



Restoring Family Links

The confusion and chaos surrounding armed conflict and disasters often separates families just when they need each other most. This separation can cause unbearable psychological and emotional suffering. Often, the three short words “I am alive” may be all that is needed to ease the minds of loved ones. The American Red Cross, with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies throughout the world, helps by restoring family links.

What We Do

The American Red Cross helps to reconnect thousand of families each year, with services including:

- Locating missing loved ones separated by armed conflict or disaster;
- Sending Red Cross Messages between separated family members—civilians, prisoners of war and political detainees;
- Obtaining information about the fate of civilians, including those separated during the Holocaust and World War II;
- Providing Certificates of Detention to former detainees visited by ICRC;
- Securing ICRC travel documents for people who have been offered permanent resettlement; and
- Providing information and referral services.



Jamilah Mohammed holds a Red Cross letter from her sister Shafiqah. The two sisters reconnected after six years of separation.

How We Work

- As international and internal conflicts continue to rage around the world, and disasters become more frequent and severe in nature, separated families will continue to rely on the American Red Cross.
- The Restoring Family Links program is truly global in scope. The American Red Cross currently provides services in response to conflicts and conflict-affected countries that include:

Bosnia-Herzegovina	Former USSR	Rwanda
Cambodia	Former Yugoslavia	Sierra Leone
Democratic Republic of Congo	Hungary	Somalia
Eritrea	Iran	Sudan
Ethiopia	Iraq	Vietnam
Former Eastern Bloc; Cold War	Liberia	WWII; Holocaust Survivors

How to Access American Red Cross Restoring Family Links Services

- The backbone of the U.S. Restoring Family Links program is the over 700 American Red Cross chapters across the country. American Red Cross volunteers and staff are providing the vital first step in the Restoring Family Links process. Local chapter staff and volunteers handle inquiries and work directly with family members, communities, and other local agencies. To begin a search, contact your local American Red Cross chapter <http://www.redcross.org/>