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Council of Delegates of the International Red Cross
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COUNCIL OF DELEGATES
OF THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS
AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT

Geneva, Switzerland
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THE RESTORING FAMILY LINKS (RFL) STRATEGY
FOR THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT
(2008-2018)

PROGRESS REPORT (2008-2011)

Document prepared by the Central Tracing Agency
of the International Committee of the Red Cross
in consultation with members of the RFL Implementation Group
from National Societies and the International Federation



Geneva, October 2011

"Whenever people are separated from, or without news of, their loved ones, as a result of armed conflict, other situations of violence, natural disaster or other situations requiring a humanitarian response, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement responds efficiently and effectively by mobilizing its resources to restore family links."

(Vision Statement of the RFL Strategy 2007)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Not knowing the fate of their loved ones causes untold suffering to large numbers of people throughout the world. The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement has a unique global network that can help them.

In 2007, the Movement adopted the RFL Strategy (2008-2018). Its main ambition is to improve the ability of the Family Links Network to meet the humanitarian needs of individuals separated from their family members as a consequence of armed conflicts, violence, disasters, forced displacement and migration or other situations requiring humanitarian action.

This present report provides an overview of the progress made on several key areas during the last four years of implementing the Strategy. The Implementation Group, established to guide and monitor the implementation of the Strategy and consisting of National Societies (NS), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, identified three priority areas for this phase: RFL response in disasters and emergencies; the foundation for RFL capacity building; and RFL coordination and cooperation within the Family Links Network. An impressive total of 129 or 69% of all NS replied to a survey of development in these areas. The survey showed that although significant progress had been made, certain important issues remained to be addressed. The situation in the NS that did not respond is not known.

Significant achievements

- New RFL mechanisms, materials and tools are available to support domestic and international rapid-response in emergencies. In 2009, a pool of RFL experts for emergency response, drawn from the ICRC and NS, was created, trained and equipped, and (as of August 2011) has been deployed in ten large-scale crises during the last three years.
- A growing number of NS have made significant efforts to understand the changing RFL needs by conducting needs assessments; they have also included RFL in their strategic and development plans. In addition, RFL is increasingly being incorporated in disaster response plans.
- Cooperation has grown within the Family Links Network, in particular between components that share caseloads. There is also a trend towards increased participation in regional RFL fora. Given the regional and even global impact of armed conflict, large-scale disasters and migration flows, this increased cooperation is of vital significance.

Challenges ahead

- The trend towards incorporating RFL in strategic and development plans and disaster response plans needs to be sustained, reinforced and translated into operational capacities. Particularly in the area of emergency response, a fuller knowledge of all the resources that are available globally is required. These resources need to be incorporated at the national and regional level. RFL should also have a place in NS agreements with authorities on national emergency response plans.

- Much remains to be done to the mobilization of resources for RFL activities. Budget allocations for RFL have stagnated, there have been few efforts to increase and diversify funding and many NS continue to be excessively dependent on ICRC support. Within NS, leaders, managers and staff concerned need to raise awareness of the crucial importance of RFL in order to gain the required support for RFL activities.
- Resource flows within the Family Links Network remain low. To date, very few NS have engaged in partnerships with other National Societies to support the strengthening of their RFL capacities. Such capacity building efforts need to be understood as a mid- to long-term change processes that require engagement at the strategic level.
- The way people communicate and look for family members has changed. This presents a challenge to the Movement in the provision of services to beneficiaries and the sharing of information within its Family Links Network. It is addressing this challenge by developing new information and communication technology (ICT) projects.

As we move into the next phase in the implementation of the RFL Strategy, leaders of each component of the Movement must be aware of their role in ensuring the success of the Strategy. The unique worldwide Family Links Network is a resource full of potential. Realizing that potential will be one of the great challenges for all the components of the Movement for the next six years.



Introduction

Restoring family links (RFL) is the generic term given to a range of activities that aim to prevent the separation of families and the disappearance of family members, to restore and maintain contact among families, and to clarify the fate of persons who have been reported missing.
(RFL Strategy 2007)

Not knowing the fate of their loved ones causes untold suffering to large numbers of people throughout the world. The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement has a unique global network that can help them. The restoration of family links has an important psychological and emotional impact on beneficiaries. It also has significance, social and economic, for their families.

In 2007, the Movement adopted the RFL Strategy (2008-2018). Its main ambition is to improve the ability of the Family Links Network to meet the humanitarian needs of individuals separated from their family members as a consequence of armed conflicts, violence, disasters, forced displacement and migration or other situations requiring humanitarian action.

While acknowledging the strengths of the worldwide Family Links Network and its achievements in RFL in the past, the Movement identified several key areas in which it could be improved. In order to meet the needs of beneficiaries in an increasingly complex environment for humanitarian action, the following three 'strategic objectives' were defined:

1. Improving RFL capacity and performance;
2. Enhancing coordination and intra-Movement cooperation;
3. Strengthening support for RFL.

Since 2008 the components of the Movement - the National Societies (NS), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (the International Federation) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) - have actively worked on implementing the Strategy. This report gives an overview of the key achievements and the challenges that remain after four years. It is partly based on a survey to which an impressively high number (129) of NS replied. However, the situation in the NS that did not respond, 31% of all NS, could not be ascertained. In addition, discussions in this regard took place within the ICRC and the International Federation.

In this initial phase of implementation and reporting, it is essential to keep the monitoring focused on the most crucial expected results and the most significant indicators of success. Together with the RFL Implementation Group¹, the ICRC's Central Tracing Agency (CTA) identified three key 'expected outcomes' that would denote success at the end of the first phase of implementation in 2011 and defined various 'indicators of expected progress' for each of them.

1. Strong foundation and asset for RFL capacity building: Components of the Movement have made plans to strengthen RFL within their areas of expertise and carried out RFL needs and capacity assessments. Tools are available to guide RFL capacity building.
2. RFL coordination and cooperation within the Family Links Network: The components of the Family Links Network are better interconnected, the flow of knowledge has increased among them and partnerships have been developed.
3. Rapid RFL response in emergencies: The components of the Family Links Network are able to respond rapidly, efficiently and effectively to RFL needs in situations of emergencies.

¹ The RFL Strategy Implementation Group is comprised of members from the National Societies of Australia, Cambodia, Canada, RD Congo, Croatia, Dominican Republic, Salvador, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iran, Libya, Qatar, Russia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom, as well as the International Federation and the ICRC. It provides guidance and support in the implementation process of the RFL Strategy and develops the criteria for its success and indicators to measure that success (Resolution 4, para. 8 of the 2007 Council of Delegates).

This report reflects the progress made in these three areas, starting with the rapid response in emergencies. The survey's findings focus on the 'indicators of expected progress', defined by the Implementation Group. The report also offers recommendations for the future, in line with the actions and implementation measures set out in the RFL Strategy.

1. RFL response in disasters and emergencies

The ICRC and NS have a long history of assisting people affected and often displaced² by armed conflicts and other situations of violence - by helping them search for missing persons and facilitating the restoration of family links. The distress of victims separated from their loved ones after natural disasters highlights the importance of the Movement's RFL action in emergencies, this was made especially clear during some of the major disasters of the first half of this decade, such as the 2004 tsunami in the Indian Ocean and Hurricane Katrina that struck the United States in 2005.

RFL services were provided in all these crises by NS and the ICRC. Even so, a faster and more efficient response to RFL needs in emergencies was needed, and RFL had to be incorporated more fully into national and international emergency response mechanisms.

This realization was confirmed in 2006 by the results of a global assessment of NS Tracing Service capacities (the 2006 Global Mapping). It showed that most NS (60%) did not incorporate RFL in their own disaster preparedness and response plans and, in the overwhelming majority of cases (88%) their countries' disaster response plans did not recognize a specific role for RFL³.

Action 1 of the second 'strategic objective' of the RFL Strategy called for improvement of the Movement's rapid-response capacity in emergencies, including measures by NS, the ICRC and the International Federation in their respective fields of responsibility. This was prioritised in anticipation of future emergencies.

Indicators of Expected Progress (2008-2011)

1. NS have improved the integration of RFL needs and risks in their national disaster/emergency preparedness and response plans.
2. RFL specialists and other staff and volunteers involved in Disaster Management have improved their awareness and training on RFL challenges and actions in disasters.
3. In emergencies, RFL needs are systematically assessed and RFL specialists (staff or volunteers from NS or ICRC) are deployed to provide effective response to the assessed needs.

Key Results of the 2011 Survey

- The ICRC has developed new technical guidance materials and mechanisms to support domestic and international RFL response in emergencies. A pool of 64 trained specialists from the ICRC and NS has been operational since early 2009. A total of 19 members of the pool have been deployed, three in their own countries, in 10 different crises.
- Some 64% of NS indicate that they have included RFL in their national disaster/emergency preparedness and response plan.
- About 57% of NS state that their emergency/disaster response teams include members (staff and volunteers) who are trained to manage an RFL response in emergencies; 63% of NS include RFL sensitization in training for staff and volunteers involved in providing emergency response.
- However, 56% of NS concerned state they did **not** carry out a RFL needs assessment during an actual disaster and 46% did **not** deploy volunteers or staff trained in RFL.
- The International Federation is incorporating RFL in global guides and tools of reference for disaster management (e.g., *Disaster Response and Planning Guide 2007*; Disaster Management Information System; Operational Plan of Action template). RFL awareness is also being raised in Disaster Management training (in e.g., Field Assessment and Coordination Teams; Health Emergency Response Unit).

² See Report on the implementation of the International Movement of the Red Cross and Red Crescent policy on internal displacement (Council of Delegates 2011)

³ (2006) *Capacity Assessment of National Society Tracing Services: Global Mapping*, pp. 16; 49

The results of the survey show that, on the whole, awareness of RFL needs in emergency response has increased. More NS have incorporated RFL in their disaster/emergency preparedness and response plans. More staff and volunteers involved in disaster/emergency response have been sensitized to the issue and emergency response teams include RFL specialists. These efforts must become an established feature of the humanitarian response in the very early stages of an emergency. The availability of an international pool of RFL specialists has also boosted the global capacity of the Movement to provide swift support to an emergency operation.

1.1. New RFL mechanisms, materials and tools are now available to support domestic and international rapid-response in emergencies

At the global level, considerable progress has been made in providing the Movement with new guidance and tools for incorporating RFL in national emergency preparedness and response. Mechanisms for the rapid international deployment of RFL specialists have been established to offer support in large-scale humanitarian crises. In addition, RFL is being steadily incorporated in the disaster management systems of the International Federation.

The ICRC, in partnership with the German Red Cross and the British Red Cross produced a field manual on RFL in Disasters.⁴ It also established a pool of 64 RFL specialists, drawn from NS and the ICRC, who were trained and equipped for rapid deployment in emergencies (the equipment included telecommunication kits). A memorandum of understanding between the ICRC and the International Federation facilitates the deployment of members of the pool in situations where the International Federation is the lead agency.



Haiti, Port-au-Prince, 2010 – After the worst earthquake in the country's history, an ICRC employee and a volunteer of the Haitian National Red Cross Society interview a woman: they are hoping to reunite her with her child.

© CICR/KOKIC, Marko

As of August 2011, members of the pool of RFL specialists have been deployed, with operational or advisory responsibilities, in ten crises since late 2009: earthquakes in Indonesia, Haiti and Chile; the tropical storm Agatha in Guatemala; floods in Pakistan; civil unrest and armed violence in Kyrgyzstan, Côte d'Ivoire and Libya (which also involved the displacement of people to other countries in the region); the earthquake and tsunami in Japan; and the influx of Somali refugees into Kenya. The lessons learnt from these experiences have contributed to substantial improvement and new developments in operating procedures and equipment.

The International Federation has included RFL awareness into its training for Field Assessment and Coordination Teams and Regional Disaster Response Teams. Special attention is being paid to raise awareness of RFL among medical and psychosocial workers being prepared for deployment in disasters, through cooperation with the International Federation's Emergency Response Unit's Technical Working Group and the Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support in Copenhagen. Furthermore, RFL is incorporated in the reference materials and tools developed by the International Federation for disaster management, particularly the following: *Disaster Response and Contingency Planning Guide*⁵; the field report template of the Disaster Management Information System; the Operational Plan of Action template; the Simple Recovery Guidance publication; the Rapid Field Assessment form (for the first 24 and 72 hour assessment); *Setting Up a National Disaster Preparedness and Response Mechanism: Guidelines for National Societies 2010*; and the *Guidelines*

⁴ For a selected overview of reference material and background information available to the Movement see Annex 3.

⁵ <http://www.ifrc.org/Global/Publications/disasters/disaster-response-en.pdf>

Global RFL resources are available for emergencies. It is vitally important to raise awareness of this fact, at the national and regional level.

Field teams from NS, the ICRC and/or the International Federation that are managing responses to emergencies can get international support from the ICRC CTA. This support includes the following:

- **Technical guidance on RFL in emergencies**
- **Launch of a [Family Links Website](#)**
- **Deployment of ICRC and NS specialists and equipment from the RFL Pool**

for Assessment in Emergencies.⁶ By means of the International Federation's Disaster Management mechanisms, these tools must be better integrated and operationalised in each disaster response where they can provide added value.

Recent emergencies confirmed the importance of a very rapid RFL response as well as the necessity of promoting RFL services among beneficiaries. Awareness of the service can be crucial in the very first days after a disaster. The ICRC has produced a toolkit for RFL promotion in emergencies for NS and ICRC field workers⁷. New avenues of promoting RFL are being explored with the International Federation, such as the mobile

telecommunication tool ('TERA') that makes it possible to be in touch with beneficiaries by SMS.

A training module on RFL in emergencies – based on new materials, tools and experiences - is now available to NS and the ICRC. This training should be part of a broader effort to incorporate RFL in NS plans for emergency preparedness.

All components of the Movement need to be familiar with and take advantage of such developments in the global framework for RFL action in emergencies.

1.2. Securing more investment and fuller incorporation of RFL resources in preparedness for emergencies continue to be very significant obstacles to the success of the RFL Strategy

RFL needs in disasters are significant and urgent.

RFL services need to be provided from the first phase of emergency response, to alleviate suffering and strengthen recovery.

As first responders in most disasters, NS need to invest more in RFL preparedness.

NS need to be prepared in order to provide an early response to RFL needs, especially in contexts with clearly identified risks. This entails incorporating RFL in NS emergency preparedness at national and, if appropriate, at regional levels. The survey shows progress in this regard. Over 30 NS have indicated the integration of RFL services within their disaster management department (e.g., Bangladesh, Canada, Indonesia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo).

This needs to be translated into field operations. Some 24% of the NS that have incorporated RFL in

their disaster response plans did not assess RFL needs or deploy staff trained in RFL when faced with a disaster. Only once was the pool of RFL specialists deployed at the request of a NS. Effective incorporation of RFL services in emergency response requires well-trained staff and volunteers and a sound knowledge of global and regional response tools, including surge mechanisms such as the RFL Pool. Planning for emergency response should also include interaction with other NS actors involved in areas like care for the wounded, shelter, psychosocial support and dead body management.

⁶ March 2008, <http://www.ifrc.org/Global/Publications/disasters/guidelines/guidelines-for-emergency-en.pdf>

⁷ Tracing Activities Extranet: Chapter 11 Toolkit for RFL Promotion in Emergencies. For more information on the Tracing Activities Extranet, see footnote 11.

Agreements with national authorities can greatly improve the provision of RFL services and enable NS to play a prominent role in national emergency response.

of Afghanistan and Indonesia, have already cooperated with authorities to position their RFL service in national emergency preparedness plans. The incorporation of RFL in national plans can facilitate cooperation with the authorities involved in dead body management, conducting medical evacuation, and running reception shelters where RFL issues may arise. It should be noted that if a NS plays a role in managing dead bodies⁸ (beyond data collection for RFL purposes) this role should be formally agreed on with the authorities.

Many NS have agreements or discussions with authorities on their role in national emergency preparedness plans. Such dialogue can highlight unmet humanitarian needs and raise the visibility of NS offering RFL services. Some NS, such as those

RFL Response to the Libyan Crisis of 2011

Telephone: a swift and effective way to re-establish contact among family members

- Over 100,000 phone calls were made from Libya and the border areas in Tunisia and Egypt to over 70 countries
- RFL actions also took place in other countries. The Bangladesh Red Crescent Society for example, provided mobile phone service to over 12,500 returnees.

Following popular uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt, protests began in Libya in mid-February 2011 and escalated into an armed conflict. Tens of thousands of people started to flee Libya. This created a major humanitarian crisis, not only in Libya, but also in the border areas of neighbouring countries. The Movement provided various kinds of assistance, including RFL services.

From February to May 2011, four members of the RFL Pool - two from the ICRC, one from the Swiss Red Cross and another from the Netherlands Red Cross - were deployed in Tunisia and Egypt to provide support for the Movement response. Initially they concentrated their efforts on border areas, to meet the needs of refugees and migrants fleeing

the fighting. Later, RFL activities were undertaken within Libya, as part of the operations of the Libyan Red Crescent and the ICRC to benefit displaced and separated families.

The four RFL specialists coordinated with staff and volunteers of ICRC delegations, NS and the NGO Telecom Without Borders, to provide telephone services to a large number of refugees and migrants from more than forty countries. In cooperation with other stakeholders, such as the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration, evacuees were followed. Some ICRC travel documents were issued and official documents were channelled through the Movement to facilitate repatriations. Unaccompanied minors were monitored and active tracing was undertaken for them and for other vulnerable people. The tracing staff ensured that the information of people transferred to medical facilities was registered, to prevent secondary family separations and facilitate family visits to hospitals. In some countries, particularly Bangladesh and the Philippines, NS were able to offer RFL services and other humanitarian aid to returnees.

Once the members of the RFL pool were withdrawn, ICRC delegations and the NS continued to provide RFL services in Libya, Tunisia, Egypt and other countries as part of their regular activities.



Tunisia, Chucha camp near the Libyan border, 2011

– A Bengali fleeing the armed conflict in Libya is calling his relatives with the help of a Tunisian Red Crescent volunteer.

© CICR/BELTIFA, Soumaya

⁸ Dead body management (DBM) is the general term for a range of activities covering in particular body recovery and transportation, storage, identification, information management, disposal (burial, long-term storage), support to families, etc. NS involvement in DBM can be limited to one of these activities.

2. Strong foundation for RFL capacity building

The strength of the Family Links Network depends on the capacities of each of its components, including the weakest ones. In order for it to function as a whole, each of its components should be capable of responding to needs.

The Global Mapping exercise of 2006 revealed that the capacity of NS to deliver RFL services needed to be improved. Approximately half of the NS consulted did not carry out needs or capacity assessments or allocate a budget for RFL. There was excessive reliance on ICRC funding, which was often the only source of income for an NS RFL service.

In this first phase of the Strategy, the challenge for the Family Links Network was to create a strong foundation for capacity building in order to implement the next steps of the Strategy.

Indicators of Expected Progress

- NS are active components of the Family Links Network by providing RFL services.
- NS and ICRC delegations have increased their awareness of RFL related needs and risks by carrying out RFL needs assessments.
- NS have strengthened their institutional foundation for RFL by incorporating explicit RFL objectives and provisions on RFL in their strategic and development plans.
- NS have strengthened their operational foundation for RFL activities by incorporating the response to RFL needs of affected population and to enquiries from the Family Links Network in their operational plans (annual plan of activities).
- More NS have an allocated budget for RFL services and activities for RFL service delivery and development. The funding for this budget is coming from diversified sources.
- More NS engage in RFL skills development by organizing regular trainings for managers, staff and volunteers involved in RFL.

Key Results of the 2011 Survey

- Most NS (95%) provide RFL services.
- Approximately 47% of all NS indicated that they either carried out an RFL needs assessment during the period 2008-2011 or that one was in progress.
 - Of the NS that have not carried out a needs assessment, 66% plan to do so in 2011-2013.
 - The ICRC provided technical, financial and/or operational support to NS needs assessments in over 25 countries, often involving partner NS from a third country (about 30%).
- 67% of NS have included explicit RFL objectives and provisions in their strategic and development plans.
- 67% of all NS have, in their operational plans, allocated resources (human resources, equipment, etc.) for responding to RFL needs and risks.
- 81% of NS have allocated a budget for RFL activities;
 - The ICRC and governments are most often mentioned as the main contributors: 36% of all NS rely entirely on ICRC funding for their RFL programmes;
 - About 12% of NS indicate a decrease in budgetary allocation since 2008, often the result of reduced ICRC funding.
- 71% of NS have organized some form of training for managers, staff and/or volunteers involved in RFL.
- There is a strong suggestion (55% of all NS) that NS leaders, managers and staff are not sufficiently informed about or aware of RFL activities.

Significant efforts have been made by a number of NS to acquire a firmer grasp of changing RFL needs and to include RFL in their strategic and development plans. However, a great deal of work needs to be done to increase and diversify financial resources, develop the human resources available for RFL, and ensure that RFL services are better incorporated in the humanitarian work of NS.

2.1. The positive trend of RFL needs assessments should be sustained

With regard to RFL needs assessments, the dynamics observed since 2008 are very encouraging. The number of needs assessments has increased, particularly during the period 2010-2011, and more are envisaged in the short and medium term. They are necessary to ensure that the RFL services provided are reaching the people who are most in need - such as persons displaced, detained or separated - and that NS are prepared to step in if risks that have been identified materialize. Consequently, assessing needs should not be a one-off exercise but should be carried out regularly and become established as standard practice in managing an RFL program.

Understanding the needs of separated family members is essential and the first thing that must be done: only then can relevant RFL services be provided and decisions be taken to strengthen NS capacity.

Recent assessments have revealed, in particular, the growing interest of many NS, often supported by the ICRC, to understand the RFL needs of migrant populations in countries of transit and destination as well as the needs of their families at home.⁹ Tremendous challenges are ahead for the



Mali 2009, Tin Zaouaten village – Many migrants are stranded in the middle of the desert without the resources to survive. The Mali Red Cross and the ICRC provide food, water and basic health care. The most vulnerable are transported to Gao, where they are given the opportunity to contact their families.

© CICR/LAWAL, A

Family Links Network as it attempts to respond to needs along migratory trails: missing migrants, the recovery of unidentified bodies, family reunifications, detained migrants who have lost touch with their families, the reception of returnees or deported migrants in their homelands or in third countries, human trafficking, etc. A successful RFL programme can make a significant contribution to realizing the objectives of the International Federation's 2009 Policy on International Migration and those of the Movement's 2009 Policy on Internal Displacement.¹⁰

In addition to being the starting point for developing RFL activities, a needs assessment is an important opportunity for an NS to reflect on and strengthen the positioning of the RFL programme within the NS. A number of NS (e.g. Afghanistan, Cambodia,

Canada, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iraq, and Liberia) have made a clear commitment in this regard.

The ICRC's Central Tracing Agency has produced a number of guidance materials as required in the RFL Strategy. The proper identification of RFL needs is prominently featured in the field manual *Restoring Family Links in Disasters* (2009), the *Guidelines on Providing RFL Services to Persons Separated as a Results of Migration* (2010) and particularly the handbook *Assessing Restoring Family Links Needs* (2010).

2.2. RFL services need to gain more support within their own NS

Skilled managers, staff, and volunteers are needed to run high-quality RFL activities. Despite a fair amount of training organized for NS personnel, 33% of NS are of the opinion that they do not have appropriate training material.

⁹ See 'Follow-up to the 30th International Conference: Implementation of Resolution 1, "Together for Humanity" Part on "Humanitarian Concerns generated by International migration" (Council of Delegates 2011)

¹⁰ Policy of the International Federation on International Migration: <http://www.ifrc.org/PageFiles/49631/migration-policy-en.pdf>; Policy of the Movement on Internal Displacement: <http://www.icrc.org/eng/assets/files/publications/icrc-002-1124.pdf>

Many training initiatives exist at national, regional or global level, and are open to RFL personnel from NS and/or the ICRC. Training of RFL staff should not be ad-hoc, but rather part of a wider capacity building strategy and a uniform NS training system. It should be based on the latest guidance documents available. The ICRC can help the Family Links Network with advice on developing training programmes; it has already developed training materials that provide support for the incorporation of RFL in emergency preparedness (such as the creation of training and awareness modules for NS and the International Federation). Furthermore, the International Federation is developing a global learning platform. Best practices in the Family Links Network need to be identified and shared through platforms for exchange (e.g. [Tracing Activities Extranet](#)¹¹; regional seminars).

A well-functioning RFL service relies on skilled personnel to ensure that the services provided are of good quality. It also requires internal recognition and support to enable it to develop and be fully incorporated in the NS.

When RFL services are not sufficiently known within NS – that is, among providers of other services, senior management or governing bodies – a serious obstacle is placed in the way of strategically strengthening these services. All RFL managers should regard this as a challenge and engage more actively in efforts to explain and promote their activities internally, so that leaders and managers can make informed decisions and allocate resources critical for organizing and developing RFL services. RFL staff should work with colleagues in such areas as communications, fundraising, volunteering, information technology, health and disaster preparedness, to raise awareness of RFL and benefit from the expertise of other NS managers and staff.

For most, if not all, components of the Movement, raising funds to ensure the sustainability of programs is a constant challenge. To be effective, a programme like RFL requires the necessary funding and resources: only then will an NS be able to respond to the humanitarian needs and risks identified.

RFL is relatively low-cost and has a significant impact for beneficiaries. The 2006 Global Mapping exercise identified a lack of financial resources for RFL and that continues to be a major constraint. It limits the provision of services and expansion of operations to meet needs not previously covered or

The share of resources available to RFL programs has not increased since 2006.

NS decision-makers and RFL programme managers must work together to allocate adequate budgets for RFL activities and develop effective strategies for mobilizing resources and diversifying funding.

assessed. The funding base for RFL does not seem to have expanded since the Global Mapping exercise. Many NS remain entirely dependent on contributions from the ICRC to carry out their RFL activities. At the same time, the ICRC is becoming less able to fund NS RFL services, particularly when its operations are being scaled down after a conflict.

In this first phase, the absence of progress in the external mobilization and the internal allocation of resources for RFL makes it clear that RFL programme managers and NS decision-makers have to address this issue together. It is also clear that these problems often reflect broader challenges that NS face in financing their activities and operations. However, NS leaders can do more to ensure better integration of RFL in their budgets and fundraising strategies. If necessary, the International Federation, the ICRC and other Movement partners, can advise NS on this. Some NS have managed to build effective communication and fundraising campaigns by publicizing RFL stories that have powerful humanitarian themes and that emphasize the emotional importance of RFL (e.g., Australia, Austria, China - Hong Kong branch,

¹¹ The Tracing Activities Extranet is an operational tool that provides the members of the Family Links Network with information on, int. al.: RFL tools and guidelines; contacts of National Societies, ICRC delegations and ICRC Headquarters in Geneva in charge of RFL; descriptions of RFL activities and acceptance criteria in each country.

Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, as well as some NS engaging in annual campaigns for the International Day of the Disappeared).

Performance management of RFL services will be another important challenge during the next phase of the Strategy. Developing and using performance management tools will enable RFL staff to identify gaps in capacity. They will also make it easier for RFL staff to give a clear picture of the impact of RFL services to NS colleagues and the public.

RFL assessment in Sierra Leone: Reviewing needs during a period of post-conflict transition

During and immediately after the civil war in Sierra Leone (1991-2002), the ICRC and the Sierra Leone Red Cross Society (SLRCS) handled a large number of RFL cases, including the tracing of missing persons and families of unaccompanied children. Since 2005, the conflict-related caseload has decreased significantly.

In line with the recommendations of the RFL Strategy and supported by the ICRC and an expert of the Canadian RC, the SLRCS carried out a countrywide RFL needs assessment in 2011. This included reviewing its own current RFL capacity and its cooperation with the ICRC and the Family Links Network, as well as the services provided by other actors in Sierra Leone.



Sierra Leone, 2011 - SLRCS volunteers and staff leading interviews with community members during RFL needs assessment
© Sierra Leone Red Cross Society

Some 53 staff and volunteers were trained in the collection of field data. Some 1,200 questionnaires, containing responses obtained during face-to-face interviews with community members and other stakeholders across the country, were processed.

The results showed that, although less important than in the past, RFL needs existed and were a significant issue of concern in Sierra Leone. For instance, street children and unaccompanied minors are among those most in need of support for tracing and family reunification. Although a number of other actors were working with these children, gaps were identified in the field of RFL. The assessment also evaluated the risk of

a major influx of refugees from neighbouring countries or of a major disaster in the country, and recommended that these be taken into account in preparedness plans.

The SLRCS defined clear short and long-term objectives for strengthening its capacities and enhancing its response to the needs. A plan of action is now being for the implementation of these objectives.

NS and ICRC observers from Guinea and Uganda visited the assessment team. Based on their observations, they have made preparations for carrying out assessments in their countries.

The RFL needs assessment report on Sierra Leone, including lessons learnt, and other good practices and reference documents, is available to the Family Links Network on the [Tracing Activities Extranet](#).

Adapting RFL services to changes in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

In the last twenty years, the way people communicate and look for information has changed radically. The wide availability of mobile phones and the Internet has made communication faster and cheaper, which has had a direct impact on RFL services and needs. Several provisions in the RFL Strategy draw attention to the challenges the Movement faces in this regard and to measures for addressing them¹². The Family Links Network must adapt to these radical and global changes in ICT to ensure that it retains its lead status in RFL.

Providing support to NS for technological upgrades in RFL

While developing and testing the following tools, which will become available to the Family Links Network from 2012, the ICRC seeks the active involvement of NS in making them pertinent to their needs.

- **Restoring Family Links Website**

This will be a universal web portal for RFL, containing public information and providing beneficiaries direct access to services (e.g. contacts in NS and the ICRC, access to Family Links Websites, electronic tools for tracing, etc.), as well as serving as a knowledge-sharing forum for RFL workers worldwide.

- **Online tracing service**

Used for the first time in 1995 in the Balkans, "Family Links Websites" was established on several occasions to post lists online of persons who had gone missing during armed conflict and to enable people to register and search for information on persons missing or confirmed to be alive after a disaster. The platform is being upgraded on the basis of recent experiences, in order to facilitate its involvement in field operations and its management by NS.

- **Case management application for NS**

Properly recording and following up individual cases is essential for a well-functioning RFL service; it is also important for monitoring and reporting purposes. This application will be at the disposal of NS that need a tool to manage caseloads during emergencies and at other times. The application will also be used by RFL deployment teams during emergencies, especially disasters.

Offer relevant services to beneficiaries - Beneficiaries' RFL needs and expectations, and the way the Movement can respond to them, have changed. While the traditional Red Cross Messages remain valuable, the use of phones and the internet has become standard practice in many contexts for restoring and maintaining contact instantly and even for tracing.

Enhance information sharing within the Family Links Network - New technology also changes the way components of the Movement interact. To realize the potential of the worldwide Family Links Network, the use of new ICT tools can increase workflow and make knowledge sharing more efficient.

Ensure high standard of data management – It is essential to preserve beneficiaries' trust in the Movement's RFL services. The Movement needs to guarantee a thorough follow-up of cases and due protection of personal data. RFL is a competitive field with a growing number of other actors. The quality and reliability of the Family Links Network form the basis of its success in a context where standards of data protection are not

universally applied by others.

The development of technological tools for RFL is one thing; the ability of RFL staff and volunteers to access and use them is another. Partners within the Family Links Network should take advantage of Movement initiatives, such as the International Federation's Bridging the Digital Divide' programme, to increase their ICT capacity. This is an area in which development is rapid and the corporate sector is leading progress; the Movement needs to make sure it can keep up. However, it must not lose sight of its comparative advantages over other actors: the high quality of the personal data in its possession and the degree of protection it provides for such data, as well as the field activities of its worldwide network of RFL staff and volunteers.

¹² See in particular Strategic Objective 1, Action 4 on the incorporation of technology for greater RFL programme efficiency and Strategic Objective 2, Action 2 on RFL knowledge sharing within the Movement.

3. RFL coordination and cooperation within the Family Links Network

The Movement is in the unique position of having a worldwide Family Links Network, whose members are active in most countries. However, the 2006 Global Mapping and an internal evaluation of the CTA revealed that the full potential of the Family Links Network had not yet been realized and that cooperation between components of the Network - particularly in capacity building - remained limited.

One of the main aims of the Strategy is to ensure that the Family Links Network's potential is translated into action. This entails improving cooperation between the members of the Family Links Network, in addition to building the capacity of individual members.

Indicators of Expected Progress

- NS are increasingly involved as operational partner in RFL operations with the ICRC.
- International contributions to support RFL capacity building of other NS and/or strengthening of the Family Links Network have increased.
- Exchanges and contact within the Family Links Network have intensified through multilateral and / or regional RFL fora with the aim to strengthen exchange of information and best practices and harmonize RFL approaches in policy, methodology and case management.

Key Results of the 2011 Survey

- 95% of NS participate actively in caseload exchanges within the Family Links Network.
- 67% of NS have participated in multilateral/regional fora that included a significant RFL element.
- Over 60 NS have engaged with the ICRC in RFL operational partnerships in their own countries.
- The ICRC has provided support to RFL related structures, organization and resources of about 80 NS since 2008.
- Only about 4 % of NS have provided substantial resources to fund the RFL operating budget of another NS or to support international operations or capacity building projects in the field of RFL.

On the whole, cooperation within the Family Links Network has increased. This cooperation consists mainly of working together on tracing cases and participating in regional fora, with an increased focus on migration. However, capacity building support and operational partnerships appear to be initiated only by a small group of NS, the ICRC and the International Federation.

3.1. Cooperation within the Family Links Network on caseloads and in regional fora has increased

The survey showed that the majority of NS cooperate on caseload exchanges. There are also examples of more extensive cooperation on shared caseloads: cooperation between West African and European NS in the context of migration, and in one instance between NS from the Netherlands, Hungary and Serbia who established the whereabouts of missing migrants and communicated the information to their families.

The contacts established between NS who regularly work together on caseload exchanges can be used to build capacity and share examples of best practice. Knowledge sharing between members of the Family Links Network can be facilitated by the launch of new ICT tools (see above).

Approximately two-thirds of NS indicated that they had participated in regional fora. The ICRC has provided assistance for organizing regional fora in West Africa, South-East Asia, Central Asia and Europe. The ICRC has also provided support for NS initiatives in South America and southern Africa. In addition, NS have organised regional fora among themselves: for example, regular meetings of NS from Nordic countries.

For developing regional initiatives in RFL, as in other spheres of activity, support from the leadership of NS is necessary. In the field of RFL, interdependence is self-evident and regional cooperation is essential. Central America provides a vivid illustration of this fact: there, NS, with support from the ICRC, are developing a regional family-links strategy for migrants and victims of natural disasters.

NS should cooperate regionally on issues of shared concern, such as migration and natural disasters.

3.2. There are significant challenges in the formation of partnerships between NS

To provide support to for another NS is to invest in the Family Links Network as a whole. However, there appear to be only about five NS that provide significant financial and long-term programme support to another member of the Family Links Network. Unfortunately, the results of the survey suggest that this number is not likely to increase in the near future: the vast majority of NS either do not intend to increase their support or do not know if they will do so. This report challenges NS with more resources, human and financial, to play a more active role in providing support to sister NS and to incorporate RFL in international programming (as is the case with health, disaster management and other fields of activity).

The flow of resources within the Family Links Network must increase. In addition, support for capacity building must go beyond the provision of material and funding. Developing a capacity building support programme with another NS requires a broad understanding of that NS, its ability to provide RFL services and the specific RFL needs in the country. NS partners need to consider capacity building as a comprehensive and institutional, medium to long-term process based on a strategic decision. It should be incorporated in the development plan of the NS. Capacity building requires support from all levels and sectors of the NS and can benefit from involvement by the International Federation.

Very few NS engage in partnerships with other NS. More should do so.

The ICRC and NS should provide more support and resources to NS that are committed to developing their RFL capacities.

The ICRC has facilitated partnerships between NS: for example, it enabled the German Red Cross to provide the Afghanistan Red Crescent Society with support for capacity building, helped the Swedish Red Cross to forge partnerships with the Indonesian Red Cross and the Ethiopian Red Cross, and assisted the British Red Cross in doing the same with the Magen David Adom. The Australian RC has developed a capacity building programme with several Pacific Island NS. These partnerships have a positive impact, but there are too few of them. The ICRC should intensify efforts to encourage more NS to cooperate on capacity building partnerships and knowledge sharing. At the same time, NS should not wait for the ICRC to take action. In areas in which a particular NS can provide needed support it is important that it take the initiative. The ICRC has developed a guidance document on improving capacities through partnerships, which is available on the [Tracing Activities Extranet](#).

RFL Capacity Building Programme in the Pacific Islands

In 2009, the Australian Red Cross (ARC), with support from the ICRC, started a capacity building partnership with the eleven NS of the Pacific Islands region. The project aims to develop adapted RFL tools, training modules and management capabilities, in order to raise the level of preparedness for RFL response in natural disasters and situations of conflict.

After an analysis of the NS, based on interviews with RFL staff and NS leaders, the ARC identified those NS that were likely to benefit most from a RFL-strengthening programme.

The partnership resulted in cooperation on needs assessments in four Pacific Island NS. The ARC also assisted these NS in developing their strategic implementation plans for implementing RFL. In addition, three NS were given training on RFL. Based on these experiences, the ARC, NS and ICRC developed manuals on RFL for trainers and trainees in the region, which were made available to the NS and can be found on the [Tracing Activities Extranet](#).

An evaluation in 2010 showed that NS staff and volunteers had added to their knowledge of RFL in disaster response and were planning to incorporate RFL in their disaster management plans and training. The evaluation was also used to draw up plans for continuing the programme. Plans for the future - for the ARC, the ICRC and the Pacific Islands NS - include the development of new promotional materials, training courses and a regional RFL simulation exercise.



Staff and volunteers of the Solomon Islands Red Cross during a training workshop on RFL in 2009.
© Jess Letch, Australian Red Cross

Conclusion

This report, which is based on the survey conducted in 2011, provides an overview of the progress made in the last four years in implementing the RFL Strategy in certain priority areas, such as rapid RFL response, improving the RFL capacity of the Movement's components, and initiatives for cooperation and partnership.

Significant progress has undoubtedly been made in certain areas. New tools were developed to guide the Family Links Network's response to current RFL needs. The rapid response capacity has increased considerably. Cooperation on RFL caseloads and exchanges in regional fora has grown. RFL staff in NS have deepened their knowledge on the RFL needs in their countries and have taken steps to incorporate RFL in disaster response and migration-related projects.

However, more work remains to be done by all components of the Movement. NS should follow the example of NS who have reviewed strategic and operational plans, conducted needs assessments and ensured that RFL was incorporated integrated in activities and structures at national and branch level. Increased knowledge of RFL, and provisions in the strategic and operational plans of NS, must be translated into action on the ground.

The RFL service of NS must have sufficient resources. Awareness within NS, of the crucial importance of RFL, must increase and key stakeholders must be mobilized in order to gain the needed operational and financial support. More NS should invest in RFL in international programming. Cooperation between all members of the Family Links Network, in strengthening capacities and mobilizing resources within the Network, needs to increase.

Substantial and continuous ICRC investment, in capacity building partnerships with NS and in the ongoing development of ICT tools, remains a necessity. Organizational development support and continued incorporation of RFL in disaster management mechanisms are the key contributions required specifically from the International Federation.

As we move to the next phase in the implementation of the RFL Strategy, leaders of each component of the Movement, as well as all RFL managers and workers, need to renew their commitment to the success of the Strategy.

The unique worldwide Family Links Network is a resource full of potential.

Realizing that potential will be one of the great challenges for all the components of the Movement for the next six years.

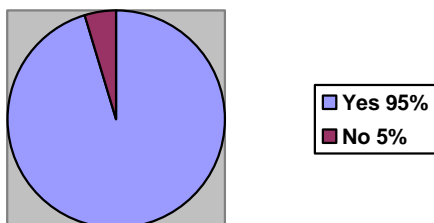
Annex 1: NS that responded to the Survey

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| 1. Afghanistan | 56. Israel | 111. Tajikistan |
| 2. Albania | 57. Italy | 112. Tanzania, United Republic |
| 3. Algeria | 58. Japan | 113. Thailand |
| 4. Angola | 59. Jordan | 114. Timor-Leste |
| 5. Argentina | 60. Kazakhstan | 115. Togo |
| 6. Armenia | 61. Kenya | 116. Trinidad and Tobago |
| 7. Australia | 62. Korea, Republic of | 117. Turkey |
| 8. Austria | 63. Kyrgyzstan | 118. Turkmenistan |
| 9. Azerbaijan | 64. Lao, People's Democratic Republic of | 119. Uganda |
| 10. Bangladesh | 65. Lesotho | 120. Ukraine |
| 11. Belarus | 66. Liberia | 121. United Kingdom " |
| 12. Belgium (FL/FR) | 67. Libyan Arab Jamahiriya | 122. United States of America |
| 13. Bolivia | 68. Liechtenstein | 123. Uruguay |
| 14. Bosnia-Herzegovina | 69. Macedonia, the former Yugoslav Republic of | 124. Uzbekistan |
| 15. Botswana | 70. Madagascar | 125. Vanuatu |
| 16. Brazil | 71. Malaysia | 126. Venezuela, Bolivarian Republic of |
| 17. Brunei Darussalam | 72. Mali | 127. Viet Nam |
| 18. Bulgaria | 73. Malta | 128. Yemen |
| 19. Burundi | 74. Mauritania | 129. Zimbabwe |
| 20. Cambodia | 75. Mexico | |
| 21. Cameroon | 76. Moldova | |
| 22. Canada | 77. Montenegro | |
| 23. Central African Republic | 78. Morocco | |
| 24. Chad | 79. Mozambique | |
| 25. Chile | 80. Myanmar | |
| 26. China | 81. Nepal | |
| 27. Colombia | 82. Netherlands | |
| 28. Comoros | 83. New Zealand | |
| 29. Congo, Republic of the | 84. Nigeria | |
| 30. Congo, Democratic Republic of | 85. Norway | |
| 31. Costa Rica | 86. Pakistan | |
| 32. Croatia | 87. Palestine | |
| 33. Czech Republic | 88. Paraguay | |
| 34. Denmark | 89. Peru | |
| 35. Djibouti | 90. Philippines | |
| 36. Dominican Republic | 91. Poland | |
| 37. Ecuador | 92. Portugal | |
| 38. El Salvador | 93. Qatar | |
| 39. Ethiopia | 94. Romania | |
| 40. Finland | 95. Russian Federation | |
| 41. France | 96. Rwanda | |
| 42. Georgia | 97. Samoa | |
| 43. Germany | 98. Serbia | |
| 44. Greece | 99. Seychelles | |
| 45. Guatemala | 100. Sierra Leone | |
| 46. Guinea | 101. Singapore | |
| 47. Haiti | 102. Slovakia | |
| 48. Honduras | 103. Slovenia | |
| 49. Hungary | 104. Somalia | |
| 50. Iceland | 105. South Africa | |
| 51. India | 106. Spain | |
| 52. Indonesia | 107. Sri Lanka | |
| 53. Iran, Islamic Republic of | 108. Sudan | |
| 54. Iraq | 109. Sweden | |
| 55. Ireland | 110. Switzerland | |

Annex 2: Survey Questions and Quantitative Results

Availability and Structure of RFL Services

1. Is your National Society providing RFL services?



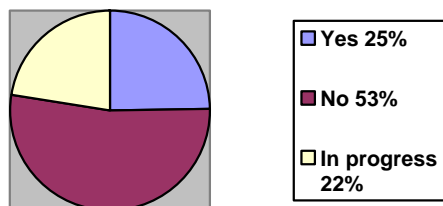
Department in which RFL is included/on which RFL depends:

Number of employees currently involved in RFL working for your National Society, including branches/chapters (if available and significant, please indicate details on the rate of occupation in RFL for these employees, e.g. "2 staff work 100% each on RFL, 3 staff work 50%, etc.):

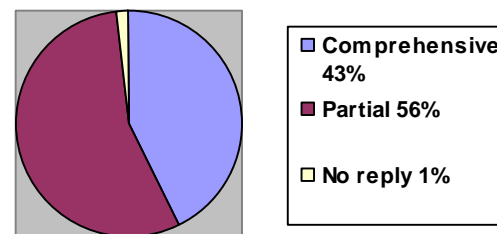
Number of volunteers within your National Society (incl. branches/chapters) currently involved in RFL:

RFL Needs Assessment

2. Since 2008, has your National Society carried out an assessment of the RFL needs and risks in your country?

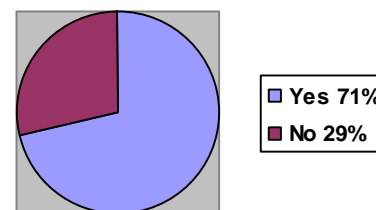


If your answer is "Yes" or "In progress," please indicate if the assessment is/was comprehensive (i.e. covered the most significant needs and risks in the whole country or in the most affected areas) or partial (i.e. to have a better understanding of the needs of specific population, region, situation, etc.)



Please indicate the year and aim(s) of the assessment(s):

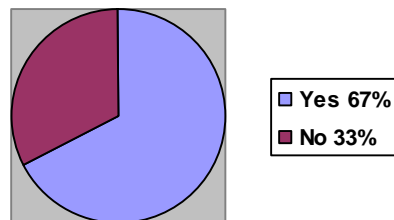
3. Is your National Society planning an RFL assessment in the near future (2011-2013)?



Please specify (if no, please indicate the reason: no need, no capacities, etc.):

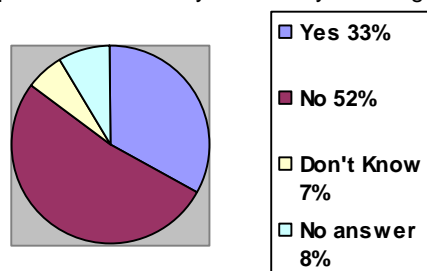
Strategic Institutional and Organizational Foundation for RFL

4. Do your National Society's strategic and/or development plans contain explicit RFL objectives and provisions?

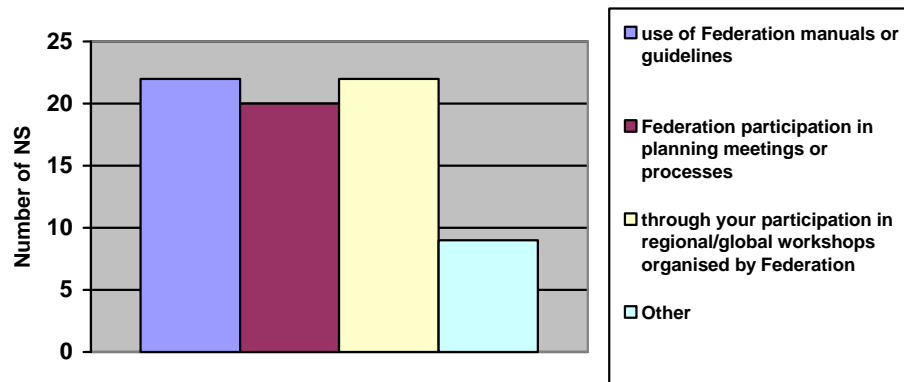


If yes, please indicate the title and date of the document(s):

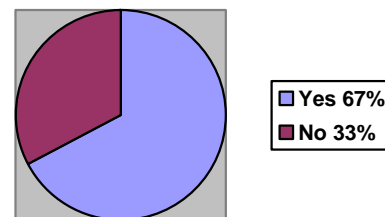
Did you receive assistance from the International Federation facilitating/guiding the incorporation of RFL in your Society's strategic or development plan?



If yes, was it in the form of:



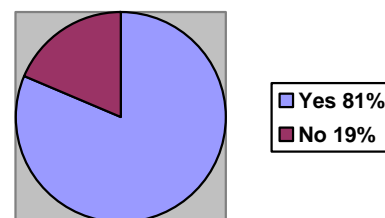
5. Does your National Society's operational plan (annual plan of activities) include resources (e.g. human resources, equipment, technical/communication materials) for responding to RFL needs and risks?



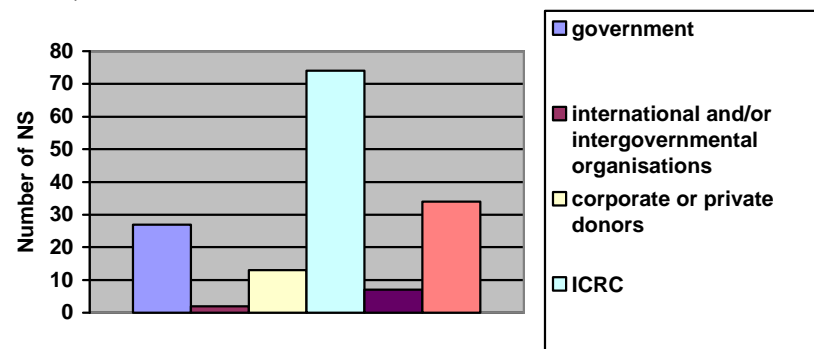
If yes, please indicate the title and date of the document(s):

Budget for RFL Activities

6. Is there an allocation for RFL activities in your National Society's budget?

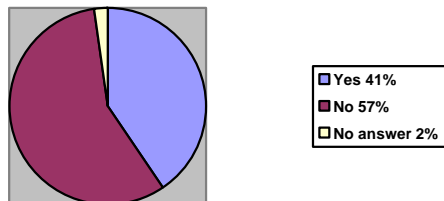


If yes, please indicate the source of funding for the budget covering RFL services and activities in 2010: (multiple answers possible)



If the funding is coming from different sources, please indicate the approximate share of each in percentage:

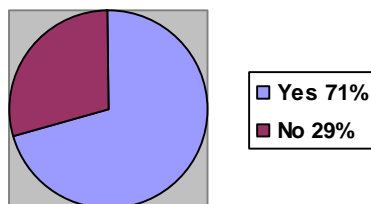
Since 2008, have you noticed any significant changes in the size of the budgetary allocation for RFL or in the source of funding?



If yes, please specify:

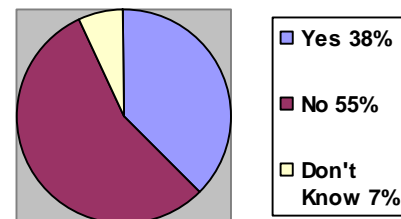
RFL Training and Awareness

7. Since 2008, has your National Society organized RFL training sessions or courses for managers, staff and volunteers involved in RFL?

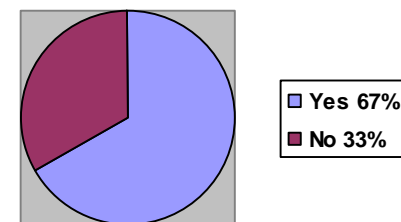


If yes, please specify (e.g. focus of training, target audience, frequency, duration):

8. In your opinion, are all leaders, managers, staff and volunteers (i.e. non-specialists in RFL) of your National Society sufficiently informed and aware about RFL activities provided by your National Society and by the Movement's Family Links Network?



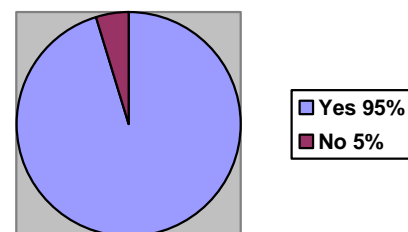
9. Are there standard materials available for RFL training and awareness building?



If yes, please describe briefly what type of material:

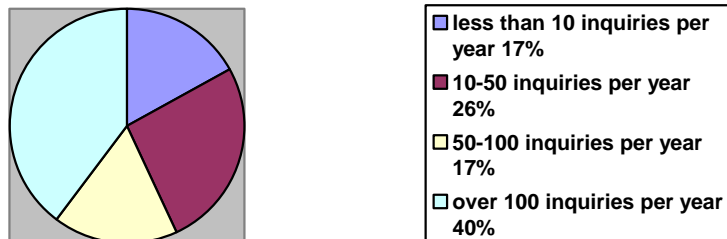
Working with Partners of the Family Links Network

10. Does your National Society regularly respond to inquiries (e.g. tracing requests, Red Cross Messages) received from other components of the Family Links Network (ICRC or other National Societies)?

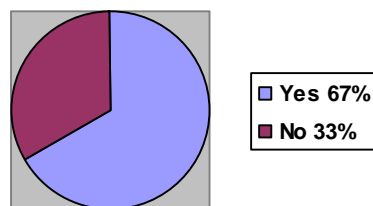


If yes, please describe briefly what kind of inquiries you get from other components of the Family Links Network:

If yes, please indicate to how many inquiries from the Family Links Network you respond approximately per year:



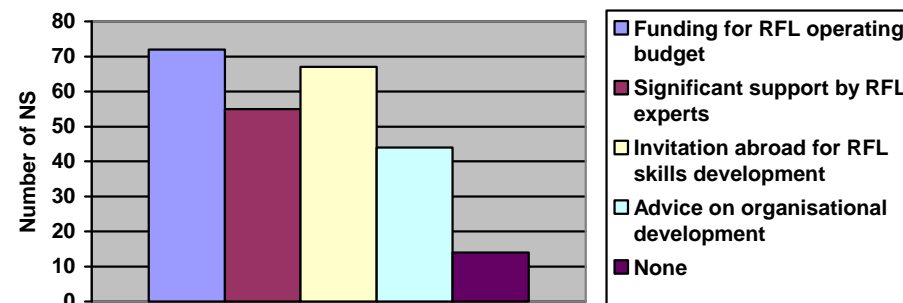
11. Since 2008, has your National Society carried out joint RFL operations with the ICRC within your own country? For instance, has your National Society delivered RFL services jointly with the ICRC or with its direct support (joint team working in the field, funding direct costs of operations, provision of equipment, etc.)?



If yes, please describe briefly the nature of these activities:

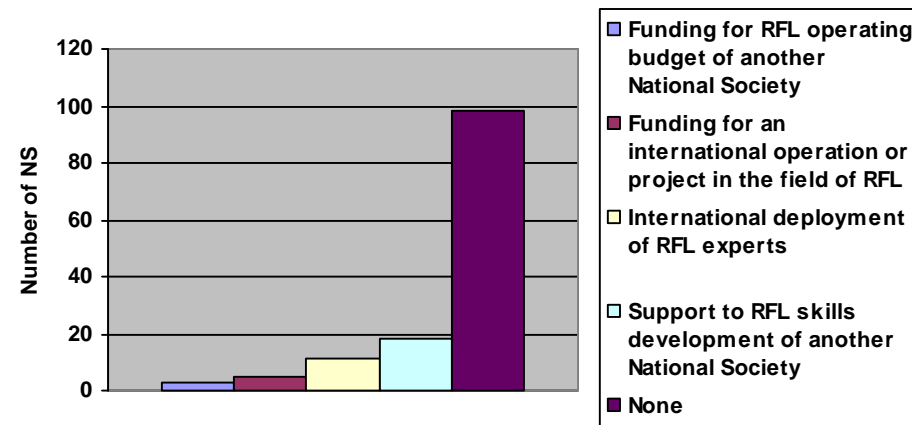
International Partnerships for RFL Capacity Building

12. Since 2008, has your National Society received any of the following kinds of support from the ICRC, International Federation or from another National Society? (multiple answers can be clicked)



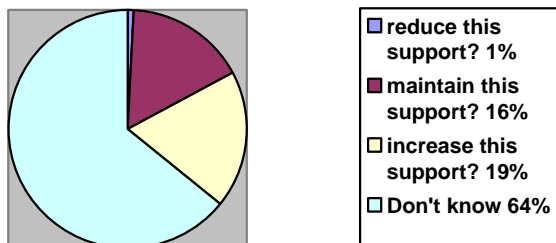
Please indicate who provided the support:

13. Since 2008, has your National Society provided any of the following kinds of support to another National Society, the ICRC and/or the Family Links Network? (multiple answers can be clicked)



Please indicate who received the support:

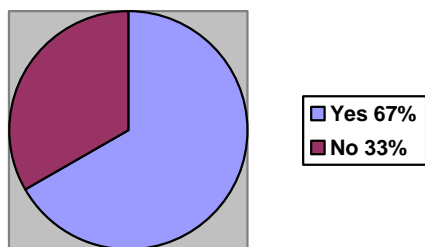
In the near future (2011-2013), does your National Society intend to



Please specify

Regional RFL Fora

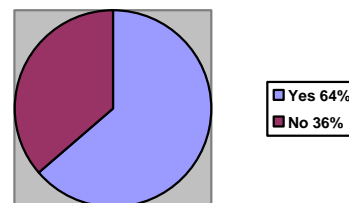
14. Since 2008, has someone from your National Society (staff, leader, manager) participated in a multilateral/regional RFL or another forum that included significant sessions or discussions on RFL?



If yes, please indicate the designation, organizer, year and place of meeting(s) as well as the level and approximate number of participants:

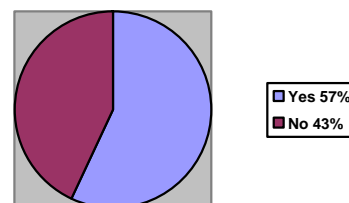
Preparedness for RFL Response in Disasters/Emergencies

15. Are RFL needs and risks incorporated in your current national disaster/emergency preparedness and response plan?



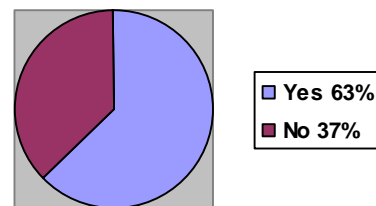
Please specify

16. Have any of the current members (staff and volunteers) of your emergency/disaster response team been trained to manage RFL response in emergencies?



If yes, please indicate how many

17. Is RFL sensitization included in training sessions for staff and volunteers involved in your National Society's emergency/disaster response team?



If yes, please indicate how many of these RFL-sensitized staff and volunteers are members of:

NDRT

RDRT

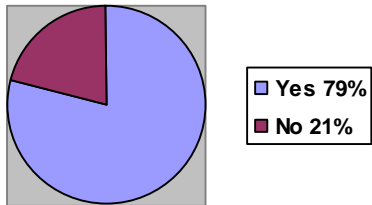
ERU

FACT

If other, please specify

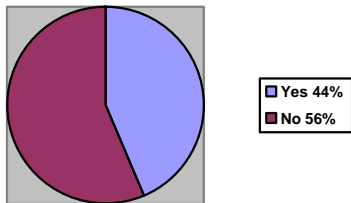
RFL Deployments in Disasters/Emergencies

18. Since 2008, has your country experienced a disaster/emergency?

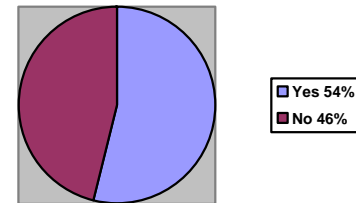


If yes, please specify what type(s) of disaster and how many people were affected: (e.g. injured, displaced, missing, dead)

Did your National Society carry out an RFL needs assessment?

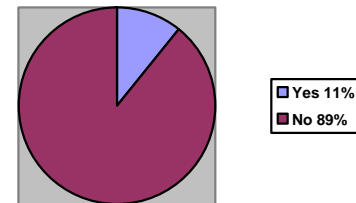


Did your National Society deploy staff and/or volunteers trained in RFL?



If yes, please indicate how many:

Did your National Society call for/receive support from the international pool of RFL specialists?



Annex 3: Overview of Selected Documents Available to the Movement

Most of the reference documents below are available in several languages on the [Tracing Activities Extranet](#) (TA Extranet), which also contains examples of good practice, forms, information on NS tracing activities and contact details, information on the RFL Strategy, and resources for fundraising and communication. It is updated regularly. The International Federation's [Disaster Management Information System \(DMIS\)](#) contains more information on disaster management and disaster response, as well as links to external agencies. Other resources produced or collected by the International Federation can be found on [FedNet](#).

Reference

- ***Restoring Family Links Strategy, Including Legal References (2009)***

The RFL Strategy for the Movement (2008-2018), including the implementation plan and legal references.

PDF copies are available on the [TA Extranet](#) (Chapter 09/01).

Hard copies can be ordered on the [ICRC website](#).

- ***Assessing Restoring Family Links Needs: Handbook for National Societies and the ICRC (2010)***

Handbook on conducting needs assessments. It contains information on carrying out assessments and analyses in emergency and non-emergency situations, reporting findings and translating the needs assessment into a plan of action for RFL.

PDF copies are available on the [TA Extranet](#) (Chapter 05/01).

- ***Guidelines on Providing Restoring Family Links Services to Persons Separated as a Results of Migration: An Internal Document for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (2010)***

Guidelines for the Movement on the provision of RFL services to people separated as a result of migration. It contains information on assessing needs, handling cases, searching for migrants and the promoting RFL services among migrants.

PDF copies are available on the [TA Extranet](#) (Chapter 05/03).

- ***The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies - Policy on Migration (2009)***

Document explaining the Movement's position on migration, which is based on the Fundamental Principles. It contains guidance for National Societies on responding to the needs of migrants and their families.

<http://www.ifrc.org/PageFiles/49631/migration-policy-en.pdf>

- ***The Movement Policy on Internal Displacement (2009)***

The Movement's Policy on Internal Displacement proposes 10 principles for addressing forced displacement. The policy guidelines refer to the importance of national law and international human rights, while emphasizing that international humanitarian law is the strongest international legal framework applicable in times of armed conflict, both for preventing displacement and for meeting the most pressing assistance and protection needs of the civilian population, including internally displaced persons.

<http://www.icrc.org/eng/assets/files/publications/icrc-002-1124.pdf>

- ***Inter-agency Guiding Principles on Unaccompanied and Separated Children (2004)***

Guidelines set within a framework and based on a set of principles intended to ensure that the rights and needs of separated children are effectively addressed. They aim to promote and support preparedness, coordination and good practice based on lessons learnt. The document addresses all aspect of an emergency - preventing separations, family tracing and reunification, to long-term solutions, etc. - and encourages the pooling of complementary skills and expertise.

http://www.icrc.org/eng/assets/files/other/icrc_002_1011.pdf

Hard copies can be ordered on the [ICRC website](#).

- ***Restoring Family Links in Disasters: Field Manual (2009)***

Manual, for the Movement, on providing RFL services in disasters. It contains background information and an overview of the activities needed in all phases of the response, from preparedness to monitoring and evaluation. It comes with a CD-ROM that contains the entire manual and practical tools such as job descriptions, sample forms and guidance on training.

PDF copies are available on the [TA Extranet](#) (Chapter 05/02).

- ***Disaster Response and Contingency Planning Guide***

Guidelines for the Movement on contingency planning for disasters. It contains information on the process of planning a response; the steps involved in developing the plan; communication and coordination during disaster response; implementing, updating and evaluating the plan; training specifically for disaster response; and standards, tools and templates.

<http://www.ifrc.org/Global/Publications/disasters/disaster-response-en.pdf>

- ***Simple Recovery Guidance (draft)***

This guide has been written to assist with the implementation of recovery programmes in disaster response. It aims to further strengthen the results of disaster response by promoting a uniform approach to early recovery amongst National Societies and the International Federation. It is designed for use primarily by managers, generalists and technical specialists involved in making decisions about programmes affecting the recovery of communities after disasters.

More information is available on [FedNet](#).

- ***Setting up a National Disaster Preparedness and Response Mechanism: Guidelines for National Societies 2010***

This publication presents a set of practical guidelines that are designed to provide support for National Societies in developing the processes, systems, individuals and teams involved in preparing for and responding to disasters.

More information is available on [FedNet](#).

- ***Guidelines for Assessment in Emergencies***

Guidelines for the Movement and external actors on carrying out assessments during emergencies. It provides information on planning assessments as well as on what assessments should consist of.

<http://www.ifrc.org/Global/Publications/disasters/guidelines/guidelines-for-emergency-en.pdf>

- ***Management of Dead Bodies after Disasters: a Field Manual for First Responders (2006, 2009)***

Field manual for the use of the Movement and external actors. It provides basic guidance for managing the recovery, basic identification, storage and disposal of dead bodies following disasters to ensure that no information is lost and that the dead are treated with respect. It also contains information on communication and the media, and on providing support to families. The manual is included as an annex in the field manual on RFL in disasters (see above).

PDF copies are available on the [TA Extranet](#) (Chapter 05/06).

Hard copies can be ordered on the [ICRC website](#).

- ***Missing People, DNA Analysis and Identification of Human Remains (2009)***

A guide for the Movement and external actors to best practice in armed conflicts and other situations of armed violence. It contains information on DNA analysis and forensic identification of human remains, covering both the technical aspects and ethical and legal issues.

A PDF copy is available on the Family Links Extranet (Chapter 05/06).

Hard copies can be ordered on the [ICRC website](#).

- ***Restoring Family Links. a Guide for National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (2001)***

Guide for National Societies with practical information on all aspects of the provision of RFL services by NS. It is due for revision in 2012.

Currently available in electronic format on the [TA Extranet](#) (Chapter 05/08, 05/09 or 05/10)

Promotion

- ***Restoring Family Links. Presenting the Strategy for a Worldwide Network (2009)***

Short leaflet explaining the RFL Strategy (2008-2018).

PDF copies are available on the [TA Extranet](#) (Chapter 07/01/03)

Hard copies can be ordered on the [ICRC website](#).

- ***The Need to Know: Restoring Links Between Dispersed Families (2005)***

Brochure explaining how the Family Links Network provides RFL services and why these services are so crucial for so many people.

PDF copies are available on the [TA Extranet](#) (Chapter 07/01/01)

Hard copies can be ordered on the [ICRC website](#).

- ***Restoring Links between Dispersed Family Members (2011)***

Leaflet summarizing the problems of families split up by war or disasters, and containing a description of the methods used by the Movement to restore family links.

PDF copies are available on the [TA Extranet](#) (Chapter 07/01/07)

Hard copies can be ordered on the [ICRC website](#).

- ***Restoring Family Links - Poster***

Hard copies can be ordered on the [ICRC website](#).

- ***The Missing: End the Silence - Poster***

Hard copies can be ordered on the [ICRC website](#).

- ***Missing Persons - A Hidden Tragedy (2007)***

Brochure containing testimonies, stories and quotations that provide a stark illustration of the issue of missing persons. It is intended to draw attention to the suffering endured by the families of missing persons and to raise awareness of the issue at the local, regional and international levels.

http://www.icrc.org/eng/assets/files/other/icrc_002_0929.pdf

Hard copies can be ordered on the [ICRC website](#).

- ***Toolkit for RFL Promotion in Emergencies***

Toolkit for RFL staff in the field that allows them to rapidly develop a communications response during an emergency.

In digital format on the [TA Extranet](#) (Chapter 11)