GUIDELINES ON PROVIDING RESTORING FAMILY LINKS SERVICES TO PERSONS SEPARATED AS A RESULT OF MIGRATION

An internal document for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

Prepared by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in cooperation with the British Red Cross, the Netherlands Red Cross and the Belgian Red Cross – Flanders and in consultation with a number of National Societies

RESTORING FAMILY LINKS

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1 INTRODUCTION

The Restoring Family Links Strategy for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement 2008-2018 (the RFL Strategy) expands the scope of RFL to include persons separated as a consequence of migration, and not only those affected by conflicts and disasters.

Migration, being a comparatively new field for the Family Links Network, requires a certain expansion of activity. The RFL Strategy reiterates the commitment of the Movement's components to undertake RFL activities whenever required and for as long as needed, to help people whose loved ones are unaccounted for or who are separated from their families as a consequence of specific situations involving population movement such as international migration.[1]

As a consequence of the RFL Strategy, National Societies and the ICRC have come to see the need for a more uniform and systematic way of carrying out migration-related RFL activities in the countries of origin, transit and destination. It is this recognition that has led to the development of guidelines on providing RFL services to this particular group.

The International Federation's Policy on Migration makes it very clear that in order to accurately reflect the full extent of the humanitarian concerns related to migration, it has adopted a **description** - rather than a definition - of migrants that is intentionally broad: "persons who leave or flee their habitual residence to go to new places – usually abroad – to seek opportunities or safer and better prospects. Migration can be voluntary or involuntary, but most of the time a combination of choices and constraints are involved."[2] The Policy adds that its definition "includes, among others, labour migrants, stateless migrants, and migrants deemed irregular by public authorities" and "also concerns refugees and asylum seekers,

1 Migration within the borders of a country should not be disregarded as it represents a serious challenge in large and populous countries: for instance, India has an estimated number of 42.3 million internal migrants. RFL procedures related to international migration could apply *mutatis mutandis*, to migration within borders

2 Introduction, International Federation Policy on Migration

notwithstanding the fact that they constitute a special category under international law."[3]

However, with regards to RFL, guidelines and procedures for persons separated as a result of migration may differ in certain aspects from those for categories such as refugees and asylum seekers. The RFL needs of, and the necessary activities for, persons affected by conflicts and disasters have already been addressed in a number of National Society and ICRC documents, including *Restoring Family Links: A Guide for National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies* and *RFL in Disasters: A Field Manual.* For that reason, this document will not focus on the same population (refugees, asylum seekers, etc).

The Movement has identified migrants as an especially vulnerable category and has committed itself, through various resolutions[4], to alleviating their plight, including in the field of RFL, on the basis not of their status but of their vulnerability. Resolution 5 of the 2007 Council of Delegates "invites National Societies to utilize their capacity as auxiliaries to the public authorities in the humanitarian field to engage in a dialogue with their public authorities to clarify their respective roles relating to the humanitarian consequences of migration, noting that while acting in an auxiliary capacity National Societies will be in a position to base their services strictly on vulnerabilities and humanitarian needs and maintain their independence and impartiality at all times."

1.1 Goals and contents

The goals of these guidelines are to ensure uniformity of approach in the RFL response for migrants as a particular group and to provide guidance on issues that are specific to this population, with regards to:

3 *Ibid.*

4 Resolutions on topics relating to migration adopted by the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (Resolution XXI, Manila 1981; Resolution XVII, Geneva 1986; Resolution 4A, Geneva 1995; and Goal 2.3 of the Plan of Action of the 27th International Conference, Geneva 1999) as well as the resolutions adopted by the Council of Delegates (Resolution 9, Budapest 1991; Resolution 7, Birmingham 1993; Resolution 4, Geneva 2001; and Resolution 5, Geneva 2007).

i. **Assessment of RFL needs** and setting the acceptance criteria
ii. **Handling cases and active searching**
iii. **Outreach to promote RFL services**

These guidelines on providing RFL services to persons separated as a result of migration will eventually be incorporated into the revised version of *Restoring Family Links: A Guide for National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies*[5] in due time. Until then, they will be used as a reference document; for ease of consultation, the guidelines contain references to certain general RFL approaches common to other target groups as well.[6]

Note

The RFL needs of, and the required activities for, persons affected by conflicts and disasters have already been addressed in a number of National Society and ICRC documents. For that reason, and when not otherwise specified, *Guidelines on Providing RFL Services to persons separated as a result of migration* will **focus on categories of population that do not include those separated by conflicts and disasters.** The document will intentionally not focus on refugees, asylum seekers, etc.

1.2 Persons separated as a result of migration: Needs and responses

In general, RFL needs differ from one context to another. More specifically, the needs of individuals on the move, and of their families, may vary depending on their location (country of origin, transit or destination). However, the RFL needs of persons separated as a result of migration, and the responses to them, have certain distinctive aspects.

Disasters and conflicts give rise to mass movements of population and general disruption of means of transportation and communication. The context in which migration occurs

5 Current version published by the ICRC in 2000.

6 The contents of the *Guidelines on Providing Restoring Family Links Services to persons separated as a result of migration* will be further revised prior to integration into the new edition of the *Restoring Family Links: A Guide for National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies*.

is quite different: migrants often move on their own or in smaller groups and, in most cases, have more access to means of communication. However, in certain situations, migrants and their families might face **challenges related to RFL** and require support:

i. they might not have access to means of tele-communications, or be deprived of such access (during irregular crossings of borders, upon arrival in a country of destination, in detention/retention centres, during/ immediately after their (in)voluntary) return
ii. they might be particularly vulnerable (e.g. victims of trafficking)
iii. they might be in difficult circumstances, psychologically, and/or reluctant to communicate with their families out of a fear of being stigmatized
iv. they might have died and their bodies, when recovered, not identified, news of their death not communicated to their families

National Societies should take into consideration the reasons for the separation and loss of contact in order to identify the needs and to select suitable RFL tools and approaches for addressing them.

Loss of contact as a consequence of migration might not always be involuntary as it is in most cases related to conflicts and disasters. A sought person might hesitate, out of fear, to re-establish contact with an enquirer, or simply not wish to do so. For that reason, extra care is required when deciding with whom information on sought migrants' whereabouts may be shared. Respecting the wishes of the sought migrants themselves and obtaining their consent, after they have been traced, is extremely important.

The social networks of migrants are often different from those of local persons. It is necessary to make a certain effort - to understand migrants' backgrounds, communicate in their language and reach their community - in order to be able to disseminate RFL activities, gain migrants' trust and, eventually, to provide the required RFL services.

Tracing **irregular migrants** is a particularly delicate task. They might have reasons to hide their identity, in order to avoid deportation, for instance. A National Society should be cautious when performing active tracing, always keeping in mind that building trust with the migrant community, and ensuring confidentiality of collected information, are essential. In any case, a National Society should always clarify, with relevant national authorities, its role in the matter of irregular migrants.

Providing RFL services for migrants and their families entails efforts by National Societies in the countries of origin, transit and destination. Therefore, criteria for accepting migration-related RFL cases would certainly depend on **capacity of National Societies** within the Family Links Network to deliver the service for this particular target group.

Note

It is of utmost importance to keep in mind the notion of **"do no harm"** when assessing the RFL needs of, and providing services for, persons as delicately placed as migrants often are.

2 ASSESSING RFL NEEDS AND CAPACITIES RELATED TO MIGRATION

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides recommendations on the information to be gathered when conducting an assessment of the RFL needs of migrants and/or their families. It does not consider assessment methodology in detail, as that is covered in "*Assessing Restoring Family Links needs: a Handbook for the National Societies and the ICRC*", which should be consulted before embarking on any RFL assessment exercise.

An assessment should take into consideration the RFL activities being undertaken by the National Society and other actors for the benefit of the migrant population, identifying the unmet needs that have to be addressed.

Example

"It appears likely that migrant workers from Afghanistan, based in Iran and in the Gulf countries, may find it difficult to communicate with their families remaining in Afghanistan specifically if they are arrested, deported, or are kept in a closed working network without communication possibilities. If family contact is cut for some time because of these circumstances, the migrant worker (either in the country of work or back in Afghanistan) or the family remaining in Afghanistan may approach the ARCS/ICRC for RFL services ..."

Assessment of Restoring Family Links (RFL) Needs and Capabilities in Afghanistan: Final Report on Main Findings and Recommendations, ICRC, 2009

Assessments should also not disregard the potential RFL needs of refugees and asylum seekers, internally displaced persons, separated and unaccompanied children, missing persons and victims of human trafficking; the needs of these persons are intertwined and their migration status can change (for instance, an asylum seeker can become an irregular migrant).

2.2 Collecting relevant information on persons separated as a result of migration

Once the decision to conduct an assessment has been taken, one of the first tasks is to make an inventory and a detailed analysis of the information available and accessible through secondary (or indirect) sources. This is followed by the gathering of information from primary (or direct) sources, through on-the-spot observation and directly from the migrants themselves.

2.2.1 Secondary sources of information

The four principal secondary sources of information are:

i. **Online resources**
   a. A list of helpful websites should be compiled from various government institutions (this should include checking whether a system for registering migrants is in place in the country, like the Immigration Police database in Malta), research bodies, international organizations[7]. This will make it possible to collect valuable data. It should be noted that quite often these sources do not include information on irregular migrants (e.g. statistics). Although they may provide information on the origins of various migrant groups, they might not indicate their exact location in the host country.

ii. **Stakeholders**
   a. Government authorities (relevant ministries, immigration police, border control services, etc)
   b. United Nations agencies (UNHCR, UNICEF, IOM, etc.) and NGOs
   c. Private companies (providers of telecommunications and of financial services like Western Union)
   d. Media (newspapers and newsletters in migrants' communities and the radio stations and television channels that cater to them)

7 A list of useful websites and links for collecting information on migrants and migration is attached as an annex to the Guidelines.

e. Universities (academic researchers, foreign students' clubs)
f. Embassies and consulates of the migrants' countries of origin

Note

Besides being indispensable sources of information about migrants, stakeholders (particularly government authorities, UN agencies and NGOs) may even be offering RFL services themselves. Their activities and potential RFL responses may have to be taken into consideration and assessed as well.

iii. **The Movement**
   a. Within a National Society, colleagues from other departments
   b. Other National Societies
   c. ICRC delegations covering countries of origin and/or transit and/or destination
   d. Representatives of the International Federation covering countries of origin and/or transit and/or destination

iv. **Service providers and institutions for vulnerable individuals**
   a. Reception centres
   b. Foster homes for unaccompanied minors and child care centres
   c. Humanitarian agencies and community-based associations providing direct support for migrants and victims of human trafficking
   d. Places of detention and/or removal centres
   e. Emergency/crisis accommodation centres
   f. Domestic violence shelters
   g. Language schools/centres
   h. Religious groups/organizations (churches, mosques, synagogues, temples,)
   i. Day/drop-in centres
   j. Restaurants and cafes serving meals to the homeless
   k. First-aid centres
   l. Hospitals and nursing homes

2.2.2 Primary sources of information

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

i. On-the-spot observation by the National Society and/or the ICRC
ii. Information gathered from the migrant population
iii. In-depth knowledge of the context

Direct contact with potential beneficiaries is essential for assessing RFL needs. In a migration-related RFL assessment, both migrants and their families may be regarded as primary sources of information. Separation brought out by migration affects migrants and their families equally and, therefore, both sides may be considered to be beneficiaries in need of RFL support as well.

Detailed guidelines on the type of interview to conduct and the proper way of doing so, when eliciting information directly from beneficiaries, can be found in "*Assessing Restoring Family Links needs: a Handbook for the National Societies and the ICRC*".

2.3 Migrant population profile

Besides establishing RFL needs, collecting data from primary and secondary sources would be of help in creating a profile of the migrant population within a country. A profile created in this way would include **cultural and social factors relevant for** RFL, and this can be of value in addressing the needs of all potential RFL beneficiaries, not only those of migrants:

i. Nationality and ethnic origin
ii. Distribution by gender
iii. Distribution by age
iv. Legal status within country of residence
v. Geographical distribution in host country
vi. Naming systems
vii. Family structure (nuclear/extended)
viii. Family connections in country of origin
ix. Most common forms of employment

x. Rates of literacy and language skills
xi. Time spent in host country
xii. Religious practices
xiii. Cultural or traditional practices with regard to the treatment of the dead, funeral rites and mourning

At the same time, there are **cultural and social factors that characterize the migrant population**, useful for mapping patterns of migration, which are of significance for RFL:

i. Reasons for migration
ii. Specific provinces in the countries of origin with particularly high migration rates
iii. Means by which migrants arrived in host country - type of transportation
iv. Migrating alone or with family
v. Migration routes used
vi. Whether the host country is a transit or a final destination

2.3.1 Identifying vulnerable individuals within the migrant population

The most vulnerable migrants might find themselves confronted by particularly challenging situations. For example, they might have difficulty in gaining access to means of communication. Special attention must be paid to the following categories within any migrant population:

i. Irregular migrants
ii. Unaccompanied minors
iii. Persons without a fixed address (homeless)
iv. Victims of domestic violence
v. Migrants in detention centres
vi. Single mothers and pregnant women
vii. Elderly persons
viii. Persons who are ill or disabled
ix. Persons without diplomatic representation in the country of destination
x. Female migrants at risk of becoming victims of human trafficking

xi. Victims of human trafficking
xii. Separated families (e.g. during the journey from the country of origin to the country of destination)
xiii. Temporary regular migrants who have limited rights as a result of their status
xiv. Relatives of migrants who have died while travelling (and whose bodies are often unidentified)

Example

In **Asia**, women - domestic workers and factory workers mainly, but also prostitutes, victims of exploitative fraud - represent a significant percentage of the migration flux. Domestic workers, in regular or irregular situations, might be at risk of isolation (locked up in the houses where they work), of not having access to means of communication and/or of having no contact with their families. Prostitutes, potentially an easy target for human trafficking, might face additional risks. Staying in touch with their families could reduce their risk of being exposed to trafficking.

2.4 Assessing migrants' environment

2.4.1 Communications and infrastructure

The availability, accessibility and affordability of different forms of communication, and the infrastructure in the country, should be taken into consideration during the assessment exercise.[8] Although these matters are of relevance for other potential RFL beneficiaries as well, it is necessary to include them here:

i. **Telephone**
   a. Fixed line telephones (coverage in urban/rural areas, percentage of population using it)
   b. Mobile telephones (coverage in urban/rural areas, number of providers, cost, percentage of population using it)
   c. Kinds of communication for which mobile telephones are predominantly used (voice calls, SMS, MMS, Internet)

8 The information is relevant to other potential beneficiaries as well and some official data could be found in an initial RFL needs survey, which most National Societies would already have conducted. Some of this data might have to be updated.

d. Satellite telephones (if they are used in the country and who is allowed to use them, number of providers, cost)[9]

ii. **Internet**

a. Types of access (dial-up, ADSL, satellite,)
b. Places of access (home, Internet cafés,)
c. Coverage across the country
d. Percentage of population using the Internet
e. Cost and general affordability
f. Kinds of communication for which the Internet is used (Skype, chat, social forums, etc.)
g. Are there limits to Internet use, in terms of access to certain websites? If yes, what are they and who imposes them?

iii. **Postal service**

a. Coverage and reliability, particularly when the host country or country of origin has experienced war or natural disaster

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[10], traders, bus drivers and taxi drivers)
b. Communication through radio amateurs
c. Frequency of use of alternative means of communication

v. **Media**

a. Media used by the population (radio, TV, newspapers and magazines, websites, etc.) and access to media
b. The existence of media exclusively for foreign/migrant communities
c. Feasibility of using media for promoting RFL services and/or as a tool for tracing migrants or their families

Example

In Japan, newspapers in Chinese and Portuguese are published and read in migrant communities.

9 In certain countries, use of satellite telephones is limited to the civilian authorities and to the armed forces..

10 In some African countries, it is at social gatherings that women, in particular, obtain and share news.

vi. **Transportation**
   a. Most frequently used means of transportation
   b. Choices available for travelling between the countries of origin, transit and destination
   c. Affordability of transportation

2.4.2 Information on migrants' countries of origin

The secondary sources of information already mentioned and, especially, other National Societies and ICRC delegations are likely to be of help in gathering information on migrants' countries of origin. This will be useful when assessing RFL needs in their countries of transit and destination. The kinds of data that must be collected are listed below:

i. General situation in the country and its impact on migrants and their families (ongoing crisis, displacement of population, discrimination towards specific ethnic groups, etc.)
ii. Effects of social environment on migrants and their families (stigmatization of unsuccessful/repatriated migrants, victims of human trafficking, etc.)
iii. Country's policy towards nationals who have migrated abroad (treatment of migrants who have returned, issuance and renewal of passports and identity cards, etc.)
iv. Activities undertaken by the National Society and by the ICRC to benefit migrants and their families

2.5 Assessing the management of human remains

Families looking for missing migrant relatives should be informed of their fate. The families' need to obtain information on relatives' whereabouts, the identification of human remains and the proper management of the dead are all connected to one another.

Of course, it is not inevitable for a missing migrant to be dead. However, when that is the case, if identification attempts are not carried out properly and the results made available to the family, they will remain ignorant of the fate of their relative.

Note

It is the primary responsibility of the authorities in every country to collect and properly manage the remains of deceased migrants.

The authorities are responsible for collecting and managing human remains in a way that is not only adequate but also respectful. It is also a primary responsibility of the authorities to properly collect and manage all information that might enable them to identify a deceased migrant (i.e. safeguard post-mortem data - PMD[11]), ascertain the cause of death, issue a death certificate, and locate and inform his or her relatives.

However, the authorities may find it very difficult to identify the remains of dead migrants owing to lack of information, particularly ante-mortem data (AMD).[12] They may also find it difficult to communicate news of death to the families in their countries of origin. Consequently, it is necessary during the assessment exercise for National Societies, with ICRC support when needed, to attempt to understand and identify gaps in the legal framework, and in the legal procedures and practices, put in place by the authorities to:

i. Manage migrants' human remains
ii. Manage all information related to deceased or missing migrants
iii. Ascertain the fact of death and communicate it to the families

Example

Every year, between 100,000 and 120,000 irregular migrants, travelling from Africa to Europe, try to cross the Mediterranean Sea. At least 1,000 of them disappear or die on the way. In many cases, their bodies remain unidentified and their families never learn what became of them.

11 Post-mortem data (PMD) – Identification features obtainable from a body or evidence taken from personal effects (clothing, jewellery etc.) attached to the body, which might be compared with ante-mortem data (AMD) and used to establish the cause of death.

12 Ante-mortem data (AMD) – Any information obtained from relatives or other reliable sources that can be compared with data obtained from human remains (post-mortem data, or PMD) and enable a positive identification to be made.

2.6 Role and capacity of National Societies

In order to be able to offer RFL services to migrants and their families, National Societies in the countries of destination, transit and origin, must have the requisite capacities. While assessing the RFL needs of migrants, it is necessary to take into account the National Society's own capacity and make an assessment of that as well. It is also important to assess the capacity of the ICRC delegation that will be providing support in offering RFL services to migrants and their families.

Assessment of capacity vis-à-vis RFL services for migrants may be part of a wider general RFL capacity assessment exercise or done separately, with the focus solely on the migrant population. The following questions must be raised when a National Society is assessing its role and its ability to provide RFL services to migrants (in countries of destination or transit) or to their families (in the country of origin):[13]

i. How is the National Society's RFL network coping with the RFL needs of other groups?
ii. Given the estimated needs of the migrants and/or their families, does the National Society have the human resources and technical capacity to deal with the expected additional caseload?
iii. Would the National Society have the necessary specific skills for meeting the needs that have been identified by the assessment (e.g. does the National Society provide psychosocial support services? Does it have staff with the language skills required for directly contacting and communicating with the migrants in question?)?
iv. How might the activities to benefit the new target group affect the functioning of the National Society, and what is the likely impact in terms of tools and resources (planning, budgeting, training for staff and volunteers, etc.)?

13 More in-depth guidance for assessing the overall RFL capacity of a National Society can be found in the "Capacity assessment tool for tracing services of National Societies" used in the mapping process that led to the development of the 10-year RFL Strategy for the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

Cooperation within the Family Links Network is of utmost importance for dealing effectively with the needs of migrants and their families. Working on a single RFL case might require the involvement of National Societies and/or ICRC delegations throughout the migration route - in countries of destination, transit and origin. For this reason, a National Society should, while assessing its ability to offer RFL services to migrants or their families, also engage in a dialogue with the National Societies and/or the ICRC delegations that would potentially be involved in providing RFL services on the migration route. Good working relationships among partners within the Family Links Network are indispensable for the speedy exchange of information and the effective handling of cases.

Example

A boat with a group of irregular migrants capsized while crossing the river Tisa on the border between Serbia and Hungary. A number of bodies were recovered but some of the passengers remained unaccounted for. Shortly afterwards, relatives of one of the missing migrants requested the Netherlands Red Cross for help in ascertaining his fate. With the assistance of the Hungarian Red Cross and the Red Cross of Serbia, the Netherlands Red Cross established the migrant's whereabouts and communicated the information to his family in the Netherlands.

Note

The **Tracing Activities Extranet** should be consulted for information on acceptance criteria and on the roles and capacities of other National Societies with regard to RFL, including activities for migrants.

3 ANALYSING AND USING THE FINDINGS

3.1 Analysis

After assessing the RFL needs of migrants and/or their families, as well as the capacity of the National Society, it is important to summarize the information collected and undertake a proper analysis. The analysis will help to identify patterns of RFL needs as well as gaps between needs and the services already being provided by the National Society and/or other actors. This will enable the National Society to start planning: designing a strategy, fixing objectives and drawing up a plan of action focusing on the identified gaps and on solutions for overcoming them.

3.2 Strategy, objectives and plan of action

The **strategy** for addressing the RFL needs of migrants identifies the combination of methods of action (substitution,[14] support,[15] and persuasion/advocacy[16]), partners, tools and resources needed to deliver the most appropriate response, given the National Society's capacity and role.

Example of Strategy

To provide support for or take over, if necessary, the role of the relevant authorities to a) notify families when migrants die on the migration route and when their bodies are identified and b) transmit death certificates through the Family Links Network.

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

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

16 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..

On the basis of the assessed RFL needs and the priorities that have been set, a framework for action may be established by listing objectives and the activities to be undertaken in order to reach them, as well as the corresponding resources; and by drawing up a budget and timeline.

Example of an objective

To restore family links between migrants in reception centres and their families in countries of origin by providing telephone services and/or transmitting oral messages (e.g. *salamats*).

Having set the strategy and objectives, it is important to identify how they will be achieved. That can be done by drawing up a plan of action. While it is true that National Societies have their own specific planning tools and formats, every plan of action should include the following:

i. **Activities** – acceptance criteria, the choice of approaches and tools
ii. **Human resources required** - RFL staff and volunteers
iii. **Resources required** - material, logistical, financial
iv. **Timing of activities** - when they will start and end, if time-bound
v. **Assumptions** - key assumptions must be made and regularly monitored
vi. **Risk management** - risks to individuals from the National Society and steps to manage them
vii. **Monitoring indicators** - key indicators to monitor activities and results

3.3 Setting the acceptance criteria

General RFL criteria, applicable to other groups of beneficiaries, should also be used to determine which migrants are to be assisted. Additionally, in migration-related cases, the main focus should be on vulnerability arising from the loss of family contact. Thus, two main groups of criteria may be used to determine whether a request for RFL support is valid and how it should be treated, bearing in mind that some criteria are applicable to other RFL beneficiaries as well:

i. **Vulnerability owing to disruption of family links**

a. **Protection** - if migrants or their families are in need of protection, RFL services should, whenever possible, be prioritized (e.g. unaccompanied minors and migrants in detention take precedence); at the same time, migrants or their families should be referred to those institutions that are able to address their protection concerns

b. **Security** - victims of human trafficking, isolated and vulnerable migrants deprived of liberty of movement and access to means of communication

c. **Psychological vulnerability** – migrants suffering psychologically because they have lost contact with family members

d. **Physical vulnerability** – migrants suffering physically (e.g. serious illness, hospitalization) and needing to restore contact with family members

e. **Economic vulnerability** – migrants suffering economically as a result of having lost contact with family members, even though this is not by itself sufficient reason for accepting a case. However, there may be instances in which a migrant is especially vulnerable because he or she is without financial resources (e.g. a homeless person, a single mother separated from the family's breadwinner) and needs to restore contact with family members

Example

"There are circumstances that expose migrants to heightened and acute risks to their physical integrity and well-being. This is the case when they are subject to refoulement, sexual and labour exploitation, and human trafficking (…) An increasing number of migrants are unaccompanied minors or minors separated from their families. Without family links or appropriate care arrangements, they are at high risk of abuse and exploitation. Their rights may be violated, and their prospects for a secure and productive future are often dim. These minors are of special concern to the Movement. National Societies shall cooperate and engage in the protection of unaccompanied and separated minor migrants, including through efforts to restore their family links…"

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Policy on Migration

ii. **Added value of National Society offering RFL services**
   a. Means of communication are non-existent, unreliable or insufficient for contacting a relative
   b. Persons have little or no access to means of communication
   c. Lack of trust in channels of communication made available by the authorities (e.g. migrants in detention); clearly, there is an added value in the National Society stepping in and offering its services
   d. RFL needs of migrants are not met by other organizations
   e. Migrants and their families are separated across borders and the Movement potentially has access to them through the Family Links Network (National Societies in the countries of origin, transit and destination accept migration-related RFL cases and have the capacity to deal with them)
   f. When migrants want to restore contact with relatives already living within the borders of a country of destination, the provision of support should be considered only on a case-by-case basis (i.e. two migrants became separated on arrival and the enquirer is unable to locate the other person)

3.4 Reasons for separation and loss of contact, potential RFL needs and response

There are many reasons why there are disruptions in contact between migrants and their families and why the families of migrants are unable to establish their relatives' whereabouts (vulnerable migrants in locations on or near migratory routes where there are no means of communication, migrants in reception/retention/detention centres, etc.).

Recognizing the **reasons for separation and loss of contact** will help to identify potential RFL needs and, subsequently, to choose the most appropriate approach for addressing them.

Example

In April 2009, a number of migrants from Bangladesh, hoping to reach Thailand and a better life, were found stranded on small boats in the Bay of Bengal. They were taken by the Indian Navy to the Andaman Islands in India.

During the long period spent at sea, they could not contact their families who had remained in Bangladesh. The Movement's Family Links Network played a crucial role in remedying their situation. The Bangladesh Red Crescent Society collected Red Cross Messages from the migrants' families; the Indian Red Cross Society, together with the ICRC, managed to visit the migrants and distribute the RCMs. With the assistance of the Family Links Network, the families in Bangladesh were able to send the official documents (copies of identity cards, birth and citizenship certificates) that would enable the migrants to return home.

The **coping mechanisms** of the potential beneficiaries, related to restoring and maintaining contact between separated families, must be taken into account when assessing RFL needs among migrants, not in order to replace them, but rather with a view to providing support for them if necessary.

Example

In **Senegal**, a local organization collects the names of migrants attempting to reach Europe in small boats, so that their families can be notified in the event of an accident.

3.5 Typical RFL activities for those separated as a result of migration

For easier comprehension of the link between assessing the needs of migrants and/or their families and providing RFL response, all the relevant aspects of the RFL process have been grouped in the table - "Typical RFL activities for those separated as a result of migration" - that follows. The aim of the table is to indicate probable:

i. Reasons for family separation
ii. RFL needs
iii. National Society activities and responses to RFL needs
iv. Measures needed to enable National Societies to provide RFL services

Note

The activities of National Societies, including those for migrants and their families, are subject to legal constraints and domestic laws. Therefore, the following table should not be regarded as being prescriptive. It is indicative, not exhaustive, and shows only possible choices.

Table 1 – Typical RFL activities for persons separated as a result of migration		
Reasons for separation and loss of contact	**Potential RFL needs**	
1) Migrants-to-be, still in countries of origin, who are about to depart on their journeys facing a potential risk of separation	**Risk of separation** on the migration route and at the final destination	
2) Migrants decide voluntarily to sever ties with their families	Migrants might not have RFL needs for the time being but their families might want to know their whereabouts	
3) Vulnerable migrants in locations on or near migratory routes in countries of transit where there are no means of communication	Need to **send news** or restore contact with family members	
	Risk of separation further along the migratory route	

17 In the Philippines, the National Society distributes to all departing migrants, through a variety of channels, leaflets containing emergency contacts and simple recommendations for what to do in case of trouble in the transit or destination countries.

	Potential/Possible RFL responses	Measures that might enable National Societies to provide RFL response
	Preventive measures taken to avoid separation: • Strengthening of the existing coping mechanisms (registration of migrants, etc.) • Disseminating information on RFL services • Provision of contact details of National Society RFL services in countries of transit and destination • Distribution of leaflets containing relevant and useful information[17]	Map the existing coping mechanisms used by the migrants to prevent separations Liaise with the authorities responsible for organized migration (if they exist) and negotiate in advance the role of the National Society in undertaking preventive RFL-related measures Produce dissemination materials targeting departing migrants and communities in areas known to be points of departure in countries of origin
	Consult the section on "RFL needs of families of migrants," which appears later in the table	Disseminate information on RFL activities to the migrants and explain the impact restored family links, by reducing distress caused by separation, would have on the psychological wellbeing of their families
	Strengthen the existing coping mechanisms through support and technical advice **Restore family links using:** • Telephones • 'Safe and well' messages • Oral messages (e.g. *salamats*)	Map locations on migration routes where migrants congregate and that lack means of communication Map the existing coping mechanisms used by migrants to restore family links and prevent further loss of contact
	Preventive measures taken to avoid loss of contact: • Strengthening of the existing coping mechanisms (registration of migrants, etc.) • Migrants registered by National Society • Information on RFL services disseminated • Provision of contact details of National Society RFL services in countries of transit and destination	Negotiate in advance – with the authorities responsible for dealing with migrants in transit - a role for the National Society that would enable it to have access to the migrants and undertake preventive measures

Table 1 – Typical RFL activities for persons separated as a result of migration		
Reasons for separation and loss of contact	**Potential RFL needs**	
4) Vulnerable migrants (unaccompanied minors, irregular migrants, etc.) in the country of destination who are finding it difficult to locate and/or contact relatives	Need to **send news** or restore contact with family members Lacking accurate addresses or precise information, some migrants may **need to trace relatives** in their country of origin or elsewhere	
	Vulnerable migrants **lack information** necessary for their voluntary return to their country of origin, or for their potential resettlement or integration	
	Vulnerable migrants who are eligible for **family reunion** need support to avail themselves of the opportunity	
	Vulnerable migrants who are to be reunited with their families **do not have valid passports** and are unable to obtain or renew any other documents that might permit them to travel	

18 Travel documents may be issued to migrants wishing to return to their countries of origin if they fulfil the general acceptance criteria: 1) the applicant does not have a valid passport and is unable to obtain or renew any other that that might permit travel. Furthermore, it is impossible for the receiving country to provide a travel permit; 2) The country to which the applicant wishes to travel and the transit country/countries have promised or already granted entry and transit visas; 3) An exit visa or safe-conduct to leave the country, if required, has been promised by the country whose territory the applicant wishes to leave.

	Potential/Possible RFL responses	Measures that might enable National Societies to provide RFL response
	Restoring family links using: • Telephones • Red Cross messages **Searching for the relatives using these methods:** • Opening tracing requests • Active tracing • Registering and monitoring unaccompanied minors	Disseminate information on RFL activities among migrants Establish contact with migrants' communities and associations who can serve as referral for providing RFL services Negotiate auxiliary role to public authorities in order to gain access to official information on migrants, which is necessary for active searching and RFL
	Referring to relevant institutions and/or providing information on: • Voluntary return • Resettlement • Legal counselling • Health care, etc.	National Society is aware of activities for migrants of other organizations and institutions and has an established referral system with them
	Persuasion/advocacy, support and substitution activities: • Advocacy by National Society with authorities to organize family reunification • If required, National Society provides support for authorities in organizing family reunifications (providing transportation, obtaining consent from family members, follow-up, etc.) • If needed, National Society substitutes for authorities in organizing family reunification	Negotiate in advance – with the authorities responsible for dealing with migrants – a role that would enable the National Society to position itself as a relevant actor vis-à-vis family reunification for vulnerable migrants
	Issuing travel documents (ICRC)	National Society is aware of the acceptance criteria and of the procedures for issuing travel documents and transmits requests for such documents to the ICRC[18]

Table 1 – Typical RFL activities for persons separated as a result of migration		
Reasons for separation and loss of contact	**Potential RFL needs**	
5) Migrants who are victims of human trafficking, forced marriage, domestic violence and unsuccessful or failed migrants may be in a state of depression, despair, shame or fear	Faced by the possibility of stigmatization, migrants might require support in the form of **contacting and interceding** with their families and ensuring their social reintegration when they return	
	Lacking accurate addresses or precise information, some migrants may **need to trace relatives**, in their country of origin or elsewhere, before the National Society can intercede with their families	
	Migrants in need of **official documents** for proving their identity, nationality, status, etc., which are required for various purposes (repatriation, asylum- seeking process, etc.), are not able to receive them through the usual means (e.g. postal service)	
	Migrants' need for **psychosocial support** and for the RFL services that could help them overcome their distress	

	Potential/Possible RFL responses	Measures that might enable National Societies to provide RFL response
	Contact and mediation with families of migrants: • Direct contact with the migrant's family through a National Society in the country where the family lives • National Society contacts the family and carefully explains the migrant's situation, fears and needs • National Society intercedes with the family on potential restoration of contact and the migrant's social reintegration **Restore and maintain family links using:** • Telephones • Red Cross messages • Oral messages (e.g. *salamats*)	National Society is aware of the ability - to deliver the necessary services - of the National Societies in the countries where the migrants' families live
	Search for the relatives using the following methods: • Opening tracing requests • Active tracing	
	Transmission of official documents through Family Links Network (birth certificate, citizenship certificate, etc.)	
	Providing psychosocial support: • Trained National Society staff/volunteers provide psychological help while offering RFL services • Psychosocial support provided by professionals	National Society has the capacity to provide psychosocial support

Table 1 – Typical RFL activities for persons separated as a result of migration

Reasons for separation and loss of contact	Potential RFL needs	
6) Migrants in reception/ retention/ detention centres[19]	Migrants might be **prevented from communicating** with their families or **may not have access to means of communication**	
	Migrants **are unable to get in touch with diplomatic representatives** from their country	
	Migrants are denied **family visits**	

19 For definitions and for more information on migrants in detention, see "Activities for the benefit of detained migrants, refugees and asylum seekers – basic and practical guide for National Societies," an internal document for the Movement, prepared by the ICRC in consultation with a number of National Societies and the International Federation in 2009.

20 *Ibid*

	Potential/Possible RFL responses	Measures that might enable National Societies to provide RFL response

	Persuasion/advocacy, support and substitution activities:
	• Advocacy by National Society with the relevant authorities for provision of access to means of communication
	• If required, National Society provides support for the relevant authorities in ensuring adequate access to means of communication (e.g. provision of telephone cards to migrants)
	• If needed, National Society substitutes for the relevant authorities in providing RFL services for the migrants by using:
	  • Telephones
	  • Red Cross messages
	  • 'Safe and well' messages
	  • Oral messages (e.g. *salamats*)
		Negotiate with the proper authorities the National Society's role as well as access to the reception/retention/detention centres [20]
		
		National Society authorized to provide RFL services in the centres

	Persuasion/advocacy, support and substitution activities: • Advocacy by National Society with the relevant authorities, for proper notification of the migrant's status to the appropriate consular or diplomatic representative • National Society provides support or, if necessary, substitutes for the relevant authorities and notifies the appropriate consular or diplomatic representative (in the host country or elsewhere through the Family Links Network) of the migrant's status	
	Persuasion/advocacy and support activities: • Advocacy by National Society with the relevant authorities, for family visits • If required, National Society provides support for the relevant authorities in facilitating and/or financing family visits	

Table 1 – Typical RFL activities for persons separated as a result of migration		
Reasons for separation and loss of contact	**Potential RFL needs**	
6) Migrants in reception/ retention/ detention centres	Migrants in need of **official documents** for proving their identity, nationality, status, etc., which are required for various purposes (repatriation, asylum- seeking process, etc.), are not able to receive them through the usual means (e.g. postal service)	
	Migrants' need for **psychosocial support** and for the RFL services that could help them overcome their distress	
	Migrants **lack information** related to their voluntary return to their country of origin, their resettlement, etc.	
	Migrants who wish to return to their country of origin but **do not have a valid passport** and are unable to obtain or renew any other documents that might permit them to travel	
7) Migrants have become separated from family members on the migratory route	**Clarifying the whereabouts** of the family members/migrants who have become separated or who have disappeared on the migratory route	
	Migrants' need for **psychosocial support** and for the RFL services that could help them overcome their distress at being separated from relatives	

	Potential/Possible RFL responses	Measures that might enable National Societies to provide RFL response
	Transmission of official documents through Family Links Network (birth certificate, citizenship certificate, etc.)	National Society is aware of the ability of sister National Societies to deliver the necessary services in the countries where the migrants' families live
	Providing psychosocial support: • Trained National Society staff/volunteers provide psychological help while offering RFL services • Psychosocial support provided by professionals	National Society has the capacity to provide psychosocial support
	Referring to relevant institutions and/ or providing information on: • Voluntary return • Resettlement • Legal counselling • Health care, etc.	National Society is aware of the existing services for migrants in their country of return or resettlement and establishes referral system with service providers
	Issuing travel documents (ICRC)	National Society is aware of the acceptance criteria and of the procedures for issuing travel documents and transmits requests for such documents to the ICRC
	Search for the relatives using the following methods: • Opening tracing requests • Active tracing • Data sharing and cross-checking (e.g. Red Cross tracing application for Europe)	Establish contact with migrants' communities and associations as they can be valuable sources of information for tracing, and disseminate information on RFL services Negotiate auxiliary role to public authorities in order to gain access to official information on migrants, which is necessary for active searching and RFL
	Providing psychosocial support: • Trained National Society staff/volunteers provide psychological help while offering RFL services • Psychosocial support provided by professionals	National Society has the capacity to provide psychosocial support

Table 1 – Typical RFL activities for persons separated as a result of migration		
Reasons for separation and loss of contact	**Potential RFL needs**	
8) Migrants may die along the migratory route or in the country of destination; their bodies may remain unidentified and their families kept in ignorance of their death	**Establishing the identities** of migrants who have died along the migratory route or in the country of destination	
	Notifying families of deaths and of the identification of bodies or human remains, and **transmitting death certificates**	

21 The ICRC's forensic experts are at hand to give advice on this and to organize or perform an assessment of forensic practices and needs in the country, if required

	Potential/Possible RFL responses	Measures that might enable National Societies to provide RFL response
	Persuasion/advocacy and support activities: • Advocacy by National Society with relevant authorities, for respectful handling of human remains, ensuring compliance with commonly accepted standards, in order to make it possible to identify the remains, even at a later stage; and provision of expert advice if necessary [21] • If required, National Society provides support for the relevant authorities in the management and identification of human remains (collection of ante-mortem data, provision of body bags and other materials, etc.)	Understand and identify gaps in the legal framework, procedures and practices put in place by the authorities to: • manage the migrants' remains • manage all information related to deceased or missing migrants • ascertain the fact of death and communicate the information to the family
	Persuasion/advocacy, support and substitution activities: • Advocacy by National Society with the relevant authorities, for providing proper notification to the families of dead migrants and for the provision of death certificates • National Society provides support for the relevant authorities for notifying the families of dead migrants and for transmitting death certificates • If necessary, National Society substitutes for the relevant authorities by notifying migrants' families of the death of their relatives and by transmitting death certificates through the Family Links Network	Liaise with the authorities responsible for the management and identification of the dead and negotiate in advance the role of the National Society

Table 1 – Typical RFL activities for persons separated as a result of migration

Reasons for separation and loss of contact	Potential RFL needs	
9) Families who have lost contact with their migrant relatives [22]	Lacking accurate information on the whereabouts of their migrant relatives, some families may **need support in tracing them** in the country of their final destination or elsewhere	
	Need for **psychosocial support** among migrants' families as the separation might have had a major impact on the family (distressing uncertainty, guilt, self-accusation, anger, etc.)	
	Need for support in overcoming **legal and administrative** difficulties related to the disappearance of family members	
	Financial difficulties related to the disappearance of relatives (lack of income owing to the loss of the (main) breadwinner, financial burdensomeness of the search, etc.)	

22 The section on the needs of migrants' families of is based on the handbook, *Accompanying Families of Missing Persons* (ICRC, 2009 – draft version)

	Potential/Possible RFL responses	Measures that might enable National Societies to provide RFL response
	Providing information about existing procedures regarding the search for their missing relative and on other services offered to families in their country **Search for the relatives using the following methods:** • Opening tracing requests • Active tracing • Data sharing and cross-checking (e.g. Red Cross tracing application for Europe)	National Society is aware of the existing services for migrants' families in their country Disseminate information on RFL services among potential beneficiaries National Society is aware of the ability of sister National Societies to deliver the necessary services in the countries of destination or transit
	Providing psychosocial support: • Trained National Society staff/volunteers provide psychological help while offering RFL services • Psychosocial support provided by professionals **Proposing a range of activities** aimed at ending the social isolation of the families (summer camps, play rooms for children, etc.)	National Society has the capacity to provide psychosocial support National Society includes migrants' families in its ongoing activities or refers them to organizations active in the sphere of psychosocial support and similar activities
	Networking, which entails informing families about existing services and making service providers sensitive to the plight of the families so that they can provide the most effective assistance of which they are capable	National Society is aware of the existing services and legal and administrative procedures that are of pertinence for migrants' families
	Material support, as needed, in the form of distributions of food and non-food items **Proposing a range of activities** aimed at encouraging their reintegration into social life (basic vocational training, educational sessions, etc.) **Providing financial support for specific** occasions, for instance, following the identification of human remains (transportation, burial, etc.)	National Society includes migrants' families in existing assistance programmes or refers them to others providing such support

4 HANDLING CASES AND ACTIVELY SEARCHING FOR MIGRANTS

4.1 Introduction

In many respects the techniques and methods that can be used for tracing migrants are similar to those for tracing persons separated from their families as a result of conflict or disaster. However, in certain areas - confidentiality, for instance - migration-related RFL cases require a more sensitive approach:

i. While tracing irregular migrants extra care has to be taken while deciding with whom information may be shared and to whom or where the tracing request may be submitted.
ii. In some cases, it might be appropriate to offer means of restoring family links without registration and without revealing personal data (e.g. use of mobile telephones).
iii. It may be appropriate to offer a Movement address to which correspondence can be forwarded, rather than insisting on the contact details of the enquirer or, when found, the sought person

Through negotiation, National Societies, as auxiliaries to the public authorities, may be able to obtain access to official information on migrants, which is necessary for active searching and RFL (e.g. information on migrants in places of detention). There are, nonetheless, a number of conditions to be met before requesting the authorities for access to official information on migrants:

i. The National Society must have the will and the capacity to address the RFL needs of migrants
ii. The National Society's governing body must be convinced by the reasons for conducting negotiations with the relevant authorities regarding the auxiliary role as it pertains to migrants
iii. The authorities must acknowledge the humanitarian role of the National Society

iv. The National Society must have a policy on data sharing, data protection and the use of data obtained from government departments

When the cause of separation is conflict or disaster, there is a working assumption that the loss of contact was involuntary and that the sought person will want to re-establish contact with the enquirer. This is not always the case with migrants. For this reason, the enquirer's reasons for re-establishing contact should be carefully examined, and the contact information of the sought person released only after his or her consent has been secured.

Note

Given the possibility that sought persons in migrant tracing cases may not wish to make their whereabouts known to the authorities, close attention must be paid to the search methods used.

4.2 Sources of information for active searching

The sources used for tracing migrants, regardless of their reason for migration, will vary depending on the likely status of the sought person, i.e. whether he or she is a "regular" or "irregular" migrant. For persons believed to be "regular" migrants, official sources may be used to conduct a "national" search. They include the following:

i. Relevant government departments
ii. Social security records
iii. Health-care records
iv. Electoral roll registers
v. Telephone directories
vi. National archives
vii. Companies/agencies dealing with migrant labour
viii. Boat and other available official transportation lists

Active tracing involving community groups and NGOs working with migrant communities may also be helpful. Besides contacting the already mentioned service providers and institutions for vulnerable persons (point 2.2.1, pages 12-13), the **usual tracing methods** should be used when searching for migrants.[17]

Note

There may be official sources who, if they are used in the search for someone believed to be an "irregular" migrant, could alert the authorities to the person's whereabouts and imperil his or her position in the country.

A careful assessment should be conducted in each case to decide which official sources to use, particularly when dealing with cases involving migrants believed to be "irregular." In some instances, it may be more appropriate to bypass government authorities and simply to approach local community contacts (for example, community and religious leaders and groups, and/or volunteers from the same ethnic group or community as the sought person).

4.3 Advantages and drawbacks of using community contacts

Community contacts, including National Society staff and volunteers from the ethnic group in question, are often helpful in tracing migrants. Contacts of this kind are likely to have a sound knowledge of their community. They are aware of the movements of individuals within the community, and can be relied on to know about particularities such as the spellings of names; they may even know the sought person's whereabouts. These contacts may also have access to information on recently arrived migrants, and could prove to be a more effective means of locating individuals than using official channels. One should be mindful, however, of the **potential risks** involved in using community contacts:

17 *Restoring Family Links: A Guide for National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies*, p. 68.

i. **Impartiality** - Community leaders may not represent the whole community, and they may not be impartial. They may also not have the best interests of the sought person in mind, and may have allegiances to certain clans or groups, including political groups, that could put the sought person's safety or position in the country at risk.
ii. **Confidentiality** is another issue of potential concern. When a government official is approached for information regarding a sought person, the details of the enquiry are expected to remain confidential. This is not necessarily the case when a National Society seeks information from a community contact: the sought person's name may be disclosed to other members of the ethnic group or community concerned, and made known to other parties as well.
iii. **Using the information** - A National Society does not have much control over the use of information by community contacts; for example, a community group may, without checking with the National Society, decide to put up posters in public places asking for news of the sought person.

Whilst approaching community contacts and using such techniques for locating people may not cause any harm, it is important to keep these risks in mind, particularly when searching for someone who may be an 'irregular" migrant: the need to maintain confidentiality is even more important then.

4.4 Risk assessment when approaching community contacts

In view of the potential problems associated with approaching community contacts for information, a thorough risk assessment should be carried out. This requires a careful evaluation of the risks that might be involved in using certain sources of information.

One way to encourage respect for confidentiality when using community contacts might be to ensure that the persons in question fully understand how RFL activities are conducted.

In order to facilitate a risk assessment, a standardized checklist is provided below. When assessing the risks of using a particular source of information to search for migrants, e.g. a community or ethnic group, it is important to have all the relevant information. This includes information from the enquirer about the sought person, as well as information about the source that you are proposing to consult.

As with all RFL activities, the guiding principle should be "do no harm." If there are any doubts or misgivings about a particular source, the source should not be used.

Table 2 - Risk Assessment Checklist for Active Searching

Questions related to individuals

1) Is there anything in the case that suggests that a community search is not appropriate? If so, do not use community sources.
2) Do you have full information about the cause of separation?
3) Do you have full information about the reasons for wishing to establish contact?
4) Do you have full information about the relationship of the enquirer to the sought person?
5) Is the sought person an irregular migrant or believed to be one? It may not be possible to find this out, but it is certainly useful information to have.
6) Do you have full information about any affiliations the sought person may have with regard to politics, clan, religion, etc.? This will help to determine which community sources may be appropriate to approach.
7) Has the enquirer consented to the use of community groups for locating the sought person? If not, why not? (What are the sensitivities? Knowing this will help to determine how the search should be conducted).
8) Is there any suggestion that the case is connected to human trafficking? If so, extra care will be needed as community contacts might not be the most prudent source of information, and National Society staff/volunteers, the sought person and/or the enquirer may all be at risk.
9) Are there any gender sensitivities that could influence the choice of groups to approach?

Table 2 - Risk Assessment Checklist for Active Searching

Questions related to associations and community groups

10) Have you approached this community group before? If so, what was the nature of the encounter? Are there any causes for concern?
11) What information do you have about the group's affiliations (political, clan, religious etc.)? What does this suggest about its suitability as a source of information? Is there any risk of the National Society being identified with the political activities of the association, if any?
12) Are the association's working methods in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of the Movement?
13) Do you have volunteers from the community who can provide information about it?
14) Are you clear about how you would like the group to help with the search, e.g. are you asking a community leader if he or she knows the location of the sought person, or are you asking the community leader to use the community as a whole? This is important as it may determine how widely the personal data of the sought person is likely to be circulated.

4.5 Using community media

Use may also be made of the media when tracing migrants, for example, media that are specific to a particular community or ethnic group. In doing so, the following should be taken into consideration:

i. Permission to use the media must always be obtained from the enquirer, including his or her consent to the publication of names (whether the enquirer's or the sought person's).
ii. National data protection legislation has to be taken into account when considering whether using the media is an appropriate search option.
iii. As with searches involving the use of community contacts, an assessment of the risks and sensitivities involved in using community media should also be conducted, even if the enquirer's consent has been secured. This could include examining the media's affiliation with any groups or political opinions that could compromise the sought person's safety and/or position in the country.

As a rule, it is advisable to explore all other options before considering the media. If there is any likelihood of endangering the safety of the sought person or that of his or her family, or his or her position in the country, media should not be used.

Note

Whilst the use of media exposure already exist in the context of other categories of search, such as the ICRC/BBC Somalia programme or the Family Links website, one should **always consider the risks to the safety of the sought person** or to that of his or her family when their names are circulated in public. **Permission to use the media must always be obtained from the enquirer.**

5 OUTREACH TO PROMOTE RFL SERVICES TO MIGRANTS

Before services are offered to them, migrants and their families must be given information on RFL including descriptions of the tracing process (and the limits of the process).

There are two main issues in the outreach process for raising awareness of RFL services among migrants:

i. How to reach migrants
ii. How to inform migrants of RFL activities

5.1 How to reach migrants

Every outreach process is based on a good mapping of the target population. Certain preliminary considerations are necessary:

i. Is the mapping of the different groups within the migrant population conclusive? Are the different groups being identified according to all the relevant cultural and social factors, as listed in chapter 2.3, pages 14-15.
ii. When conducting detailed mapping research, experts in community mapping (e.g. anthropologists) and members of the community should both be involved.
iii. When approaching the migrants through associations/community groups the following should be taken into consideration:
    a. Does the association represent the community as a whole? If not, how can the groups not represented by the association be approached?
    b. Is the association able to reach the most vulnerable persons within its own community?
    c. Using the questions in the risk assessment checklist (see chapter 4.4, page 47, table 2) would provide more detailed information on the nature of the association/community group to be approached.

iv. It is advisable to include in the mapping what the migrants think of the National Red Cross or Red Crescent Society in their own country, and their views on the Movement's standing in their community.
v. The following locations may be suitable settings for outreach activities:
    a. Churches and mosques or other places of worship
    b. Markets
    c. Schools
    d. Places where cultural integration courses or language courses are given
    e. Community centres
    f. Reception centres and detention centres
    g. Clinics
    h. Internet cafés
    i. Organizations working with or on behalf of the migrant population,

It must be emphasised that for the irregular migrant population, it is extremely difficult to draw up an accurate picture, due to the clandestine nature of these communities who work in the informal economy and who are unlikely to identify themselves for obvious reasons. Any mapping should therefore be treated as indicative.

5.2 How to inform migrants of RFL activities

i. The outreach activity should use the most suitable tools of communication, so that the message is fully communicated and understood by the community. Traditional methods may, of course, be used to raise awareness of RFL among migrants (e.g. leaflets, posters, radio programmes, and especially community media), but more imaginative methods may be developed as well, e.g. comic books. These tools of communication or dissemination should, preferably, be developed in collaboration with the migrants.

ii. A multi-lingual approach is recommended for dealing with migrants.
iii. Clear information on the National Society's RFL activities increases the chances of referral of cases.
iv. Straightforward explanations of the limits of support (e.g. financial) made directly to the migrants, but also conveyed through the authorities and associations, help to avoid raising false hopes.
v. It is advisable to identify "bridges," e.g. persons who are comfortable navigating between two cultures and who might play an important role in establishing contacts. Volunteers from minority groups can be useful in assisting with tracing work because of their knowledge of the language and the culture, but also because of their access to the community and their contacts within it.
vi. Furthermore, trustworthy persons from the community should be approached, as well as former RFL clients who can serve as "promoters" and provide information from within the community.
vii. Do not overlook National Society staff or volunteers from other departments who can be helpful in disseminating information on RFL activities.

Annex: Websites and links for information on migration

1. Maps

Source/Organization	Website
i-MAP (interactive map ICMPD, created within the framework of the Dialogue on Mediterranean Transit Migration)	https://www.imap-migration.org/
Interactive Map of Migration Flows	http://pstalker.com/migration/mg_map.htm
Atelier de cartographie Sciences Po	http://cartographie.sciences-po.fr/
Cartothèque La Documentation française	http://www.ladocumentationfrancaise.fr/cartotheque/index.shtml
Le Monde Diplomatique	http://www.monde-diplomatique.fr/cartes/

2. Statistics

Source/Organization	Website
Eurostat	http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/
NIDI/Eurostat	http://www.nidi.knaw.nl/web/html/pushpull/
UNDESA	http://www.un.org/esa/population/
Population Reference Bureau	http://www.prb.org/
OECD Statistics	http://stats.oecd.org/
Euro-Mediterranean Consortium for Applied Research on International Migration (CARIM)	http://www.carim.org/
Migration Policy Institute Data Hub (MPI)	http://www.migrationinformation.org/datahub/
World Bank, Research Programme for International Migration and Development	http://econ.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTDEC/EXTRESEARCH/EXTPROGRAMS/EXTINTERNATIONAL/0,,contentMDK:21087611~menuPK:3043414~pagePK:64168182~piPK:64168060~theSitePK:1572893,00.html

3. General Information

a. Research Institutes

Source/Research Insitutes	Description	Website
Federation of Centers for Migration Studies	The site of the Federation of Centers for Migration Studies "G. B. Scalabrini" provides access to the work of its six partner centres around the world.	http://www.scalabrini.org
Center for Migration Studies	The centre publishes a journal, a newsletter and various books and papers on migration, refugees and ethnic groups. The site provides a complete list of the Center's publications as well as access to the table of contents of the most recent issues of the International Migration Review	http://www.cmsny.org/
Migration Dialogue/ Migration News	Provides timely, factual and non-partisan information and analysis of international migration issues, notably through its newsletters. Migration News provides a summary and analysis of the most important developments related to immigration and integration during the preceding quarter.	http://migration.ucdavis.edu/mn/
International Migration Institute (University of Oxford)	The IMI is committed to developing a long-term and comprehensive perspective on global migration dynamics. IMI's website presents information on its initiatives and research programmes, such as the African Migrations Programme, the African Perspectives on Human Mobility, and Transnational Migrants Organizations projects. It provides access to a working papers series, articles and books, an online directory of African migration researchers and an online library with references on African migration.	http://www.imi.ox.ac.uk/
Forced Migration Online (University of Oxford)	Provides instant access to a wide variety of online resources dealing with the situation of forced migrants worldwide.	www.forcedmigration.org

b. International Organizations

Source/ Internatonal Organizations	Description	Website
International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)	Inter-governmental organization whose purpose is to promote innovative, comprehensive and sustainable migration policies and to function as a service exchange mechanism for governments and organizations in the wider European region.	http://www.icmpd.org/15.html
International Metropolis Project	Metropolis is an international network for comparative research and public policy development on migration, diversity, and immigrant integration in cities in Canada and around the world.	http://international.metropolis.net/index_e.html
International Organization for Migration (IOM)	Provides a wide collection of materials about the agency and its activities in various countries in the world. In addition, it provides access to information on migration research and policy initiatives.	www.iom.int
ILO, International Migration Programme (MIGRANT)	MIGRANT provides the following: information on its areas of work, publications and studies; the International Labour Migration Database; and reports on the state of migrant workers around the world, with statistical information on labour migration.	http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/migrant/
Migration Policy Institute (MPI)	Independent, non-partisan, non-profit think tank dedicated to the study of the movement of people worldwide. Their site offers a comprehensive view of research programmes covering US immigration, European migration, migration and development and refugee protection.	www.migrationpolicy.org
Migration Information Source	*Migration Information Source* is the newsletter published by the Migration Policy Institute	www.migrationinformation.org
UNESCO, International Migration and Multicultural Policies	Available on this page is the Migration Research Institutes Database, which provides information on almost 300 research and training institutes in 77 countries. It also provides details on 86 periodicals dealing with migration.	http://portal.unesco.org/shs/en/ev.php-URL_ID=1211
OECD, Migration	The site offers information on OECD's work on the economic implications of migration as well as international migration policies and statistical data (continual monitoring of migratory movements and policies in member countries and in countries outside the OECD area).	http://www.oecd.org/topic/0,3373,en_2649_37415_1_1_1_1_37415,00.html
UNHCR	The UNHCR site provides extensive information on the agency, its mission statement, its initiatives throughout the world, and comprehensive collections of refugee and asylum-related documents (RefWorld online).	www.unhcr.org
World Bank, International Migration and Development	Statistics on migrants by country of origin and by country of destination	http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPROSPECTS/ Resources /334934-1110315015165/ T1EstimatesMigrantStocks.xls

c. Human Rights Organizations

Source/ Human Rights Organizations	Description	Website
Human Rights Watch	Independent human rights NGO. HRW's website provides a number of reports and documents on issues related to migrant workers, refugees, domestic workers, asylum seekers, forced labour and trafficking throughout the world.	www.hrw.org
Amnesty International	Amnesty' International's website provides reports and other useful information on migrants and refugees, especially about violations of the human rights of migrants throughout the world.	www.amnesty.org
Fédération Internationale des Droits de l'Homme (FIDH)	FIDH's website offers a great deal of useful information on issues related to migration and human rights, throughout the world.	http://www.fidh.org/-Migration-Asylum-Policies-

4. By region

a. Africa, Middle East & North Africa

Source	Description	Website
IRIN News (OCHA)	An OCHA website with news from Africa, Asia and the Middle East. The website offers a selection of reports and articles on migration-related issues in these regions.	http://www.irinnews.org/Theme.aspx?theme=MIG
South African Migration Project (SAMP)	International network of organizations founded in 1996 to promote awareness of migration-development linkages in the South African Development Community (SADC). SAMP's website offers insight into the project's activities, its policy and public education work, policy briefs, policy papers, articles and several other publications with a focus on SADC countries.	http://www.queensu.ca/samp/
International Migration Institute (University of Oxford)	Provides access to a working paper series, articles and books, an online directory of African migration researchers and an online library with references on African migration	http://www.imi.ox.ac.uk/
Euro-Mediterranean Consortium for Applied Research on International Migration (CARIM)	Offers comprehensive information on research, events and publications on the countries studied (Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey and, since February 2007, Libya and Mauritania). Demographic maps and databases covering the demographic, economic, legal and socio-political dimensions of migration are available online.	http://www.carim.org/index.php?areaid=1

Source	Description	Website
Forced Migration Studies Programme (FMSP)	Based in Johannesburg, FMSP is an internationally engaged, Africa-oriented, and Africa-based centre of excellence for research and teaching that helps shape global discourse on migration aid and social transformation	http://www.migration.org
World Bank, International Migration and Development	Statistics on migration for sub-Saharan Africa	http://siteresources.worldbank.org/ INTPROSPECTS/ Resources/33493 4-1199807908806/4549025-1212445178844/SSA.pdf

b. Asia

Source	Description	Website
Asian Pacific Migration Research Network (APMRN)	APMRN carries out interdisciplinary research on the social and political aspects of international migration and the growing ethno-cultural diversity in the region. The site provides information on its projects, conferences and publications, focusing on migration in the Asia Pacific region.	http://apmrn.usp.ac.fj/
Asia Migration News (Scalabrini Migration Center)	The Scalabrini Migration Center (SMC) is a non-profit research institute established in 1987 and based in Manila. SMC is dedicated to encouraging and facilitating the study of socio-demographic, economic, political, psychological, historical, legislative and religious aspects of human migration and refugee movements from and within Asia. Its website gives access to its newsletter Asia Migration News.	http://www.smc.org.ph/amnews/amnissue.htm

c. Europe

Source	Description	Website
European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE)	ECRE regularly monitors the developments in asylum and refugee policy in the European Union. It publishes all its public documents, including country reports.	www.ecre.org
Council of Europe	Provides documents on migration-related policy.	http://www.coe.int/
European Union	Provides documents on migration-related policy.	http://europa.eu/index_en.htm
OSCE	OSCE works actively against human trafficking in the regions it covers. Its website provides a number of policy documents as well as country reports and thematic reports	http://www.osce.org/
Swiss Forum for Migration and Population Studies	An institute of the University of Neuchatel. Its website contains institute's research and publications, discussion papers and selected bibliographies. The website also contains a large collection of documents related to migration in Switzerland.	http://www.migration-population.ch

d. Americas

Source	Description	Website
Red Internacional Migración y Desarrollo	Involved in research projects with regional focus on Latin America, the United States and Canada. The site provides access to working papers, articles, books, current reports, workshops and conferences. Migration statistics on Mexican migration and its effects on Mexico and the United States are also available.	http://www.migracionydesarrollo.org/

5. Human Trafficking

Organization	Description	Website
UNODC	UNODC's website offers useful information on human trafficking and migrant smuggling.	www.unodc.org
Anti-Trafficking.net	This website is a platform for the exchange of information, experiences and best practices between key actors in the field of anti-trafficking. It is maintained by the International Centre for Migration Policy Development.	http://www.anti-trafficking.net/

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

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