published on the Family Links Website

Annex 10 - Initial RFL Needs Survey

National Society:							
Date completed:							
Contact person:							
1. Country profile							
1.1	Total population of country:						
1.2	Population by gender:				% Male	% Female	
1.3	Age breakdown:		% under 18	% 18-60	% over 60		
1.4	Rural/urban population:		% Rural		% Urban		
1.5	Literacy rate:		% <input type="checkbox"/> Estimate <input type="checkbox"/> Source (name source)				
1.6	Income per capita:		<input type="checkbox"/> Source (name source)				
1.7	Population outside the country (diaspora) (number):						
1.8	Top three diaspora countries		1.	2.	3.		
1.9	Is there a system that registers individual residents of country?		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes		<input type="checkbox"/> No		
1.10	Is the country experiencing conflict or any other situation of violence?						
Please tick:			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes		<input type="checkbox"/> No		
1.11	Is the country experiencing conflict or any other situation of violence?						
Please tick:		Not Applicable <input type="checkbox"/>	0-5 years <input type="checkbox"/>	5-10 years <input type="checkbox"/>	10-20 years <input type="checkbox"/>	20-50 years <input type="checkbox"/>	World War II <input type="checkbox"/>
1.12	Is the country prone to natural and/or other disasters?						
Please tick:			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes		<input type="checkbox"/> No		
Please list disasters since 1995:			RFL assessment conducted:				
			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes		<input type="checkbox"/> No		
			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes		<input type="checkbox"/> No		
			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes		<input type="checkbox"/> No		
2.	Infrastructure						
2.1	Percentage of country covered by telephone network:						
Please tick:		0-5% <input type="checkbox"/>	5-25% <input type="checkbox"/>	25-50% <input type="checkbox"/>	50-75% <input type="checkbox"/>	75-100% <input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Estimate (tick if applicable)			<input type="checkbox"/> Source (name source)				
2.2	Coverage of telephone network in rural areas		% <input type="checkbox"/> Estimate <input type="checkbox"/> Source (name source)				
2.3	Percentage of population with access to Internet		% <input type="checkbox"/> Estimate <input type="checkbox"/> Source (name source)				
2.4	Percentage of country covered by postal service						
Please tick:		0-5% <input type="checkbox"/>	5-25% <input type="checkbox"/>	25-50% <input type="checkbox"/>	50-75% <input type="checkbox"/>	75-100% <input type="checkbox"/>	

<input type="checkbox"/> Estimate (tick if applicable)		<input type="checkbox"/> Source (name source)	
2.5	Coverage of postal services in rural areas	<input type="checkbox"/> Estimate <input type="checkbox"/> Source (name source)	
2.6 Ease of movement within country			
Please tick:		<input type="checkbox"/> a - Free movement with accessible transport	<input type="checkbox"/> b - Free movement but road access/public transport limited in some areas
		<input type="checkbox"/> c - Free movement but no road access/public transport	
		<input type="checkbox"/> d - Movement restricted in some areas	<input type="checkbox"/> e - Movement highly restricted

Please refer to the definitions provided in the Guidelines	Migrants	Refugees and asylum seekers	Internally displaced persons	Separated and unaccompanied children	Other people needing RFL services (please specify)
3. Potential RFL beneficiaries					
3.1 Population					
Please tick and indicate figure by category (e.g., refugees: 10,000)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Source?					
3.2 Gender (please indicate percentage)					
% Male	%	%	%	%	%
% Female					
Source?					
4. Main locations					
% Urban	%	%	%	%	%
% Rural	%	%	%	%	%
% Camps	%	%	%	%	%
% Settlements	%	%	%	%	%
Source?					
5. Main causes of loss of contact					
Conflict or other situations of violence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Natural and/or other disasters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Reception facilities/shelters					
Indicate the number of facilities of the following kinds for the population categories mentioned above:					
Camps	Settlements	Transit centres/ camps/way stations	Other	Other	
Source?					

7. Potential RFL needs by population category (please indicate up to three such potential needs for each population category)

	Migrants	Refugees and asylum seekers	Internally displaced persons	Separated and unaccompanied children	Other people needing RFL services (please specify)
Tracing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family reunification	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family contact (by RCM, telephone, other)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transmission of documents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Providers of RFL services by population category (indicate the agencies working in this area by ticking the appropriate boxes)

	Migrants	Refugees and asylum seekers	Internally displaced persons	Separated and unaccompanied children	Other people needing RFL services (please specify)
Red Cross/Red Crescent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
UNICEF	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
UNHCR	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
IOM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SCF	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
IRC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Oxfam	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Government services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. Current RFL caseload

9.1	Total of RCMs exchanged in 2005:				
9.2	Total of tracing requests closed in 2005:		9.3	Total of active tracing requests:	
9.4	Other (specify) Total:	Other (specify) Total:		Other (specify) Total:	
9.5	Number of visitors in 2005		Total:		
9.6	Name the three main NS – outside your region – with which you have regular caseload exchanges (either via ICRC or directly)				
9.7	Name the three main NS – within your region – with which you have regular caseload exchanges (either via ICRC or directly)				

9. Comments

Other comments or remarks:

MISSION

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is an impartial, neutral and independent organization whose exclusively humanitarian mission is to protect the lives and dignity of victims of armed conflict and other situations of violence and to provide them with assistance. The ICRC also endeavours to prevent suffering by promoting and strengthening humanitarian law and universal humanitarian principles. Established in 1863, the ICRC is at the origin of the Geneva Conventions and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. It directs and coordinates the international activities conducted by the Movement in armed conflicts and other situations of violence.



ICRC