



# FAMILY LINKS

Trying to locate people and put them back into contact with their relatives is a major challenge for the ICRC, the Somali Red Crescent Society (SRCS) and the network of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and volunteers in the region and across the world.

## KNOW THEIR FATE, FIND THEM.

We witness everyday how losing contact with a relative is a misfortune that is affecting millions. During conflict, many go missing while more get separated when fleeing violence. Vulnerable children, women and the elderly are not spared from the risk of separation from their families. The ICRC has developed tools that can help you locate them.

### RESTORING FAMILY LINKS

Today, as we mark the International Day of the Disappeared, we believe there is still hope of finding them. Every day in our offices around the world we receive requests for assistance from people searching for their missing relatives.

In Somalia, after receiving family and personal information jointly with the Somali Red Crescent we engage with communities to establish the possible whereabouts of the person. It is a journey which may take even years but we choose to accompany the families through it.

'I cannot imagine the pain and torment of families who have lost contact. On this day we express our empathy and remind them that we are here to help them', says Ahmed Zaroug, the ICRC coordinator for restoring family links in Somalia. 'Through our Restoring Family Links programs, we try to assist them in finding out the fate of their loved ones hoping they could attain some comfort.'



A log list showing phone calls made to Somalia by relatives looking for family members.

For Abdi Rahman Abdi Iglaa, time was something he chose not to think about. He wanted to know what happened to his daughter. From a village in Janaale, where he lived with his family, his daughter moved to Mogadishu to look for a job. He refers to this moment as 'the beginning of our separation'.

'When fighting broke out in Mogadishu, she moved to Kenya with my friend's family. Unfortunately my friend died soon after arriving Kenya, and I lost contact with my daughter', said Abdi Rahman from a displacement camp in Mogadishu where he now lives.

In 2016, 26 years after they were separated he spoke to her thanks to the tireless work of our colleagues and the Somali Red

Crescent. She had migrated to the United States from Kenya and Abdi Rahman says he has 'happy feelings'.

Over time the pain and torment experienced by both father and daughter could be seen in Abdi Rahman's tears and loss of voice as he spoke to his daughter. 'I believe that we shall meet again, he said. He now requests for a reunion.

Between January and June this year more than 15,000 families were able to establish contact with their relatives in Somalia and abroad.

### TRACE THE FACE.

In Europe, the ICRC and the Red Cross organizations created an online tool. 'Trace the Face' helps migrants and their families to re-connect with each other.

If you have lost contact with a relative who migrated to Europe, you can use this website to see if they have posted their picture and are looking for you. More than 1,400 persons have already posted their 'FACE' on this site, 94 are Somalis.

To find out more about the ICRC Somalia visit [www.blogs.icrc.org/somalia](http://www.blogs.icrc.org/somalia)

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