

Engelsk = English

### **Tracing service**

The Red Cross offers assistance in re-establishing contact between persons that have become separated during wars and conflicts. We search for relatives, family members and friends.

If you have lost contact with a family member due to war, conflict or natural catastrophe, The Red Cross can initiate a search for the missing person.

The tracing service offers assistance to everyone, regardless of gender, age, political affiliations, nationality, ethnicity or religious beliefs. The service is free of charge.

### **Contact us**

Do you need help to search for your family because you have lost contact with one another during war, conflict or natural catastrophe?

### **Tracing service**

Telephone: +47 22 05 40 00

E-mail: [tracing@redcross.no](mailto:tracing@redcross.no)

Office address: Hausmannsgate 7, 0186 Oslo

### **Confidentiality**

The Red Cross has a duty of confidentiality. This is absolute and applies to all information received by the Red Cross. This means that we do not pass on information to the Directorate of Immigration, the police, public authorities or private agencies, without express consent from the person searching or his/her representative.

If war, conflict or natural catastrophe is not the reason for the loss of contact, the Salvation Army may be able to help. Unfortunately, in certain countries, the situation is such that the Red Cross is unable to search. There may be political or security-related reasons for this.

If you have lost contact with your family when fleeing to Europe and do not know where they are located, the Red Cross cannot search for them. However, what we can do is to register you in the photograph database "Trace the Face". In this way, you will be visible to those you have lost contact with. If they recognise your photograph, they can contact the Red Cross. We will then ask you if you wish to make contact with those who are searching.

Contact the Tracing Service at the Red Cross to find out whether the country where the search is to be carried out is accessible for tracing.

## **When can the Red Cross help me to find a missing person?**

If you think you know where the missing person is located, but you cannot make contact, the Red Cross, in principle, can search for the person.

We are completely dependent on exact information in order to start a search. It is not sufficient to just have a telephone number, or know in which country the missing person is located.

## **I know where the missing person is located**

The Red Cross can search in most countries of the world. However, many have lost contact with family members in the countries listed below. Therefore, we have chosen to clarify which information we require in order to be able to search in these countries:

### **Afghanistan**

Afghanistan is divided into provinces, districts and villages. In order for the Red Cross to be able to search in Afghanistan, the name of the province, district and village must be provided.

To find this information, you can enter into a Google search: "Afghanistan (name of province) land cover map". If you find the village via this link, print out the map, place a ring around the village and send the map to us.

- A village can be poorly defined – there can be many inhabitants, or the houses can be spread over a large area. To help the Red Cross to find the missing person, take the market in the town as a starting point, or a familiar building, a mosque, a bridge over a river or similar and draw a map that shows where the missing person's house is located in relation to this point.
  
- To increase the chances of finding the family, we ask that you state the name of the head of the village, other family members in the same village, neighbours, friends or others that know the family. These may have information about where the family can be located.
  
- The Red Cross only has the information contained in the form to assist in finding the missing person. There are no population registers, telephone catalogues or other lists that the Red Cross can use. For this reason, it is completely decisive that the information provided in the form is as detailed as possible.
  
- It can often be difficult to know whether the information provided is sufficient to allow a search to be initiated. If you wish to have an interpreted interview with an investigator, contact us in advance. We can then take part in the interpreted interview via telephone. We will then be certain that we have obtained all of the information we need.
  
- If you have completed the form yourself, please contact us before you send it to us. We will then be able to review the information provided together and assess whether we can initiate a search on the basis of the information gathered.

## **Somalia**

- In Somalia, the clans are very important. It is through the clans that it is possible to place a person and in this way trace the person concerned. You must state not only the main clan but the sub-clan also.
- The name of the person must be stated with three names: the person's own name, the father's name and the father's father's name. You must state where the person lives. As a starting point, take an easily recognisable building, a market, a bridge over a river or similar, then draw a map showing how to get from that place to the missing person's house.
- To increase the chances of finding the family, we ask that you state the names of other family members in the same village, neighbours, friends or others that know the family. These may have information about where the family can be located.
- In Somalia, the BBC has its own radio broadcasts where they request information about missing persons. If you wish for the missing person to be included in these broadcasts, you can ask the Red Cross about this service.

## **Ethiopia**

In Ethiopia, a person's name is composed of three names: their own name, father's name and father's father's name. These three names must always be stated in the tracing request.

- Towns in Ethiopia are presently divided into: Kifle Ketema, Kebele and house number. State this if known.
- Previously, a town was divided into Woreda (Kefetegna), Kebele and house number. If this system was used when the person searching left Ethiopia, note this in the tracing form.
- If the person searching is unable to provide an address in this way, a map must be drawn showing where the missing person lives. As a starting point, take an easily recognisable building, a market, a bridge over a river or similar, then draw a map showing how to get from that place to the missing person's house.
- To increase the chances of finding the family, we ask that you state the names of other family members in the same village, neighbours, friends or others that know the family. These may have information about where the family can be located.

### **I do not know where the missing person is**

If you do not know where the missing person is, the Red Cross can:

2) Publish a photograph of the person searching in a database at the International Red Cross Committee in Geneva. The photograph will then be accessible to everyone. This is also a way to make oneself visible to the person who is missing. If anyone recognises the person in the photograph, they will contact the Red Cross. The Red Cross will then ask the person registered in the database whether they wish to make contact with those who are searching. It is always the persons in the database who decide whether they wish to make contact – not the Red Cross.

### **Is there any danger to the person who is being searched for?**

It is the person searching that is most familiar with the local circumstances, and must evaluate whether a search should be initiated. This risk evaluation cannot be done by the Red Cross. The Red Cross will speak to a great number of people in order to find the missing person. Everyone at the location, within a short time, will become aware that a search is being carried out for a certain person/family. If it is possible that this will represent a danger to those being searched for, an evaluation must be made of whether tracing should be initiated.

### **Send Red Cross messages**

Red Cross messages are used in situations where war, conflict or natural catastrophes prevent normal postal services. The message service is free of charge. The Red Cross also arranges contact between prisoners of war and civil internees and their next of kin.

A Red Cross message must only contain family-related information. It cannot contain information concerning religious, political or military matters. The Red Cross will read the message before it is sent and will censor any prohibited information. For this reason, the Red Cross message must be written in Norwegian or English language. Photographs can be enclosed; however, money or other objects cannot be sent with the Red Cross message.

Messages must be written on standardised forms and handed in to the Red Cross. They are distributed via the Red Cross network, comprised of 190 Red Cross and Red Crescent national associations, the International Red Cross (ICRC) and the Red Crescent Movement (IFRC).

### **Tracing in connection with the Second World War**

The Red Cross can attempt to find information concerning prisoners of war, prisoners that were interned in concentration camps, German soldiers stationed in Norway during the Second World War, frontline soldiers and others.

**When will I receive a response from the Red Cross?**

When the case has been processed by the Norwegian Red Cross, you will receive confirmation via e-mail or by letter. Thereafter, the case will be sent to the country where tracing will be carried out.

It can often take from six months to one year before the Norwegian Red Cross receive a response in a case. When we have received a response, we will contact you and inform you of the result. You will always receive a reply from us, regardless of whether we have been successful in tracing the missing person or not.