Introduction ................................................................. 2

Objectives of Tracing guidelines .................................................... 2

Tracing Service of BDRCS and its Tracing Network ................ 3

I. RFL tools and cases management (detailed information for RFL department staff) ....... 4

1. Information management and FLANWERS database ................ 4

2. Red Crescent/Cross Messages (RCMs) ................................ 5

3. Tracing Request ............................................................... 8

4. Family reunification ....................................................... 13

5. Repatriation .................................................................. 14

6. Migration .................................................................. 14

7. Tracing in Disasters/Emergencies ....................................... 16

II. Rapid Instruction cards ......................................................... 25

III. Forms .................................................................. 26

Registration of UAM ................................................................ 26

Tracing request .................................................................. 26

Phone calls log .................................................................. 26

RCM ................................................................................. 26

Fundamental principles of activity in the sphere of restoring family links ... 27
Introduction

Objectives of Tracing guidelines

The purpose of producing these guidelines is to provide reference and guidance to all members of the BDRCS Tracing network, to enable them to perform their roles appropriately.

Tracing Guidelines are intended to be a tool used by the BDRCS Tracing (RFL) personnel to:

- Understand the process of Tracing and how it is conducted,
- Become acquainted with the different actors and their roles in the process,
- Understand the different criteria pertaining to each case,
- Be familiar with the different Tracing terminologies and forms used,
- Be informed about the flow of information

It is essential that all BDRCS representatives involved in Tracing activities are familiar with the Guidelines, that they have access to it and consult it whenever needed.

These guidelines are comprised of the following:

- **Detailed guidelines for BDRCS RFL department staff.** It comprises detailed explanation on the RFL tools and guidance on the case management, flow of information and usage of the FLAWSERS database. This detailed and technical part is less immediately relevant for the volunteers.
- **The instruction cards** created with the ICRC technical support. This part is aimed to guide the volunteers during RFL trainings and field work. It includes short, user-friendly one pager instruction cards for each of the RFL tools/methods for use in the field. These cards are to be printed as one pager for each tool, laminated/put in individual plastic sleeves and distributed to RFL volunteers for easy reference. These RFL rapid instruction cards are also translated in Bangla.
- **RFL forms**
Tracing Service of BDRCS and its Tracing Network

After tragic events, families ask what happened to their loved ones, where are they now? In the Red Cross & Red Crescent Movement, the service through which families and individuals who have been separated are put into contact is called Tracing. Through this service, members are informed of the fate of their loved ones and families are helped to rebuild their lives, either by bringing good news or by relieving the uncertainty.

The BDRCS Tracing Service carries out the following activities to assist the families who are separated due to conflict, political unrest, natural & manmade disaster, migratory movements or other situation of humanitarian need:

- Re-establish or maintain contact between separated families by exchanging Red Cross Message,
- Tracing individuals reported unaccounted for by family members,
- Reuniting families.

Tracing Department is working under the Disaster Management Division. The BDRCS Tracing Department is an operational partner of the International Tracing Network of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. The Tracing department, together with all the National Societies worldwide, plays an important role in helping to re-establish and maintain contact between separated family members and to trace family member unaccounted for in any part of the world. It is a unique service provided free of charge.

The BDRCS Tracing Department provides its services throughout Bangladesh by utilizing the widespread network of BDRCS 68 Units located in each district and the cities of Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi and Khulna.

1. BDRCS Headquarters Tracing Department is coordinating the whole activity and in charge of the overall tracing services.
2. BDRCS Unit tracing team consists of six members in all the 68 BDRCS Units (branches). The Unit Tracing Team is comprised by the Unit Secretary, one Unit Executive Committee member, one Unit Level Officer (ULO) and three volunteers. Among them one female member should be included. The Unit Secretary is the Focal Person for smooth running of the tracing service in the respective districts.

In order for such a structure to function in an organized manner, all members at all levels have to acknowledge and accept certain rules and procedures (further described in the guidelines). This is of utmost importance when it comes to communication and correspondence between the different structure members.
Background of Tracing Service

1.1. History and legal basis of Tracing Service

Tracing was first started during the Franco Prussian War of 1870 during which a group of Swiss humanitarians demonstrated that a Tracing bureau on a neutral territory is indispensable in times of a conflict to help those held prisoners, or civilians separated by the conflict to re-establish link with their relatives. The need to address the issue of missing people and to reunite separated families culminated into the creation of the Central Tracing Agency, which is an integral part of the International Committee of the Red Cross based in Geneva. It is recognised by all states signatory to the 1949 Geneva Conventions. Its role is clearly spelt out in Geneva Conventions III and Protocol II.

The Central Tracing Agency works in close association with National Societies to carry out its mission. This is the International Tracing Network. National Societies play a vital role as components of the international network for tracing and reuniting families.

The Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocols provide the legal basis for National Societies and ICRC/Central Tracing Agency activities in all areas aimed at restoring and maintaining family links.

All persons (…) shall be enabled to give news of a strictly personal nature to members of their families, wherever they may be, and to receive news from them
(Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, Article 25)

1.2. International Tracing Network

The Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) is part of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the largest global humanitarian network. The main components of the Movement are the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and 186 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

The main strength of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is that it consists of a single worldwide network that applies the same principles and working methods in every country where it is active – regardless of the legal status of those concerned (people deprived of liberty, local communities, internally displaced persons, refugees, population affected by disasters, etc.).

Chapter 1.3. Tracing Service of BDRCS

The BDRCS inherited Tracing Service from the ICRC in January, 1976. Since then the following activities have been carried out to assist the families who are separated due to conflict, political unrest, natural disaster, migratory movements or other situation of humanitarian need:

- Re-establish or maintain contact between separated families by exchanging Red Cross Message,
- Tracing individuals reported missing,
- Reuniting families.

The BDRCS has recognized the tracing service as an important humanitarian activity. It has placed the Tracing Department under the Planning and Development Division of the Society in the year 1998. Later on the BDRCS noticed that the tracing services are more related with natural disaster situation such as cyclone, tidal surge, tornadoes, floods, etc. and has taken the decision in 2002 to move the Tracing Department under the Disaster Management Division of the Society. Since then the Tracing Department is working under the Disaster Management Division.

The BDRCS Tracing Department is an operational partner of the International Tracing Network of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. The Tracing department, together with all the National Societies worldwide, plays an important role in helping to re-establish and maintain contact between separated family members. As part of the International Tracing Network, the BDRCS is helping a person in Bangladesh to trace a missing family member in any part of the world. It is a unique service provided free of charge to the public.

I. RFL tools and cases management (detailed information for RFL department staff)

1. Information management and FLANWERS database

The Family links ANSWERS is an application for National Societies for RFL case management. The ICRC puts it at disposal of National Societies since mid-2013.

Each FL Answers is adapted to the specific needs of the National Society using it. The BGD FL Answers was deployed in Bangladesh in September 2015.
RFL cases such as Family News (RCMs), Tracing Requests, Family Reunifications, Oral Greetings and Assistance (e.g. Accommodation / Cash Grant / Food / Health Services / Phone Calls / Transportation / Other) are updated in the tool.

Following the influx of persons from Rakhine State in October 2016, more than 600 Tracing Requests and the Registration of some 200 UAM/SC were updated. The BDRCS RFL Team was supported by an ICRC Data Operator from India and two BDRCS volunteers.

The RFL caseload (except for RCMs) related to the August 2017 influx of persons from Rakhine State will be updated in the BDD Prot6 as to ease the process between Bangladesh and Myanmar where the cases are being handled in the Prot6 as well.

Please refer to FLA BGD Data Entry Procedures and Workflows for RCMs, Tracing Requests Incoming / Outgoing and Oral Greetings (Notifications) - FR - Assistance in Annexes.

2. Red Crescent/Cross Messages (RCMs)

1. What is a Red Crescent/Cross Message (RCM) / Pre-printed RCM

The Red Cross/Crescent Message (RCM) is a printed form that is used for the exchange of family news when exact location of the addressee is known and postal service or other means of communication have been temporarily suspended due to natural disaster, war, internal disturbance or any other undue circumstances. The RCM is an unsealed "open" letter that can be checked or censored by the authorities or other parties to ensure that it contains only family news.

The standard form consists of two pages: the first page is used by the sender to write his/her message, and the second page is used for the relative’s reply. Content is limited to:

- the identity and full address of both the sender and the addressee. This information is vital if the RCM and reply are to be delivered successfully;
- space for strictly family or private news.

"Safe and well" RCMs can be used in specific circumstances during conflict or natural disaster by population in affected areas. It allows population to inform their next of kin of their whereabouts. "Safe and well" RCMs are used to meet massive demand early in an emergency. Once contact has been re-established in this way, other systems of communication can be set up.

2. Acceptance criteria

- When regular means of communication (telephone, internet, postal service, etc) have been interrupted due to conflict or major disaster or when the regular means of communication are not sufficient for contacting a separated family member,
- RCMs are permissible between members of family as defined by custom: father/mother, brother/sister, brother-in-law/sister-in-law, son/daughter, husband/wife, grandmother/grandfather, cousins, aunt/uncle,
- Exact address/ location of the addressee is known (in the city: house no, road no., name of area, city, district; in the village: village, post office, police station or upazila, district). If the RCM is for Rakhine state please consult Rapid Instruction Card.
- Criteria that might influence a RCM’s acceptability include the ease of access to the region in the country where the RCM is to be delivered (e.g. respective NS or ICRC have access only to certain area of one country and RCMs are accepted only for those accessible areas).

3. Beneficiaries of RCM

- Victims of natural & manmade disaster, migration or conflict and their families
- Minors such as unaccompanied children who have been separated from both parents and are not being cared for by any adult, children that are being taken care of by an organization (governmental, welfare, NGO, etc.) in an institution such as childcare centre, safe house or similar,
- Parents of unaccompanied/separated children,
- Elderly,
- Women household,
- Sick/hospitalized,
- Disabled/handicapped
- Migrants (including those in detention)
- Foreigners detained in jail
- Families of Bangladeshi detained abroad
- Victims of human trafficking when rescued and taken care of by an institution (welfare institution, NGO, etc.).
Other groups of population in need of Tracing services as decided by the NHQ Tracing Department.

4. Correct use of RCM

Sender – Person who writes the message:
✓ Full name (including first name, family name, middle name, etc) is always required and should be written clearly. If an alias exists it should also be written, as should any name the person is popularly known by. On all the RCMs addressed abroad, names should be written in both local and English language.
✓ Father’s name should be written in full. These names can identify one person from another. In a case where two persons use the same name, the father’s name is very important. Sometimes the parents are the ones who are well known in the areas and therefore having their names can help locate the person who is being traced.
✓ Mother’s name should be written in full for the same reasons as above.
✓ Date of birth is important to ascertain whether a person is young, middle aged or old. Sometimes you may have two persons with the same names whereby only the age can tell them apart.
✓ Sex – Male or Female
✓ Full postal address must be as detailed as possible and written clearly according to the local custom. It should contain:
  - Country,
  - District,
  - Upazila,
  - Police station
  - Union
  - Post office
  - Village,
  - For the city: street, house and block number, area and city name
  - Landmark (nearest school, mosque, market place, etc)
  - Telephone number, e-mail address (where applicable),
  - any other information used locally,
  - In case the address is for an institution, the section/department and profession of the addressee should be indicated.

For RCMs addressed abroad, the information should be adjusted as appropriate.

Addressee – Person the message is addressed to
✓ All the requirements are the same as for the sender above.
✓ Relationship between the sender and the addressee
✓ Signature of the sender
✓ Date of the message

5. Checking content and censorship procedure of RCM

RCMs are not private letters. The authorities may ask at any time to read them in order to ensure that they deal only with family matters.

The Red Cross/Crescent Movement bears final responsibility for the content of correspondence exchanged through its network.

Red Cross Messages can contain only family and private news. Consequently, family news can be defined as correspondence relating to the personal or family life of the sender or addressee, such as:

- personal or family events (births, marriages, illness or death);
- the whereabouts of family members and their state of health;
- requests for news of other relatives or friends;
- the daily lives of relatives or friends (work, school, etc.).

Conversely, the following will render the RCM unacceptable:

- references to the political or military situation, including statements of allegiance;
- references to the behaviour of bearers of weapons;
- plots, insults or threats;
- discriminatory or abusive language;
- inaccurate references to Red Cross/Crescent Movement activities, including requests for financial help through Red Cross/Red Crescent channels;
- RCMs addressed to celebrities or political leaders where there is no family connection.
It is advisable to check the content of each RCM as it is collected, and ideally in the immediate presence of its sender. Otherwise, RCMs should be censored by staff at the local branch or head office of the tracing service which collects them. Each message should be read individually and stamped “Read” or “Checked” by HQ. Any words or phrases that do not meet the criteria given above should be made illegible.

If most part of an RCM is unacceptable, it should be stamped “Personal and family news only” and returned to the sender as soon as possible together with a blank form and covering letter.

6. Accepted attachments to RCMs

People writing RCMs can attach photographs and official documents (birth certificate, school diploma, marriage certificate, etc) to it and send them to their family members. Nevertheless, photographs of people in uniforms, with weapons as well as photographs of military barracks, government institutions, bridges or any similar objects will not be accepted. It is also not allowed to write on the back of photographs (only RCM form should be used for writing).

Money, medicines, parcels, etc are not acceptable as RCM attachments. Red Cross Message is only a mean to re-establish and maintain family link, not a postal or courier service.

7. RCM collection cycle

a) RCMs collected in Bangladesh for distribution abroad (outgoing): All RCMs collected should be sent by the BDRCS Unit to the NHQ Tracing department for forwarding to the concerned National RC/RC Societies or the ICRC.

b) RCMs distributed in Bangladesh coming from abroad (incoming): Once received by the NHQ Tracing department, the RCMs are forwarded to the BDRCS Unit for distribution and collection of replies.

c) RCMs within Bangladesh (different branches)

d) RCMs within Bangladesh (same branch)

8. Processing RCM

Record keeping & Registration

- The BDRCS Units/NHQ tracing department registered the accepted RCMs in the registered books “Outgoing Message” or “Incoming Message”

- The date of receipt, Reference number, Sender, Addressee, date when reply received are maintained in the corresponding column in the registered books to keep record and follow-up every RCMs.

Outgoing RCM
- The RCM collected at BDRCS Unit are sent directly to NHQ Tracing department with a covering letter without any delay. If the RCM is to be distributed by the same branch which collected the message, then BDRCS unit sends to NHQ Tracing department only the photocopy of RCM and the forwarding letter.

- RCM is received at BDRCS NHQ and registered. RCM is sent to the corresponding destination (National RC/RC Societies or ICRC) for distribution.

**Incoming RCM and collecting replies**

- RCM incoming from other countries (from National RC/RC Societies or ICRC) are received by the NHQ Tracing department.

- After registration at BDRCS NHQ tracing department, all RCMs are checked with the existing records to find out whether it matches with the tracing requests (addresses and senders). There might be some additional information (i.e. more recent address) regarding the tracing case.

- RCMs are sorted according to districts of their final destination and are forwarded immediately to the respective BDRCS Units together with a covering letter with instruction (through courier service) within one week after being received at NHQ.

- The Unit Secretary or Unit Level Officer personally or transmit the RCM to a tracing team volunteer for distribution and collection of a reply by fastest channels.

**Timeframe for distribution of RCM**

There is an expectation from the beneficiaries that RCMs are transmitted as fast as possible.

RCMs are to be treated as priority and not left for longer than two weeks without action. If the addressee cannot be located after a maximum of 2 months, RCM should be returned as BTS.

Tracing personnel should not give promises to senders regarding time needed to receive RCM reply since there are various constraints that might delay distribution of a RCM, such as:

- Logistical problems,
- Insecurity, limited access to certain areas,
- RCM route - BDRCS Tracing Volunteer, BDRCS Branch, BDRCS NHQ, respective National Society or ICRC Delegation.

The RCM reply goes through the same channel,

- One can never be sure whether the addressee will be located or not and whether he/she would write RCM reply after all.

**Back to Sender (BTS)**

Undelivered RCMs are never thrown away. Instead they are sent “back to sender” (BTS) with an explanation:

- The addressee has left without giving a forwarding address,
- The address on the message is incorrect / insufficient / illegible,
- The addressee is unknown at the given address,
- The addressee did not come to collect the message despite several reminders, etc

**3. Tracing Request**

RCMs are used when a full address and whereabouts and the addressee are known. The Tracing Request is used when the enquirer does not know the address and exact whereabouts of the relative he/she is looking for.

**1. Acceptance criteria for opening Tracing Requests**

The following criteria have to be respected in order for the Tracing requests to be accepted:

- The family does not know the exact whereabouts of a person to be traced,

- The sought person is unaccounted for because of natural disaster (such as earthquake, flood, cyclone, etc), manmade disaster, migration, conflict, human trafficking (victim is being taken care of by an institution, i.e. welfare institution, NGO, etc) and other situations of humanitarian need, as decided by the NHQ Tracing department,
- Priority in collecting the cases and tracing efforts is given to unaccompanied and separated minors, elderly, women, sick/hospitalized, disabled/handicapped, migrants and parents of unaccompanied/separated children,

- Other methods of restoring contact have proved unsuccessful. Attempts have been made to restore family links by traditional means of communication (telephone, postal service, etc),

- An RCM was sent but could not be delivered (sent Back to Sender) through the BDRCS. Tracing requests are accepted without hesitation when the enquirer has good reasons to believe that RCM will not be enough to locate the person being sought,

- The enquirer is a family member: father/mother, brother/sister, brother-in-law/sister-in-law, son/daughter, husband/wife, grandmother/grandfather, cousin, uncle/aunt,

- Under 'circumstances leading to the loss of contact', the Tracing request includes full and detailed information about the disappearance, the date and the kind of last news or people involved,

- There is sufficient information to begin a Tracing inquiry e.g. full name, approximate age, last known address.

Tracing requests are NOT ACCEPTED in following situations:

- Third party Tracing Requests (those made on behalf of someone else)
- Direct enquiries from civilians living outside Bangladesh (all Tracing enquiries have to be channelled through a respective National Red Cross/Red Crescent Society, e.g. a person from Great Britain searching for a relative in Bangladesh should approach the British Red Cross directly),

- Tracing requests should not be used in situations of family or legal dispute (inquiries involving divorce, custody or support, cases of family breakdown, land dispute, etc).

2. How to fill in a Tracing Request

Special care must be taken over the spelling of names.

- Full name (including first name, family name, middle name, etc) is always required and should be written clearly. If an alias exists it should also be written, as should any name the person is popularly known by. On all the Tracing Requests addressed abroad, names should be written in both local and English language.

- Father's names should be written in full. These names can identify one person from another. In a case where two persons share the same name, the father's name is very important. Sometimes the parents are the ones who are well known in the areas and therefore having their names can help locate the person who is being traced.

- Mother's name should be written in full for the same reasons as above.

- Date of birth is important to ascertain whether a person is young, middle aged or old. Sometimes you may have two persons with the same names whereby only the age can tell them apart.

- Sex – Male or Female, always make sure that the appropriate box is ticked. Why? It is without a doubt helpful if the person delivering performing Tracing knows the sex of the person to be traced. It is not always possible for other National Societies and ICRC to tell by someone's name whether they are male or female (e.g. Sasha Brown / Haimanot Eshetu / Sanja Ilic).

- Nationality, is the person of Bangladeshi nationality, Myanmar, Indian, etc?

- Religion, is the person Muslim, Hindu, Christian, etc?

- Mother language, is the person talking Bengali, Myanmar dialect, Indian dialect, etc?

- Occupation, knowing what kind of job the person to be traced is doing can often help in locating that person (e.g. if a missing person was known to be working as a bus driver, local transportation companies could be contacted for obtaining information on the persons whereabouts).
- Marital status, whether the person is married, single, engaged, divorced or widowed.

- Rank, unit and service number
Applies only if a person to be traced is affiliated with an organized armed structure.

- Details of enquiry (number 2 on the form)
Date and kind of last news, for example the last news could be from a letter the sought person wrote. In this case, the date and address on the letter should be put in this section. If it is verbal information, then again the date and source of this information should be indicated.

- Last known address, where the person to be traced lived.

- Circumstances leading to the loss of contact, what has actually happened to the person who is to be traced? Did the person disappeared during a natural disaster, or maybe he/she went to another country and has not contacted the family ever since? Special care must be taken for this information. Every detail might me crucial for successful Tracing.

- Other family members to be traced (number 3 on the form)
- Full names, date of birth (if known), sex and relationship to the sought person. This helps the caseworker to make further inquiries concerning the sought person in a locality through the mentioned relatives.

- Additional information (number 4 on the form)
- Here any other information, regarding the sought person, circumstances of losing contact or any important details can be included. This should include:
  - Any distinguished characteristic (blind, def, etc),
  - Activities that a person could have been involved in (sports, hobbies, social services, etc),
  - Community/clan,
  - Any other useful information.

- Name and address of persons able to provide information (number 5 on the form)
These are people who can provide information leading to the whereabouts of the sought person. They can be relatives, friends or even mere acquaintances.

- Enquirer (number 6 on form)
In this section, you will write details on the person who is searching for a missing family member. If the person to be traced is successfully located, he/she might have to rely on these details to know who is looking for him/her so as to release his address or acknowledge the enquiry. The same details are used either to refer back to the enquirer for more information or to transmit the results of the Tracing.

This section is filled in a same manner as the section number 1 (details on the person to be traced).

3. Procedures for processing Tracing Requests opened by the BDRCS

- BDRCS Unit staff should forward all collected Tracing requests to NHQ Tracing department,
- BDRCS Unit staff should check the Tracing requests before sending for tracing to be sure that information collected is complete (consent is collected etc).

- At the NHQ Tracing department, the case is registered (with reference number) in the out Out Going tracing registration after preliminary checking the information described in the form and crosschecking with existing records/card index to make sure that the case is new . Tracing Request reference number is attributed at the NHQ Tracing department, example:
- An individual file will be opened and documents relevant to that particular case are filed in chronological order.
- The case is then forwarded to a respective National Society, ICRC delegation or BDRCS Unit for action.

4. Procedures for processing Tracing Requests received from other National Societies or ICRC delegations

- NHQ Tracing department receive Tracing Requests from ICRC Dhaka if it is a conflict related case or it is coming from ICRC delegation. Other Tracing cases are being sent directly to the BDRCS from the National Societies.

- When a Tracing request is received, the information provided and other particulars are checked in order to verify if the data is sufficient for Tracing of the sought person (names, addresses, circumstances of disappearance, etc.).

- The case is then registered in the incoming Tracing request registered example cited above and an individual file opened. The original request and all copies of correspondence/information pertaining to the request are kept in the file in chronological order.

- A copy of a Tracing Request and a memo are forwarded from NHQ Tracing department to the respective BDRCS Unit immediately for action. Tracing Requests should not be kept at the Headquarters longer than two weeks prior to dispatching to the field. Once received in the Unit, an individual file is opened and all the correspondence related to the case is filed in.

- If there is no feedback from the BDRCS Unit within two months, a reminder will have to be sent to the concerned Unit.

5. Active Tracing

On receiving a request, the BDRCS should use its network, whenever possible, to try all possible means of locating the person being sought, including:

- visiting the most recent private or business addresses,
- contacting neighbours and relatives,
- approaching the heads of ethnic and religious communities,
- contacting district and community offices,
- consulting local representatives of organizations and NGOs dealing with vulnerable groups,
- contacting relevant local authorities.

Active Tracing has to be performed in a timely manner and BDRCS Units have to give feedback to the NHQ Tracing department on the results of the enquiry within two months (even if there are no results). BDRCS Unit representatives have to describe all the steps undertaken in their efforts to locate the sought person.

A progress report on a Tracing case (containing information on action already undertaken) is sent from the BDRCS Unit to the NHQ Tracing department at least every two months. NHQ Tracing department accordingly transmit the feedback received from the field to a respective National Society or ICRC in due time. When informing ICRC or respective National Society on the outcome, BDRCS should give detailed description of the Tracing steps undertaken in a specific case.

A record of all action – whether active searching, telephone calls or correspondence – should be kept in the appropriate personal file (both at the Unit and the NHQ Tracing department).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Ref. No</th>
<th>Person to be sought</th>
<th>Place of missing</th>
<th>Enquirer</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>07.7.2008</td>
<td>TD/EBDC-0001</td>
<td>MD. Nizamuddin</td>
<td>Andaman, India</td>
<td>Md. Bashiruddin</td>
<td>Action taken by BDRCS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If it proves impossible to recontact the enquirer, after repeated attempts the case will be closed. This information is to be shared with respective NS or ICRC (including reason for closure).

**Tracing Requests Incoming / Outgoing Workflows**

**TRACING REQUEST INCOMING – COLLECTED ABROAD FOR TRACING IN BANGLADESH**

- **Non-Conflict related Tracing Requests collected by NS abroad**
  - All non-conflict related Tracing Requests are sent from NS abroad to BDRCS. Avoid the Tracing Request to be sent to ICRC. Message to NS saying that the case is being forwarded to BDRCS and the NS should liaise with ICRCs directly.
  - Updated in FLAnswers
  - Not Updated in Prots

- **Non-Conflict related Tracing Requests collected by ICRC abroad**
  - All non-conflict related Tracing Requests collected by ICRC abroad are sent to ICRC Dhaka who transmits them to BDRCS. Message with Tracing Request sent to BDRCS & Reminder every three months.
  - Updated in FLAnswers
  - Updated in Prots

- **Conflict related Tracing Requests collected by ICRC and NS abroad**
  - All conflict related Tracing Requests* should be sent to ICRC Dhaka even if most of them will then be transmitted to the BDRCS for the tracing. Message with Tracing Request sent to BDRCS & Send Reminder every three months.
  - Not Updated in FLAnswers
  - Updated in Prots

* Also Tracing Requests related to the 2017 Rohingya Crisis

**TRACING REQUEST OUTGOING – COLLECTED IN BANGLADESH FOR TRACING ABROAD**

Criteria to accept a Tracing Request for abroad should be checked in the FLExtranet. FLExtranet contains descriptions of NPL activities in each context as well as any other information or forms that are necessary to know if a case can be accepted and what information must be collected from the enquirer.

- **Non-Conflict related Tracing Requests collected by BDRCS for tracing by NS abroad**
  - All non-conflict related Tracing Requests are sent by BDRCS to NS abroad.
  - Updated in FLAnswers
  - Not Updated in Prots

- **Non-Conflict related Tracing Requests collected by BDRCS for tracing by ICRC abroad**
  - All non-conflict related Tracing Requests followed by the ICRC abroad are sent by the BDRCS to ICRC Dhaka for transmission. Message with Tracing Request sent to ICRC abroad & Reminder every three months.
  - Updated in FLAnswers
  - Updated in Prots

- **Conflict related Tracing Requests collected by BDRCS for tracing by ICRC abroad**
  - All conflict related Tracing Requests* followed by the ICRC abroad are sent by the BDRCS to ICRC Dhaka for transmission. Message with Tracing Request sent to ICRC abroad & Reminder every three months.
  - Not Updated in FLAnswers
  - Updated in Prots

* Also Tracing Requests related to the 2017 Rohingya Crisis including the ones collected from Unaccompanied Minors
4. Family reunification

The successful outcome of many requests for Restoring Family Links (RFL) ultimately results in a request for family reunification. Respect for the family’s unity goes in hand with respect for human dignity. The BDRCS, as part of the RC/RC Movement, has the duty to assist in reuniting families separated due to disaster, movement population or conflict.

When necessary, the NHQ Tracing department will take the necessary steps in advising the persons concerned or helping them to collect all necessary documentation and to complete the numerous and often complicated formalities. The NHQ Tracing department maintain liaison with the Bangladesh Government (e.g. the Bangladesh Ministry of Home Affairs, the Bangladesh Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the UNHCR, IOM, ICRC, etc.) in order to assist and facilitate family reunification cases. The BDRCS tracing department acts as an intermediary between families and the competent authorities.

1. Pre conditions for family reunification

After receiving the official/written request, the BDRCS help the following persons for family reunification:

- Unaccompanied children,
- Separated children (children separated from their parents or legal custodian but taken care of by other adult family members),
- Female-headed households with young children,
- Pregnant women,
- Single women when at risk of sexual or other abuse due to their situation,
- The lone elderly,
- Those with illnesses or disabilities requiring support,
- Bangladeshis detained abroad wishing to go back to their home (see repatriation).

When BDRCS tracing volunteers identified a possible family reunification case (once family links have been re-established), the following details of the family member wishing to receive the vulnerable persons are collected:

- Full name,
- Date and place of birth,
- Nationality
- Full address,
- Other contact details,
- Profession,
- Details of the person/sponsor in the destination country,
- Relationship with the person/sponsor.

Written consent for reunification should be collected.
2. The family reunification process

The steps for the family reunification process are:

- Contact between family members have been restored,
- Family relations have been checked (when the case concerns children),
- BDRCS should visit/contact the family member expressing the wish to receive the relative,
- BDRCS should assess the best interests of the vulnerable persons looking if there is no risk of harm, safe environment, family environment for the relative who will arrive in the family,
- BDRCS should ensure that all necessary authorization are obtained,
- The family reunification form should be signed by both parties during the reunification,
- If everything is fine, BDRCS should arrange transportation for the vulnerable persons to travel to their home (sometimes family is ready to bear the transportation costs),
- Once the person is reunited with the family, there should be at least one follow-up visit to ensure the person well being. If the reunified person is not doing well, depending on the nature of the problem the BDRCS will try provide necessary support/find a solution (referrals, looking for another relative etc).

5. Repatriation

Upon request of the families, or the persons concerned and or the Government of Bangladesh either Ministry of Foreign Affairs or Ministry of Home Affairs, the BDRCS can participate in the repatriation of Bangladeshis from abroad (if funds available). When receiving the Bangladeshis' returnees at the border or airport, the BDRCS activities will be (if possible):

- To provide phone service to the returnees to call their family,
- To provide First Aid services,
- To provide food & water,
- To organize the transportation to their home,
- To inform the competent local authority and other organizations involved.
- Follow up visit

6. Migration

6.00 Overview

6.1 Migration is increasingly being recognized as a viable livelihood option and one of the major development issues for Bangladesh. Alongside regular migration - irregular migration, and human trafficking continue to result in serious violations of migrants' rights and an increasing number of Bangladeshi irregular migrants are apprehended in destination countries. Whatever the reasons, migrants can become vulnerable at many stages of their journey as they travel from their home countries, often through other countries, to their intended destination. Some migrants lose contact with their family members, many suffer accident or serious illness and cannot get access to medical care; others are detained for entering or remaining in a country irregularly. It is these vulnerable migrants that the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society and Red Cross movement seeks to help.

BDRCS should make a concerted effort with the support of movement and other platforms to meet and harmonize plans of action that include developing and maintaining a quality migration response in the field.

6.2 Definition of Migration

Migrants are 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.

6.3 Reasons for Migration

People decide to move for different reasons: fear of persecution, conflict and violence, human rights violations, poverty and lack of economic prospects, or natural disasters. Many people cross borders to find work, and an increasing number are moving as a result of climate change. People’s reasons for migrating are complex, and often a combination of a variety of these and other factors.

6.4 Responding to humanitarian and protection needs of migrants and displaced people

Increasing migration is both a cause and consequence of some of the most significant humanitarian challenges of the modern era. In recent years, people on the move across different regions all over the world have highlighted the risks faced by migrants, especially when particularly vulnerable. Women and children – especially unaccompanied and separated minors – traumatized persons, people with physical and mental disabilities, and elderly persons are particularly vulnerable.
The International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) has a longstanding history of working with migrants. National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies provide support to people migrating, including refugees and asylum-seekers, victims of trafficking, labour migrants and unaccompanied children, and provide life-saving and life-enhancing services to the most vulnerable such as first aid, access to health care and other essential services.

Working with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), National Societies also play a crucial role in helping reunite families through restoring family links (RFL) services.

With National Societies in 190 countries and around 17 million volunteers around the world, the IFRC has a truly global presence, allowing us to support migrants at different stages of their journeys in countries of origin, transit and destination. Through our local action globally, we are uniquely placed to prevent suffering and help uphold the rights and dignity of migrants, as well as help societies to maximize the benefits of migration through social inclusion programs.

6.5 Identifying vulnerable individuals within the migration population
The following categories of persons are of BDRCS’ concern:
- Irregular migrants
- Unaccompanied minors and Separated Child
- Migrants in Immigration detention center and Prisons
- Refugees and Asylum Seekers
- Victims of domestic violence
- Single mother and pregnant women
- Persons who are ill or disabled
- Elderly person
- Migrants at a risk of becoming victims of human trafficking

6.6 Services provided to the Migrants
- Exchange Red Cross Message between detained migrants and family member
- Transmit Salamat message between detained migrants and family member
- Collect official documents such as national ID card, character certificate, citizen certificate for sharing with the concerned authorities, if needed
- Facilitate repatriation process in coordination with movement partner and concerned authorities
- Advocacy with the relevant authorities for proper notification of the migrant’s status to the appropriate consular and diplomatic representative
- Organize phone call service after arrival in Bangladesh
- Provide medical service including FA service after arrival in Bangladesh, if required
- Follow up visit of UAMs
- Livelihood support
- Collect tracing request from the family member of missing
- Advocate for the migrants’ detainees

6.7 Migration preparedness/ Role of BDRCS
In order to able to offer RFL services to migrants and their families, adequate planning and preparedness are required:
- The National Society must have the will and the capacity to address the needs (RFL & others) of vulnerable migrants
- The National Society’s governing body must be convinced by the reasons for conducting negotiations with the relevant authorities regarding the auxiliary role of the National Society on migration.
- Raising awareness at national and local government level and within communities for preparedness to go abroad and the importance of family news and tracing in a humanitarian response;
- Identifying which government departments and NGOs respond in times of migration crisis in order to ensure coordinated and effective action;
- Maintaining a stock of appropriate forms (RCM forms, TR forms, etc.). These should be developed in cooperation with the ICRC to ensure standardization across the Red Cross/Red Crescent network;
- Devising a training programme for staff and volunteers at headquarters and local level and providing appropriate training in liaison with the ICRC & IFRC, if necessary;
- Developing methods and procedures for transmitting news and enquiries both nationally and internationally (mail, fax, e-mail, phone, etc.) that confirm to the overall Red Cross/Red Crescent network system for tracing;
- Collaboration and liaison with regional, trans-regional, Global forum of the movement and others relevant organizations.
The family links Network, made up of the ICRC and 190 National Societies, helps prevent people from disappearing or getting separated, and works to restore and maintain contact between family members when and wherever possible.

6.8 Policy

National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies engage – individually and together – with the movement partners, to address humanitarian concerns of vulnerable migrants throughout their journey, in countries of origin, transit and destination. They provide assistance and protection, promote rights and dignity, help them identify opportunities, and promote social inclusion.

Our policy and strategy work supports the action of the Movement by setting principles and providing guidance on everyday work with migrants and displaced people. We work with governmental and non-governmental partners, and our work is based on our understanding of migrants’ needs. Guided by our Fundamental Principles, we aim to ensure that the dignity and safety of migrants and displaced people comes first.

Principles

Each National Society and the International Federation shall take into account and adopt the following approach on migration:

10 Migration Principles

1. Focus on the needs and vulnerabilities of migrants
2. Include migrants in humanitarian programming
3. Support the aspirations of migrants
4. Recognize the rights of migrants
5. Link assistance, protection and humanitarian advocacy for migrants
6. Build partnerships for migrants
7. Work along the migratory trails
8. Assist migrants in return
9. Respond to the displacement of populations
10. Alleviate migratory pressures on communities of origin

6.9 Awareness campaign about RFL services for Migrants

BDRCS organise awareness session among students and campaign in the migration prone area to avoid separation and share the RFL service for the family members of migrants who are detained abroad. In addition, seek to raise awareness of international humanitarian law, human rights law and other applicable norms and standards, and draw attention to issue of concern for migrants.

7. Tracing in Disasters/Emergencies

1. Overview

In disasters, the need to know where and how relatives are – if have they survived, if they need help – is a priority for individuals. Beyond this immediate need in the acute phase of a disaster, the psychological, physical and social recovery of individuals and communities depends heavily on the family. For the majority of people affected by a disaster, family is the most essential “coping mechanism” of them all.

Usually, demand for Restoring Family Links (RFL) services in a natural or manmade disaster will be:

- a short term need to transmit news when normal means and channels of communication are disrupted,
- requests for clarification of fate of relatives from whom/about there has been no news after communications were restored,
- a limited need for evacuation/transfer and family reunion, concerning particularly vulnerable individuals.

In order for BDRCS or any other NS to address RFL needs in times of natural/manmade disasters in a rapid and coordinated manner, preparation is crucial.

2. Disaster preparedness
- RFL activities should be fully incorporated in the BDRCS disaster preparedness plans (RFL is included in contingency plan),

- A minimum Tracing capacity must be maintained in normal times, through regular and appropriate trainings for the BDRCS Tracing staff and Volunteers,

- Raising awareness at both national and local level on the importance of the Tracing services in a natural disaster response. The authorities need to know about the RFL activities currently undertaken by the BDRCS and what would be the role of BDRCS Tracing department in times of natural disaster,

- Identifying which government departments, organizations and NGOs are involved in the disaster preparedness in order to ensure coordinated and effective approach and eventual action. This step is necessary to avoid duplication of work, misperception and confusion. Once all the involved parties are aware of each other's role, it is much easier to achieve desired goals,

- Maintaining a stock of appropriate forms (RCMs, safe and well, Tracing Requests, etc.), specific tools and equipment required for RFL at both BDRCS NHQ and in BDRCS Units (Branches).

- The Tracing department should communicate with Federation and ICRC representatives to see what equipment (additional telecom or office equipment, etc) can be made available for RFL activities. Consequently, methods and tools to be used for facilitating family communication out of the disaster-affected area (phones, safe and well/ RCMs, Internet, radio) will be defined.

7.3. Disaster response

Initial needs assessment

The assessment of possible needs to restore family links and to inform relatives of the fate of victims within the country or abroad, should always be incorporated within the initial and general BDRCS needs assessment following a natural disaster (RFL is included is in emergency need assessment form).

A person from the Tracing Department at the NHQ level or a tracing Focal person at the Unit level should take part as a member of the BDRCS assessment team. The following basic principles apply in carrying out the assessment:

- Consult the people directly affected to understand their real needs (are telecommunications means available for the affected population? Are they easy to use (access, cost)?),

- Collect information on victims (dead, injured, evacuated, displaced),

- Consider the tracing needs of different groups (men, women, children, the elderly, etc.),

- Other actors (governmental, NGO, IO, private) involved in RFL activities,

- Consider the reliability of the information. Facts, opinions or rumours?

**Key informants**

*These are people who have specific knowledge about certain aspects of the affected population. Typical examples include health staff, government officials (local and national), fishermen community leaders, members of women's groups, staff from different institutions (prisons, orphanages, etc.), social workers, telecommunications staff, etc.*

Much of the "usual" general information about the nature and extent of the disaster, the affected population, damage to communication systems, etc. collected during a needs assessment will also be relevant for Restoring Family Links (RFL).

All relevant information is communicated to the In-charge Tracing department at the NHQ.

**Contact with authorities, members of the Movement and other relevant actors**

Regular contact with authorities is particularly important, as they are most likely to coordinate the overall disaster response and some specific rules and regulations may have to be observed. Once the needs are known, the BDRCS Tracing representatives should meet authorities and other actors in order to clarify roles, ensure coordination and avoid duplication of work.

BDRCS is recognized as an important disaster response organization in the country, as stated in the Government "Standing Order" of the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management.

BDRCS has to ensure that the RFL services are disseminated amongst the population and known among the local authorities and NGOs involved in the area. They can easily refer potential beneficiaries to the BDRCS representatives in the field.
Additionally, the ICRC as coordinator of Tracing activities within the Movement should always be contacted for the necessary support (technical, human resources, etc) and synchronization of the overall RFL response.

The NHQ should also contact the ICRC for possible use of “Family Links” web site and consider updating RFL information on the BDRCS web site.

7.4 Restoring Family Links in time of disaster

In the early response to a disaster, priority must be given to facilitating one-way family communication OUT OF the affected area.

BDRCS should provide population with access to appropriate means (telephones, radio, Internet, safe and well/RCMs, etc) to contact and reassure / inform their relatives outside the affected areas on their welfare and the fate of the other family members.

There should generally not be two-way exchange of family news, except in cases where a reply from the addressee is necessary for further action (e.g. family reunion).

BDRCS prepares RFL Updates for family links network so that the ICRC and other NS know what is being done as RFL response in Bangladesh and inform about the services provided by BDRCS in the affected area. This RFL update will also inform the ICRC and other NS if BDRCS accepts already requests from outside of affected areas (normally enquiries such as Tracing Requests, RCMs, etc. from outside should not be accepted in the first phase of emergency).

BDRCS, at both NHQ and Branch level, should try to obtain lists of victims in morgues, hospitals (injured, dead, etc.) from the authorities for possible response to enquiries.

A centralized point (preferably at the BDRCS Headquarters or outside affected area) must be set up as a place where the public can be advised on how and where to obtain information.

BDRCS will have a hotline in situations of disaster. Staff and volunteers will be assigned for the hotline.

Tracing department must formulate standard replies to public enquiries. Staff and Volunteers must be briefed on the current situation and conditions to enable them to provide frequent and accurate information in the early stages of the disaster.

7.5 Using telephones (mobile/satellite)

If available, telephones can be the most effective mean for the people in the affected areas to re-establish link with their family members outside the area. In case telephones are at BDRCS’s disposal, Volunteers will again be directly involved in offering the services to the population. The beneficiaries will be allowed to call their families wherever they are (in Bangladesh or abroad).

Every person in charge of offering the telephone service will use a phone call form in order to record all the calls, including unsuccessful calls (in Annexes).

In order to provide the service to the largest possible number of person, the telephone calls should be restricted to maximum 3 minutes.

One person is allowed to make only one telephone call (exceptions on a purely humanitarian basis should be made e.g., the called person was not reachable so the caller wants to try another number).

A person wanting to make a telephone call should approach the BDRCS representative and give him the necessary information (presented in the table). The BDRCS representative personally dials the given number and once the connection is established, passes the telephone to the caller. The BDRCS Volunteer would then calculate the time of call and make sure that the maximum 3 minutes rule is respected.

BDRCS representative should inform the beneficiaries of the service on the applying rules prior to actually offering the service, in order to avoid any misunderstandings and misuse (family news only, a service free of charge).

Combined use of RCMs and telephone contacts

If telephone networks do not function in the affected areas but Tracing teams do have access to telephone network outside the affected areas, then combination of use of RCMs and telephones can be the most efficient modality of restoring family links.
The BDRCS Volunteers use RCM forms to collect the names and location of people in need of restoring contact with family members out of the affected area. At the same time, names and telephone numbers of the family members to be contacted (addressees) are also noted down on RCMs.

Once the Volunteers reach the BDRCS Unit, where the telephone network is functional, they contact the “addressees” directly through the telephone and transmit orally the messages from the “senders”. Therefore, it is not a traditional exchange of RCMs as it is not appropriate due to time needed for distribution of RCMs, urgency of situation, etc. It is only transmitted orally.

Safe and well

Safe and well are messages with a standard text (e.g. “Safe and well”). The only additions are the name and address of the sender and addressee and phone number. Since no content check is necessary, they can be processed without delay. “Safe and well” RCMs are used to meet massive demand early in an emergency. Once contact has been reestablished in this way, other systems of communication can be set up.

In the previous chapter, it has been clearly indicated who is entitled to send/receive RCMs in Bangladesh (minors, migrants, etc.). Nevertheless, in natural/manmade disaster, the acceptance criteria for RCMs become much wider. All the population affected by the natural/manmade disaster and in need of RFL services have access to the RCM network.

The RCM routing, already discussed in these guidelines (see BDRCS Tracing structure chapter), should apply, if possible, in case of natural disaster as well. Nevertheless, we always have to keep in mind that RFL services in times of disaster should be provided as quickly as possible.

A Tracing Volunteer or Tracing team has to find the most efficient modality of restoring family links depending on the situation: use of telephones, combinations of RCMs and telephone contacts, radio networks, media, etc.

Coordination with NHQ Tracing department

Coordination is essential in disaster’ response. It is vital to get in touch with the respective Unit or directly with the NHQ Tracing department in order to coordinate potential action in the field.

Tracing Volunteers are at the source of information of the BDRCS in the affected areas. All the necessary information (including all the locally obtained lists of victims – from the local authority such as morgues, hospitals, shelters, etc.) should be forwarded to the NHQ Tracing department (directly or through the Units). This will allow the NHQ Tracing department to have a good overview of the situation in the specific area and to be able to coordinate delivery of RFL service and formulate replies to public enquiries.

If a certain district is not affected, the Tracing staff can support the nearby affected districts, both in human recourses and with material (with the existing stocks of pre-printed cards/RCMs, office material, etc.).

Once the BDRCS Tracing department has all the necessary information and facts about the situation in the affected areas, they will initiate offering of RFL services to the affected population if needed. BDRCS Volunteers will be directly involved in offering the mentioned services to the affected population.

Tracing of missing persons

Once means of communication have been restored, BDRCS can face need to search for persons whose families still do not have news about their fate.

The first step would be to register the missing persons and collect as much information as possible on the circumstances of their disappearance. The BDRCS volunteers would need to approach directly the families of the missing persons in order to acquire the most reliable information.

Local authorities are the best sources for obtaining the initial information on the missing – the numbers of persons who have disappeared, their names, contact details of families. Nevertheless, all the details received from the authorities or any other sources always need to be crosschecked and confirmed with the families of missing persons.

The BDRCS staff should also obtain permission from the families to use publicly names of their missing relatives.

Once the missing persons are registered by the BDRCS, the following steps can be performed in order to obtain information on their fate:

- Active tracing for the missing persons

Active tracing performed as already explained in the chapter on Tracing Request.

- Comparing lists of missing persons with lists of dead and injured people
In a case when a certain missing person (as reported by the family to the BDRCS) also appears on the list of dead or injured published by the authorities or another organization, the BDRCS needs to perform necessary crosschecking prior to informing the family.

Details regarding a person appearing on both lists need to be sent to a respective BDRCS Unit. The following information has to be sent: Name of the person, Date of Birth, last known address, contact details of the family, name of the authority publishing the list of dead or injured.

The BDRCS Unit representative will contact the authorities or organization who has published the list of dead or injured to crosscheck and confirm the information, since according to the family, the person is still considered as missing (the fact to be presented to the authorities).

If the person is confirmed to be injured and in hospital, contact the person and offer the possibility to restore family link with the enquirer (through telephone or RCM).

The respective authorities should be requested to share information on the potential witnesses of a person's death and/or information on the place of burial.

If the information provided by the respective authorities proves to be valid (a dead person has been identified prior to burial, the exact place of burial is known, etc), the BDRCS Unit representative should approach the family and share the received information.

The BDRCS representative should advise the family of a missing person to approach the responsible authorities for confirming the missing person's death, and should accompany the family when meeting with the respective authorities for the purpose of confirming the death, whenever possible.

The BDRCS Unit shares the outcomes of the crosschecking as soon as possible with the BDRCS NHQ Tracing department.

7.6 Publishing the names of missing persons in the media (newspapers, radio, TV)

Depending on the availability of media and its accessibility to the local population (do people have TV and radio sets, do they read newspapers?), the BDRCS will decide whether to use the media in its tracing efforts, and if yes – which media.

If decided to use media, the names of missing persons would be published as well as designated telephone numbers of the BDRCS NHQ Tracing department. For more details about data protection in relation to the publishing of the names of missing persons please consult Data Protection Code of Conduct (risk assessment etc).

The BDRCS would designate one or two staff/volunteers to receive telephone calls and collect necessary information and inform the beneficiaries through the hotline established for this purpose.

The BDRCS representative receiving telephone calls will write down the full name, address and contact telephone number of the person who is calling (the BDRCS might have to contact the person later on directly and therefore these contact details are important) and the name of the sought person.

If the caller has recognized a name, the BDRCS representative will note down the following in the excel sheet (please see in Annexe):

- Name of the missing person that has been recognized, as well as Father's name and the place of origin of the missing person (important because there are more missing persons with the same names),
- Information on the missing person's whereabouts that the caller can provide. If the missing person is dead the following information should be asked: Has anybody witnessed the person's death and if yes, who (contact details – name, address, telephone number)?
- Does the caller know where the body has been buried? If yes, what is the exact location (description of the place e.g. near the mosque, name of the village and district, etc),
- Who has buried the body (contact details – name, address, telephone number)?

If the caller claims that the missing person is alive, the BDRCS representative will note down the following:

- The exact location of the missing person (full address - village, post office, upazila, district) and telephone number if any,
- Any other information that would allow the BDRCS to contact the missing person (if the person is in hospital – in which hospital ward and bed number, if away – where the person is gone and when is coming back, etc).

Printing of posters with names (and pictures if available) of missing persons
If publishing names of missing persons in the media is not feasible (the public does not have access to it for any reason), the names of missing persons can be printed in the form of a poster and posted in the affected areas.

Telephone numbers of the BDRCS NHQ Tracing department would be printed on posters, inviting the public to share information on missing persons.

The BDRCS would designate one or two staff/volunteers to receive telephone calls and collect necessary information in the same manner as described in the previous example with the media.

**Tracing on behalf of unaccompanied minors and other vulnerable persons**

The BDRCS prioritizes tracing activities on behalf of unaccompanied minors and other vulnerable persons. They should be given special attention in order to reunite them with their families and ensure they receive more permanent support.

Children who are not being cared for by an adult are the most vulnerable as they have lost the care and protection of their families. They often find themselves forlorn and unaided with meagre resources, psychological dilemmas, social taboos (especially for girls) and in an unfamiliar environment with hardly any skills to re-integrate back in the society. Separated from those closest to them, these children loose care and protection of their families when they most need them. They face abuse and exploitation and sometimes their very survival may be threatened. There are also other vulnerable persons facing difficult situation that the BDRCS should help.

**Definition of vulnerable persons**

The following persons separated from their families/parents due to disaster, population movement or conflict are to be considered as vulnerable persons:
- Unaccompanied children,
- Separated children (children separated from their parents or legal custodian but taken care of by other adult family members),
- Female-headed households with young children,
- Pregnant women,
- Single women when at risk of sexual or other abuse due to their situation,
- The lone elderly,
- Those with illnesses or disabilities requiring support.

**RFL action for vulnerable persons**

When BDRCS tracing volunteers identified vulnerable persons which have lost contact with their family members due to disaster, population movement or conflict, they should open a tracing request if/when the person is settled somewhere and can be re-contacted. This will enable the start of active tracing and restoration of family links.

Once the family links have been re-established and when possible, BDRCS tracing team should always intent to organize family reunification for the unaccompanied minors and other vulnerable persons to ensure they receive more permanent support.

**8. RFL services among foreigners in the jail**

The Bangladesh Red Crescent Society is a neutral and impartial humanitarian organisation. In November 2001, the BDRCS received the official authorization from the Ministry of Home Affairs of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh to offer RFL services to foreign nationals detained in Bangladesh.

**8.1. Persons of concern to the BDRCS in jail**

The following categories of persons are of BDRCS' concern:

- The foreigners who have crossed the border and entered into Bangladesh without any valid document such as passport, visa etc.
- Asylum seekers, irregular migrants, economic migrants captured as being in an illegal situation.
- Refugees who committed an offence and are waiting for deportation,
- Foreigners who have been arrested by the authority for a criminal offence and served a sentence,
- The foreigners which are still in jail after completing their sentence and are waiting to go back to their countries of origin.
The foreigners detained in Bangladesh found themselves alone and most of the time are unable to draw the attention of their authorities. They are mentally suffering as nobody is taking care of them and to help them to get in touch with their dear ones is a humanitarian service that the BDRCS is providing to them.

8.2. Services provided to foreign nationals

- The BDRCS endeavours to ensure that foreign detainees can maintain contact with their families and arrange the exchange of Red Cross/Crescent Message (RCM) if required;
- Notify the families or the concerned Embassies if desired by the foreign detainees in order to help them in the process of their repatriation;
- Provide relief and hygienic kits to the foreign detainees once in a year (on the basis of their needs and if funds available).

8.3. Preparation for the jail visit

Following are the key elements that need to be taken into account when organizing a jail visit:

- Do the BDRCS staff/volunteers already have the knowledge and skills required to carry out activities in favour of foreign nationals detained in jail. If not, provide training to the staff/volunteers on how to talk with the authorities and how to fill in RCM,
- Collect as much information as possible on the foreign nationals detained. Try to assess what are the main needs and what is the best way to respond to those needs,
- Take contact and assess the existing relations between the authorities and the BDRCS. Develop professional and trustful relation with the authorities,
- The authority should confirm their availability for the jail visit (fix up a date and time to visit the jail) and agree about how many persons of the BDRCS tracing team will work in the jail at a time,
- Confirm the availability of sufficient stock of RCM,
- If you foresee that there will be any language problem, you will have to arrange an interpreter. If no BDRCS volunteer is able to translate, it is better to have an interpreter from the detainees.

8.4. Steps for the jail visit

8.4.1. Contact with the jail authority

The visit should begin with a meeting between the tracing team and the authorities to discuss about the role of the BDRCS tracing department. This talk is extremely important for establishing a professional and trustful dialogue with the authorities:

- Explain that the BDRCS Tracing department plays an important role in helping to re-establish contact between separated family members,
- Exchange of family news is the right of every person wherever he/she may be,
- The Red Cross/Crescent Message (RCM) form is an open letter and is the same all over the world. The jail authorities have the right to censor the RCMs written by the foreign detainees,
- The BDRCS Tracing Department (same as the International Committee of the Red Cross and the other nationals Red Cross Societies) is also responsible to censor the content of the RCM before distribution,
- Explain the use of the information collected and that it will be treated confidentially between the BDRCS and the jail authority,
- Ask the authority to provide a brief overview of the detained foreign nationals.
If it is the first visit to the jail in addition:

- Introduce the tracing team and discuss each individual's experiences,
- Explain the purpose of the visit and BDRCS services offered,
- Request to give you a room /space where you can talk with foreign detainees privately or in a group.

8.4.2. Interview in private or group with the foreign detainees

Members of the tracing team should always introduce themselves and explain the purpose of the visit. They should keep in mind that the foreign detainees are often very stressed and anxious about their situation:

- Tracing team should explain the role and goal of the BDRCS Tracing Department in speaking with them,
- They should show empathy and respect to the detainees in order to gain trust and confidence and to be able to collect clear and completed information about them,
- They should put emphasis on the humanitarian and impartial nature of the tracing activities which is quite different from government activities,
- It is essential to inform the detainee that this is a private conversation and that we will not share anything from our conversation with the authorities unless he permits it,
- Inform the detainee that he/she has right to exchange family news with his/her dear one's where ever they may be. The BDRCS can help them to exchange family news,
- Tracing team should collect information as detailed as possible: Name, father's name, permanent address, date of arrest, for what reasons he/she has been arrest, have he/she been to a detention hearing, what is the condition of his case, is he released prisoner, under trial or convicted. Ask him/her whether he/she maintain contact with family or relatives. If they want to contact with the family or relatives help them to fill in the RCM. Do they have any difficulties in staying in touch with the families? What are the problems, if any detainee refuse to use the RCM, the reasons should be collected. Ask them whether they wants to inform their embassies about their detention,
- Inform the detainee that the Red Cross/Crescent Message is treated an open letter and the authority has the right to go through it,
- Tracing Team will also identify the needs of the detainees as sometimes the team has an obligation to report to the authority to improve detainee’s conditions (only under certain conditions – i.e. very bad conditions of detention),
- The detainee may be willing to mention other problem he/she facing in the jail. Do not create false expectations. Make clear the limitations of the BDRCS what it can do or cannot do. The BDRCS is not dealing with the legal problems. Upon request from the detainee other problems/issues can be discussed with the jail authority,
- Take note of all information collected from the detainees. This will also allow the team to crosscheck with the information provided by the jail' authority.

8.4.3. Final discussion with the jail authority

At the end of the visit, it is important to meet the jail authority in order to share the findings of the tracing team:

- The jail authority should check/censor the RCMs written by the detainees,
- Discuss about the problems faced by the detainees,
- Mention if the tracing team faced any problem during the visit and obtain commitment from the authorities.

8.4.4. Reporting
Immediately after the visit, the tracing team should compile all the collected information and prepare a report. It will include the information collected from the jail authority and from the detainees:

- General information: appointment with the authority, Name of the members of Tracing team, Date & time of the jail visit, Mode of journey etc.
- Findings of the jail visit: produce the list of detainees met in the jail including their names, father’s name, permanent address, date of arrest, detainees status whether released prisoner (RP), convicted or under trial (UT) with the date,
- Support provided to the detainees: RCM filled in by detainees, family notification or notification for their embassies, distribution of relief or hygiene kits etc.
- Conditions of the detainees: problems and impact on their lives,
- Include the comments of the authority and problems faced by tracing team,
- Recommendations: proposals for corrective measures to be taken into consideration,
- The report should be send to the NHQ Tracing department for review.

The jail authority will receive the report on the visit. They should therefore get a clear picture on the detained foreign nationals in order to take appropriate action for follow-up the visit.
II. Rapid Instruction cards
III. Forms
Registration of UAM
Tracing request
Phone calls log
RCM
FLA BGD Data Entry Procedures and updating Workflows
Family reunification form
Fundamental principles of activity in the sphere of restoring family links

**Fast, prompt and adequate response**
Response in the field of RFL is notable for flexibility, and is aimed at solving the existing issues. It encompasses wide range of types of RFL activity, unfolding as quickly as possible and lasting as long as it is needed and if there are corresponding conditions.

**Accountability**
Those, who were separated from their relatives or lost contact with them, are the most important objects of RFL activity and humanitarian responsibility. Their participation in the work on identification, in determining tasks, performance of practical work and assessment of its results is a key to success. These people need to be informed about steps that will be taken in their interest. They should know, that they can apply for RFL services.

**Not to cause harm**
Under no circumstances, RFL operations should have negative consequences. When planning and implementing them, it is necessary to give the closest attention to reviewing requests and other personal information so that no harm is inflicted on the applicants.

**Respect to each separate person**
When taking measures of response in the field of RFL, priority is given to individual needs without any negative differentiation. First of all, the most vulnerable are identified, as they are under risk to be separated from their relatives and disappear. They are provided with help and protection. Activity in the field of RFL is carried out with all possible respect to dignity of people and their vital interests, including religious, social and cultural needs.

**Protection of data**
Personal data (such as first name and last name, date and place of birth, family status, etc.) is used with extreme care. Insofar as security of individuals is of prime importance, no information, that can cause them harm, is disclosed and published (see Annex 1, Principles of data protection).

**Observance of the policy and Charter of the Movement**
Response in terms of RFL is made in accordance with Fundamental principles, Charter of the Movement, Seville Agreement, Supplementary measures, principles and rules of provision of help during disasters and calamities and Code of conduct of the International Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) during performance of assistance operations in case of natural disasters and calamities.

**Consistency with global RFL network**
Any natural disaster or calamity may have consequences for relatives of affected persons in other countries. ICRC and National Societies form Family Links Network, which serves as a basis of coordinated international response. ICRC Central Tracing Agency (CTA) in Geneva coordinates work of the network and offers consultative accompaniment and practical support to National Societies. In case of natural disasters or calamities, requiring international efforts, CTA coordinates the efforts of tracing services of National Societies in order to ensure maximum efficient response to RFL needs.