



COMING TOGETHER

A critical analysis of key issues, actors and tools in the current global landscape of Family Tracing & Reunification

STUDY REPORT

IKEA Foundation



SAMUEL HALL.



Samuel Hall is an independent think tank with offices in Asia (Afghanistan) and East Africa (Kenya, Somalia). We specialise in socio-economic surveys, private and public sector studies, and impact assessments for a range of humanitarian and development actors. With a rigorous approach, and the inclusion of academic experts, field practitioners, and a vast network of national researchers, we access complex settings and gather accurate data. We bring innovative insights and practical solutions to addressing the most pressing social, economic and political issues of our time.

IKEA Foundation



IKEA Foundation's mission is to create substantial and lasting change by funding holistic, long-term programmes in some of the world's poorest communities that address children's fundamental needs: home, health, education and a sustainable family income, while helping communities fight and cope with climate change. Our vision is to work toward a world where children living in poverty have more opportunities to create a better future for themselves and their families.

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Cover Photo: © Anna Pantelia - A Syrian mother and children travel from Athens to Berlin to reunite with the father, who received asylum in Germany. The family reunification process took two years.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CEO	Chief Executive Officer
COO	Chief Operating Officer
CPIMS	Child Protection Information Management System
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CTA	Central Tracing Agency
DfID	Department for International Development
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
EASO	European Asylum Support Office
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
FTR	Family Tracing & Reunification
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
HHC	Hungarian Helsinki Committee
ICMP	International Commission on Missing Persons
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IDTR	Identification, Documentation, Tracing, Reunification
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
IO	International Organisation
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IRC	International Rescue Committee
ISS	International Social Service
KII	Key Informant Interview
KIND	Kids In Need Of Defence
MIT	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
MNO	Mobile Network Operator
MOOC	Massive Open Online Course
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OFDA	Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance
RC	Red Cross/Crescent
StC	Save the Children
UK	United Kingdom
UMA	Unaccompanied Minor Asylum Seeker
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
US / USA	United States / United States of America

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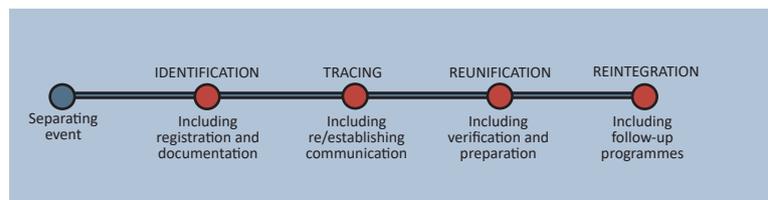
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Across the globe, people of all ages are getting separated from their families and communities on a daily basis. No matter the context, **separation and lost contact leave many people in highly vulnerable situations**; without the protective network of one's family, further displacement can occur easily, and mental and physical well-being are threatened. Separated children in particular are vulnerable and need support. To overcome separation and to mitigate its consequences, individuals and various support providers worldwide engage in the task of Family Tracing and Reunification (FTR). But while reunification appears to be a simple goal, achieving it is very complex. Separation within the contexts of humanitarian crisis and/or across borders is particularly difficult to overcome, as security situations and **convoluted, confusing and sometimes hardening legal frameworks create significant barriers for reunification.**

The study 'Coming Together' by Samuel Hall, commissioned by IKEA Foundation, provides a **'sophisticated picture of tracing and reunification tools, from the perspective of both separated persons and institutions using these'**. Based on a literature review and 22 additional key informant interviews with FTR providers and experts worldwide, the study focused on the current landscape of FTR tools and methods, their respective actors and key challenges for accessing and providing the best FTR support services possible, in the present and in the future. The findings of the study are designed to enable the Foundation and other engaged donors to create evidence-based interventions in the FTR sector.

To overcome separation and to mitigate its consequences, individuals and various support providers worldwide engage in the task of Family Tracing and Reunification (FTR).

In line with IKEA Foundations general approach, also **FTR must be understood as a holistic fashion; precisely, as process for affected individuals and their support providers, that starts with the separating event but does not stop with mere reunification.** To mitigate further separation and ensure the well-being of separated persons in the long term, especially for children, further support regarding actual reintegration into families and societies is necessary. Hence, for the purpose of this study, FTR and its support services are looked at as parts of a holistic process that covers the following 'formal' steps:



While individual efforts in FTR are often highly 'informal', the formalized institutional support services by actors such as International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), UNICEF, Save The Children, Refunite and many others also often rely on 'informal' means of communications and referrals – **the 'informal' and the 'formal' are thus inseparable in the current FTR landscape.** The direct participation of separated persons themselves in FTR support services is practiced and supported by many stakeholders as communities are sensitised and directly involved in FTR efforts, online platforms and apps give separated persons the possibility to 'self-trace' their missing relatives, and reunification procedures highly rely on individual engagement, etc.

On the other hand, the crucial 'do no harm' policy of many stakeholders makes FTR a field of

The approaches and precise tools of FTR are in a constant trade-off position between protection needs and enabling an extended reach through participation.

major protection concerns, especially regarding (digital) data protection and the potential exposure of separated persons to the public and/or authorities. This is especially important when children are involved. FTR tools and methods therefore cannot always use publicly available or highly participatory means of tracing, such as online platforms. The approaches and precise tools of FTR are in a constant trade-off position between protection needs and enabling an extended reach through participation. Given the large variety of separation contexts and individual histories, **there can be no one-size-fits-all tool or service that can account for all possible FTR support needs.**

After decades of expansion and professionalisation, the current global landscape of FTR support providers ranges from international organisations, UN agencies, and global and local NGOs, to government actors and others. But very few of these actors are actually involved in all parts of an FTR process. Rather, some focus on the tracing aspects (eg Refunite and ICRC), others support separated persons in the legal/bureaucratic struggles for (cross-border) reunification (especially smaller NGOs and societies), some provide reintegration support but most do not, and others are only focused on advocacy or capacity building tasks (eg Terres des hommes and EASO). Based on factors such as '(global) reach', 'FTR expertise', 'innovative potential' and others, **the FTR actor landscape can be segmented into four kinds of FTR providers, that are play crucial parts in supporting separated persons worldwide** (see below).

Main Actors

Large players, primarily prominent IOs and INGOs

These actors provide the majority of FTR support services worldwide and hold in-depth knowledge, expertise and extensive networks to their advantage. They regularly collaborate on operational and advocacy level but showcase rather slow pace in adapting and creating new (technological) means for FTR. Examples are: ICRC, UNICEF, UNHCR, IOM, Save the Children and the International Rescue Committee (IRC).

Discreet Actors

Important players with little visibility

These actors have a strong expertise in FTR-related topics and hold important yet niche roles in the global FTR landscape; examples are the International Social Services (ISS), a child-protection federation of 120 agencies worldwide, and the International Commission on Missing Persons (ICMP) working on topics of missing persons in a rule-of-law based approach. While being important, these actors have rather limited visibility and are not as innovative as Disrupting Actors.

Disrupting Actors

Small players, trying to create change

Examples for these actors in this study are the online platform Refunite, the grassroots app *Find Me in Kakuma*, and the UK-based NGO Safe Passage. These comparably small and less endowed actors are changing the status quo of the FTR landscape by introducing new technologies or by actively contesting the legal landscape.

Supporting Actors

Various players, supporting separated persons or other actors

These actors are highly diverse in their scope and involvement in FTR efforts but are often crucial responders 'on the ground', by giving direct support to separated persons, or by working on an advocacy level. Globally, not as impactful and crucial as Main Actors and not as innovative as Disrupting Actors, these players are, for example: national Red Cross/Crescent societies, World Vision, Plan International, Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Hungarian Helsinki Committee, Terres des hommes, and many others.

While direct funding and direct private sector involvement in the current FTR landscape remain low – resulting in lack of resources as a main challenge for all actors – the collaborations between actors paint an ambiguous picture, with many being only rarely involved in inter-agency working-groups and such likes.

Although contexts may present specific challenges, the following key barriers in accessing or providing FTR support services have been identified:

Key barriers in Accessing FTR support (client perspective)

- **Lack of Awareness:** Many separated persons around the globe do simply not know about available support services; this barrier is connected to language constraints.
- **Fear of Exposure:** As many separated persons are in vulnerable, sometimes illegal, situations, they can be afraid that FTR support can lead to exposure to authorities or hostile groups.
- **Lack of Trust:** In combination of limited awareness and fear of exposure, separated persons often have no experience with FTR support, and hence are (initially) distrusting the potential benefits.

Key barriers in Providing FTR support (provider perspective)

- **Limited Resources:** Actors across all geographies and scales are struggling with limited funding and (trained) staff for their various FTR efforts.
- **Lack of Collaboration:** Despite improvements, the potential benefits of collaborations are still not fully exploited, especially regarding data-matching and cross-referencing.
- **Limited (local) Capacity:** Especially ‘on the ground’ and in situations of humanitarian crisis, limited FTR capacity/expertise of local staff, government actors, and others is a barrier in providing the best FTR support possible.

While innovations and disruptions in the technological/tracing aspect of FTR were necessary until recently, general support services and a focus on the actual reunification aspect have become more relevant.

Despite recent advancements in utilizing ICT for FTR, **the landscape of available tools and services has only shown slow adaptations to changes in communications and mobility patterns of potential ‘clients’ in the past.**

Tracing tools are still dominated by searches on the ground, informal (e)mail communications, registration at physical locations, etc. Increasing connectivity and technical literacy worldwide, including separated persons, are contributing to a shift in the FTR support needs landscape, as people stay more and more connected, via Facebook, WhatsApp, Viber and such like.

While innovations and disruptions in the technological/tracing aspect of FTR were necessary until recently, general support services and a focus on the actual reunification aspect have become more relevant. As the landscape of actors has grown, so has the portfolio of available tools and methods, as detailed below.

Digital/online tools & services

Primarily focused on the tracing part of FTR

Examples include: **tracing platforms**, such as Refunite and ICRC’s *Trace the Face*; **(mobile) apps**, such as *Find Me in Kakuma* and Google’s *Person Finder*; **holistic case management tools**, such as *CPIMS+* (by UNICEF and others) that have embedded FTR ‘features’; **digital but internal databases** by various organisations; and **social media and messenger apps**.

Analogue/offline tools & services

Primarily used for FTR tasks ‘on the ground’

Examples include: **communications services**, such as phone calls and *Red Cross Messages* (RCMs); **tracing methods**, such as message boards and

media announcements; **transportation support** for reunification; **physical contact points and offices**; **active visits** of locations, communities and families for various FTR services; and **active community involvement** in FTR services ‘on the ground’.

General support services & tasks

Primarily used for FTR tasks ‘on the ground’

Examples include: **legal support or advice** for reunification purposes; **financial support** for reunification (very rare); **educational and psychosocial support** after/for reunification; **advocacy tasks** (primarily aimed at reunification barriers); and **capacity building** (internal and for other stakeholders, including communities).

Given the sheer lack of available evaluations of FTR-focused tools and programmes, it is hard to impossible to estimate which approaches are most successful in which context. However, **analysing and mapping the current landscape of FTR tools and methods underlines three key issues:**

- 1) The majority of tools and services along the FTR process are disconnected**, addressing one element (e.g. reunification or tracing) rather than taking a holistic approach.
- 2) The key issue for tracing/identification tools and services is not a lack of available tools or platforms but rather the disconnect between databases:** other than ICRC and Refunite, no actor and tool is able to directly match/trace across borders. Even within agencies, most databases are highlight disconnected, limited to the national level.
- 3) The key issue for support in reunification/reintegration is not on operational level but rather that the general legal landscape for (cross-border) reunification is highly problematic:** without external support, separated persons worldwide are often not

able to overcome separation, due to financial, bureaucratic and legal constraints; especially for cross-border cases.

The need for FTR support around the globe is immense, and further donor involvement in this topic is called for to further ‘reshape’ and enhance the sector. In the past, donors such as the IKEA Foundation emphasised technological aspects (of tracing support) as a crucial realm of intervention. Based on the developments identified in this report, the current global FTR landscape is experiencing a pivotal moment. While innovation and disruptions, in structural and technological terms, have in the past been highly necessary, consolidation, increased collaboration and capacity building should now become the focal points of global interventions.

The current global FTR landscape is experiencing a pivotal moment; increased collaboration and capacity building should now become the focal points of global interventions.

Subsequently, and combining the aims of ‘reshaping humanitarian response’ as well as investing in ‘long-term, holistic programmes’, engaged donors such as the IKEA Foundation should focus their attention on the following four areas of intervention:

1) Reshaping and optimizing the FTR process and its tools

This requires better integration of the various tools (and their actors) along the FTR process; tracing and reunification in particular need a stronger connection and direct/professional referral mechanism. This can be achieved by stronger collaboration efforts (see below), but investments into holistic case management tools that approach FTR as a procedural topic,

interlinked with other issues such as child protection or refugee assistance, are highly promising as well. **The child-protection focused and only partially FTR-related CPIMS+ tool showcases a high potential to bridge these gaps by providing an internal online and offline application.**

2) Reshaping and optimising the FTR actor landscape

Further collaborations between the various global stakeholders are necessary to optimise the current FTR landscape. Inter-agency working groups (primarily by Main Actors) are already in place, but two disconnects remain: a) limited integration of small/local FTR stakeholders and their distinct expertise, and b) complete lack of data-matching or cross-referencing between the uncountable databases of separated persons. **First steps to integrate various datasets have been attempted by UNICEF, Save the Children and others, but without bearing fruits yet.**

3) Reshaping the legal landscape to allow separated persons to access reunification

Legal support and advice for (cross-border) reunifications are one of the most important tools to actually overcome separation, legally. In this regard, supporting various actors that provide such support (eg DRC, Hungarian Helsinki Committee, the New Zealand Refugee Family Reunification Trust) is one option. However, **approaches that actively contest the respective legal and policy landscapes on national and regional levels (such as the work of Safe Passage) are even most promising as they go beyond the individual case.**

4) Reshaping and enhancing the capacity of FTR stakeholders

Many FTR efforts continue to rely on the involvement of various individuals 'on the ground'. The sensitivity of FTR issues as well as the capacity and expertise of local staff, government actors, separation-affected communities and others is a crucial factor for the actual success of holistic and integrated FTR services. To enhance capacity and awareness is major task that can be approached by general awareness campaigns (directed at the public and politics), but the direct training of individuals should be given priority.

By addressing the core priorities above, the global FTR landscape can be 'reshaped' in an integrated, consolidating fashion, improving the general ability to provide the best FTR support possible. In addition, FTR-related technological aspects are worth to receive attention; for example: supporting the further expansion of (mobile) connectivity and technical literacy, or investing into the implementation of digital identity options to substitute for missing documents.

Regardless of the intervention, engaged donors such as IKEA Foundation should, in the future, rigorously demand thorough evaluations of the supported projects or programmes. **The lack of evaluations on FTR focussed interventions is a major problem for the future design and implementation of tools, methods and collaborations.** In this regard, additional research into the actual experiences of separated persons in individual and institutionalised FTR processes is also called for.

Children separated from the parents or guardians are a global phenomenon along various migration routes and within conflict zones. The reasons for separation vary by local and individual contexts and are by no means limited to migration and conflict: children can get separated voluntarily but also due to abduction, trafficking, in the aftermath of a natural disaster, incarceration, forced recruitment,¹ and others may “seek to reunite with family members already abroad.”² What is similar in their various situations is an immensely increased vulnerability to (further) physical and psychological harm, as they usually lack a protective network of present relatives which could shield from abuse, (further) trafficking, detention, unjust deportations, sexual exploitation and other threats.³ The large body of documents and (academic) literature on the topic often distinguishes between ‘unaccompanied minors’ and ‘separated children’, due to their different protection or care needs:

- The term ‘unaccompanied minors’ refers to children that have been completely “separated from parents or other legal or customary caregivers, as well as other adult relatives”;
- The term ‘separated children’ refers to children that have ‘only’ been “separated from both parents, or from their legal or customary caregiver, but are accompanied by another adult.”⁴

However, critical voices about this distinct categorisation (especially within policy and legal procedures) have been raised by Key Informants of this study, as the level of vulnerability and the need for protection has to be determined on a case-by-case basis and not just by broad categories.⁵ Acknowledging this concern and for enhancing readability, this report will use the term ‘separated children’ as a generalization.

Overall, the number of separated children worldwide seems to have skyrocketed in recent years. Actors across the globe record a large increase with an estimated 300,000 separated children moving across borders between 80 countries in 2015/2016.

Overall, the number of separated children worldwide seems to have skyrocketed in recent years. While no public, precise, reliable (global) data exists, actors across the globe record a large increase with an estimated 300,000 separated children moving across borders between 80 countries in 2015/2016, nearly a fivefold increase from recorded numbers in 2011/2012.⁶ Many separated children stay undetected, and may not cross borders, so actual figures may be significantly higher: Mexico deported about 15,000 separated children just from its Northern Triangle region in 2016,⁷ and at least 20,000 cross the Mexican-US border each year, in 2015 more than 23,000 separated children have claimed asylum in Sweden alone.⁸ Apart from Central America, the Middle East and Europe, comparably high numbers of separated (migrant) children are also recorded in Southeast Asian countries, South Africa and Western Africa.⁹

The scope and severity of child separation in displacement or conflict situations today is probably unparalleled in history. Accordingly, the specific FTR and protection needs of such children receive particular attention in this report.

1. INTRODUCTION

Each day, people of all ages around the world are getting separated from their families and other close relatives.¹⁰ Separation and loss of contact can happen for reasons ranging from armed conflict, internal displacement, injury, natural disasters, forced migration and human trafficking, to simple loss of contact details of phones storing these. While separation seems to occur more frequently during man-made than during naturally caused emergencies,¹¹ it is “generally distressing and can have long-lasting negative consequences”¹² for everyone affected. Reduced mental and physical health, constant sorrow, increasing social problems, increased risks for substance abuse and, in the case of refugees and asylum seekers, decreased chances of successful integration in host countries or communities – these are just some of the examples of negative consequences stemming from family separations.¹³

Separated and/or missing persons – the so-called “primary victims”¹⁴ – face immensely increased risks and vulnerabilities: in conflict zones and during irregular migration, they are more likely to be subjected to human right violations, forced recruitment, detention and various forms of violence.¹⁵ Separated children are at particular risk (see Spotlight - Unaccompanied Minors and Separated Children).¹⁶ On the other side, the families of the separated and/or missing can be ‘left behind’ with reduced socio-economic resilience if the absent person was bringing in income.¹⁷



© Preethi Nallu - Eleven year old Abuzar from Afghanistan has been stranded in Serbia because of the closure of borders that lead to Europe. He is hoping to reach Sweden where some of his family members have received asylum.

Therefore, the tracing of and reunification with family members are often the first priority of separated persons, at least after they have overcome situations of immediate danger.¹⁸ Humanitarian actors worldwide also overwhelmingly recognise the immense need of special protection and assistance for separated persons, especially children.¹⁹ **To overcome separation and ‘lost contact’ individuals and support providers are engaging with the task of Family Tracing and Reunification (FTR).** This process can include ‘formal’ and ‘informal’ means (see Chapter 2), online and offline communications, and various (formal) steps, such as:

- **Identification** (including registration and documentation)
- **Tracing** (including re/establishing communication)
- **Reunification** (including verification of family relations and preparation)
- **Reintegration** (including follow-up programmes)

However, the ‘life goal’ of reunification and the existing support mechanism for such are unlikely to be implemented in a straightforward fashion. Separated persons and support actors around the globe have to navigate in a “bumpy landscape”²⁰ of legal systems, methods, tools and technological challenges. This landscape and its actors are at the core of this study and will be explored throughout the report.

Separated persons and support actors around the globe have to navigate in a ‘bumpy landscape’ of legal systems, methods, tools and technological challenges.

1.1. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The IKEA Foundation is already supporting FTR efforts globally, a crucial contribution to the successful protection of dispersed families and individuals, especially children. In order to support the positive development and strengthening of FTR actions, a critical assessment of the current state of FTR programmes worldwide is necessary. This will allow the Foundation to make evidence based decisions about funding and direction, in line with its mission “to create substantial and lasting change [...] by funding holistic, long-term programmes.”²¹ To date, while organisations and working groups have issued a large body of documents (such as guidelines and policy papers) on FTR in recent years, no comprehensive and systematic overview about FTR efforts worldwide exists. The main objective of this study is thus:

To provide a sophisticated picture of tracing and reunification tools, from the perspective of both separated persons and institutions using these.

This main objective can then be broken down in three sub-objectives, which will – by addressing them – create the required ‘sophisticated’ picture. These are:

1. **From a *practical* perspective**, to identify the key stakeholders and tools currently related to FTR, and gather information about how they function;
2. **From an *analytical* perspective**, to consider the appropriateness and relevance of the above, identifying the most successful approaches as well as gaps in theoretical and practical knowledge; and,
3. **From a *strategic* perspective**, to provide recommendations to the IKEA Foundation, based on the practical and analytical perspectives, for future strategic decisions.

1.2. METHODOLOGY

To achieve the study's main objective of 'providing a sophisticated picture of tracing and reunification tools from the perspective of both separated persons and the institutions using these', the research for this study used two key tools:

- **Firstly**, an iterative desk review and analysis of the existing data and evidence on FTR, with a global scope and a particular focus on methods allowing separated persons and their families to participate in this (focus time period: 2000 onwards).
- **Secondly**, a stakeholder and mechanism mapping, based on both the literature review and interviews conducted with Key Informants within the sector (KIIs). This step allowed for a triangulation of data and the mapping of stakeholders and actions along the FTR process and other dimensions (see Chapter 2).

The research and analysis were guided by specific research questions in the following categories: *Models; Use & Users; Implementation & Coordination; Challenges; Evaluation; and Sustainability & Scalability* (for a full overview of the research questions, see ANNEX 1).

While an indicative rapid online survey with FTR key actors was also conducted, response rates were too low to be statistically significant. The survey was disseminated to more than 80 direct contacts identified as actors and network nodes in the FTR landscape, including but not limited to representatives of large IOs and NGOs, such as UNICEF, ICRC, UNHCR, IOM and others. In addition, these persons were asked to forward the survey within their networks (inter-agency and intra-agency), and several contacts reportedly did so. Finally, the survey was further shared by the IKEA Foundation. However, after an extended survey period of more than three weeks and two follow-up reminder emails, only 12 responses were received – too few for further analysis.²²

DESK REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

The research team utilised a systematic and iterative approach for the desk review with three key phases:

- 1) **Identifying and reviewing** existing literature and data, selecting appropriate ones to include in the results;
- 2) **Assessing and analysing** the data presented and its relevance to research objectives; and
- 3) **Identifying knowledge gaps** where additional research is required in the future.

The review drew on a wide range of reports by practitioners, academic studies, other research publication, policy documents and guidelines as well as media content (newspaper/online articles). The (online) search for these documents was conducted on the following websites and platforms: Google Scholar, ResearchGate, Project Muse, Academia.edu, CRIN, Save the Children's Resource Centre, Better Care Network, and the online portals of major organisations, such as UNHCR, UNICEF and IOM. The search terms included the following examples and various combinations of those: *family tracing, family reunification, separated persons, separated children, reuniting refugees, family reunion, missing persons, FTR, IDTR*, and others.

By reviewing abstracts and introductions, the potential relevance of the search results to the research questions was assessed. If deemed potentially relevant, a further snowballing search within the bibliographies of the respective documents was conducted. This initial yet iterative search led to the identification of 159 potentially relevant documents (Search 1). Over the course of the study, two additional literature assessments were conducted: a)

literature that was recommended or provided by Key Informants (Search 2: 32 documents), and b) literature that was assessed for contextual information during the report writing process (Search 3: 33 documents).

Table 1: Results of the literature search, review and scoring process

Score	TOTAL	Search 1	Search 2	Search 3	REVIEWED	Reviewed %
3	6	1		5	5	83
4	2	1		1	1	50
5	11	7	2	2	4	36
6	16	7	2	7	11	65
7	30	21	8	1	13	43
8	25	21	1	3	12	48
9	42	34	7	1	14	33
10	28	26	2		28	100
11	34	24	8	2	34	100
12	20	9	2	9	20	100
13	8	6			8	100
14	2	2			2	100
TOTAL	224	159	32	33	152	68

The ‘strength of evidence’ of each document was assessed and documented, inspired by DFID’s ‘Strength of Evidence’ approach and literature scoring process (focused on four dimensions: publication type, reliability, currentness, and thematic focus).²³ This scoring process led to a maximum score of 16 points per document; documents with scores of 10 points and higher were directly included in the analysis. Other documents with lower scores were in some cases referenced later in the report writing process, if they provided missing contextual information. For a full overview of all identified or reviewed documents, see ANNEX 2 – a general overview can be found in Table 1.

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

With the support of the IKEA Foundation, the research team identified local and global stakeholders/providers of the FTR ‘scene’ from IOs, UN agencies, INGOs, NGO, private sector/donor representatives, and several other academic or additional experts on FTR. **Nearly 70 contacts were approached over the course of this study, and a total of 22 Key Informants were directly interviewed via Skype, email or in person (KIIs).** For these conversations, an open-ended questionnaire was used. The interviews followed a narrative approach based on the interviewee’s background and the actual FTR involvement of the respective Key Informant. For a full overview of approached or interviewed contacts, see ANNEX 3.

1.3. FRAMING FTR

Professional FTR services have a long history; despite this, the landscape and frameworks around them remain complicated. Although several (global) legal frameworks protect ‘family unity’, the right to ‘family reunification’ is a highly contested and convoluted area of policies and legislations. Most changes to FTR mechanisms and approaches have been reactive, triggered by past disruptions to the system, as historically the landscape of actors and tools has been rather slow in proactively adapting techniques. Currently, FTR needs worldwide are significant, and the scope of ongoing forced displacement suggests this will not change soon. For a comprehensive overview of the historical and legal frameworks on global level and for a more detailed look into the potential hotspots of FTR needs and service provisions, see ANNEX 4.

It is hard to impossible to estimate the actual extent of global separation of families for two primary reasons:

1. **Separated persons, including children, may stay voluntarily or involuntarily unidentified** if they actively avoid being registered or seeking help (see Chapter 2), or when they slip through identification procedures.
2. **Very few FTR actors publish full numbers on their caseloads.**

In 2016, ...

ICRC recorded at total of 20,963 new tracing requests, and facilitated more than 570,000 phone calls between separated family members.²⁴

The network of NGOs and governmental actors of the ISS worked on an estimated “20,000 family tracing cases and 14,000 family reunification cases.”²⁵

“Unaccompanied or separated children – mainly Afghans, and Syrians – lodged some 75,000 asylum applications in 70 countries.”²⁶

UNICEF and partners worldwide reunified more than 21,000 separated children with their families or caregivers, and an additional 33,000 separated children were provided with alternative or foster family care.²⁷

The rather small NGO War Child UK, “identified 2,387 children in need of reunification with their families and communities. The majority were unaccompanied children deported from Iran, and found at the border between Afghanistan and Iran.”²⁸

As of today, ...

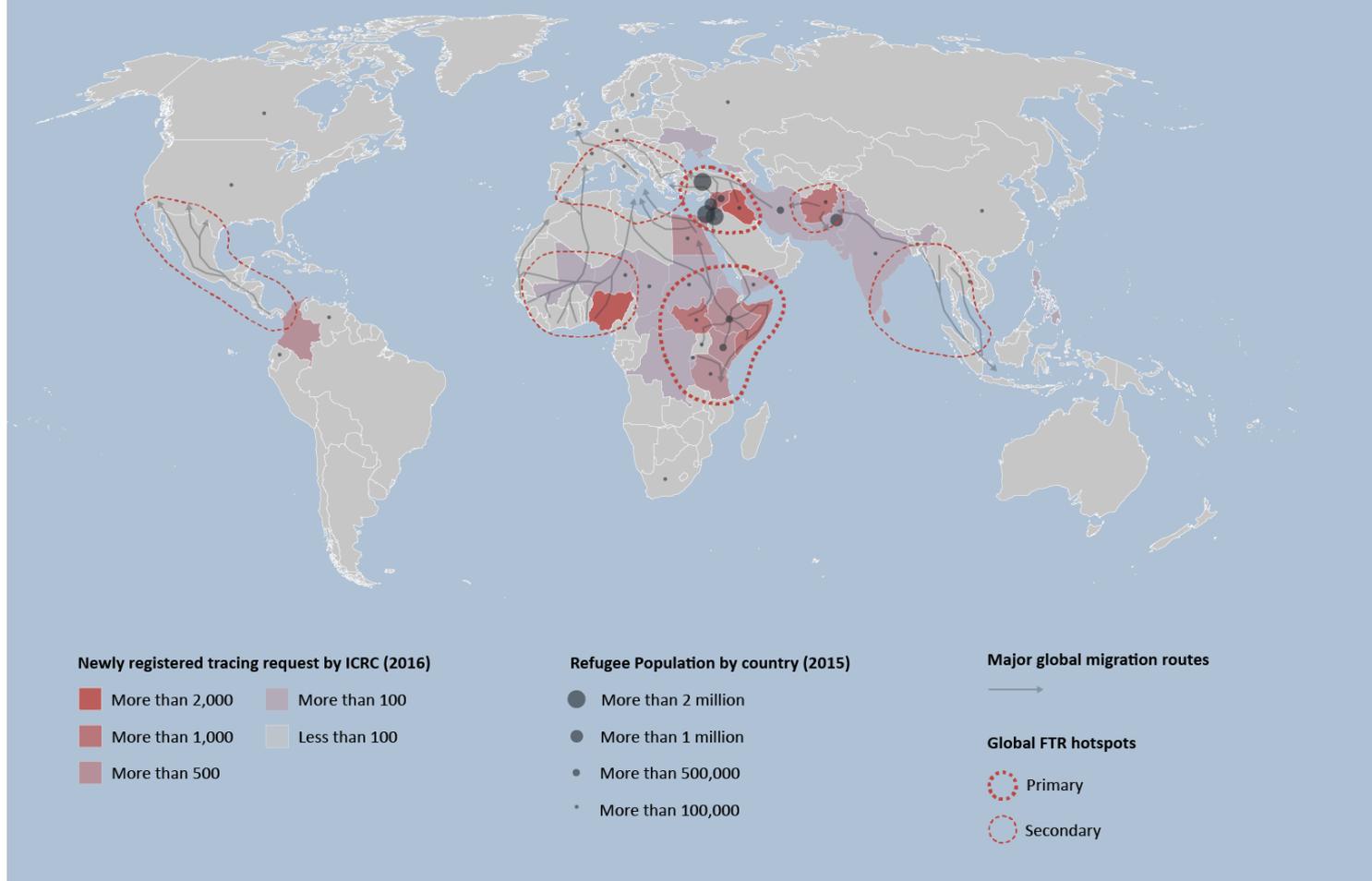
Refunite currently holds a reported number of over 600,000 members on their platform.²⁹

The *Find Me in Kakuma* app registered more than 3,000 profiles in their first month of testing.³⁰

ICRC’s *Trace the Face* website currently holds nearly 3,200 profiles with pictures.³¹

Despite the lack of aggregated data at a global level, it is necessary to understand where current geographic hotspots are located, because FTR support systems and tools require adaptation to local circumstances – including socio-cultural, technological and language aspects (see Chapter 2). The map below highlights areas which have been identified as hotspots of FTR needs (see Figure 1). Of these, several (the Middle East and Horn of Africa region) form ‘primary’ hotspots. These show geographical specificities: for example, while the sheer number of displaced persons in the Middle East is more significant than in some other regions, higher connectivity rates reduce the need for tracing support.

Figure 1: Mapping of potential global FTR hotspots³²



A SHORT HISTORY OF PROFESSIONAL FTR EFFORTS

FTR services were originally spearheaded by the Red Cross movement, its International Committee (ICRC) and its Central Tracing Agency (CTA), beginning in the 19th century. Over the course of the 20th century, additional actors have joined this landscape, including the International Social Service (ISS), Save the Children, the International Rescue Committee (IRC), and UN agencies, namely UNICEF and UNHCR, amongst others, methods and services of FTR saw only moderate change until recently. Written communication within agencies were common, accompanied by searches ‘on the ground’ in places of presumed location. **Two major shifts in tools and approaches have occurred since then:**

- **The first occurred in the 1990s, as the initial lack of coordination and the extent of separation during crises in Rwanda³³ and in former Yugoslavia led to stronger coordination between actors.³⁴** The very first centralised and digital database for FTR was created for this particular situation (Rwanda).³⁵ Simultaneously, actors ‘on the ground’ tested and professionalised participatory, analogue tracing methods.³⁶ These experiences and efforts cumulated in the creation of inter-agency working groups related to FTR (for children), various guidelines and handbooks,³⁷ and an increase of academic literature on the topic.³⁸
- **The second occurred with the increased use of digital and online technology for FTR, especially by Refunite in 2008.** This online platform was specifically designed “to help the world’s hundreds of thousands

of refugees who desperately wanted to reconnect with long-lost relatives and friends.”³⁹ Since then, the use of digital and online technology for FTR purposes has been on a slow but steady rise, leading to the development of specific software for formal FTR purposes⁴⁰ and more participatory tools, like ICRC’s *Trace the Face* website.⁴¹

FTR programmes and actors, both old and new, have significantly expanded their capacity and have become increasingly professionalised.⁴² Yet, clear areas for improvement and adaptation to users’ needs remain. The landscape seems to call for further disruption and innovation, as the most recent example of the *Find Me in Kakuma* app highlights, a ‘grassroots’ initiative by Belgian filmmakers (see Box 1 in Chapter 2).

FTR programmes and actors have significantly expanded their capacity and have become increasingly professionalised. Yet, clear areas for improvement and adaptation to users’ needs remain.

LEGAL SUPPORT OF AND CHALLENGES TO FTR

While “everyone, especially civil society, agrees that everyone should be with his family”,⁴³ the concepts of family unity and therefore family reunification are legally contested areas. Although “the right to family life is recognized in universal and regional as well as in many national legal instruments,”⁴⁴ the right to family unity or family reunification is “weakly codified, and very restricted.”⁴⁵ This is particularly the case in two scenarios:

- 1) Cross-border separation:** when families are torn apart through voluntary or forced migration between nation states, (supra)national immigration laws create a significant barrier to family reunification and, thus, unity.⁴⁶
- 2) Separation of children:** when children are separated from the parents or legal guardians, FTR becomes also impacted by questions of child protection and rights. As the reasons for separation are manifold, family reunification might, thus, not be in the best interest of the child, because tracing and reunification could mean exposure to further harm.⁴⁷

Finally, the lack of an internationally accepted definition of the word/concept ‘family’ is problematic. The focus on the ‘nuclear family’ is rooted in a Western understanding of family relations, which often creates major barriers for reunifications across the world.⁴⁸

SPOTLIGHT

SOMALI REFUGEES, DISPLACED AND SEPARATED

Somalia has faced over two decades of inter-tribal violence, with the Civil War which broke out in 1991 resulting in mass forced migration. There has been no functioning federal government since then, causing difficulties for Somali nationals in obtaining basic necessary documents such as identity documents, birth, marriage and death certificates, and passports.⁴⁹ Conditions in Somalia are poor: political instability, a weak economy and limited livelihood opportunities, continued armed violence amongst clans and perpetrated by terrorist group Al-Shabaab, human rights violations being commonplace, climate change results in extreme drought and flash floods, leading to food insecurity, malnutrition, and serious disease outbreaks owing to decreased water supply and low sanitation.⁵⁰

Although an estimated 5 million people are in need, relatively few seek refuge in other countries such as Kenya, South Africa, Yemen, and Australia, and IDPs exceed the number of international refugees, with estimates placing IDPs between 1.1 million and 1.5 million. As violence seemed to be declining after 2014, refugees living outside the country were encouraged to voluntarily return, and between 2014 and 2016, 31,226 refugees returned from Kenya, and 28,688 returned from Yemen. However, renewed terrorist attacks by Al-Shabaab have been occurring since 2016.⁵¹

Tens of thousands of Somalis have been separated from their families, resulting from the ongoing violence. For those living in IDP camps and neighbouring countries, radio communication is the most effective means of family tracing.

Family separation has been a dominant feature of this back and forth migration, and results in pervasive psychological distress for individuals accustomed to living in large communal family groups. Tens of thousands of Somalis have been separated from their families, resulting from the ongoing violence.⁵² For those living in IDP camps and neighbouring countries, radio communication is the most effective means of family tracing. Individuals can submit the names of missing relatives, and these are read out through locally broadcast radio programmes.⁵³

Based on the mostly narrow definitions of 'family' for reunification purposes, Somali families regularly face additional barriers, as they are typically large and extended, with many dependent children.

Although Somali refugees have citizenship in Somalia, they often do not have documentation proving this, or their identities. The documentation that they do have is frequently not accepted by other countries as they are unable to validate the data within. Valid travel documentation is usually a requirement to apply for family reunification. Without documents however, even when this reunification has been applied for, family relationships are extremely difficult to prove, and often very costly DNA tests are the only valid means.⁵⁴ In addition, based on the mostly narrow definitions of 'family' for reunification purposes (see Chapter 1), Somali families regularly face additional barriers, as they are typically large and extended, with many dependent children; polygamous marriages with multiple spouses are often deemed valid in Somali culture, but not for international family reunifications.⁵⁵

2. KEY FTR CONCEPTS AND ACTORS

FTR is a broad process ranging from the separating event to reintegration into former family structures; FTR support mechanisms therefore need to be designed and implemented holistically and not ‘stop’ after reunification is achieved. This research uncovered several key elements to keep in mind while considering FTR and its key stakeholders:

While FTR efforts and actions can be formal and informal, given the intertwined nature of these along FTR processes it is impractical to make a clear distinction along these lines.

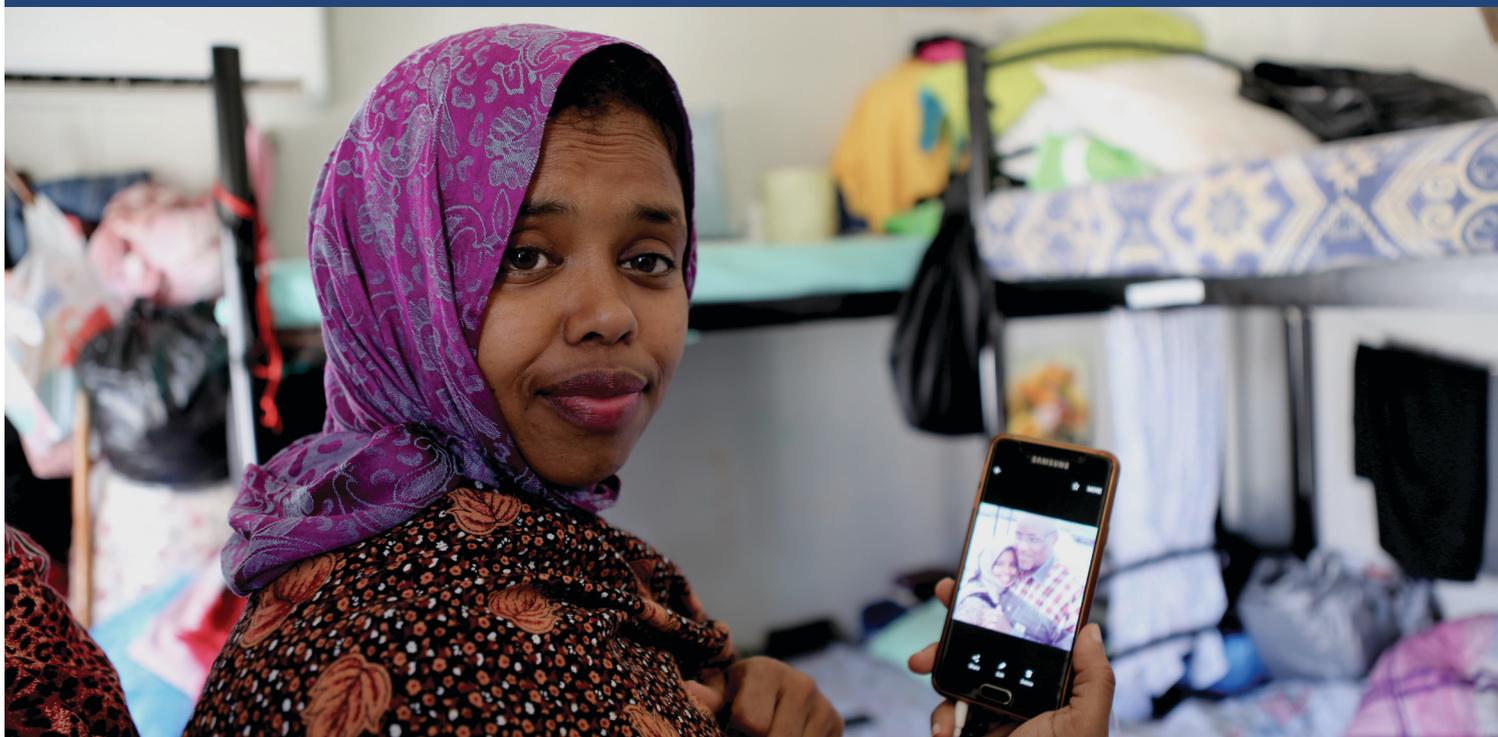
The landscape of FTR support providers worldwide can be broadly categorised in four categories: ‘Main Actors’ (mostly IOs and INGOs), ‘Disrupting Actors’ (smaller NGOs and initiatives creating change), a few large but ‘Discreet Actors’, and a wide range of various ‘Supporting Actors’.

From the perspective of support providers, the provision of FTR support is generally limited by resources (finances and staff), a lack of capacity and expertise on a local level, and a continued lack of collaboration between actors, despite recent advances on this front.

FTR support services do not always match the realities and actual needs of separated persons, in particular due to difficulties in adapting to specific socio-cultural circumstances.

From a ‘client’s’ perspective, the access to FTR support services is generally limited by lack of knowledge about such support, fear of exposure to authorities, and a lack of trust in the capability of support providers.

FTR actors and tools are in a situation of constant trade-offs, as they balance the (data) protection needs of (vulnerable) separated persons and the potential benefits of a wider (tracing) reach by using participatory and public means for FTR.



© Preethi Nallu - Nour (pseudonym), a 23 year old woman from Somalia, currently living in a refugee camp in Athens, Greece, shows a photograph of her with her Somali husband, who is currently in the U.K. She is hoping to reunite with him, but she is yet to start her asylum process in Greece due to lack of information and an overwhelmed registration system.

2.1. UNDERSTANDING THE REALITIES OF THE FTR PROCESS AND APPROACH

At its core, FTR consists of the tracing and reunification of separated family members. However, these efforts are intrinsically part of a broader process, ranging from the separating event itself to full reintegration. The majority of available literature conceptualises FTR as a process that starts with the *Identification* of separated persons, especially children, which is then followed by *Documentation, Tracing and Reunification*; in short: IDTR⁵⁶ – this concept, however, ignores Reintegration, which was recognised as crucial by several Key Informants and various literature:

1. Cases of separated children not only need a thorough ‘best interest assessment and determination’ but also strong efforts to prepare/follow-up on reunification. This is important to **ensuring that the child’s well-being is secured in the long term.**⁵⁷
2. For children and adults alike, reintegration support is important for **ensuring that the original and potential new causes for separation can be mitigated, and thus separation will not occur again.** Such causes include problematic family situations that led to (voluntary) separation,⁵⁸ or psychosocial consequences of long-term separation.⁵⁹

Therefore, FTR and its single support services are, for the purpose of this study, looked at as individual, procedurally intertwined parts (see Figure 2), ranging from the separating event to **Identification** including registration and documentation, **Tracing** including re/establishing communication, **Reunification** including verification of family relations and preparation, and finally **Reintegration** including follow-up programmes.

Figure 2: FTR as a process



Recent changes in the way people communicate worldwide have created a shift in needs for support around FTR, from tracing to reunification and reintegration; the actual tracing part of FTR has therefore become the smallest issue in many areas of the world with good connectivity.

Recent changes in the way people (including displaced persons) communicate worldwide, due to increased (mobile) connectivity, have created a shift in needs for support around FTR, from tracing to reunification and reintegration, especially relevant considering the increasingly difficult legal landscapes worldwide. While connectivity and technical literacy may still pose a barrier to some separated persons in engaging in individual or professional FTR efforts, both

are globally decreasing as a challenge, as studies by UNHCR, GIZ and GSMA showcase.⁶⁰ Young people in particular are highly connected via the internet, and “93 per cent of all refugees live in places that are covered by at least a 2G network, and that 62 per cent live in locations covered by 3G networks.”⁶¹ This trend is positive for the usability of online tracing services, but also raises the question of the relevance of services such as *Trace the Face* and Refunite if people stay connected anyway, via Facebook, WhatsApp, Viber and so on.

According to several Key Informants, **the actual tracing part of FTR has therefore become the smallest issue in many areas of the world with good connectivity.**⁶² Despite violence and displacement in areas such as Central America and the Middle East, interviews for this study revealed that the need for the tracing portion of FTR is decreasing as the other components come to the forefront.⁶³

THE DUAL NATURE OF FTR: BETWEEN THE FORMAL AND INFORMAL

Literature on family tracing and reunification, and on related topics such as reintegration, has not yet attempted to systematically categorise forms of FTR along a clear formal-informal dichotomy. In addition, the importance of non-formalised – speaking, non-institutionalised but rather individual – FTR efforts is an extremely neglected area of research and practical knowledge. However, there are indications that rather ‘informal’ FTR efforts are more common and maybe even more ‘successful’ than the services offered by providers such as ICRC, Refunite, UNHCR, and others.

In Aceh (Indonesia), after the 2004 Tsunami, “83 percent of reunifications were made informally through community mechanisms, and only 17 percent through agency support.”⁶⁴

In Australia, Somali families primarily try to achieve family reunification via regular travel visas and non-formal support systems.⁶⁵

Already in 1983, UNHCR wrote in their *Guidelines on Reunification of Refugee Families*: “Many refugee families become reunited on their own without the help of UNHCR.”⁶⁶

Key Informants confirmed not just the importance of ‘informal’ efforts in FTR – running parallel to all formal steps of the process from separating event until reunification and reintegration – but also showcased how intertwined these presumed opposites are:

- In parallel to ‘formal’ support, **separated persons use various forms of online and offline communication** to re-establish or keep up the contact with their families.⁶⁷
- Lengthy and complicated formal procedures, particularly in cross-border reunification may lead to **separated persons exiting formal processes and trying to achieve family reunification in informal, sometimes illegal, ways.**⁶⁸
- The **active involvement of communities and ‘informal’ networks in FTR processes of ‘formal’ institutions** is a highly common and successful practice.⁶⁹
- Despite legitimate hesitations based on protection concerns, **informal social media communication** is widely acknowledged as a potential asset for tracing.⁷⁰
- Seeking formalised support by agencies like Red Cross societies often only occurs **after individual and informal efforts have been exhausted.**⁷¹

The means of identification and tracing by humanitarian and even state actors often feature informal methods, particularly in cases of cross-border separation. Small NGOs and actors write emails to partner organisations;⁷² ‘big players’ such as Save the Children and IRC also rely “heavily on informal contacts between individuals from different

organizations”;⁷³ for cross-border cases, many actors informally refer separated persons to the ICRC or the local Red Cross societies;⁷⁴ and even the very structured ICRC processes involve basic, nearly ‘informal’ steps.⁷⁵ This large amount of ‘informality’ within ‘formal’ processes is a challenge: “Existing communication channels are informal and largely ineffective. This deficient situation translates into uneven and incomplete responsibility sharing at both regional and national levels. This problem is particularly acute when migration flows are high.”⁷⁶

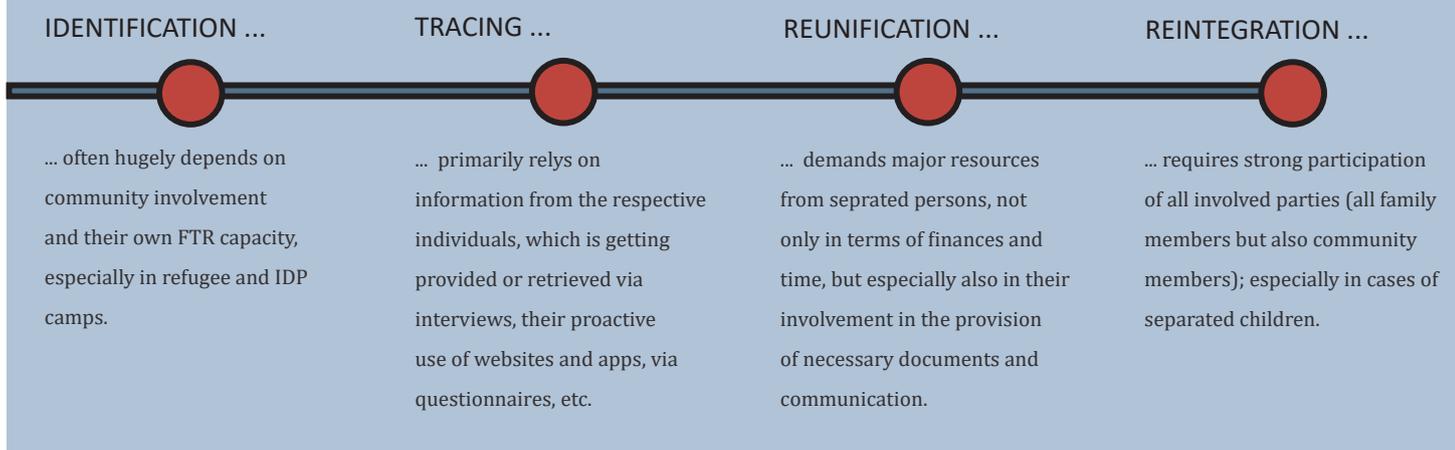
Existing means for tracing and family reunification, both by individuals and institutions, highlight that no clear line can be drawn between informal and formal steps/tools. Furthermore, new approaches of using digital and online options for FTR are blurring this line even further.⁷⁷

Existing means for tracing and family reunification, both by individuals and institutions, highlight that no clear line can be drawn between informal and formal steps/tools.

THE TRADE-OFF BETWEEN (DATA) PROTECTION AND ENHANCED REACH THROUGH PARTICIPATORY APPROACHES

The degree of involvement and participation of separated persons themselves is: 1) a crucial feature for the understanding of the current landscape; and b) a valuable asset for all steps of an FTR Process (see Figure 3). While participation can be crucial asset for FTR efforts, separated persons and support providers face the challenge of protecting affected individuals from further harm. Separated persons may be in situations where public exposure of their situation and location could create significant dangers to their own or their families well-being such as persecution by authorities or armed forces, abusive family situations, risk of GBV, ethnic discrimination, and more.⁷⁸ The protection of information is thus a key issue for FTR, especially when using digital means of communication, case management and data storage: “One of our principles is to do no harm to the people we want to help, so we don’t want the data of the beneficiaries of our services to be misused. [...] It’s all about data collection, the right storage and transmission.”⁷⁹

Figure 3: The role of participation in all steps of an FTR process⁸⁰



Questions of (data) protection are already a concern for separated adults, and most actors in the field of FTR are investing heavily in securing their databases and processes.⁸¹ These questions are even more relevant when children are involved. Not only do children face additional vulnerabilities (see Spotlight - Unaccompanied Minors and Separated Children), their “lack of legal capacity”⁸² puts the responsibility for FTR decisions in the hands of third parties that are obligated to make various decisions, including FTR-related ones, based on the ‘best interest’ of the child.⁸³ The ‘best interest’ in child protection includes the protection from being “subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his or her privacy, family, home or correspondence,”⁸⁴ which result in a decreased availability of publicly accessible and highly participatory tools for child-related FTR.⁸⁵

FTR support providers, and separated persons themselves, must engage in a constant trade-off situation between enhanced reach through participation and protection.

In sum, both FTR support providers, and separated persons themselves, must engage in a constant trade-off situation between enhanced reach through participation and protection. While the realities of separation and FTR are different on a case-to-case basis, no single FTR approach or tool can account for these numerous configurations: some cases have to be ‘hidden’ as much as possible, some can be publicly disclosed, and many will lie between these extreme opposites.

Table 2: The trade-off between (data) protection and enhanced reach through participation

	(Data) Protection	Enhanced reach through participation
<i>Examples</i>	<p>Closed case management systems and databases</p> <p>Direct tracing and case management by professional FTR actors</p>	<p>Open (online) platforms (eg Refunite and <i>Trace the Face</i>)</p> <p>Active community involvement ‘on the ground’</p>
Strengths	<p>Thorough data protection</p> <p>FTR support possible for children and highly vulnerable people (eg persecuted persons)</p> <p>Potential for holistic case management and guidance through the FTR process</p>	<p>Highly increased reach (on a global level)</p> <p>Increased empowerment and self-reliance for separated persons</p> <p>Less resources required (especially staff)</p>
Challenges	<p>Limited reach</p> <p>Demands large resources (especially staff)</p> <p>Lack of empowerment and self-reliance for separated persons</p>	<p>Lack of or limited data protection</p> <p>Not available for children and highly vulnerable people (eg persecuted persons)</p> <p>Requires investments, constant maintenance and/or local capacity building</p>

FTR FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF SEPARATED PERSONS

While the participation of separated persons in FTR efforts is considered as crucial in the literature – the same lacks information on and analysis of the actual experience and demands of separated persons within such support systems. Although a large body of documents exists providing guidelines and presumed best-practices on how to case-manage and support separated persons, especially children, **studies on the actual realities of separated persons trying to trace and to reunify with family members are scarce.**⁸⁶ The few that exist are either only concerned with the experience of separated persons currently residing in the Western world, or focus on the psychosocial ramifications of separation and/or reunification as well as on the challenges people face within legal systems and with authorities.

“Our clients from Afghanistan have no idea when their mother was born. All these things. And many times, when they are in detention, they are already in a very bad psychological state, they are frustrated, and there I come with a two-page questionnaire? This is very unrealistic. It was a big disappointment for me with the Red Cross tracing services, I have to be honest, in 2015, in 2016. They could not adapt to this situation, and then we saw no success.”⁸⁷

Given this crucial gap in knowledge, it comes to no surprise that several Key Informants raised criticisms around some of the available tracing services. These do not always seem to match the realities and demands of separated persons, although knowledge about local conditions (especially regarding countries of origin of unaccompanied minors or separated children in Europe) is highlighted as a key issue for institutionalised and successful tracing and reunification efforts in numerous documents.⁸⁸

“I assumed that there were already tools existing, like apps and mobile websites, to connect refugees. But I found, there are, but they are not used. For example, Refunite is huge, but have you tried it? [...] Their site is complicated. With your name, you will find all names starting with the same first letters, like 2,000 names. [...] And it's a heavy site, it's difficult to download.”⁸⁹

2.2. STAKEHOLDER OVERVIEW, MAPPING AND ANALYSIS

Given the strong overlap between FTR and other (protection) support services, such as general child protection or refugee/asylum seeker assistance, the number of stakeholders worldwide involved to at least some extent in one of the FTR process steps is significant: in addition to the well-known large humanitarian or UN actors (for example, ICRC, Save the Children and UNHCR), other INGOs, small NGOs and actor networks, such as ISS, around the globe are assisting separated persons in FTR.

OVERVIEW OF (SELECTED) FTR ACTORS WORLDWIDE

While acknowledging the inherent diversity of the FTR actor landscape, these actors can nonetheless be categorised in four broad groups: **1) IOs, UN Agencies and Networks, 2) INGOs, 3) Small/local NGOs, and 4) Other actors.**

STAKEHOLDER OVERVIEW
INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS, UN AGENCIES AND NETWORKS

INVOLVEMENT IN
 Ident. Trace Reuni. Reint.

ICMP	Following a rule-of-law based approach, ICMP primarily supports state actors and CSOs in their capacity to engage with FTR themselves. In addition, they carry out forensic duties and DNA testing all around the world. ⁹⁰	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
ICRC	With its CTA and its extensive network of RC societies and volunteers worldwide, ICRC is arguably the largest and most experienced FTR actor today. ICRC is primarily focused on (cross-border) tracing and re/establishing communication between separated persons, which is part of its protection mandate in situations of armed conflict. ⁹¹	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
IOM	Active in the field of tracing since 2008, IOM’s work is often crucial in logistically carrying out reunifications for separated migrants, particularly for return migrations. ⁹²	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
ISS	ISS is an “international federation of 120 interconnected NGOs and Child Protection Authorities [...] that assists children and families facing complex cross border social situations.” Through this network they are involved in all aspects of FTR. ⁹³	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
UNHCR	UNHCR is potentially involved at all aspects of FTR in situations of displacement and (forced) migration. Given their strong presence at borders and camps, the active identification of separated persons/children is inherent to their work. ⁹⁴	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
UNICEF	Naturally focused on (separated) children, UNICEF and its local partners are working on all aspects of FTR-related child protection in emergency situations. ⁹⁵	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

STAKEHOLDER OVERVIEW
SELECTED INGOS

INVOLVEMENT IN
 Ident. Trace Reuni. Reint.

DRC	DRC is only marginally involved in FTR efforts, as they primarily assist refugees in Europe through legal advice/support regarding reunification through the Dublin procedure and other forms of reunification. However, their presence in countries of transit and origin also involves the identification step. ⁹⁶	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
IRC	The IRC has a long history of FTR involvement and they are active in various FTR related working groups. They are part of the <i>CPIMS+</i> group (see Chapter 3), their actual involvement in FTR varies between the actual emergency situations. ⁹⁷	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SAVE THE CHILDREN	Of all major INGOs, Save the Children is arguably the most experienced and active actor in FTR (regarding children). They are involved in all aspects of FTR, several working groups and advocacy tasks. ⁹⁸	●	●	●	●
TERRES DES HOMMES	Terres des hommes is currently not directly involved in any operational FTR efforts. However, through their ‘Children on the Move’ campaign and other advocacy tasks, they are working on a policy level. Further, their operations can indirectly involve identification and reintegration efforts. ⁹⁹	●	○	○	●

Other (potentially) relevant INGOs include: **Plan International, SOS Children’s Villages, World Vision**¹¹⁰

STAKEHOLDER OVERVIEW SELECTED SMALL/LOCAL NGOS AND SOCIETIES

INVOLVEMENT IN

Ident. Trace Reuni. Reint.

HUNGARIAN HELSINKI COMMITTEE	The Hungarian Helsinki Committee is supporting refugees (in detention) in Hungary in various aspects, particularly legal advice/support (which includes reunification cases through the Dublin procedure and other means). Through their network of partners in Europe and via Hungarian embassies they are to some extent also involved in tracing efforts. ¹⁰¹	○	●	●	○
KIND	The US based NGO KIND is supporting children “who enter the U.S. immigration system alone”, but primarily after tracing and reunification has been conducted by US state agencies or sub/contractors. ¹⁰²	○	○	○	●
NATIONAL RC SOCIETIES	The national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies conduct various steps of FTR processes on the ground through their volunteers. However, not all of them are actually involved in FTR, depending on the needs and capacities of the local context. ¹⁰³	●	●	●	●
REFUNITE	Refunite’s online platform allows separated adults to create their own profiles and, hence, to trace missing/separated persons. This service does not actively include any other aspects of FTR than tracing, yet it is a form of (passive) identification. ¹⁰⁴	●	●	○	○
SAFE PASSAGE	The UK based NGO Safe Passage primarily supports separated refugee children in Europe in either achieving family reunification or reaching their targeted destination. In particular, they engage with strategic lawsuits and policy tasks to change the current landscape of (policy) barriers for child-related FTR and migration in Europe. ¹⁰⁵	●	○	●	○
WAR CHILD UK	War Child UK is active in FTR for children in DRC, Iran and Afghanistan. The scope of these efforts is comparably small and not explained in detail in available documents. ¹⁰⁶	○	○	○	○

LOCAL NGOS (1) Various local NGOs/CSOs in emergency areas worldwide (eg in South Sudan, Somalia, Syria) support the FTR efforts of INGOs and International Organisations on the ground. This includes all aspects of FTR, while FTR is usually not their focus task.¹⁰⁷



LOCAL NGOS (2) Local NGOs/ CSOs in countries of refugee destination or transit can be involved in various FTR steps either directly or by supporting INGOs and International Organisations on the ground. Examples include HHC, Safe Passage and KIND (see above) but also ActionAid Hellas, the New Zealand Refugee Family Reunification Trust, and others.¹⁰⁸



**STAKEHOLDER OVERVIEW
SELECTED OTHER ACTORS**

INVOLVEMENT IN

EASO The EU agency EASO supports Members States through capacity building and advocacy tasks targeted at the issues of a variety of vulnerable groups, particularly migrants. This mandate includes the development of guidelines and tools, such as the EASO Practical guide on family tracing. EASO is not itself operational in FTR.¹⁰⁹

Ident. Trace Reuni. Reint.



VARIOUS GOVERNMENTAL ACTORS Governments and their agencies across the globe (including border patrol, police, social services, migration offices, etc) are involved in FTR efforts. However, their actual involvement and capacity differs from country to country. While state actors and their subcontractors in the US are often involved in tracing and reunification for separated children,¹¹⁰ governmental actors in the EU are primarily dependent on the FTR capacities of IOs, INGOs and NGOs.¹¹¹ The ECOWAS countries, on the other hand, have just ratified clear governmental procedures for child protection and FTR¹¹² – still, this is rather an exception for non-Western countries, where FTR is often in the hands of humanitarian/non-governmental actors.



Legend for ‘Involvement in’:

- Strong focus
- Small focus
- Focus unclear/varying
- No involvement

Box 1: The story of Find Me In Kakuma (Interview)

"I made two films in Ethiopia before I went to Kakuma,¹¹³ I lived for ten years in Ethiopia. [...] And then I started to make a film in the Kakuma refugee camp. The film was about two teenagers and one kid in a refugee camp. So I stayed in the camp for almost four years, for the film. But during the filming I started working in a Somali telephone shop in Kakuma.

There I found out that almost all refugees come to buy smartphones, [...] and in Kenya, and in most African countries, the 3G, the mobile data networks, are quite good, and by accident two of the three children I was filming were living without family in the camp, it just happened. That's how the idea started, and I thought maybe there are more and I did a short investigation, I found out that a lot of these kids and teenagers that live in refugee camps without their parents, but their parents are still alive, they just have no idea where they are. [...]

So, I assumed that there were already tools existing, like apps and mobile websites, to connect refugees. But I found, there are, but they are not used. For example, Refunite is huge, but have you tried it? And the ICRC, their mandate is family tracing, but they did not have a mobile website or application,¹¹⁴ they did not use new technology for it. [...] So, with friends in the phone shop – I'm not a coder – we created a kind of application in wireframes¹¹⁵ and I contacted some friends, and via the University of Nairobi and the University of Ghent, and they made a very basic application for me, to do tracing. Android-based. This application, I tested it for, let's say, a month in Kakuma, and in a month we had 3,000 children that had subscribed.

I got nightmares, because we had now the data of over 3,000 children. And then the film came out and a British fund, that funds documentaries, via them we got into contact with a big tech company in London, ThoughtWorks,¹¹⁶ and they updated and made the app for free for us. We worked with them for a few months, then we found out that there are a lot of legal issues and a lot of protection issues, like child protection. But the problem was the app was growing and growing. And then ICRC found out about the app through the film, but the film is not about the app Then we had meetings over six months – it's a huge organisation. And now they are taking the app over, for free.

They want to implement it globally. They will do some research, because we only tested it in Kakuma. I didn't really understand what was happening, but they said, 'we are taking it over'. I give it to them for free. They will do the testing in Kakuma, and then they want to expand globally. I'm not involved in this anymore, they just send me email updates."¹¹⁷

QUALITATIVE MAPPING OF THE CURRENT FTR ACTOR LANDSCAPE

The actors involved in FTR worldwide approach the issues and needs of separated persons from a variety of perspectives: from highly operational tasks to more advocacy focused work; from purely FTR related approaches to FTR work embedded in general support services (eg child protection or refugee assistance); from a global scope to local initiatives. In addition, expertise and capacity for innovation vary between all actors. For a better understanding of roles and current approaches of selected FTR actors, the subsequent qualitative mapping provides an overview of the current landscape along the following six dimensions:¹¹⁸

- **FTR Focus:** considers how strong the focus on FTR is within the general work of the respective actor;
- **Advocacy versus Operational:** considers whether the FTR-related work of the respective actor is focused on operational FTR or advocacy tasks;
- **Resources:** considers the potential resources for FTR of the respective actor in terms of finances and staff.
- **Geographic Scope:** considers the geographic scope of FTR efforts of the respective actors, from locally confined approaches to a global scope;
- **FTR Expertise:** considers the expertise of the respective actors, based on their history in FTR efforts and their focus on the topic; and finally
- **FTR Innovation:** considers the innovative urge or capacity for creating change in FTR tools and approaches.

Figure 4: Qualitative mapping of FTR selected stakeholders along the dimensions of Advocacy-Operational and FTR Focus

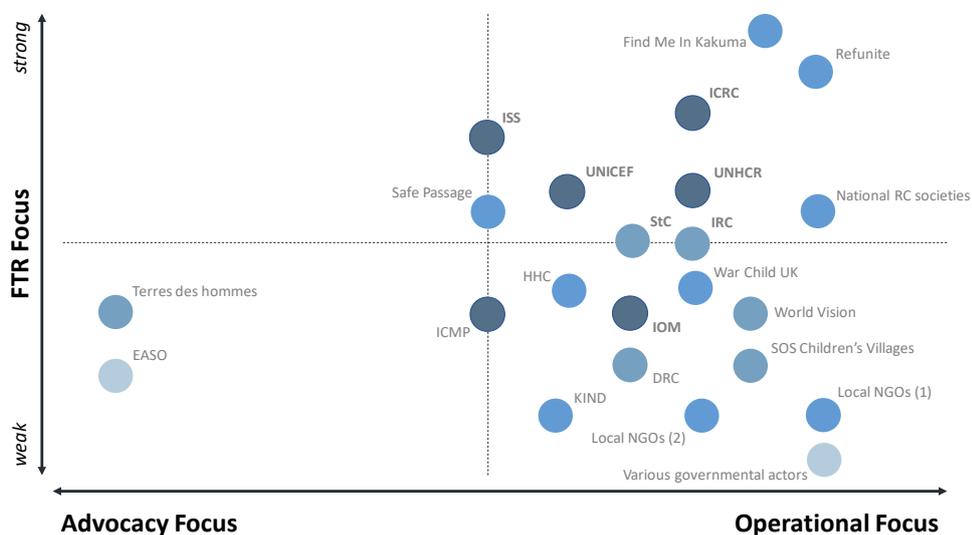


Figure 5: Qualitative mapping of FTR selected stakeholders along the dimensions of FTR Expertise and FTR Innovation

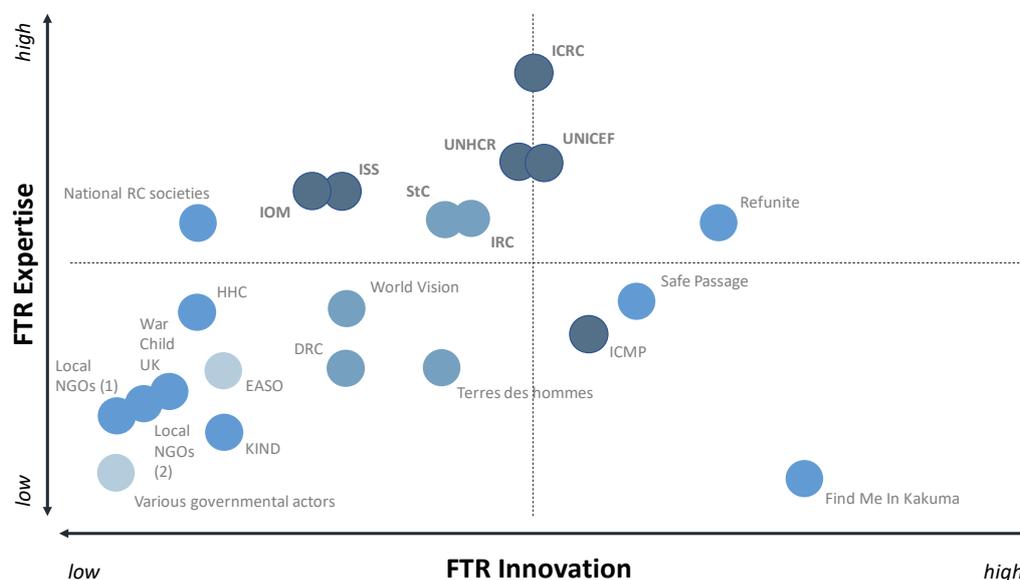
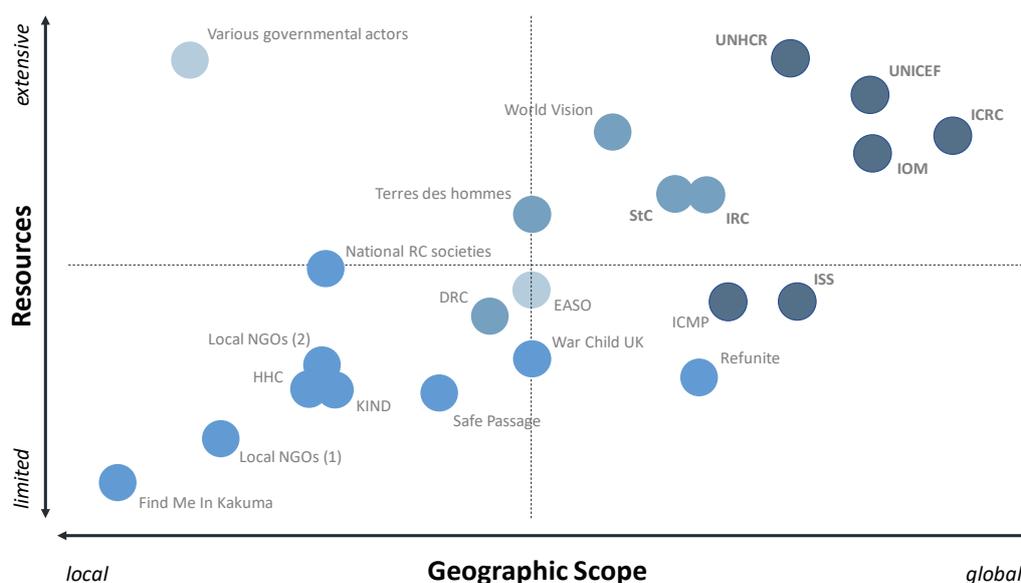


Figure 6: Qualitative mapping of FTR selected stakeholders along the dimensions of Geographic Scope and Resources (financial/staff)



The mappings above (see Figure 4, Figure 5 and Figure 6), with additional information from KIIs and literature, allow for the **categorization of FTR actors into four categories**. *NB: these categories do not indicate any form of ranking of the actors’ activities –the efforts of all actors in the FTR landscape are incremental for the well-being of separated persons worldwide. All actors play their crucial part, and should not be seen a ‘competitors’ but as players of different sizes and functions in the global system of FTR efforts.*

All actors play their crucial part, and should not be seen a ‘competitors’ but as players of different sizes and functions in the global system of FTR efforts.

Major Actors - ICRC, UNHCR, UNICEF, etc

- Historic and in-depth FTR expertise
- Major internal or inter-agency networks
- Main FTR support providers worldwide
- Variety of approaches and mandates, but regular collaborations

Disrupting Actors - Refunite, Safe Passage, etc

- Creators of change in the FTR landscape
- Innovative approaches/tools and disruptions
- Strong (personal) engagement in the topic
- Rapid growth/consolidation in the recent years

Discreet Actors - ISS, ICMP

- Strong FTR-related expertise and global reach
- Different mandates and approaches, but strong advocacy and capacity building focus

Supporting Actors - World Vision, RC Societies, etc

- Often the facilitators of FTR support ‘on the ground’
- Variety of approaches and scales
- Involvement and collaborations with Main Actors vary by local context

MAJOR ACTORS

ICRC, IOM, UNHCR, UNICEF, SAVE THE CHILDREN, IRC, (WORLD VISION, PLAN INTERNATIONAL)

Without these actors most separated persons worldwide would not have any support for FTR. They either feature major internal networks for FTR tasks (ICRC) or are part of extensive and long-standing histories of collaboration. Their historical expertise in FTR is unparalleled and they are often part of inter-agency working groups on FTR-related topics, such as separated children and reintegration. Their work is heavily operational, but all of them also engage in FTR advocacy and policy tasks. In addition, they primarily have highly advanced and tested approaches and implemented guidelines for the protection of their clients, especially children.

They have different mandates and approaches, ranging from armed conflict situations (ICRC) to displacement/migration (IOM/UNHCR) to child protection (UNICEF/Save the Children) to general humanitarian or development support (IRC, World Vision, Plan International). These different but often complementary approaches lead to continuous but locally adapted cooperation between these actors in various situations of humanitarian needs.¹¹⁹ While their FTR resources are comparably large, they may also struggle with funding for their efforts and FTR programmes.¹²⁰

Due to these actors, many of the major advancement in FTR methods and tools have taken place in the past (see Chapter 1). However, given their often large and somehow bureaucratic character, many of them openly admit to struggling in adapting their FTR efforts to the digital or mobile revolution, and hence to the actual communication needs and practices of their clients. While recent developments, such as *Trace the Face* and *CPIMS+* (see Chapter 3), are positive, these are arguably belated responses.

DISRUPTING ACTORS

REFUNITE, SAFE PASSAGE, FIND ME IN KAKUMA

In recent years, small NGOs and initiatives have endeavoured to create change in the current FTR landscape of actors, tools and legal barriers. The key examples studied are: Refunite, Safe Passage, and the *Find Me In Kakuma* app. What is at the core of their actions is not just support for separated persons, but the incentive to change or even disrupt the usual FTR effort methods and frameworks. In doing this, they usually do not start with a distinct expertise in FTR.

While Refunite has set an important example in the past for the usage of mobile technology (via their website and their mobile shortcode approach) in a well organised fashion, *Find Me In Kakuma* was created in a highly 'informal', grassroots and local way that aimed at closing the gap in FTR mobile phone applications.¹²¹ While the first two follow a technological approach, Safe Passage is fighting for (separated) refugee children in Europe by actively and successfully contesting national and/or European immigration procedures and legislations. Therefore, they focus on strategic lawsuits and advocacy campaigns that complement their operational tasks.¹²²

All three examples were created due to personal experiences on the part of their founders, and they have experienced rapid growth and/or certain consolidation processes in their young histories: Refunite is now the largest platform for separated persons worldwide and is highly professional, *Find Me In Kakuma* has now been taken over by ICRC for further testing and expansion, and Safe Passage started off in the UK and now holds field teams in Italy and Greece. While collaborations with other FTR actors exist, the relationships to the Major Actors are either rare or complicated. Given their different yet comparably small sizes, funding is a major issue for Disrupting Actors.¹²³

DISCREET ACTORS

ISS, ICMP

While Main Actors and Disrupting Actors may benefit from comparably large yet diverse visibility for their FTR actions, actors such as ISS and ICMP are surprisingly less prominent than their actual scope and professionalism would suggest. While both are very different from each other in terms of organisational structure, mandate and approach, they engage with FTR issues similarly at both operational and advocacy levels. While not as prominent as the Main Actors, these Discreet Actors are also not focussed on innovation, given their comparably sophisticated yet highly structured character.

ISS is a federation of 120 child protection or social service providers (governmental and non-governmental) across the globe, coordinated by a General Secretary in Geneva. In this role, ISS engages in operational cross-border child protection and care, including all aspects of FTR and attached (alternative) support programmes. With a network-wide caseload of 20,000 tracing requests in 2016, ISS has facilitated numerous reunifications and international kinship care arrangements based on very strict (protection) guidelines and locally adapted solutions.¹²⁴ Spearheading the creation of ECOWAS guidelines for vulnerable children on the move and currently developing a MOOC on alternative care (including FTR related topics) are just two examples of their capacity building and advocacy work.¹²⁵

ICMP has a different approach towards FTR than all other (humanitarian) FTR actors. While ICMP acknowledges the importance of humanitarian FTR, they note that the actual need for this is caused by a lack of FTR capacity of state actors and civil society. Because separation or disappearance happens often in situations of human rights violations, ICMP promotes a rule-of-law based approach that views FTR, especially tracing, as a potentially crime-related issue. ICMP supports state actors and civil society with forensic services and DNA testing (for example, in most of the affected regions after the 2004 Indian ocean earthquake). They are active in advocating for the rights of the families of the missing and are actively building capacity of CSOs worldwide to claim such rights.¹²⁶

SUPPORTING ACTORS

WORLD VISION, PLAN INTERNATIONAL, SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES, TERRES DES HOMMES, DRC, WAR CHILD UK, HUNGARIAN HELSINKI COMMITTEE, KIND, NATIONAL RC SOCIETIES, VARIOUS OTHER LOCAL NGOS, EASO, ETC

Without the work of these diverse organisations in operational and advocacy support for separated persons worldwide, many FTR support mechanisms would not function. These organisations often either fill the remaining gaps and insufficiencies of large scale FTR support (eg, Hungarian Helsinki Committee and War Child UK)¹²⁷ or providing the manpower and expertise on the ground (eg RC societies).¹²⁸ Some of them are purely working on an advocacy/capacity building level (eg Terres des hommes and EASO)¹²⁹ or through legal support (eg KIND and DRC),¹³⁰ while various NGOs in conflict zones and in countries of large scale refugee populations are supporting or implementing the actual work of identifying, tracing and reintegration efforts.¹³¹

While these organisations vary regarding size, FTR scope and approach, they are often part of internal or inter-agency networks, including but not limited to those with Main Actor involvement. Their actual role and involvement in FTR depends on the local context and their local capacities. Their 'weight' and involvement in local and global FTR efforts is comparably smaller or less disruptive, yet the issues and needs of separated persons worldwide demand the involvement of all these Supporting Actors.

Box 2: The private sector, funding and donor involvement for FTR

While the challenges faced by separated children have received increased attention by international organisations, governmental actors, donors and the public, the FTR funding landscape is highly diverse and its actors draw money from various sources. In many cases, it is hard to impossible to conclude where FTR funding is coming from, as these efforts are often embedded in other programmes, such as child protection interventions and general refugee support. Many IOs and even NGOs in the FTR landscape receive general financial support from governmental actors. This is the case for ISS, ICMP, UN agencies, and RC bodies among others.¹³² Government funding for FTR programmes is also available in some cases,¹³³ while fund raising and public donations are crucial for many smaller actors, for example Safe Passage.¹³⁴ In many cases, the Key Informants interviewed for this study were not able or did not want to disclose the exact funding schemes.

The private sector's relationship to FTR is more distant: while some FTR actors have long-standing histories of support and collaboration with private sector companies, few private sector companies themselves work directly on FTR services. For Refunite, the long-standing support by Ericsson and collaborations with MNOs and Facebook are positive examples.¹³⁵ The free support of ThoughtWorks for the *Find Me In Kakuma* app has to be mentioned as well (see Box 1). On the other hand, Google's initial involvement in FTR through their *PersonFinder* web application (see Chapter 3) seems to have died down: recently they "haven't touched on [the FTR] issue in particular."¹³⁶

The immense but indirect importance of MNOs and other connectivity providers must also be mentioned. Connectivity is a crucial asset for the protection and self-reliance of displaced persons, in general,¹³⁷ simultaneously providing possibilities for 'informal and 'formal' FTR efforts. In this regard, the efforts and business strategies of MNOs, IOs and NGOs to connect refugees or IDPs can be considered as indirect FTR support. Positive examples include: Turkcell's increased and adapted provision of mobile services for Syrian refugees in Turkey, Vodafone's Instant Network project in Greece, Vodacom's upgrading of 3G networks in Tanzanian refugee camps, and many other business-oriented efforts worldwide.¹³⁸ The provision of phone calls and other communication means by Main FTR Actors (see Chapter 3), such as ICRC and UNHCR, and by smaller NGOs, can then attempt to cover remaining gaps or the so-called 'last mile connectivity', sometimes with the support of companies like Google and Facebook.¹³⁹

Apart from private sector support and donor involvement, FTR actors work with academic institutions. The *Find Me In Kakuma* app received support from the University of Nairobi and the University of Ghent (see Box 1), while ICRC was recently consulted by experts from MIT regarding parts of their ICT infrastructure, namely FTR databases and potential mobile applications.¹⁴⁰

2.3. KEY BARRIERS IN ACCESSING AND PROVIDING FTR SUPPORT

Three key access barriers to separated persons (actively) receiving FTR support were identified through this research, valid for all parts of the FTR process and in all circumstances (meaning separation in both acute humanitarian crisis situations as well as along voluntary and forced migration routes). Barriers in providing assistance along the various FTR parts change from each process step and local circumstances, however, three key provision barriers were also identified.

THE THREE KEY BARRIERS TO ACCESSING FTR SUPPORT

Lack of Awareness - Actors across all levels and geographies have emphasized the point that **separated persons often just simply do not know about the available support systems** provided by ICRC, IOM, Refunite, local NGOs and many more. This holds true for both offline and online services.¹⁴¹ This lack of awareness is sometimes addressed by humanitarian actors and state authorities by explicitly informing separated persons about such opportunities, for example when refugees are identified as separated at borders or at other contact points.¹⁴² However, where such direct forms of information delivery about FTR services do not occur, separated persons seem to have very limited knowledge about these.¹⁴³

Fear of Exposure - Separated persons are often in highly vulnerable, sometimes illegal, situations, for example as irregular migrants or in areas of conflict and large-scale persecution. These situations can create **fear of exposure to authorities or hostile groups when obtaining FTR support and being registered in respective databases**. In this regard, it is not only the fear of self-exposure but that the active search for missing or separated family members might cause harm to them. The resulting hesitations to engage with professional FTR support occur in cases of (man-made) humanitarian crises and migration-related cross-border separation.¹⁴⁴

Lack of Trust - In combination of a lack of knowledge and fear of exposure, **separated persons do not always trust providers of FTR services**. Such potential lack of trust is not only fuelled by fear but by little to no individual experience with the potential benefits of professional support, especially in moments of first contact.¹⁴⁵ The problem of limited trust is exacerbated the moment governmental actors and/or children are involved in FTR processes.¹⁴⁶ To counteract mistrust, operational FTR providers often seek the direct involvement of communities to build trust but also capacity and awareness in the long-term¹⁴⁷ – highlighting again how crucial participation and active involvement of separated persons is for FTR.

THE THREE KEY BARRIERS TO PROVIDING FTR SUPPORT

Limited Resources - **Limited resources, in terms of finances and staff are named as the number one barrier** to providing separated persons with the services and protection they deserve. This issue was flagged by the vast majority of Key Informants, and is supported by literature.¹⁴⁸ While the lack of finances and staff are already problematic for the internal operations of FTR actors, they also hinder the support for separated persons to reunify. Reunifications are highly expensive and inadequately supported, globally speaking.¹⁴⁹ Legal support and all other FTR efforts can be affected negatively, as well.¹⁵⁰

Lack of Collaboration - In situations of great humanitarian need and FTR demands, strong collaboration in FTR efforts have been promoted since the 1990s (see Chapter 1), and the current FTR landscape shows several inter-agency working groups and good practices in this regard.¹⁵¹ However, **the (global) collaboration between FTR actors is far from perfect**. Main Actors and Support Actors in the field duplicate efforts. Many rely on their own databases for separated persons, with nearly no data matching happening at the moment – often not even between branches of the same body (see Chapter 4).¹⁵² This lack of collaboration is to some extent based on a lack of resources, but in other cases actors deliberately decide not to work together, as they believe it could ‘water down’ their standard of conduct and protection.¹⁵³

Limited (local) Capacity - **A lack of capacity, knowledge and sensitivity for the issues of separated persons, especially children, is a major barrier** for the success of FTR efforts on a local level.¹⁵⁴ While the expertise of the Main Actors and their international staff is immense, the actual implementation of FTR efforts, especially in areas of humanitarian crises, often depends on local staff, small NGOs and CSOs. FTR, in its entirety, is a complicated task that needs thorough on the ground training in tools and methods. Especially when vulnerable persons (eg children) and data protection issues come into play.¹⁵⁵ Unfortunately, the FTR capacity of local actors does not always live up to the actual demands, and several Key Informants have raised this critical issue, even highlighting that some local FTR initiatives can cause more harm than good.¹⁵⁶

SPOTLIGHT

SYRIAN REFUGEES, DISPLACED AND SEPARATED

The Syrian war and resultant mass displacement crisis is well into its sixth year, with no signs of abating. The conflict was sparked in 2011 by anti-government protests that were met with state-imposed violence, and has deteriorated into one of the largest humanitarian crises in history, with over 50% of Syria's population displaced.¹⁵⁷ The conflict has been further complicated by the variety of ethnic and cultural groups residing in Syria and which have, in some cases, taken up arms.¹⁵⁸ A chaotic web of conflict and violence has left the country in a state of 85% poverty, with 69% of the population in extreme poverty and 35% in abject poverty, meaning there is insufficient food to survive. Syrians face indiscriminate and targeted attacks on civilians, torture, detention, public beheadings, physical mutilation, sexual enslavement and forced recruitment into various armed forces.¹⁵⁹

After the initial outbreak of violence, by December 2011 there were 8,000 registered Syrian refugees worldwide; this number soared to 490,581 the following year. By August 2017, this number stands at 5,165,317, with approximately half of them children and youth.¹⁶⁰ The clear majority of Syrian refugees reside in neighbouring countries: 3 million live in Turkey, and 2 million combined live in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan and Lebanon. In the entire period of April 2011 to June 2017, Europe has seen 983,876 asylum applications from Syrians, with the majority of these being claimed in Germany and Sweden (63%).¹⁶¹

The enormous number of refugees is exceeded by the number of internally displaced persons trapped inside Syria, with an estimated 6.3 million IDPs. These individuals are trapped in besieged areas, ISIL-controlled regions, hard-to-reach areas, and closed borders, making it very difficult to administer humanitarian aid. In addition, hundreds of thousands have been killed, tens of thousands are missing, and an estimated further 6,150 Syrians are being displaced per day.¹⁶²

UNHCR numbers indicate the nearly 20% of all Syrian refugees in Greece are to some degree separated from family members. Causes of separation include the death of one or both parents, migration, disappearance, sending children to live in safety away alone, and recruitment into armed forces.

Given these numbers, family separation and lack of documentation are major protection concerns – for example, UNHCR numbers indicate the nearly 20% of all Syrian refugees in Greece are to some degree separated from family members.¹⁶³ Causes of separation include the death of one or both parents, migration, disappearance, sending children to live in safety away alone, and recruitment into armed forces.¹⁶⁴ Family-based care for separated Syrian minors is encouraged by humanitarian actors, and they often end up living with grandparents, aunts and uncles, and elder siblings.¹⁶⁵ But none of these family members are included in the very narrow definitions of family that are part of most family reunification legislations worldwide.¹⁶⁶ Change in the various (supra)national legal frameworks would be crucial for Syrian refugees around the globe to overcome separation.

3. EXAMINING EXISTING FTR TOOLS

FTR tools and services cover a broad range of potential needs and approaches; the various actors involved differ in their use of and provision of these. After recent advancements in adapting modern ICT for FTR, the landscape of tools has grown into an often-disconnected amalgam of possibilities consisting of the following:

- **Digital/online tools and services primarily directed at identifying and tracing separated persons;**
- **Analogue/offline tools and services covering the different parts of the FTR process in a disconnected fashion; and**
- **General support services especially directed at the reunification and reintegration process.**

An analysis of the current FTR tool/service landscape points to a current lack of integration between the FTR parts of **identifying and tracing** and **reunification and reintegration**. This disconnect is only accounted for by few examples of holistic and integrated approaches and tools. Further major challenges are the **lack of cross-referencing or data-matching between the various platforms** and, more from a perspective of separated persons, various **legal barriers for (cross-border) reunification**.



© Anna Pantelia - A Syrian mother and children travel from Athens to Berlin to reunite with the father, who received asylum in Germany. The family reunification process took two years.

3.1. FTR TOOLS AND SERVICES ALONG THE PROCESS

FTR support providers around the world follow a variety of approaches in assisting separated persons, which vary along several scales: the analogue/digital, protection/participatory, specific/holistic, for general/specific demographics. Different tools and methods are thus used to fulfil the support providers’ missions.

OVERVIEW OF CURRENT TOOLS AND METHODS

The following provides an overview of various tools and methods/ services that are used by FTR providers in assisting separated persons. The short profiles of these are complemented with a mapping of their role in the single parts of the FTR process. The key elements of the FTR process considered are defined as follows:

- **Identification**, including registration and Documentation: All tools and services that identify separated persons, document their status, characters and needs, and register them in analogue or digital databases (includes the actual databases)
- **Tracing**, including re/establishing communication: All tools and services that support the search and tracing of separated or missing persons (passive and active), and enable the re/establishment of communication between separated persons
- **Reunification**, including verification and preparation: All tools and services that either support or are (sometimes) mandatory for the reunification of separated persons, including means for the verification of family relations as well as the (psychosocial) preparation for reunification
- **Reintegration**, including follow up programmes: All tools and services that support successful reintegration into (former) family structures

OVERVIEW OF TOOLS AND SERVICES FOR FTR SUPPORT DIGITAL/ONLINE TOOLS AND SERVICES

USED FOR

Ident. Trace Reuni. Reint.

CPIMS+ / IA CPIMS

UNICEF
StC
IRC
and others

The Child Protection Information Management System, CPIMS for short, was initially developed in 2005 by IRC, StC and UNICEF and “consists of a database and accompanying tools such as template paper forms, data protection checklists and information sharing protocols” (for IA CPIMS). As a holistic tool, its updated version *CPIMS+*¹⁶⁷ has now replaced UNICEF’s *RapidFTR* as the primary case management tool for child protection emergency situations that features online and offline FTR possibilities (eg ‘offline’ data matching). While *CPIMS+* has not yet been used for FTR purposes, *IA CPIMS* is still active as well and is used for FTR purposes (eg in South Sudan). Various actors have started to use CPIMS as well (eg Terres des hommes and UNICEF), and *CPIMS+* is currently active in Sierra Leone, Nepal, Kenya and Jordan – however, data matching between emergency situations and across borders is currently not possible. *CPIMS+* is a software application that includes a mobile app.¹⁶⁸

SOCIAL MEDIA (GROUPS) & MESSENGERS

Facebook
WhatsApp
Viber
and others

Social media channels and mobile messenger apps are a common form of ‘informal’ tracing efforts by separated individuals themselves. However, apart from their potential for verifying family relations (eg by communication records) and for re/establishing communication, the vast majority of FTR support providers criticise the use of these for tracing, as they do not provide any protection from exposure and from potential negative outcomes of tracing; in addition, information from social media can be highly unreliable.¹⁶⁹

EMAIL	Various	Formal and informal email conversations between FTR actors and offices are the standard communication for tracing and preparing reunification when FTR efforts are not embedded into coordinated programmes. Smaller NGOs in particular seem to primarily communicate about FTR cases in this way. ¹⁷⁰	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
FIND ME IN KAKUMA	(ICRC)	For the history and current status of the <i>Find Me In Kakuma</i> app, see Box 1. The app is a highly participatory option, allowing separated persons to create profiles and tracing requests. It also enables pictures and voice messages. When persons match along various characteristics, there are several steps in place to self-verify the relationship: "Friends told me it's like Tinder for refugees, but it works." ¹⁷¹	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
INTERNAL DATABASES	Various (and governmental actors)	Internal digital databases are used to register and document separated persons and their tracing requests. These can be specifically designed or just in the form of Excel spreadsheets. Such databases can be attached to specific tools (eg <i>CPIMS+</i> or <i>Trace the Face</i>). The general problem is that these numerous databases around the world are currently not cross-referenced and/or used for data-matching (see Chapter 4). ¹⁷²	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
PERSON FINDER	Google	Google's PersonFinder was created in response to the January 2010 Haiti earthquake to aggregate information on missing persons. It is an open online software for everyone interested in using it for a particular emergency situation, but does not protect the data uploaded in any way. ¹⁷³ Google's current lack of interest in FTR and the fairly inactive Github board of PersonFinder suggest that it is a rather unimportant tool in the current FTR landscape. ¹⁷⁴	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
ONLINE TRACING REQUEST	ICRC	On their Family Links website, ICRC allows for the submission of a Tracing Request via an online form; this can be considered as a self-identification/registration and creates basic information for later tracing. Online Tracing Requests allow people that are not able to physically go to a local ICRC/RC location to receive FTR support from ICRC. Depending on emergency situations and internal capacity, ICRC can adapt the online form to the local demands (eg language). However, these requests are not shared publicly online. They remain internal and are sent to the respective ICRC/RC offices.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
RAPIDFTR	UNICEF and others	<i>RapidFTR</i> is a now discontinued open source software and mobile application that was designed to allow for on the ground identification, registration, documentation and also tracing in (child protection) emergencies across the globe. It was used in Africa, Asia and South America, but has now been replaced by the more holistic <i>CPIMS+</i> . ¹⁷⁵	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
REFUNITE	Refunite	Refunite's massive platform for separated persons is available as a web-portal and, in some East African countries, via mobile shortcodes (accounting for limited web connectivity). It is a highly participatory tool, in which users self-register and are able to find themselves. Refunite is also active in community outreach, and is highly aware of protection concerns (it excludes children from using their service). It is technically available worldwide, but their language features and outreach efforts are currently limited to (Eastern) Africa and parts of the Middle East. Refunite's platform does not provide any guidance or direct referrals for reunification support needs after tracing was successful. ¹⁷⁶	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
TRACE THE FACE	ICRC	<i>Trace the Face</i> is ICRC's answer to the high influx of migrants in Europe that overwhelmed their traditional Tracing request (also due to high mobility patterns). Online since 2015, <i>Trace the Face</i> requires separated persons to visit an ICRC/RC office to get their pictures taken, which are then (usually) uploaded on the public website where people can look for relatives and friends. If successful, the initial contact continues via ICRC/RC, and <i>Trace the Face</i> also	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

features non-public accounts for ICRC-internal tracing (eg for children or highly vulnerable persons). Designed for migrants to Europe and their countries of origin, the global web service is available in several languages. However, it was only recently adapted to mobile browsers, is not accessible in other ways than its website (eg via a mobile app or mobile shortcodes; see Refunite), and currently holds 'only' 3,200 profiles.¹⁷⁷

OVERVIEW OF TOOLS AND SERVICES FOR FTR SUPPORT ANALOGUE/OFFLINE TOOLS AND SERVICES

USED FOR

Ident. Trace Reuni. Reint.

			Ident.	Trace	Reuni.	Reint.
MESSAGE BOARDS	Various	Information about missing persons and tracing request are sometimes publicly displayed on message boards in locations like IDP or refugee camps. ¹⁷⁸ Given the absence of (data) protection mechanism and available information about these, ¹⁷⁹ this practice does not seem to play an important role for most tracing efforts.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT	UNHCR UNICEF StC Refunite and others	As mentioned before, direct community involvement is a crucial and successful practice for many FTR actors in cases of humanitarian crisis. Community leaders and members are actively approached and sensitised in locations such as IDP or refugee camps. This is targeted at increasing their capacity in identifying, reporting and tracing separated persons on a local level as well as for supporting reunification. Various of the Main Actors in FTR are using community involvement regularly in emergency responses, which may include FTR efforts. ¹⁸⁰	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
INTERVIEWS & QUESTIONNAIRES	Various (and governmental actors)	When separated persons are identified, the most common way to register and document their situations and requests are standardised interviews or questionnaires. These practices are done by all FTR actors in physical contact with separated persons. The form and content of these interviews should, but do not always, vary by socio-cultural and individual circumstances. Especially when interviewing (young) children and other vulnerable persons, sensitivity and experience are crucial. ¹⁸¹	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
MEDIA ANNOUNCEMENTS	Various	Announcements about separated or missing persons via the media (especially radio) exist in some contexts as well, reportedly Somalia. ¹⁸² However, the frequency and success of these approaches could not be determined, given the absence of related literature; no Key Informants mentioned these practices.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
PHONE CALLS	ICRC UNHCR and others	Phone calls are used internally by FTR providers in their case management, but their particular relevance for FTR lies actually in re/establishing communication between separated persons. Despite growing (mobile) connectivity, ICRC has experienced a dramatic increase in their provision of phone calls in the last decade, caused by the still increasing number of mobile phones worldwide (including refugees and displaced persons). Other humanitarian actors, such as UNHCR, also provide separated persons with phone call possibilities. This enables persons also to coordinate their reunification. Phone call provision is considered to be one of the most important services for FTR support. ¹⁸³	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
PHYSICAL CONTACT POINTS	RC societies UNHCR UNICEF DRC and others	While separated persons can often be found in conflict zones and other insecure locations, many FTR providers try their best to establish or hold locations on the ground. These are usually not just for FTR purposes. Offices and other contact points are immensely important to identify separated persons, eg at borders, along migration routes or in refugee shelters. Separated persons can further be supported at these locations, through legal advice for reunifications, reintegration support and other mechanisms. Good examples of this important infrastructure are the numerous RC offices worldwide, UNHCR's presence at	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

borders and their 'Blue Dot Hubs' on the Balkan route, but also smaller efforts such as DRC's office in Copenhagen.¹⁸⁴

RCMs	ICRC	Red Cross Messages, RCMs for short, were ICRC/RC's most common form for re/establishing communication between separated persons for many decades. These standardised 'letters' are still distributed through the network, especially to enable communication in peripheral areas or with detainees. However, their importance has decreased significantly given the rise of mobile communication and connectivity. ¹⁸⁵	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
TRACING REQUESTS	ICRC	Tracing Requests are ICRC's standard procedure in searching for missing or separated persons. Individuals can submit a request in person, by phone or online; afterwards they are 'interviewed' before the request is sent to the ICRC/RC location of nearest proximity to the assumed location of the other party. Searches on the ground then carry out the physical tracing by visiting locations and communities. After tracing was successful and communication has been established, ICRC doe (usually) not provide any support for reunification. ¹⁸⁶	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
TRANSPORTATION	IOM UNHCR and others	FTR support providers, such as IOM and UNHCR, can carry out the actual transport of separated persons. The extent and availability depends highly on local circumstances and capacities, and can cover various means of transport (plane, bus, etc). In cases of cross-border reunifications the availability of such support is highly limited by legal frameworks. In general, transportation support is primarily provided for highly vulnerable persons, such as children. ¹⁸⁷	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
VISITING LOCATIONS, COMMUNITIES AND FAMILIES	Various (especially local NGOs/CSOs, but also governmental actors)	Although the penetration of mobile phones and internet connectivity has significantly increased in recent years, the backbone of FTR services worldwide often still consists of physical travel to locations to meet with communities, look for people and talk to families. Especially in areas of humanitarian crisis and/or when children are involved, field visits and physical presence of FTR actors are mandatory. This is crucial when no other means of communication are available, but also to actively identify separated persons and to support or follow-up on reintegration procedures. These tasks are often implemented by local NGOs, CSOs, social workers and volunteers (under the guidance of Main Actors), and require heavy investments in capacity building for everyone involved. For such procedures, clear guidelines are necessary and they can be complemented by case management tools, such as CPIMS+.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

OVERVIEW OF TOOLS AND SERVICES FOR FTR SUPPORT

GENERAL SUPPORT SERVICES

USED FOR

Ident. Trace Reuni. Reint.

ADVOCACY TASKS	Various	While operational tasks and FTR efforts bring immediate support to separated persons, most support providers also support them at an advocacy and policy level. Especially for separated children, actors produce guidelines and handbooks, create awareness campaigns and try to influence legal frameworks worldwide. At their core, these tasks are primarily directed at immigration laws and procedures that hinder many separated persons worldwide from reunifying with their families. Often, they are targeted at the circumstances of highly vulnerable persons, including children, and are attached to general support programmes that might include FTR efforts. ¹⁸⁸	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
CAPACITY BUILDING	Various	Capacity building is one of the major tasks for all parts of the FTR process. Social workers, employees, government officials, community members and others in touch with separated persons have to be trained or, at least, informed about the needs and situations of separated persons. Volunteers and social workers in FTR	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

efforts have to learn tools and guidelines (eg on data protection), to deliver the best FTR support possible. Without relentless efforts in this regard, FTR support mechanisms may fall short or even can cause further harm (eg by exposing vulnerable persons). The need for and lack of appropriate capacity building for everyone involved has been flagged by numerous Key Informants.¹⁹⁰ New approaches, such as ISS' MOOC on alternative care, are showing such efforts can also be shifted into the digital/online realm.¹⁹¹

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES	Various (especially local NGOs/ CSOs)	Educational support services during the reintegration process can be a highly valuable asset to ensure that original causes of separation can be mitigated. This holds true especially for children as peers in education are crucial for reintegration into community structures, for example. ¹⁹² In situations where economic opportunities after reunification are few, educational support to grown-ups can be crucial for overcoming the initial reasons for separation (eg poverty) or negative consequences of separation (eg decreased livelihood opportunities).	○	○	○	●
FINANCIAL SUPPORT	Various (but limited in number)	The expenses of reunification procedures are immense and a major barrier to overcoming separation for many – apart from travel costs, expenses can include DNA tests, lengthy stays in transit countries, costs for getting necessary (travel) documents, and more. ¹⁹³ Most support policies and governments do not provide financial support for reunification. Primarily vulnerable cases (eg children) get such support from FTR actors (through direct transportation support). Most separated persons worldwide are left alone with this financial burden. However, actors such as the British Red Cross, the Hungarian Helsinki Committee, the Refugee Family Reunification Trust in New Zealand, and many small initiatives worldwide try (sometimes) to support separated persons in their reunification financially. ¹⁹⁴	○	○	●	○
LEGAL SUPPORT OR ADVICE	Various (especially local NGOs/ CSOs)	Legal advice and support is probably one of the most crucial support procedures when it comes to family reunification across borders. In times of hardening and confusing immigration laws, in terms of family reunification (see Chapter 1), separated persons do often not stand a chance to legally achieve reunification without external support, this is particularly true for refugees in Europe. The legal advice and support by organisations such as DRC, Safe Passage, the Hungarian Helsinki Committee, RC societies across the globe and others, helps to overcome these major barriers for family unity. ¹⁹⁵	○	○	●	●
PSYCHO-SOCIAL SUPPORT	various (especially local NGOs/ CSOs)	Psychosocial support is often provided during separation, but it can be also be crucial for the preparation of reunification and the later reintegration phase, especially for cases with children and traumatised persons, or after long-term separation.	○	○	●	●

The breadth of current FTR support tools and services is immense and in theory these cover all parts of FTR to ensure not only that separation can be overcome, but also that the well-being of formerly separated persons be secure in the long term, especially for children. In practice, however, this is not the case. While the world of tools and approaches for identifying and tracing separated persons has grown significantly in recent years, major challenges in accessing and providing these services still exist. The same holds true for services and approaches in supporting separated persons in reunification and reintegration. Finally, **most tools and methods are either focused on identifying and tracing or reunification and reintegration, with little ‘case management’ tools currently accounting for a required holistic approach.**

3.2. CHALLENGES IN IDENTIFICATION AND TRACING TOOLS/SERVICES

Tools and approaches for **identifying and tracing** separated persons, and re/establishing communication, include various digital/online and analogue/offline approaches, oscillate between the formal and informal, but do not always match the socio-cultural realities and needs of separated persons (see Chapter 2). They have to account for various protection needs and, hence, vary significantly in their participatory nature: from openly disclosed tracing procedures (primarily online, such as *Trace the Face* and Refunite) to actor- or network-internal tracings. The number of identified and recorded separated persons, across actors and locations, is immense, but so is the number of disconnected databases on which these records are located. This is currently the key issue in the identifying and tracing part of FTR.

The number of identified and recorded separated persons, across actors and locations, is immense, but so is the number of disconnected databases on which these records are located.

While the exact number of existing databases on the topic is unclear, the following ones are the most prominent: Refunite and its platform with 600,000 persons, ICRC and Red Cross society databases, CPIMS databases in various countries, and Google's PersonFinder, amongst many others. Information on separated individuals is likely to be scattered across various servers, phones, computers and in some cases still on paper. Even within one tool or agency network, databases are usually not available at a global level: for example, the current use of CPIMS in all countries affected by the South Sudan crisis does not allow for cross-references across borders.¹⁹⁶

Apart from ICRC and publicly available online platforms, no organisation is able to trace across borders within their systems: referrals to ICRC or the use of informal communications networks are the standard ways of coping with this situation. The current practices of identifying and tracing separated persons are thus highly disconnected from each other, and automated data matching across platforms and even within most agency networks does not exist.¹⁹⁷ Yet, Key Informants agree on the positive potential of data matching and cross referencing.¹⁹⁸

The current practices of identifying and tracing separated persons are highly disconnected, and automated data matching across platforms and even within most agency networks does not exist.

A few inter-agency initiatives in this regard have started to come up recently, but these have yet to bear fruit.¹⁹⁹ A generalised lack of collaboration is still an issue in the FTR 'landscape' (see Chapter 2): the different actors with their different databases are not communicating effectively at the moment, due to concerns that collaborations might negatively affect their strict guidelines on tracing and data protection, and for other non-disclosed reasons.²⁰⁰

Tools and methods face further challenges that jeopardise their full potential in their accessibility and the way they are implemented. These overlap with general FTR barriers (see Chapter 2), but require further examination based on the context of separation. The provision of FTR tools and services is primarily directed at persons either separated in situations of acute humanitarian crises (eg the current South Sudan crisis or after natural disasters) or who got separated along or due to (cross border) migration (eg from Syria to the UK). While in both contexts the needs and vulnerabilities of persons are significant, the challenges they face in accessing and providing FTR services differ. This is due to the very nature of both contexts, as humanitarian crises are often characterised by immediate danger, insecurity and rapid separation, while migration can stretch vulnerabilities and challenges over a longer period, with separation a creeping process.

Table 3: Challenges in accessing/providing IDENTIFICATION & TRACING SERVICES in contexts of acute humanitarian crisis versus along/ due to (lengthy) migration

Challenges in accessing/providing IDENTIFICATION & TRACING SERVICES		
Context of Separation	Access (client perspective)	Provide (FTR actors perspective)
Acute humanitarian crisis	Lack of Connectivity ²⁰¹ Lack of Awareness* Language Barriers ²⁰²	Insecurity ²⁰³ Lack of Resources* Lack of Data Matching**
Along or due to (lengthy) migration	Lack of Awareness* Language Barriers ²⁰⁴ Fear of Exposure*	Lack of Data Matching** Lack of Collaboration* Mobility of Separated Persons ²⁰⁵

* Key barrier for FTR access/provision (see Chapter 2) / ** Key issue (see above)

3.2. CHALLENGES IN REUNIFICATION AND REINTEGRATION TOOLS/SERVICES

While identifying and tracing services for separated persons have benefited the rather belated but intensified use of (mobile) technology in recent years, the issues of **reunification and reintegration** cannot be addressed by apps, websites and such like. Instead, support services in this field cover a wide range of issues and barriers – in particular, legal constraints require legal and bureaucratic support which is a major factor for reunification success. The increased prioritisation of reintegration and reunification preparation in FTR processes by practitioners, especially when children are involved, in the forms of psychosocial support and follow-up mechanisms (family visits, educational support, etc),²⁰⁶ underlines that the involvement in FTR cannot stop with reunification. **The goal of overcoming separation and mitigating future ones must be addressed more holistically.**

The increased prioritisation of reintegration and reunification preparation in FTR processes by practitioners, eg in the forms of psychosocial support and follow-up mechanisms, underlines that the involvement in FTR cannot stop with reunification.

To do this, advocacy, capacity building and policy interventions are key to change in the support of actual reunification and reintegration. Immigration procedures form a priority area of intervention. **The legal landscape for family reunifications worldwide is complicated, convoluted and constantly changing, with currently hardening rules. This forms the biggest issue to successful reunification and reintegration.** In an amalgam of internationally diverse immigration laws, protection procedures, refugee quotas, family definitions, deadlines for submitting forms, and more, separated families may find it hard to understand their rights, and have few chances of claiming these without external support. In addition, many countries – Western and non-Western alike – struggle to fulfil their actual obligations to protect persons and their right to ‘family unity’.

While slow and small but positive changes are occurring for the situations of separated children, advocated for by a range of FTR actors and other stakeholders,²⁰⁷ **family reunifications are often more prevented than supported by current legal procedures and governmental stakeholders.** Specific immigration laws and constraints play a crucial role, but even when separated persons are eligible for legal reunification procedures, further barriers are erected: family members have to thoroughly prove their relationship, sometimes via expensive DNA tests, various (identification) documents have to be produced and submitted, which is especially difficult for persons from conflict affected regions, and narrow definitions of ‘family’ prevent helpful alternative reunifications for vulnerable persons, and the list goes on.²⁰⁸

FTR support providers worldwide – but especially in Europe and the US – are highly invested in fighting for positive change in this regard:

- **At the individual level,** organisations support refugees and migrants in their communication with authorities and give legal advice/support – examples from this study include DRC, the Hungarian Helsinki Committee, Safe Passage and national RC societies (eg in the UK).²⁰⁹ These efforts support single individuals and their families in overcoming separation within existing legal frameworks.
- **From a broader legal perspective,** actors such as Safe Passage strike up strategically selected legal battles. These have shown slow but great success in improving the legal opportunities for separated children, by for example enabling several children from the former Calais refugee camp in France to legally enter the UK after a crucial court battle was won.²¹⁰ Advocacy tasks and awareness rising by campaigns such as Terre des hommes’ ‘Children on the Move’ or Refugee Action’s ‘Refugee Family Reunion’ campaign, complement the broader change efforts of Main Actors such as Save the Children, UNICEF, IRC and their inter-agency working groups.²¹¹

While the legal and policy landscape is particularly problematic for carrying out reunifications, reintegration is also negatively affected when governmental support is not available for such services. However, **services and methods in reunification and reintegration face challenges beyond the legal, being limited in realising their full potential by access and provision constraints.** These strongly overlap with general FTR barriers (see Chapter 2); again, they can be classified based on the context of separation being addressed.

Table 4: Challenges to access/provide REUNIFICATION & REINTEGRATION SUPPORT in contexts of acute humanitarian crisis versus along/ due to (lengthy) migration

Challenges in accessing/providing REUNIFICATION & REINTEGRATION SUPPORT		
<i>Context of Separation</i>	Access (client perspective)	Provide (FTR actors perspective)
Acute humanitarian crisis	Insecurity ²¹² Lack of Awareness* Financial Constraints ²¹³	Insecurity ²¹⁴ Lack of Resources* Legal Constraints**
Along or due to (lengthy) migration	Legal Constraints** Financial Constraints ²¹⁵ Verification of Family Relations***	Legal Constraints** Lack of Collaboration* Political Climate ²¹⁶

* Key barrier for FTR access/provision (see Chapter 2) / ** Key issue (see above) / *** Attached to Key Issue (see above)

SPOTLIGHT

ROHINGYA REFUGEES, DISPLACED AND SEPARATED

Myanmar, a predominantly Buddhist country, is home to 51.5 million people, including the Muslim minority of the Rohingya people – yet, out of an estimated 1.5 million Rohingya, only around 800,000 are believed to still be in Myanmar. The ones remaining primarily live in townships in Northern Rakhine, arguably the poorest areas in the country.²¹⁷ Impoverished circumstances add to decade-long tensions between the Rohingya and government-backed Rakhine Buddhists. Despite living in the region for generations, the Rohingya people are viewed by the government as illegal immigrants and are denied citizenship. Without the possibility of claiming citizenship elsewhere, the Rohingya people are thus stateless and highly vulnerable to human rights violations.²¹⁸

In the past, Malaysia was the destination of choice, as a Rohingya community is already established there. This route is usually done by boat, which is either long and expensive, or short but very dangerous, resulting in families being separated from each other.

Although the Rohingya have been persecuted and displaced for decades, waves of extreme violence resulting in mass displacement have been occurring since 2012, when hundreds of thousands fled for their lives due to an outbreak of violence between Rakhine Buddhists and the Rohingya.²¹⁹ Riots followed in 2013, and in October 2016, a militant group believed to be organised by Rohingya people, attacked border security posts and resulted in a large state security operation under the guise of searching for perpetrators and recovering stolen weapons. This led to an extension of the curfew, Rohingya people being banned from leaving their villages, and a suspension of all humanitarian aid in the region.²²⁰ Despite a UN-backed commission to investigate the circumstances in the country, by August 2017, an attack on border posts by the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army provoked state security to surround Rohingya settlements and are reportedly shoot “at anything that moves.”²²¹

In countries where refuge is sought, legal refugee status is regularly not granted, with an estimated 1 million Rohingya living outside Myanmar with no legal status. As most countries require individuals to be legally registered as refugees in order to apply for family reunification, separation has been identified as a major protection concern for Rohingya people.

The Rohingya people’s statelessness creates major difficulties for them, not only in their home of Myanmar, but also in the countries to which they flee. They are deprived of their protection rights and face detention, being led back out to sea and stranded, and drowning. Rohingya have left for Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, and Thailand. In the past, Malaysia was the destination of choice, as a Rohingya community is already established there. This route is usually done by boat, which is either long and expensive, or short but very dangerous, resulting in families being separated from each other. In countries where refuge is sought, legal refugee status is regularly not granted, with an estimated 1 million Rohingya living outside Myanmar with no legal status.²²² As most countries require individuals to be legally registered as refugees in order to apply for family reunification, separation has been identified as a major protection concern for Rohingya people. Although resettlement is offered in some Western countries, tight definitions of family and other legal requirements result in reunifications worldwide being mostly ‘informal’.²²³

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study provides a framework for understanding FTR, identifies and classifies current actors in the sector, and analyses the applied tools and services used for FTR, in order to resolve a key gap in the literature on the topic and to provide actionable recommendations to the IKEA foundation and other actors.

The FTR landscape of today shows that there are many approaches and actors present that potentially could already cover the various needs of separated persons in various situations.

The overall picture of the current FTR landscape is of a sector experiencing a defining moment. The current number of separated persons is growing significantly. Means of communications have changed in recent years, and FTR providers – especially the Main Actors – have not always been up to the task of adapting to these new realities immediately, leaving this to ‘outsiders’. The FTR landscape of today shows that there are many approaches and actors present that potentially could already cover the various needs of separated persons in various situations. Necessary tools exist or are in the process of development: mobile case management tools like *CPIMS+* can account



© John Owens - This is mother-of-5 Rashida Begum. She arrived in Kutapalong camp in Bangladesh this spring. Her 12-year-old daughter Senuara went missing during the military offensive in Myanmar’s Rakhine state and she fears the 12-year-old was taken by soldiers. “They gathered up the girls for sexual abuse and other purposes,” she claims. “Whether she is alive or not, I do not know”. Myanmar’s military has been accused of mass killings and rapes during the offensive - a claim it denies.

for situations of separated children in immediate danger, *Trace the Face* and Refunite offer similar services that only differ in their scope and protection focus, *Find Me In Kakuma* could become the first global FTR mobile application for users after further testing by ICRC. In addition, there are still 'traditional' tracing services on the ground that can account for remaining gaps of connectivity and humanitarian interventions.

On the identification and tracing part of FTR, the findings of this study underline a picture of potential and major opportunities. The 'scene' of actors is finally catching up with technological progress, the positive disruptions of the past are getting consolidated. Yet, further professionalization of existing networks, and stronger capacity building for local and community efforts are called for, both on issues such as awareness rising for the situation of separated persons but also for improved data protection and thorough case management guidelines.

While technological advances have created new possibilities for identification and tracing of separated persons, traditional reunification and reintegration procedures have yet to be disrupted. Major and confusing legal barriers, financial constraints and further challenges are preventing separated persons around the globe to reunify with their families.

The other side of FTR, the actual reunification and reintegration part, has by its very nature not yet seen technological changes. The expertise in child protection issues of many humanitarian actors, has created an immense body of practical knowledge, guidelines and handbooks on how to approach these issues carefully. Thorough practices such as 'best interest assessments' are positive examples on how to help persons, in this case children, in vulnerable situations and can be a source of inspiration for other efforts, beyond child protection. Understanding of how to approach reunification and reintegration is widespread; however, while technological advances have created new possibilities for identification and tracing of separated persons, traditional reunification and reintegration procedures have yet to be disrupted. Major and confusing legal barriers, financial constraints and further challenges are preventing separated persons around the globe to reunify with their families.

While both identification and tracing, and reunification and reintegration share certain key barriers to accessing and providing FTR, they are further challenged by the fact that the tools and methods applied for each are often disconnected from each other, and only few approaches and actors offer a holistic support to separated persons.

While both **identification and tracing**, and **reunification and reintegration** share certain key barriers to accessing and providing FTR, they are further challenged by the fact that the tools and methods applied for each are often disconnected from each other, and only few approaches and actors offer a holistic support to separated persons. Child protection programmes in situations of humanitarian crises are the exception to this identified gap, and indeed show the potential of such approaches: by utilising rigorous case management procedures and tools, such as *AI CPIMS* and *CPIMS+*, they can accompany separated persons, in this case children, throughout the process, making sure that separation is not only overcome but is also mitigated for the future. **The current lack of collaboration on organisational and technological level between the many stakeholders of the FTR landscape is holding back the broadening of this approach to separated persons overall;** this must be addressed in the future.

Box 3: A current shift in the FTR landscape?

The global landscape of FTR actors and tools, as outlined in this study, is experiencing a pivotal moment that will define its future in the long term. Technical advancements have increased the (technological) capacity of FTR actors but have also raised questions about the actual necessity of FTR-focused technology for tracing efforts. Given modern communication methods, growing connectivity and globally increasing technical literacy, why would separated persons require an open online platform, if they can stay connected anyway?

Raising this question does not imply that tracing needs will disappear in the future - far from it. Persons all over the world will continue to get separated as long as the causes for this exist, and separated persons might find themselves in situations where support for tracing is highly crucial – for example, in areas of conflict and low connectivity, or in cases of persecution and danger. In these moments, separated persons will always rely on discreet tracing services by external actors and they might not have the possibility to openly trace their families via Social Media or Messenger Apps. However, under these circumstances platforms such as Refunite and *Trace the Face* are equally irrelevant.

The considerations above – combined with one of the current major barriers of overcoming separation: the legal landscape – highlight that a shift of focus from (technological) tracing aspects to support in actual reunification is necessary. It has, in fact, already begun: many smaller stakeholders in Europe (such as Safe Passage and the Hungarian Helsinki Committee) reported that tracing is not as important as (legal) support for reunification for their clients – and a similar situation was reported by UNHCR with regards the current Syria crisis.²²⁴ Furthermore, the strong emphasis for more reintegration efforts and appropriate case management in the case of separated children by many Key Informants and literature showcase that practitioners worldwide are already more concerned with the later parts of the FTR process.

Tracing efforts and tools will always be incremental for the well-being of separated persons, however, given the current shift of focus both actors (including donors) and tools must broaden their spectrum towards reunification and reintegration. Single and disconnected tools are not what the future of global FTR needs is calling for. Instead, integration and collaboration are the key terms, catalysed by a necessary and probably already occurring shift towards the more pressing problems for many separated persons worldwide: ***it is no longer about finding each other again, but about coming together again.***

4.1. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ENGAGED DONORS

Given the focus – and origin – of this piece of research, key recommendations here are to engaged donors, such as the IKEA Foundation. Throughout this study, key areas of opportunity have been highlighted for improving and rethinking existing approaches to FTR: at this point, the main priority should not be to just create and support new technologies and responses to deal with the growing and changing landscape of separated persons, but rather to also optimise existing tools and support separated persons in accessing their rights.

The general goal of IKEA Foundation is “to create substantial and lasting change [...] by funding holistic, long-term programmes.”²²⁵ In addition, the tasks to enable the positive “reshaping of humanitarian response”²²⁶ is at the heart of the foundation’s mission. Both of these ideals, holistic approaches and positively influencing the existing FTR landscape of actors and tools, thus form the focus points for the following four recommended areas of potential intervention:

Reshaping and optimizing the FTR process and its tools – horizontally holistic approaches

The current FTR landscape of actors and tools offers a wide variety of digital and analogue support services, but is currently characterized by a missing link between the parts of identification and tracing and reunification and reintegration. **Instead of further (technological) innovations, the current situation calls for a stronger integration of the single process parts by creating and expanding holistic approaches and their tools.** This is important due to two main reasons:

- There are many separated and highly vulnerable persons out in the world that do not have the possibility to actively engage with tracing themselves, by using Refunite or *Trace the Face* or Facebook groups and the like. Their protection needs and/or their location in areas of acute humanitarian crisis render it impossible to apply highly participatory services and tools. These people therefore need approaches and services taking their situation into account and accompanying them from identification until reintegration.
- In addition, the growing connectivity of persons around the world and hardening legal barriers are shifting the necessary focus of FTR from tracing to reunification and reintegration. This does not mean that professional tracing services will go fully extinct, but tools and services that solely focus on these parts will not be able to play a major role in the future of FTR

Accordingly, **interested donors should focus on services and tools that show promising potential for the integration of all parts of the FTR process.** Examples of this include:

- **The CPIMS+ case management tool by UNICEF, Save the Children and others:** while currently still in development, and thus difficult to evaluate, mobile tools like *CPIMS+* offer the potential to create major change in the humanitarian (FTR) landscape. An expansion of its FTR component and an adaptation to situations beyond child protection should be supported.
- **Integrated support programmes for separated persons:** beyond just the technological realm, any approaches that try to integrate the single process parts more strongly should be supported as well. An expansion of services that link tracing to reunification is particularly important. While this might be achieved by single actors, stronger collaboration between existing actors should be prioritised (eg linking Refunite and *Find Me In Kakuma* to others).

Reshaping and optimising the FTR actor landscape – vertically holistic approaches

The identification and tracing components of FTR are currently supported by a variety of actors, tools, platforms and databases – necessary tools already exist. However, their form and use requires significant improvement. **The huge amount of data on separated persons is scattered,** due to two main reasons: **Firstly,** different actors follow different procedures in data collection and data protection and so are concerned about sharing data, and, more generally, these actors work very independently. **Secondly,** data-matching and/or cross-referencing of various

databases demands large resources, in terms of staff, expertise and finances. While limited resources are already a problem for the current provision with FTR services, this does not appear as a priority for organisations.

Interested donors should therefore focus on actors and collaborations between them in the future that show promising potential for the integration of all existing platforms. In addition, general collaboration support on advocacy and capacity building level should also be supported. Specifically, donors should:

- **Support data-matching efforts:** some actors have started to work on data-matching efforts (namely, UNHCR, UNICEF, Save the Children and others), without generalised success to date. Based on these first steps, a wider integration of actors into such efforts should be supported (ideally, ICRC and Refunite). These efforts would then need additional external support by ICT experts.
- **Promote more inclusive collaboration:** especially at the advocacy and policy intervention level, some of the many existing stakeholders are already working together. However, inter-agency working groups are dominated by Main Actors and should bring in smaller players, as both their work and their populations of interest – separated persons – will benefit from the addition of this expertise.

Reshaping the legal landscape to allow separated persons to access reunification

The challenges to effective FTR are slowly shifting from the tracing and technology side of affairs to reunification and its support systems. **One of the major barriers for overcoming separation in today's world of hardening immigration laws, is not 'lost contact' but the various challenges separated persons face when they actually try to get back together.** The constantly shifting and complicated legal landscape for cross-border reunification is already a target by many FTR support providers, as they try to influence policies and procedures through campaigns, legal support systems and even lawsuits, but they lack the means and often the capacity to focus on this aspect of FTR.

Accordingly, **interested donors should focus on actors and interventions that deliberately challenge the current status quo in various ways:**

- **Contest legislations and policies which prevent separated persons from accessing their recognised rights:** while many FTR actors worldwide support separated persons in the legal and bureaucratic struggles, only few actively contest the underlying legislations and policies which can go against the universally recognised rights to family. The strategically selected lawsuits by Safe Passage are a positive example that should receive further support.
- **Expand awareness and policy campaigns:** campaigns such as 'Children on the Move' can shine a light on the situations of separated persons, in this case children, to actively influence public opinion and politics. These efforts should be expanded to global campaigns that highlight the struggles and situations of separated persons more broadly, not only children.

Supporting separated persons' futures through technology

While tools and technologies directly related to FTR have reached a point where (currently) further innovation is less necessary than consolidation between tools and actors, there are still technological changes that can directly and indirectly help separated persons worldwide:

- **Ensure (mobile) connectivity and technical literacy:** While many refugees and displaced persons worldwide are getting more and more connected and ICT-literate, there are still major gaps for both, especially in situations of humanitarian crisis. Any efforts to address these gaps should be promoted, as this increases the capacity and self-reliance of separated persons to actively engage with individual FTR efforts themselves (if the security and vulnerability situation allows it).
- **Explore the creation of digital identity documents:** Like many migrants and displaced persons, separated individuals often face a lack of identification documents (birth certificates, passports, etc). The consequences for family reunification purposes (verification of family relations, travel documents, etc) are enormous, as (cross-border) reunification usually require these crucial papers. In this regard, new technologies, such as blockchain, are currently being tested out worldwide to create verifiable and secure digital identities that could bring great relief for persons with pass ports and such like. While this trend has not yet been discussed in relation to FTR, its general potential was mentioned by a Key Informant²²⁷ and FTR-related actors, such as UNHCR, are already testing with it for other purposes.²²⁸

4.2. FUTURE RESEARCH AND EVALUATIONS

While FTR actors and interested donors should, of course, focus on the practical implications and actions of FTR, **the literature review component of this research identified significant gaps in the existing literature around FTR, making evidence-based programming and funding decisions difficult. The lack of FTR programme evaluations is particularly problematic**, as to date there has been limited accountability around funding and approaches: a recent systematic review on protection interventions for separated children identified only 14 FTR related evaluations from the last decades, with most of them from the 1990s and primarily studies about humanitarian programmes that only touch upon FTR but are not focussed on it.²²⁹ All these evaluations were, of course, related to child protection – however, apart from the ones accounted for in the systematic review mentioned above, the research team was not able to find any other publicly available evaluations of FTR programmes and approaches.

Accordingly, the following priorities are recommended for future research efforts:

- 1) **At the programmatic level:** The body of evaluations on programmes that primarily focus on FTR is virtually in-existent. While child protection programmes with FTR have been evaluated in the past, their focus on children does not allow for a clear understanding of which tools work, generally, and which do not. Participatory online tools like Refunite, *Find Me In Kakuma* and *Trace the Face*, as well as case management tools such as *CPIMS+*, should be thoroughly evaluated in the future regarding their actual impact and benefit. This is necessary to create the best fitting FTR support systems that are not only adapted to the actual needs of separated persons, but which are also sustainable and offer value for the respective investments.

Subsequently, **donors in the FTR landscape should, in the future, always demand thorough and un-biased evaluations.**

2) At the individual and lived experience level: There are virtually no user-focused studies investigating the use of ‘formal’ as well as ‘informal’ FTR methods. Local studies with separated persons and their lived FTR experiences could create a highly valuable pool of knowledge from which practitioners could adapt their approaches to be more relevant and appropriate to those using them. However, the current lack of such studies is jeopardising the successful design and implementing of relevant FTR services. Subsequently, donors and academia should invest more efforts in local and comparative case studies on FTR (eg in refugee camps or urban settings) as well as in formative research efforts that look at FTR in holistic fashion.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Brian, Tara, and Frank Laczko. "Fatal Journeys – Volume 2: Identification and Tracing of Dead and Missing Migrants."
- 2 UNICEF, "A Child Is a Child: Protecting Children on the Move from Violence, Abuse and Exploitation," pp 6.
- 3 Save the Children and International Rescue Committee (IRC), "Out of Sight, Exploited and Alone: A Joint Brief on the Situation for Unaccompanied and Separated Children in Bulgaria, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Croatia." / Lemberg-Pedersen, "The Rise and Fall of the ERPUM Pilot: Tracing the European Policy Drive to Deport Unaccompanied Minors."
- 4 Hepburn, Williamson, and Wolfram, "Separated Children: Care & Protection of Children in Emergencies – A Field Guide," pp 5.
- 5 KII, EASO
- 6 UNICEF, "A Child Is a Child: Protecting Children on the Move from Violence, Abuse and Exploitation."
- 7 Dominguez-Villegas, "Strengthening Mexico's Protection of Central American Unaccompanied Minors in Transit."
- 8 UNICEF, "A Child Is a Child: Protecting Children on the Move from Violence, Abuse and Exploitation."
- 9 Nordin et al., "Unaccompanied & Denied: Regional Legal Framework for Unaccompanied Minors Asylum Seekers (UMAS)." / Willie and Mfubu, "No Future for Our Children: Challenges Faced by Foreign Minors Living in South Africa." / Skelton et al., "In Search of a Better Future: Experiences of Unaccompanied Migrant Children in Limpopo & Mpumalanga in South Africa." / ECOWAS, "ECOWAS Support Procedures and Standards for the Protection and Reintegration of Vulnerable Children on the Move and Young Migrants."
- 10 In particular, "Separations between family members are normative processes in the migratory journey" (Suárez-Orozco, Hee Jin Bang, and Ha Yeon Kim, "I Felt Like My Heart Was Staying Behind: Psychological Implications of Family Separations & Reunifications for Immigrant Youth," pp 247.)
- 11 Williamson et al., "The Impact of Protection Interventions on Unaccompanied and Separated Children in Humanitarian Crises: A Systematic Review."
- 12 Choummanivong, Poole, and Cooper, "Refugee Family Reunification and Mental Health in Resettlement," p 99.
- 13 Fresnoza-Flot, "The Bumpy Landscape of Family Reunification: Experiences of First- and 1.5-Generation Filipinos in France." / White and Hendry, "Family Reunion for Refugees in the UK: Understanding Support Needs." / Jastram and Newland, "Family Unity and Refugee Protection." / Suárez-Orozco, Hee Jin Bang, and Ha Yeon Kim, "I Felt Like My Heart Was Staying Behind: Psychological Implications of Family Separations & Reunifications for Immigrant Youth."
- 14 ICRC, "Living with Absence: Helping the Families of the Missing," pp. 8.
- 15 da Costa, "Beyond Presence: Protection Interventions on the Ground."
- 16 UNICEF, "RapidFTR Serves as a Force for Change in Some of the World's Most Complex Emergencies."
- 17 ICRC, "Living with Absence: Helping the Families of the Missing," pp. 11.
- 18 UNHCR, "A New Beginning: Refugee Integration in Europe."
- 19 UNICEF, "RapidFTR Serves as a Force for Change in Some of the World's Most Complex Emergencies."
- 20 Fresnoza-Flot, "The Bumpy Landscape of Family Reunification: Experiences of First- and 1.5-Generation Filipinos in France."
- 21 IKEA Foundation, "What We Do."
- 22 While the reasons for such a low response rate could not be explored in detail, the research team suspects the two following reasons to be of major impact: 1) the survey was conducted in August, usually a month of vacation for many employees (especially Western ones), and 2) many potential respondents (direct and indirect contacts alike) might not see themselves as FTR actors as their involvement in such issues is often of rather peripheral nature (eg embedded in general refugee assistance or child protection programmes).
- 23 DfID, "Assessing the Strength of Evidence."
- 24 ICRC, "Annual Report 2016 – Volume 1."
- 25 Pannaikadavil-Thomas, "Family Tracing and Reunification – Short Brief on International Social Service (Unpublished Overview Paper)," pp 2.
- 26 UNHCR, "Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2016," pp 3.
- 27 UNICEF, "Annual Report 2016."
- 28 Hassnain, "War Child UK Impact Report: Improving the Lives of Children Affected by Armed Conflict," pp 5.
- 29 KII, Refunite
- 30 KII, Find Me in Kakuma
- 31 KII, ICRC (A)
- 32 Mapping based on: Global Migration Data Analysis Centre, "2015 Global Migration Trends – Factsheet." / International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), "Annual Report 2016 – Volume 1." / Williams, "The World's Congested Human Migration Routes in 5 Maps."
- 33 "The scale of separation in Rwanda is unparalleled in the evidence. With an overall caseload of 120,000 UASC registered (or 3.7 percent of the affected child population), this is in excess of 3.5 times the scale of separation in any other crisis." (Williamson et al., "The Impact of Protection Interventions on Unaccompanied and Separated Children in Humanitarian Crises: A Systematic Review," pp iv)
- 34 For example: ICRC, IRC, Save the Children, and many others, including local and small NGOs.
- 35 Merkelbach, "Reuniting Children Separated from Their Families after the Rwandan Crisis of 1994: The Relative Value of a Centralized Database – ICRC."
- 36 De Lay, "Mobility Mapping and Flow Diagrams: Tools for Family Tracing and Social Reintegration Work with Separated Children."

- 37 For example: ICRC, “Inter-Agency Guiding Principles on Unaccompanied and Separated Children,” & Bonnerjea, “Family Tracing: A Good Practice Guide.”
- 38 For example: Bonnerjea, “Family Tracing: In Whose Interests?” & Doná et al., “Family Reunification for Unaccompanied Minors in Rwanda.”
- 39 Refunite, “Founders Story.”
- 40 For example: UNICEF’s *RapidFTR* (now discontinued / UNICEF, “RapidFTR Serves as a Force for Change in Some of the World’s Most Complex Emergencies.”) and the new inter-agency tool CPIMS+ (CPIMS+, “The Child Protection Information Management System (CPIMS+)/Primer) – Factsheet.”).
- 41 Banning-Lover, “Trace the Face: How Tech Has Changed the Way We Find Missing People.”
- 42 Williamson et al., “The Impact of Protection Interventions on Unaccompanied and Separated Children in Humanitarian Crises: A Systematic Review.”
- 43 KII, ICMP (A)
- 44 Jastram and Newland, “Family Unity and Refugee Protection,” pp 556.
- 45 Staver, “Family Reunification: A Right for Forced Migrants?” pp 31.
- 46 Current negative examples include hardening legal frameworks in European countries and the US, but also many non-Western countries. While studies from the US also showcase that immigration laws can actively jeopardise family unity – resulting from immigration enforcement, namely, deportations (Enchautegui and Menjívar, “Paradoxes of Family Immigration Policy: Separation, Reorganization, and Reunification of Families under Current Immigration Laws: Family Immigration Policy.”) – EU member states are actually obliged to actively trace the families of, at least, separated children (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), “Thematic Focus: Family Tracing and Family Reunification.”). Yet, the conflict between family unity and immigration procedures is convoluted in non-Western countries as well, as the current South Sudan crisis with refugee migration to neighbouring countries highlights: cross-border family reunification is legally problematic between South Sudan and neighbouring countries, especially Ethiopia, as reunification to South Sudan is currently not feasible due to security concerns. Further, reunification to neighbouring countries by formal support through humanitarian actors is politically highly contested, because this would mean a legally accepted influx of additional refugees. (KII, UNHCR (A)).
- 47 This is, for example, the case if children come from abusive family situations or if reunification is (legally) only possible in areas of conflict. Hence, the right to family unity might be overthrown and replaced by other forms of alternative care for children, such as (international) kinship care (Fonseca, Hardy, and Adam, “Unaccompanied Migrant Children and Legal Guardianship in the Context of Returns: The Missing Links between Host Countries and Countries of Origin.” / Skelton et al., “In Search of a Better Future: Experiences of Unaccompanied Migrant Children in Limpopo & Mpumalanga in South Africa.” / UNICEF, “Protecting Children from Violence: A Synthesis of Evaluation Findings.” / KII, ISS (A)).
- 48 Staver, “Family Reunification: A Right for Forced Migrants?” pp 31.
- 49 ICRC, “Somalia: Restoring Contact between Families Separated by Conflict.” / Hungarian Helsinki Committee, “Family Reunification of Somali Refugees – Good Practices of Several EU Member States.”
- 50 UNHCR, “Somalia 2016 Year-End Report.” / Somalia Humanitarian Country Team, “Somalia 2017 Humanitarian Needs Overview.”
- 51 UNHCR, “Somalia 2016 Year-End Report.” / Somalia Humanitarian Country Team, “Somalia 2017 Humanitarian Needs Overview.” / ICRC, “Somalia: Restoring Contact between Families Separated by Conflict.”
- 52 Somalia Humanitarian Country Team, “Somalia 2017 Humanitarian Needs Overview.” / ICRC, “Somalia: Restoring Contact between Families Separated by Conflict.” / McMichael and Ahmed, “Family Separation: Somali Women in Melbourne.”
- 53 ICRC, “Somalia: Restoring Contact between Families Separated by Conflict.”
- 54 Hungarian Helsinki Committee, “Family Reunification of Somali Refugees – Good Practices of Several EU Member States.”
- 55 McMichael and Ahmed, “Family Separation: Somali Women in Melbourne.” / Asylum and Immigration Tribunal, “Family Reunion: ‘In Order to Seek Asylum’ – The Immigration Acts.”
- 56 For example: Dunn, Parry-Williams, and Petty, “Picking up the Pieces: Caring for Children Affected by the Tsunami.” / Mirindi and Ntabe, “Emergency Assistance for Unaccompanied Children in Bunia, Beni and Mambassa, Eastern DRC: Final Report.”
- 57 Inter-Agency Group on Children’s Reintegration, “Guidelines on Children’s Reintegration.” / Wedge, Krumholz, and Jones, “Reaching for Home: Global Learning on Family Reintegration in Low and Lower-Middle Income Countries.” / ECOWAS, “ECOWAS Support Procedures and Standards for the Protection and Reintegration of Vulnerable Children on the Move and Young Migrants.”
- 58 UNICEF, “Protecting Children from Violence: A Synthesis of Evaluation Findings.” / Save the Children, “Kinship Care Report: Syrian Refugee Children in Jordan.”
- 59 “In some cases, people felt as though they no longer knew the person they were being reunited with because they had been apart for so long or because they had changed so much: ‘I feel actually she’s a different woman, she’s not my wife. Because there she was close to me, attached to me; here she can do everything she can, so she’s like she doesn’t need me’ (Husband, Syria).” (Marsden and Harris, “‘We Started Life Again’: Integration Experiences of Refugee Families in Glasgow,” pp 85.)
- 60 Mason and Buchmann, “ICT4Refugees: A report on the emerging landscape of digital responses to the refugee crisis.” / UNHCR, “Connecting Refugees: How Internet and Mobile Connectivity can Improve Refugee Well-Being and Transform Humanitarian Action.” / GSMA, “The Importance of Mobile for Refugees: A Landscape of New Services and Approaches.”

61 UNHCR, “Connecting Refugees: How Internet and Mobile Connectivity can Improve Refugee Well-Being and Transform Humanitarian Action, pp 12.

62 KII, *Safe Passage* / KII, ICRC (B) / KII, UNHCR (A)

63 KII, ICRC (B) / KII, UNHCR (A)

64 Williamson et al., “The Impact of Protection Interventions on Unaccompanied and Separated Children in Humanitarian Crises: A Systematic Review,” p 34.

65 McMichael and Ahmed, “Family Separation: Somali Women in Melbourne.”

66 UNHCR, “Guidelines on Reunification of Refugee Families.”

67 See also: Salvo, “Developing an Understanding of People’s Experience of Using Tracing Services to Search for Missing Family: A Qualitative Investigation.”

68 Such cases occur in situations of acute and current humanitarian crises – eg South Sudan – but also along lengthy migratory events – eg from Syria or Afghanistan to Europe (KII, UNHCR (A) / KII, *Safe Passage*).

69 Actors such as UNHCR, for example, often rely heavily on community information/consultation in refugee camps and even the online platform Refunite constantly seeks the direct contact to target communities and their networks ‘on the ground’ (KII, UNHCR (A) / KII, Refunite).

70 KII, ISS (A) / KII, EASO / KII, ICRC (A)

71 Salvo, “Developing an Understanding of People’s Experience of Using Tracing Services to Search for Missing Family: A Qualitative Investigation.”

72 KII, Hungarian Helsinki Committee

73 Save the Children and IRC, “Out of Sight, Exploited and Alone: A Joint Brief on the Situation for Unaccompanied and Separated Children in Bulgaria, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Croatia,” pp 10.

74 KII, UNHCR (A) / KII, UNICEF (B) / EASO, “EASO Practical Guide on Family Tracing.”

75 “The tracing request will go through the national headquarter office, who will then send it to the closest office where volunteers are working. Then the volunteer has been provided with a bicycle [...] to go to the village where this family is” (KII, ICRC (A)).

76 Bhabha et al., “Children on the Move: An Urgent Human Rights and Child Protection Priority,” pp 19.

77 For example, the *Find Me In Kakuma* app was developed informally and will now get formalized by ICRC (see Box 1), online services like Refunite and *Trace the Face* depend primarily on participation, Facebook conversations with parents can serve as source for the verification of family relations to authorities (KII, *Safe Passage*).

78 KII, ICRC (A) / KII, UNICEF (A)

79 KII, ICRC (A)

80 References for these statements: KII, UNHCR (A) / KII, EASO / KII, Refunite / KII, *Safe Passage* / KII, Hungarian Helsinki Committee / Salvo, “Developing an Understanding of People’s Experience of Using Tracing Services to Search for Missing Family: A Qualitative Investigation.” / Wedge, Krumholz, and Jones, “Reaching for Home: Global Learning on Family Reintegration in Low and Lower-Middle Income Countries.”

81 This holds true for Refunite, all ICRC and Red Cross FTR activities, the newly developed *CPIMS+* tool by UNICEF and others, even the grassroots app *Find Me In Kakuma*, and many others (KII, Refunite / KII, ICRC (A) / KII, UNICEF (C) / KII, *Find Me In Kakuma*) – while the actual implementation of data security measures might fall behind set guidelines and rules in local contexts (KII, ICRC (A)), institutionalized FTR efforts can still be considered as clearly more protective than purely individual efforts and/or ‘informal’ group activities, for example on Facebook.

82 KII, EASO

83 Third parties are usually state or humanitarian actors and/or their appointed guardians for the respective child. The body of literature and documents on the protection of separated children and unaccompanied minors is extensive, while the actual implementation of such can vary immensely from local context and their legal frameworks. The following four examples shine a light into current (best) practices and recommendations: EASO, “EASO Practical Guide on Family Tracing.” / Inter-Agency Working Group on Unaccompanied and Separated Children, “Alternative Care in Emergencies Toolkit.” / UNHCR and UNICEF, “Safe & Sound: What States Can Do to Ensure Respect for the Best Interests of Unaccompanied and Separated Children in Europe.” / Williamson et al., “The Impact of Protection Interventions on Unaccompanied and Separated Children in Humanitarian Crises: A Systematic Review.”

84 United Nations General Assembly, “Convention on the Rights of the Child,” Art. 16.

85 For example: Refunite only offers its platform for persons of 18 years and older, and *Trace the Face* includes a non-public but ICRC-internal version for children under the age of 15 (KII, Refunite / European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), “Thematic Focus: Family Tracing and Family Reunification.”).

86 Some of these rare examples are: Bernhard, Landolt, and Goldring, “Transnational, Multi-Local Motherhood: Experiences of Separation and Reunification among Latin American Families in Canada.” / Connell et al., “‘One Day We Will Be Reunited’: Experiences of Refugee Family Reunion in the UK.” / Fresnoza-Flot, “The Bumpy Landscape of Family Reunification: Experiences of First- and 1.5-Generation Filipinos in France.” / McMichael and Ahmed, “Family Separation: Somali Women in Melbourne.” / Salvo, “Developing an Understanding of People’s Experience of Using Tracing Services to Search for Missing Family: A Qualitative Investigation.” / Skelton et al., “In Search of a Better Future: Experiences of Unaccompanied Migrant Children in Limpopo & Mpumalanga in South Africa.”

87 KII, Hungarian Helsinki Committee

- 88 For example: Danielsen, Kirsten, and Marie Louise Seeberg. "Tracing UMAs' Families: A Comparative Study of Some European Countries' Practices and Experiences in Tracing the Parents or Caregivers of Unaccompanied Minor Asylum Seekers,"
- 89 KII, Find Me In Kakuma
- 90 KII, ICMP (A)
- 91 ICRC, "Annual Report 2016 – Volume 1." / KII, ICRC (A) / KII, ICRC (B)
- 92 KII, IOM (A + B) / IOM Italy, "Family Tracing."
- 93 KII, ISS (B) / Pannaikadavil-Thomas, "Family Tracing and Reunification – Short Brief on International Social Service (Unpublished Overview Paper)."
- 94 KII, UNHCR (A) / UNICEF, "Annual Report 2016."
- 95 KII, UNICEF (A) / KII, UNICEF (B)
- 96 KII, DRC (A)
- 97 CPIMS+, "The Child Protection Information Management System (CPIMS+/Primero) – Factsheet." / De Lay, "Family Reunification, Alternative Care & Community Reintegration of Separated Children in Post-Conflict Rwanda." / Save the Children and IRC, "Out of Sight, Exploited and Alone: A Joint Brief on the Situation for Unaccompanied and Separated Children in Bulgaria, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Croatia."
- 98 KII, Save the Children UK (A)
- 99 KII, Terres des hommes (A)
- 100 According to other Key Informants of this study the local branches of these INGOs are in some cases actively involved in various FTR aspects on the ground. However, direct interviews with their representatives were not conducted, either due to lack of response or because they were out of scope of the study.
- 101 KII, Hungarian Helsinki Committee
- 102 KII, KIND (A)
- 103 KII, ICRC
- 104 KII, Refunite
- 105 KII, Safe Passage
- 106 Hassnain, "War Child UK Impact Report: Improving the Lives of Children Affected by Armed Conflict."
- 107 KII, ICRC (B) / KII, UNICEF (B) / KII, UNHCR (A)
- 108 ActionAid, "Separated: The Challenges of Relocation and Family Reunification for Refugees Arriving in Greece." / Refugee Family Reunification Trust, "What We Do."
- 109 KII, EASO / EASO, "EASO Practical Guide on Family Tracing."
- 110 KII, KIND (A)
- 111 KII, EASO / EASO, "EASO Practical Guide on Family Tracing."
- 112 KII, ISS (A) / ECOWAS, "ECOWAS Support Procedures and Standards for the Protection and Reintegration of Vulnerable Children on the Move and Young Migrants."
- 113 "Kakuma camp is located in the North-western region of Kenya. The camp was established in 1992 following the arrival of the 'Lost Boys of Sudan'. [...] Kakuma camp had a population of 181,983 registered refugees and asylum-seekers as at 31/07/2017." (UNHCR Kenya, "Kakuma Refugee Camp.")
- 114 While ICRC's *Trace the Face* did not have a mobile browser version of its service at the time *Find Me In Kakuma* was developed (the website of *Trace the Face* was only adapted to computer browsers), its has now such a feature - however, apart from *Find Me In Kakuma* no other mobile app exists at the moment.
- 115 "Wireframing is a way to design a website service at the structural level. A wireframe is commonly used to lay out content and functionality on a page which takes into account user needs and user journeys. Wireframes are used early in the development process to establish the basic structure of a page before visual design and content is added." (Experience UX, "What Is Wireframing.")
- 116 www.thoughtworks.com
- 117 KII, Find Me In Kakuma
- 118 The qualitative mapping in the these dimensions is based on KIIs with representatives of the respective actors and/or an analysis of documents/ information published by these – examples of such documents/ information include annual (budget) reports (for example, ICRC, "Annual Report 2016 – Volume 1." and UNICEF, "Annual Report 2016."), inter-agency working group documents (for example, Inter-Agency Working Group on Unaccompanied and Separated Children, "Alternative Care in Emergencies Toolkit."), and various other FTR-related documents of the respective actors.
- 119 The most recent example is the strong collaboration between UNICEF, Save the Children UNHCR and others for the current South Sudan crisis (KII, Save the Children UK (A)).
- 120 For example, the current development for CPIMS+ by IRC, UNICEF, Save the Children and others is still looking for funds for the final development of the tool and its local implementations (KII, UNICEF (C)).
- 121 KII, Refunite / KII, Find Me In Kakuma
- 122 KII, Safe Passage
- 123 KII, Refunite / KII, Find Me In Kakuma / KII, Safe Passage

- 124 In rare cases, even ICRC asks ISS for support when they don't have the local capacity for FTR efforts (KII,ISS (B)).
- 125 KII, ISS (A) / KII, ISS (B)
- 126 KII, ICMP (A)
- 127 KII, Hungarian Helsinki Committee / Hassnain, "War Child UK Impact Report: Improving the Lives of Children Affected by Armed Conflict."
- 128 KII, ICRC (A)
- 129 KII, Terres des hommes (A) / KII, EASO
- 130 KII, KIND (A) / KII, DRC (A)
- 131 KII, UNHCR (A) / KII, UNICEF (B)
- 132 KII, ISS (B) / KII, ICMP (A) / KII, UNICEF (A) / ICRC, "Annual Report 2016 – Volume 1."
- 133 For example, OFDA has been an important donor for the current development of the *CPIMS+* tool (see Chapter 3), and local NGOs in Europe draw many resources for FTR-related tasks for EU funds or funding programmes of the Member States (KII, UNICEF (C) / KII, Hungarian Helsinki Committee).
- 134 KII, Safe Passage/ KII, ISS (B)
- 135 KII, Refunite
- 136 KII, Google
- 137 GSMA, "The Importance of Mobile for Refugees: A Landscape of New Services and Approaches." / UNHCR, "Connecting Refugees: How Internet and Mobile Connectivity can Improve Refugee Well-Being and Transform Humanitarian Action."
- 138 GSMA, "The Importance of Mobile for Refugees: A Landscape of New Services and Approaches." / GSMA, "Turkcell – Refugees as valued customers."
- 139 Betts et al., "Refugee Economies: Rethinking Popular Assumptions." / GSMA, "The Importance of Mobile for Refugees: A Landscape of New Services and Approaches." / ICRC, "Annual Report 2016 – Volume 1." / UNHCR, "Connecting Refugees: How Internet and Mobile Connectivity can Improve Refugee Well-Being and Transform Humanitarian Action."
- 140 KII, ICRC (A)
- 141 "It's about awareness, so that people know we exist." KII, Refunite / "One thing is awareness rising, that the service actually exists. [...] It's also about the local authorities knowing about the service." KII, ISS (A)
- 142 KII, UNHCR (A) / KII, Hungarian Helsinki Committee / KII, ICRC (B) / KII, DRC (A)
- 143 Salvo, "Developing an Understanding of People's Experience of Using Tracing Services to Search for Missing Family: A Qualitative Investigation."
- 144 UNHCR, "Family Reunion in the United Kingdom (UK)." / Kiama et al., "The Role of Technology in Family Tracing in Kenya." / Marsden and Harris, "We Started Life Again': Integration Experiences of Refugee Families in Glasgow.
- 145 For example: KII, Refunite / KII, Safe Passage
- 146 EASO, "EASO Practical Guide on Family Tracing." / Strik, Hart, and Nissen, "Family Reunification."
- 147 Direct community involvement is a common practice among small and large 'players' – UNICEF, UNHCR, ICRC, Safe Passage, Refunite, and many others (KII, Refunite / KII, Safe Passage / KII, UNHCR (A) / KII, Save the Children UK (A).
- 148 Williamson et al., "The Impact of Protection Interventions on Unaccompanied and Separated Children in Humanitarian Crises: A Systematic Review." / UNICEF, "Documentation and Review of RapidFTR in the Philippines Following Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda)." / European Commission, "Family Reunification of Third-Country Nationals in the EU plus Norway: National Practices."
- 149 White and Hendry, "Family Reunion for Refugees in the UK: Understanding Support Needs." / Salvo, "Developing an Understanding of People's Experience of Using Tracing Services to Search for Missing Family: A Qualitative Investigation." / British Red Cross, "How Reuniting Families Can Provide Solutions to the Refugee Crisis." / Action for the Rights of Children (ARC), "Separated Children."
- 150 Beswick, "Not so Straightforward: The Need for Qualified Legal Support in Refugee Family Reunion."
- 151 Inter-Agency Working Group on Unaccompanied and Separated Children, "Alternative Care in Emergencies Toolkit." / Inter-Agency Group on Children's Reintegration, "Guidelines on Children's Reintegration." / KII, UNHCR (A) / KII, UNICEF (B) / KII, Save the Children UK
- 152 KII, Refunite / KII, ICRC (A) / KII, UNHCR (A) / KII, ICMP (A)
- 153 KII, ICRC (A) / KII, ICRC (B)
- 154 Kaonga et al., "Information and Communication Technology for Child Protection Case Management in Emergencies: An Overview of the Existing Evidence Base." / UNICEF, "Documentation and Review of RapidFTR in the Philippines Following Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda)." / UNICEF, "Protecting Children from Violence: A Synthesis of Evaluation Findings." / Wedge, Krumholz, and Jones, "Reaching for Home: Global Learning on Family Reintegration in Low and Lower-Middle Income Countries."
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- 188 Examples are: Terres des hommes' 'Children on The Move' campaign (www.childrenonthemove.org), Safe Passage's legal battles with European authorities (see Chapter 2), and the many (inter-agency) guidelines and handbooks of actors such as Save the Children, UNHCR, UNICEF, IRC, etc (see ANNEX 2).
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- 192 Wedge, Krumholz, and Jones, "Reaching for Home: Global Learning on Family Reintegration in Low and Lower-Middle Income Countries." / UNICEF, "Protecting Children from Violence: A Synthesis of Evaluation Findings."
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- 197 KII, ICRC (A) / KII, Refunite / KII, UNHCR (A)
- 198 KII, ICRC (A) / KII, Refunite / KII, UNHCR (A)
- 199 KII, Save the Children UK (A) / KII, UNHCR (A)
- 200 KII, ICRC (A)
- 201 Situations of humanitarian crisis around the world occur often in peripheral or rural areas with little infrastructure, and in cases of conflict and natural disasters existing infrastructure can be (deliberately) destroyed. Subsequently, mobile connectivity and/or possible connection to physical 'contact' points of support providers are one of the most crucial challenges for separated persons to access FTR services and other support mechanisms. In such situations, geographical, speak: physical, connectivity can substitute for a lack of mobile connectivity, and vice versa (KII, ICRC (A) / KII, Refunite).
- 202 Language barriers have been identified as a major challenge by several Key Informants working on FTR in areas of acute humanitarian crises. While tracing tools primarily directed at migrants (eg *Trace the Face* and Refunite) have added more and more languages to their systems, participatory and online tools take time to be adapted to local socio-cultural and linguistic circumstances when a conflict breaks out or a natural disaster occurs (KII, ISS (A) / KII, ICRC (A) / KII, Refunite).
- 203 Concerning security situations in many places with humanitarian crisis (eg Syria, Somalia, South Sudan and others), keep FTR providers from expanding their services on the ground. Also, mobile connectivity is often affected by insecurity and conflict (KII, UNHCR (A) / KII, UNICEF (B) / Rohan, "Refugee Family Reunification Rights: A Basis in the European Court of Human Rights' Family Reunification Jurisprudence.")
- 204 Despite more and more languages being added to systems such as the Family Links website and Refunite, the global migrant and refugee population speaks innumerable languages that have not been accounted for. In addition, (online) information about general FTR services is often not available on local languages. Language barriers are mentioned as a challenge for connectivity and tracing support access, by literature and Key Informants (GSMA, "Turkcell – Refugees as valued customers." / (KII, ISS (A) / KII, Refunite).
- 205 Separation along or due to migration is a challenge for many traditional identification and tracing services, as people rarely stay at the place where they have been identified as separated (eg borders). Especially in cases of cross-border migration and rapid displacements, regular tracing services and searches on the ground (eg by ICRC and UNHCR) struggle to keep up with high mobility patterns, as frustrations with these services by smaller actors indicate (KII, Hungarian Helsinki Committee) – this challenge and criticism is also shared in literature (Chung and Blake, "Family Reunification After Disasters." / Dunn, Parry-Williams, and Petty, "Picking up the Pieces: Caring for Children Affected by the Tsunami.").
- 206 The increased interest in these topics is documented in various guideline documents and was emphasized by several Key Informants: ECOWAS, "ECOWAS Support Procedures and Standards for the Protection and Reintegration of Vulnerable Children on the Move and Young Migrants." / Inter-Agency Group on Children's Reintegration, "Guidelines on Children's Reintegration." / Wedge, Krumholz, and Jones, "Reaching for Home: Global Learning on Family Reintegration in Low and Lower-Middle Income Countries." / KII, International Child Protection Specialist / KII, Save the Children UK (A) / KII, ISS (A)
- 207 For example: Terres des hommes, KIND, UNHCR, UNICEF, Safe Passage, Save the Children, and others.

- 208 Taitz, Weekers, and Mosca, "The Last Resort: Exploring the Use of DNA Testing for Family Reunification." / UNHCR, "Protection of Refugee Children in the Middle East and North Africa." / Strik, de Hart and Nissen, "Family Reunification: A Barrier or Facilitator of Integration: A Comparative Study." / Bathily, Anne, and Anaïs Faure Atger. "Disrupted Flight: The Realities of Separated Refugee Families in the EU." / KII, Hungarian Helsinki Committee / KII, Safe Passage / KII, EASO
- 209 British Red Cross, "How Reuniting Families Can Provide Solutions to the Refugee Crisis." / KII, DRC (A) / KII, Hungarian Helsinki Committee / KII, Safe Passage
- 210 KII, Safe Passage
- 211 See: www.childrenonthemove.org & www.refugee-action.org.uk/resource/faq-refugee-actions-refugee-family-reunion-campaign
- 212 If one or even both separated parties are in areas of acute humanitarian crisis, insecurity can lead to the inability to travel either for reunification itself or for obtaining the necessary documents, such as passport and travel visas (KII, EASO / KII, UNHCR (A) / Rohan, "Refugee Family Reunification Rights: A Basis in the European Court of Human Rights' Family Reunification Jurisprudence.")
- 213 While support services for reunification and reintegration are generally free of charge, the general costs of family reunifications for separated persons are usually immense. In times of very limited financial or logistical support, separated persons are also restrained in accessing reunification support (eg in form of legal advice), because they are just not able to afford the following processes. In addition, many family reunification schemes worldwide demand for a sponsor in the target country, who often has to prove his/her financial capability to sustain the additional family member (Bathily, Anne, and Anaïs Faure Atger. "Disrupted Flight: The Realities of Separated Refugee Families in the EU." / Government of Canada, "Evaluation of the Family Reunification Program." / European Commission, "Family Reunification of Third-Country Nationals in the EU plus Norway: National Practices.")
- 214 While identification and tracing on the ground are highly impacted by the respective security situation in acute humanitarian crises, also the support for reunification (eg by transportation) and especially for reintegration efforts, such as follow-up visits is challenged in their availability and success in such situations. (KII, UNICEF (B)).
- 215 See: footnote 178.
- 216 The political climate towards migrants and hence many reunification cases, limits the capacity of FTR providers to fulfil their mission, as funds might get cut and new laws create additional barriers for reunifications. This concern was raised by many stakeholders, especially regarding the near future (for example: KII, DRC (A) / KII, Safe Passage).
- 217 Myanmar Humanitarian Country Team, "Myanmar 2017 Humanitarian Needs Overview." / Equal Rights Trust and Institute of Human Rights and Peace Studies (IHRP), "Equal Only in Name: The Human Rights of Stateless Rohingya in Malaysia." / Edroos, "Rohingya: 'Even a Baby Was Not Spared by the Army.'"
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- 224 KII, Safe Passage / KII, Hungarian Helsinki Committee / KII, UNHCR (A)
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- 228 Parker, "AID:Tech Offers Blockchain Solutions to Help United Nations and European Commission with Refugee Problems."
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ANNEX 1 - RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research Category	Research Question	Answered in Chapter			
		1	2	3	4
Models	What models exist and what do they look like?	•	•	•	•
	Where do these models exist?	•		•	
Use & Users	Who uses them?	•	•	•	
	Where and when are they used?	•	•	•	
Implementation & Coordination	Who funds these models?		•		
	Who implements them?		•	•	
	How are they working together?		•	•	•
Challenges	What are the barriers or blockages faced by those using and those deploying the FTR tools?		•	•	•
	Which institutional, legal and financial challenges to implementing partners of FTR tools face on a regular basis?		•	•	•
	Which cultural or social constraints exists in local contexts that can impact the successful implementation of FTR efforts?		•	•	
Evaluation	How and how frequently have FTR efforts/ tools/models been evaluated?				•
	What has been shown to work, and does not work?		•	•	•
Sustainability & Scalability	Which (future) trends for FTR efforts are to be expected?			•	•
	Which (technological) approaches show the most promising potential?			•	•
	What are the gaps and recommendations for areas where the IKEA foundation can contribute with funding?				•

ANNEX 2 - SCORING TABLE OF IDENTIFIED LITERATURE

R:	Reliability	(points: 0, 2, 4)
T:	Type	(points: 0, 2, 4, 6)
C:	Currentness	(points: 0, 1, 2, 3)
Sy:	Syrian refugees	(points: 0, 1)
So:	Somali refugees	(points: 0, 1)
Ro:	Rohingya people	(points: 0, 1)

Search	Publication	Type	Year	R	T	C	Sy	So	Ro	TOTAL	Reviewed
1	Abrar, "Repatriation of Rohingya Refugees."	Article	1996	2	6	0	0	0	1	9	
1	Action for the Rights of Children (ARC), "Separated Children."	Guidelines	2004	2	2	1	0	0	0	5	X
1	ActionAid, "Separated: The Challenges of Relocation and Family Reunification for Refugees Arriving in Greece."	Report	nd	2	4	3	1	0	0	10	X
3	Allaby, "Europe's Child Refugee Family Reunion System Is Failing."	Media	2017	2	0	3	0	0	0	5	X
1	Alliance for Child Protection, "Toolkit on Unaccompanied and Separated Children: Inter-Agency Working Group on Unaccompanied and Separated Children."	Guidelines	nd	2	2	3	1	1	0	9	
1	Amnesty International Australia, "Who Are the Rohingya Refugees?"	Media	2016	4	0	3	0	0	1	8	X
3	Amnesty International, "'We Are At Breaking Point' Rohingya: Persecuted In Myanmar, Neglected In Bangladesh."	Report	2016	4	4	3	0	0	1	12	X
1	Antognini, "Family Unity Revisited: Divorce, Separation, and Death in Immigration Law."	Article	2014	2	6	2	0	0	0	10	X
3	Asylum and Immigration Tribunal, "Family Reunion: 'In Order to Seek Asylum' - The Immigration Acts."	Guidelines	2009	2	2	1	0	1	0	6	X
1	Balint, "'To Reunite the Dispersed Family': War, Displacement and Migration in the Tracing Files of the Australian Red Cross."	Article	2015	0	6	3	0	0	0	9	
2	Banerjee et al., "Towards a Collaborative Disaster Management Service Framework using Mobile and Web Applications."	Article	2016	2	6	3	0	0	0	11	X
1	Banning-Lover, "Trace the Face: How Tech Has Changed the Way We Find Missing People."	Media	2016	4	0	3	0	0	0	7	X
1	Bathily and Faure Atger, "Disrupted Flight: The Realities of Separated Refugee Families in the EU."	Report	2014	4	4	2	1	1	0	12	X
1	Bernhard, Landolt, and Goldring, "Transnational, Multi-Local Motherhood: Experiences of Separation and Reunification among Latin American Families in Canada."	Article	2005	2	6	1	0	0	0	9	X

Search	Publication	Type	Year	R	T	C	Sy	So	Ro	TOTAL	Reviewed
1	Berrih and Kachuka, "Reducing the Separation and Abandonment of Children in the Democratic Republic of Congo."	Report	2012	4	4	2	0	0	0	10	X
1	Beswick, "Not so Straightforward: The Need for Qualified Legal Support in Refugee Family Reunion."	Report	2015	4	4	3	1	1	0	13	X
2	Betts et al., "Refugee Economies: Rethinking Popular Assumptions."	Report	2014	4	4	2	0	1	0	11	X
1	Bhabha and Dottridge, "Recommended Principles to Guide Actions Concerning Children on the Move and Other Children Affected by Migration."	Guidelines	2016	2	2	3	0	0	0	7	
1	Bhabha et al., "Children on the Move: An Urgent Human Rights and Child Protection Priority."	Article	2016	4	6	3	0	0	1	14	X
1	Boeles, "Directive on Family Reunification: Are the Dilemmas Resolved?"	Article	2001	2	6	1	0	0	0	9	
1	Bonnerjea, "Disasters, Family Tracing and Children's Rights: Some Questions About the Best Interests of Separated Children."	Article	1994	2	6	0	0	0	0	8	
1	Bonnerjea, "Family Tracing: A Good Practice Guide."	Guidelines	1994	4	2	0	0	0	0	6	X
1	Bonnerjea, "Family Tracing: In Whose Interests?"	Article	1994	2	6	0	0	0	0	8	X
1	Boothby, "Reuniting Unaccompanied Children and Families in Mozambique: An Effort to Link Networks of Community Volunteers to a National Programme."	Article	1993	2	6	0	0	0	0	8	
1	Brian and Laczko, "Fatal Journeys – Volume 2: Identification and Tracing of Dead and Missing Migrants."	Report	2016	4	4	3	1	0	0	12	X
1	British Red Cross, "How Reuniting Families Can Provide Solutions to the Refugee Crisis."	Report	2016	4	4	3	0	0	0	11	X
1	Canadian Council for Refugees, "More than a Nightmare Delays in Refugee Family Reunification."	Report	2004	2	4	1	0	0	0	7	
1	Carter, "'They Gave My Family a Future': How the Red Cross Helped Reunite One Syrian Family."	Media	2016	4	0	3	1	0	0	8	
1	Carter, "Together at Last: Syrian Father Reunited with His Son in Heathrow."	Media	2016	4	0	3	1	0	0	8	
1	Child Protection Initiative and Save the Children, "Child Protection Outcome Indicators."	Guidelines	2010	4	2	2	0	0	0	8	
1	Child Protection Sub-Cluster South Sudan, "South Sudan: Family Tracing and Reunification: Status of Reunification by County (May 2017)."	Report	2017	2	4	3	0	0	0	9	
1	Child Rights International Network (CRIN), "Joint Statement to the Child Rights Forum."	Guidelines	2016	2	2	3	0	0	0	7	
1	Cholewinski, "Family Reunification and Conditions Placed on Family Members: Dismantling a Fundamental Human Right."	Article	2002	2	6	1	0	0	0	9	

Search	Publication	Type	Year	R	T	C	Sy	So	Ro	TOTAL	Reviewed
1	Choummanivong, Poole, and Cooper, "Refugee Family Reunification and Mental Health in Resettlement."	Article	2014	2	6	2	0	1	0	11	X
1	Chung and Blake, "Family Reunification After Disasters."	Article	2014	2	6	2	0	0	0	10	X
1	Chung et al., "Survey of Emergency Management Professionals to Assess Ideal Characteristics of a Photographic-Based Family Reunification Tool."	Article	2012	2	6	2	0	0	0	10	X
1	Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ), "Delays in Family Reunification of Protected Persons in Canada: A Submission to the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration."	Guidelines	2005	2	2	1	0	0	0	5	
1	CJD Hamburg and Eutin, "Net For U' – Needs Tackling and Networks Tracing for Nierd Minors Integration."	Report	2013	2	4	2	0	0	0	8	
1	Connell et al., "'One Day We Will Be Reunited' Experiences of Refugee Family Reunion in the UK."	Report	2010	2	4	2	0	0	0	8	X
2	CPIMS+, "FAQ for the Child Protection Information Managment System+ (CPIMS+/Primer)." "	Guidelines	nd	2	2	3	0	0	0	7	X
2	CPIMS+, "Kakuma/Kenya."	Media	2016	2	0	3	0	0	0	5	X
2	CPIMS+, "The Child Protection Information Management System (CPIMS+/Primer) – Factsheet."	Report	2016	2	4	3	0	0	0	9	X
1	Currian, "Eyes Wide Shut: The Challenge of Humanitarian Biometrics."	Media	2015	0	0	3	0	0	0	3	
1	da Costa, "Beyond Presence: Protection Interventions on the Ground."	Article	2007	4	6	1	0	0	0	11	X
1	Danielsen and Seeberg, "Tracing UMAs' Families: A Comparative Study of Some European Countries' Practices and Experiences in Tracing the Parents or Caregivers of Unaccompanied Minor Asylum Seekers."	Article	2006	4	6	1	0	1	0	12	X
1	de la Soudière, Williamson, and Botte, "The Lost Ones: Emergency Care and Family Tracing for Separated Children From Birth to Five Years."	Report	2007	4	4	1	0	0	0	9	
1	De Lay, "Family Reunification, Alternative Care & Community Reintegration of Separated Children in Post-Conflict Rwanda."	Report	2003	4	4	1	0	0	0	9	X
1	De Lay, "Mobility Mapping and Flow Diagrams: Tools for Family Tracing and Social Reintegration Work with Separated Children."	Article	2002	2	6	1	0	0	0	9	X
1	Department for Education, Home Office, and Timpson, "Safeguarding unaccompanied asylum-seeking and refugee children."	Guidelines	2016	4	2	3	0	0	0	9	
1	Derluyn, Mels, and Broekaert, "Mental Health Problems in Separated Refugee Adolescents."	Article	2009	2	6	1	0	0	0	9	
2	Destination Unknown, "Surge in Number of Unaccompanied Minors in Central America as Violence Escalates."	Media	2017	2	0	3	0	0	0	5	

Search	Publication	Type	Year	R	T	C	Sy	So	Ro	TOTAL	Reviewed
1	Deutsches Rotes Kreuz, "16-Year-Old Finds Her Father – Believed Dead – through Trace the Face."	Media	nd	4	0	3	0	0	0	7	
1	Directorate of Immigration Finland, "Guidelines for Interviewing (Separated) Minors."	Guidelines	2002	4	2	1	0	0	0	7	
2	Dominguez-Villegas, "Strengthening Mexico's Protection of Central American Unaccompanied Minors in Transit."	Report	2017	2	4	3	0	0	0	9	X
1	Doná et al., "Family Reunification for Unaccompanied Minors in Rwanda."	Article	1998	2	6	0	0	0	0	8	X
2	Donahue et al., "Bringing design and technology to issues within international development."	Media	2017	4	0	3	0	0	0	7	X
1	Dubois, Marshall, and McNamara, "New Technologies and New Policies: The ICRC's Evolving Approach to Working with Separated Families."	Article	2012	4	6	2	0	0	0	12	X
1	Dunn, Parry-Williams, and Petty, "Picking up the Pieces: Caring for Children Affected by the Tsunami."	Report	2006	4	4	1	0	0	0	9	X
2	ECOWAS, "ECOWAS Support Procedures and Standards for the Protection and Reintegration of Vulnerable Children on the Move and Young Migrants."	Guidelines	2017	2	2	3	0	0	0	7	X
3	Edroos, "Rohingya: 'Even a Baby Was Not Spared by the Army.'"	Media	2017	2	0	3	0	0	1	6	X
3	Eltagouri, "Persecuted Rohingya Muslims Find Rare Refuge in Chicago."	Media	2016	2	0	3	0	0	1	6	X
1	Enchautegui and Menjivar, "Paradoxes of Family Immigration Policy: Separation, Reorganization, and Reunification of Families under Current Immigration Laws: Family Immigration Policy."	Article	2015	2	6	3	0	0	0	11	X
1	Equal Rights Trust and Institute of Human Rights and Peace Studies (IHRP), "Equal Only in Name: The Human Rights of Stateless Rohingya in Malaysia."	Report	2014	2	4	2	0	0	1	9	X
1	European Asylum Support Office (EASO), "EASO Practical Guide on Family Tracing."	Guidelines	2016	4	2	3	0	0	0	9	X
1	European Commission and Directorate General for Research, "Family Reunification Evaluation Project FARE: Final Report."	Report	2004	4	4	1	0	0	0	9	
1	European Commission, "Family Reunification of Third-Country Nationals in the EU plus Norway: National Practices."	Report	2017	4	4	3	0	0	0	11	X
1	European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE) and European Legal Network on Asylum (ELENA), "Information Note on Family Reunification for Beneficiaries of International Protection in Europe."	Report	2016	2	4	3	0	0	0	9	
1	European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE), "Position on Refugee Family Reunification."	Guidelines	2000	2	2	1	0	0	0	5	

Search	Publication	Type	Year	R	T	C	Sy	So	Ro	TOTAL	Reviewed
1	European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), "Thematic Focus: Family Tracing and Family Reunification."	Report	2016	4	4	3	1	0	0	12	X
3	Experience UX, "What Is Wireframing."	Media	nd	0	0	3	0	0	0	3	X
1	Felsman, Derib, and Cummings, "The Need for International Standards on Archiving the Records of Unaccompanied Children."	Article	2002	4	6	1	0	0	0	11	X
3	Fisher, "The One Map That Shows Why Syria Is so Complicated."	Media	2013	2	0	2	1	0	0	5	X
1	Fonseca and Ormond, "Defining 'Family' and Bringing It Together: The Ins and Outs of Family Reunification in Portugal."	Article	2008	2	6	1	0	0	0	9	
1	Fonseca, Hardy, and Adam, "Unaccompanied Migrant Children and Legal Guardianship in the Context of Returns: The Missing Links between Host Countries and Countries of Origin."	Article	2013	4	6	2	0	0	0	12	X
1	Fowler, "Before I Die, I Need to Put My Family Back Together."	Media	2016	2	0	3	0	0	0	5	
1	Free Movement, "Refugee Family Reunion: A User's Guide."	Guidelines	2016	0	2	3	0	1	0	6	
1	Fresnoza-Flot, "The Bumpy Landscape of Family Reunification: Experiences of First- and 1.5-Generation Filipinos in France."	Article	2015	2	6	3	0	0	0	11	X
2	Gemmer, "Syrische Flüchtlingsfamilie: Plötzlich Ist Die Verlorene Tochter Wieder Da."	Media	2017	2	0	3	1	0	0	6	
3	Global Migration Data Analysis Centre, "2015 Global Migration Trends – Factsheet."	Report	2017	4	4	3	1	0	0	12	X
1	Government of Canada, "Evaluation of the Family Reunification Program."	Report	2014	4	4	2	0	0	0	10	X
1	Groenendijk, "Family Reunification as a Right under Community Law."	Article	2006	2	6	1	0	0	0	9	
3	Groote, "Family Reunification Information Report For Syrian Beneficiaries Of Protection In Germany: Focussed Study by the German National Contact Point for the European Migration Network (EMN)."	Report	2017	4	4	3	0	0	0	11	X
2	GSMA, "Refugees and Identity: Considerations for mobile-enabled registration and aid delivery."	Report	2017	2	4	3	1	1	0	11	X
2	GSMA, "The Importance of Mobile for Refugees: A Landscape of New Services and Approaches."	Report	2017	2	4	3	1	0	0	10	X
2	GSMA, "Turkcell – Refugees as valued customers."	Media	2017	2	0	3	1	0	0	6	X
1	Hassnain, "War Child UK Impact Report: Improving the Lives of Children Affected by Armed Conflict."	Report	2016	2	4	3	1	0	0	10	X
1	Hawthorne, "Family Unity in Immigration Law: Broadening the Scope of 'Family.'"	Article	2007	2	6	1	0	0	0	9	

Search	Publication	Type	Year	R	T	C	Sy	So	Ro	TOTAL	Reviewed
1	Heinemann et al., "Constellations, Complexities and Challenges of Researching DNA Analysis for Family Reunification: An Introduction."	Article	2015	2	6	3	0	0	0	11	X
1	Hepburn, Williamson, and Wolfram, "Separated Children: Care & Protection of Children in Emergencies – A Field Guide."	Guidelines	2004	4	2	1	0	0	0	7	X
1	Home Office, "Family Reunification of Third Country Nationals in the European Union: National Contribution from the United Kingdom."	Report	2017	4	4	3	0	0	0	11	X
3	Human Rights Watch, "Syria."	Media	nd	2	0	3	1	0	0	6	X
1	Hungarian Helsinki Committee, "Family Reunification of Somali Refugees – Good Practices of Several EU Member States."	Report	2009	2	4	1	0	1	0	8	X
3	IKEA Foundation, "What We Do."	Media	nd	0	0	3	0	0	0	3	X
1	ILGA-Europe, "ILGA-Europe's Contribution to the Green Paper on the Right to Family Reunification of Third-Country Nationals Living in the EU."	Guidelines	2011	2	2	2	0	0	0	6	
1	Institute for Human Rights and Peace Studies et al., "Mapping and Analysing the Protection Situation of Unaccompanied and Separated Children in Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand: Regional Overview and Analysis."	Report	2013	2	4	2	0	0	1	9	
1	Inter-Agency Group on Children's Reintegration, "Guidelines on Children's Reintegration."	Guidelines	2016	4	2	3	0	0	0	9	
1	Inter-Agency Working Group on Unaccompanied and Separated Children, "Alternative Care in Emergencies Toolkit."	Guidelines	2013	4	2	2	0	0	0	8	
1	ICRC, "Accompanying the Families of Missing Persons: A Practical Handbook."	Guidelines	2013	4	2	2	0	0	0	8	X
1	ICRC, "Annual Report 2016 – Volume 1."	Report	2016	4	4	3	1	1	0	13	X
1	ICRC, "Are You Looking for a Family Member? Familylinks.Icrc.Org Can Help You."	Guidelines	2015	4	2	3	0	0	0	9	
1	ICRC, "ICRC Central Tracing Agency: Half a Century of Restoring Family Links."	Media	2010	4	0	2	0	1	0	7	
1	ICRC, "Inter-Agency Guiding Principles on Unaccompanied and Separated Children."	Guidelines	2004	4	2	1	0	0	0	7	X
1	ICRC, "Living with Absence: Helping the Families of the Missing."	Guidelines	2014	4	2	2	0	1	0	9	X
1	ICRC, "Nepal Earthquake: People's First Need Is to Know Fate of Loved Ones."	Media	2015	4	0	3	0	0	0	7	
1	ICRC, "Restoring Family Links Strategy (Including Legal References)."	Guidelines	2009	4	2	1	0	0	0	7	
1	ICRC, "Restoring Family Links: A Guide for National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies."	Guidelines	2000	4	2	1	0	0	0	7	
1	ICRC, "Somalia: Restoring Contact between Families Separated by Conflict."	Media	2013	4	0	2	0	1	0	7	X

Search	Publication	Type	Year	R	T	C	Sy	So	Ro	TOTAL	Reviewed
1	ICRC, "The Need to Know: Restoring Links between Dispersed Family Members."	Report	2010	4	4	2	0	0	0	10	X
1	International Federation for Family Development (IFFD), "What Is Family Reunification? A Human Rights Perspective."	Report	2014	2	2	2	0	0	0	6	
1	International Juvenile Justice Observatory (IJJO), "Children on the Move, Family Tracing and Needs Assessment – Guidelines for Better Cooperation between Professionals Dealing With Unaccompanied Foreign Children in Europe."	Report	2014	4	4	2	0	0	0	10	X
2	International Social Service (ISS), "2016 Global Report."	Report	nd	2	4	3	0	0	0	9	
3	IOM Italy, "Family Tracing."	Media	nd	4	0	2	0	0	0	6	X
1	Irish Red Cross, "Rohingya Family Reunited In Ireland."	Media	nd	4	0	3	0	0	1	8	X
2	ISS, "Children on the move – From protection towards a quality sustainable solution: A practical guide."	Guidelines	2017	4	2	3	0	0	0	9	X
1	Jacobs, Petry, and Sommarribas, "Family Reunification of Third-Country Nationals in the EU: National Practices – Luxembourg"	Report	2016	4	4	3	0	0	0	11	X
1	Jastram and Newland, "Family Unity and Refugee Protection."	Article	2003	4	6	1	0	0	0	11	X
1	John, "Family Reunification for Migrants and Refugees: A Forgotten Human Right?"	Article	2003	2	6	1	0	0	0	9	
2	Kaonga et al., "Information and Communication Technology for Child Protection Case Management in Emergencies: An Overview of the Existing Evidence Base."	Article	2016	2	4	3	0	0	0	9	X
1	Kiama et al., "The Role of Technology in Family Tracing in Kenya."	Article	2011	4	6	2	0	1	0	13	X
2	Klaassen and Rodrigues, "The Best Interests of the Child in EU Family Reunification Law."	Article	2017	2	6	3	0	0	0	11	X
1	Lashley, "The Unrecognized Social Stressors of Migration and Reunification in Caribbean Families."	Article	2000	2	6	1	0	0	0	9	
1	Lemberg-Pedersen, "The Rise and Fall of the ERPUM Pilot: Tracing the European Policy Directive to Deport Unaccompanied Minors."	Article	2015	2	6	3	1	1	0	13	X
1	Luke, "Uncertain Territory: Family Reunification and the Plight of Unaccompanied Minors in Canada."	Article	2007	2	6	1	0	0	0	9	
1	Lukito Edi Nugroho et al., "A Refugee Tracking System in DCoST-ER: Disaster Command and Support Centre for Emergency Response."	Article	2015	2	6	3	0	0	0	11	X
1	Luster et al., "The Lost Boys of Sudan: Ambiguous Loss, Search for Family, and Reestablishing Relationships With Family Members."	Article	2008	2	6	1	0	0	0	9	

Search	Publication	Type	Year	R	T	C	Sy	So	Ro	TOTAL	Reviewed
1	Mackey, "Rebuilding Family Life: An Exploration of Female Refugees' Experiences of Family Reunification and Integration in Ireland."	Report	2013	2	4	2	0	1	0	9	X
1	Marsden and Harris, "We Started Life Again': Integration Experiences of Refugee Families in Glasgow."	Report	2015	4	4	3	1	1	0	13	X
2	Mason and Buchmann, "ICT4Refugees: A report on the emerging landscape of digital responses to the refugee crisis."	Report	2016	4	4	3	1	0	0	12	X
1	McDonald-Wilmsen and Gifford, "Refugee Resettlement, Family Separation and Australia's Humanitarian Programme."	Article	2009	2	6	1	0	0	0	9	
1	McMichael and Ahmed, "Family Separation: Somali Women in Melbourne."	Article	2003	2	6	1	0	1	0	10	X
2	Mehler, "The Role of the Central Tracing Agency of the ICRC in Restoring and Maintaining Family Links."	Report	2008	2	4	1	0	0	0	7	
1	Meier and Munro, "The Unprecedented Role of SMS in Disaster Response: Learning from Haiti."	Article	2010	2	6	2	0	0	0	10	X
1	Merkelbach, "Reuniting Children Separated from Their Families after the Rwandan Crisis of 1994: The Relative Value of a Centralized Database – ICRC."	Article	2000	4	6	1	0	0	0	11	X
2	Mirindi and Ntabe, "Emergency Assistance for Unaccompanied Children in Bunia, Beni and Mambassa, Eastern DRC: Final Report."	Report	2003	2	4	1	0	0	0	7	X
1	Murk et al., "Children's Rights in Return Policy and Practice in Europe."	Report	2015	4	4	3	0	0	0	11	X
1	Musgrave and Liebl, "Together Again: Reuniting Refugee Families in Safety – What the UK Can Do."	Guidelines	2017	4	2	3	1	0	0	10	X
3	Myanmar Humanitarian Country Team, "Myanmar 2017 Humanitarian Needs # Overview."	Report	2016	4	4	3	0	0	1	12	X
1	Nordin et al., "Unaccompanied & Denied: Regional Legal Framework for Unaccompanied Minors Asylum Seekers (UMAS)."	Article	2015	2	6	3	0	0	0	11	X
1	Nygren, "Legal Family Definitions and the Right to Refugee Family Reunification: A Comparative Study on Ethiopia and Sweden."	Report	2015	0	4	3	0	0	0	7	
1	O'Donnell and Kanics, "Separated and Unaccompanied Children in the EU."	Article	2016	4	6	3	0	0	0	13	X
2	OCHA, "DR Congo: Weekly Humanitarian Update 10 – 16 July 2017."	Report	2017	4	4	3	0	0	0	11	X
1	PAN Children, "Unaccompanied Foreign Migrant Children in South Africa."	Guidelines	2014	0	2	2	0	0	0	4	
2	Pannaikadavil-Thomas, "Family Tracing and Reunification – Short Brief on International Social Service (Unpublished Overview Paper)."	Guidelines	2017	2	2	3	0	0	0	7	X
2	Pantzou, "A 'Blue Dot' with Huge Impact for Refugee Women and Children."	Media	2016	4	0	3	0	0	0	7	X

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1	Parsons, "Reconnecting Refugees Through Mobile Refugees United's Platform and Partnerships."	Report	2016	0	4	3	0	1	0	8	
1	Pascouau and Labayle, "Conditions for Family Reunification under Strain: A Comparative Study in Nine EU Member States."	Report	2011	2	4	2	0	0	0	8	
3	Power, "Senators Seek Expanded Family Reunification Rights for Refugees."	Media	2017	0	0	3	1	0	0	4	X
1	Refugee Action, "Refugee Family Reunion – Policy Briefing."	Guidelines	2016	0	2	3	0	0	0	5	
1	Refugee Council of Australia, "Humanitarian Family Reunion: The Building Block of Good Settlement."	Report	2012	2	4	2	0	0	0	8	
1	Refugee Council of Australia, "Policy Brief: Reuniting Refugee Families."	Guidelines	2016	2	2	3	0	0	0	7	
1	Refugee Council, "The 'Dublin' Regulation and Family Unity."	Guidelines	2015	2	2	3	0	0	0	7	
3	Refugee Family Reunification Trust, "What We Do."	Media	nd	0	0	3	0	0	0	3	X
3	Refunite, "Founders Story."	Media	nd	0	0	3	0	0	0	3	X
1	Reid, "South Sudan: Conflict, Hunger, and the Threats to Children."	Media	2017	4	0	3	0	0	0	7	
1	Rohan, "Refugee Family Reunification Rights: A Basis in the European Court of Human Rights' Family Reunification Jurisprudence."	Article	2014	2	6	2	0	0	0	10	X
1	Rousseau et al., "Remaking Family Life: Strategies for Re-Establishing Continuity among Congolese Refugees during the Family Reunification Process."	Article	2004	2	6	1	0	0	0	9	
1	Rowan, "In Tanzania, Using Mobile Technology to Reunite Families."	Media	2015	4	0	3	0	0	0	7	X
3	Said and Evans, "Exclusive: Kurdish YPG Militia Expects Conflict with Turkey in Northern Syria."	Media	2017	2	0	3	1	0	0	6	X
1	Salvo, "Developing an Understanding of People's Experience of Using Tracing Services to Search for Missing Family: A Qualitative Investigation."	Report	2012	2	4	2	0	0	0	8	X
1	Sample, "State Practice and the Family Unity of African Refugees."	Article	2007	4	6	1	0	0	0	11	X
1	Save the Children and IRC, "Out of Sight, Exploited and Alone: A Joint Brief on the Situation for Unaccompanied and Separated Children in Bulgaria, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Croatia."	Report	2017	4	4	3	0	0	0	11	X
1	Save the Children Australia, "Humanitarian Intake Submission: Australia's Humanitarian Programme 2016-2017."	Report	2016	4	4	3	1	0	0	12	X
1	Save the Children Sweden, "Emergencies and Family Tracing and Family Reunification."	Report	2004	4	4	1	0	0	0	9	
1	Save the Children, "Kinship Care Report: Syrian Refugee Children in Jordan."	Report	2015	4	4	3	1	0	0	12	X

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1	Save the Children, "Misguided Kindness: Making the Right Decisions for Children in Emergencies."	Guidelines	2010	4	2	2	0	0	0	8	
1	Schapiro et al., "Separation and Reunification: The Experiences of Adolescents Living in Transnational Families."	Article	2013	2	6	2	0	0	0	10	X
1	Schweitzer, "A Stratified Right to Family Life? Patterns and Rationales behind Differential Access to Family Reunification for Third-Country Nationals Living within the EU."	Article	2014	2	6	2	0	0	0	10	X
1	Separated Children in Europe Programme (SCEP) and Save the Children, "Position Paper on Returns and Separated Children."	Guidelines	2004	2	2	1	0	0	0	5	
1	Shalev Greene, "Prevention, Aftercare and Media Responding to the Disappearance of Unaccompanied Children in Europe."	Media	nd	2	0	3	0	0	0	5	
1	Skelton et al., "In Search of a Better Future: Experiences of Unaccompanied Migrant Children in Limpopo & Mpumalanga in South Africa."	Report	2016	4	4	3	0	0	0	11	X
1	Sloth-Nielsen and Ackermann, "Unaccompanied and Separated Foreign Children in the Care System in the Western Cape – a Socio-Legal Study."	Article	2016	2	6	3	0	0	0	11	X
3	Somalia Humanitarian Country Team, "Somalia 2017 Humanitarian Needs Overview."	Report	2016	4	4	3	0	1	0	12	X
1	SOS Children's Villages, "Protecting Children in Emergencies."	Guidelines	2016	2	2	3	0	0	0	7	
1	Staver, "Family Reunification: A Right for Forced Migrants?"	Article	2008	2	6	1	0	1	0	10	X
1	Strik, Hart, and Nissen, "Family Reunification."	Report	2013	2	4	2	0	0	0	8	X
1	Suárez-Orozco, Hee Jin Bang, and Ha Yeon Kim, "I Felt Like My Heart Was Staying Behind: Psychological Implications of Family Separations & Reunifications for Immigrant Youth."	Article	2011	2	6	2	0	0	0	10	X
3	Syria Strategic Steering Group, "Syria 2017 Humanitarian Needs Overview."	Report	2016	4	4	3	1	0	0	12	X
1	Taitz, Weekers, and Mosca, "The Last Resort: Exploring the Use of DNA Testing for Family Reunification."	Article	2002	2	6	1	0	1	0	10	X
3	Tan, "Over 168,000 Rohingya Likely Fled Myanmar since 2012 – UNHCR Report."	Media	2017	4	0	3	0	0	1	8	X
1	Tate, "Family Separation and Reunification of Newcomers in Toronto What Does the Literature Say?"	Report	2011	0	4	2	0	0	0	6	
1	UNHCR and UNICEF, "Safe & Sound: What States Can Do to Ensure Respect for the Best Interests of Unaccompanied and Separated Children in Europe."	Guidelines	2014	4	2	2	0	0	0	8	
3	UNHCR Data, "Syria Regional Refugee Response."	Media	nd	4	0	3	1	0	0	8	X

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3	UNHCR Kenya, "Kakuma Refugee Camp."	Media	nd	4	0	3	0	0	0	7	X
1	UNHCR, "A New Beginning: Refugee Integration in Europe."	Report	2013	4	4	2	0	0	0	10	X
1	UNHCR, "Challenges and Opportunities in Family Reunification."	Report	2008	4	4	1	0	0	0	9	
2	UNHCR, "Connecting Refugees: How Internet and Mobile Connectivity can Improve Refugee Well-Being and Transform Humanitarian Action."	Report	2016	4	4	3	0	0	0	11	X
1	UNHCR, "Family Reunion in the United Kingdom (UK)."	Guidelines	2016	4	2	3	1	0	0	10	X
3	UNHCR, "Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2016."	Report	2017	4	4	3	1	1	0	13	X
3	UNHCR, "Mixed Movements in South-East Asia 2016."	Report	2017	4	4	3	0	0	1	12	X
2	UNHCR, "Protection of Refugee Children in the Middle East and North Africa."	Report	2014	4	4	2	1	0	0	11	X
1	UNHCR, "Refugee Family Reunification."	Report	2012	4	4	2	0	0	0	10	X
3	UNHCR, "Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees – Covering the Period 1 July 2015-30 June 2016."	Report	2016	4	4	3	1	1	0	13	X
3	UNHCR, "Somalia 2016 Year-End Report."	Report	2017	4	4	3	0	1	0	12	X
3	UNHCR, "Somalia Factsheet."	Report	2014	4	4	2	0	1	0	11	X
1	UNHCR, "UNHCR Guidelines on Reunification of Refugee Families."	Guidelines	1983	4	2	0	0	0	0	6	X
1	UNHCR, "UNHCR Note on DNA Testing to Establish Family Relationships in the Refugee Context."	Guidelines	2008	4	2	1	0	0	0	7	
2	UNHCR, "UNHCR Resettlement Handbook."	Guidelines	2011	4	2	2	0	0	0	8	
2	UNHCR, "UNHCR, UNICEF Launch Blue Dot Hubs to Boost Protection for Children and Families on the Move across Europe."	Media	2016	4	0	3	0	0	0	7	
2	UNHCR, UNICEF, and IRC, "Discussion Paper on a Possible Way Forward to Strengthened Policies and Practices for Unaccompanied and Separated Children."	Guidelines	nd	4	2	3	0	0	0	9	
2	UNHCR, UNICEF, and IRC, "The Way Forward to Strengthened Policies and Practices for Unaccompanied and Separated Children in Europe."	Report	2017	4	4	3	0	0	0	11	X
1	UNICEF France, "Neither Safe Nor Sound: Unaccompanied Children on the Coastline of the English Channel and the North Sea."	Report	2016	4	4	3	1	0	0	12	X
1	UNICEF, "A Child Is a Child: Protecting Children on the Move from Violence, Abuse and Exploitation."	Report	2017	4	4	3	1	1	1	14	X
3	UNICEF, "Annual Report 2016."	Report	2017	4	4	3	1	0	0	12	X
2	UNICEF, "Children and the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami: An evaluation of UNICEF's Response in Indonesia (2005-2008)."	Report	2009	4	4	1	0	0	0	9	X

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1	UNICEF, "Documentation and Review of RapidFTR in the Philippines Following Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda)."	Report	nd	4	4	2	0	0	0	10	X
1	UNICEF, "Protecting Children from Violence: A Synthesis of Evaluation Findings."	Report	2012	4	4	2	0	1	0	11	X
1	UNICEF, "RapidFTR Serves as a Force for Change in Some of the World's Most Complex Emergencies."	Media	2014	4	0	2	0	0	0	6	X
3	UNICEF, "Syria Crisis: April 2017 – Humanitarian Results."	Report	2017	4	4	3	1	0	0	12	X
3	UNICEF, "Syrian Crisis."	Media	nd	4	0	3	1	0	0	8	X
3	United Nations General Assembly, "Convention on the Rights of the Child."	Guidelines	1990	4	2	0	0	0	0	6	X
1	Wake and Cheung, "Livelihood Strategies of Rohingya Refugees in Malaysia: 'We Want to Live in Dignity.'"	Report	2016	2	4	3	0	0	1	10	X
1	Wake, "Turning a Blind Eye': The Policy Response to Rohingya Refugees in Malaysia."	Report	2016	2	4	3	0	0	1	10	X
1	Walakira, Ddumba-Nyanzi, and Luwangula, "Strong Beginnings—A Family for All Children': End of Project Evaluation Report."	Report	2016	2	4	3	0	0	0	9	
2	Wall et al., "Syrian refugees and information precarity."	Article	2015	2	6	3	1	0	0	12	X
1	Wedge, Krumholz, and Jones, "Reaching for Home: Global Learning on Family Reintegration in Low and Lower-Middle Income Countries."	Report	2013	4	4	2	0	0	0	10	X
1	White and Hendry, "Family Reunion for Refugees in the UK: Understanding Support Needs."	Report	2011	4	4	2	0	1	0	11	X
3	Williams, "The World's Congested Human Migration Routes in 5 Maps."	Media	2015	0	0	3	0	0	0	3	X
1	Williamson et al., "The Impact of Protection Interventions on Unaccompanied and Separated Children in Humanitarian Crises: A Systematic Review."	Report	2017	4	4	3	0	0	0	11	X
1	Williamson et al., "The Impact of Protection Interventions on Unaccompanied and Separated Children in Humanitarian Crises: An Evidence Synthesis Protocol."	Report	2017	4	4	3	0	0	0	11	X
1	Williamson, Donahue, and Cripe, "A Participatory Review of the Reunification, Reintegration, and Youth Development Program of the International Rescue Committee in Rwanda."	Report	2001	2	4	1	0	0	0	7	X
1	Willie and Mfubu, "No Future for Our Children: Challenges Faced by Foreign Minors Living in South Africa."	Article	2016	2	6	3	0	0	0	11	X
1	Wilmsen, "Family Separation: The Policies, Procedures, and Consequences for Refugee Background Families."	Article	2011	2	6	2	0	0	0	10	X

Search	Publication	Type	Year	R	T	C	Sy	So	Ro	TOTAL	Reviewed
3	XV South American Conference on Migration, Santiago Declaration: "With Justice and Equality towards Migration Governance."	Guidelines	2015	4	2	3	0	0	0	9	X
2	Zentgraf and Stoltz Chinchilla, "Transnational family separation: a framework for analysis."	Article	2012	2	6	2	0	0	0	10	X

ANNEX 3 - KEY INFORMANTS: OVERVIEW

Type of Actor	Institution	Location	Interview Status
Local NGOs and Societies	Defence for Children	Netherlands	Interview not conducted, due to lack of response
International NGOs	DRC (Danish Refugee Council) (A)	Denmark	Interview conducted (via Skype)
International NGOs	DRC (Danish Refugee Council) (B)	Denmark	Interview not conducted, but referred to: DRC (A)
Academic or Additional Experts	EASO (European Asylum Support Office)	Malta	Interview conducted (via Skype)
Academic or Additional Experts	Find Me in Kakuma	Belgium	Interview conducted (via Skype)
Donors / Private Sector	Google	USA	Interview not conducted, no FTR engagement
Donors / Private Sector	Google Person Finder	n/a	Interview not conducted, due to lack of response
Academic or Additional Experts	Harvard T.H. Chan (Public Health)	USA	Interview not conducted, due to lack of response
Local NGOs and Societies	Hungarian Helsinki Committee	Hungary	Interview conducted (via Skype)
International Organisation	ICMP (A)	Netherlands	Interview conducted (via Skype)
International Organisation	ICMP (B)	Bosnia	Interview not conducted, but referred to: ICMP (A)
International Organisation	ICMP (C)	Netherlands	Interview not conducted, but referred to: ICMP (A)
International Organisation	ICRC (A)	Switzerland	Interview conducted (via Skype)
International Organisation	ICRC (B)	Somalia	Interview conducted (in person)
International Organisation	ICRC (C)	n/a	Interview not conducted, but referred to: ICRC (A)
International Organisation	ICRC (D)	Switzerland	Interview not conducted, but referred to: ICRC (A)
International Organisation	ICRC (E)	unknown	Interview not conducted, but referred to: ICRC (A)
International Organisation	ICRC (F)	unknown	Interview not conducted, but referred to: ICRC (A)
International Organisation	IFRC (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent)	Switzerland	Interview not conducted, due to lack of response
Donors / Private Sector	IKEA Foundation (A)	Netherlands	Interview conducted (via Skype)
Donors / Private Sector	IKEA Foundation (B)	Netherlands	Interview not conducted, but referred to: IKEA Foundation (A)
Academic or Additional Experts	Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion	Netherlands	Interview not conducted, no FTR engagement
Academic or Additional Experts	Internat. Child Protection Specialist	USA	Interview conducted (via Skype)
International Organisation	IOM (A)	Morocco	Interview conducted (via email)
International Organisation	IOM (B)	Morocco	Interview conducted (via email)
International Organisation	IOM (C)	Switzerland	Interview not conducted, due to lack of response
International Organisation	IOM (D)	Morocco	Interview not conducted, but referred to: IOM (A) & IOM (B)
Local NGOs and Societies	IRAP (International Refugee Assistance Project)	USA	Interview not conducted, due to lack of response
International Organisation	ISS (A)	Switzerland	Interview conducted (via Skype)
International Organisation	ISS (B)	Switzerland	Interview conducted (via Skype)
Local NGOs and Societies	Kenyan Red Cross	Kenya	Interview not conducted, but referred to: ICRC (A)
Local NGOs and Societies	KIND (Kids In Need Of Defence) (A)	USA	Interview conducted (via email)
Local NGOs and Societies	KIND (Kids In Need Of Defence) (B)	USA	Interview not conducted, but referred to: KIND (A)

Type of Actor	Institution	Location	Interview Status
Local NGOs and Societies	New Zealand Red Cross	New Zealand	Interview not conducted, due to lack of response
Local NGOs and Societies	NIDOS Foundation (A)	Netherlands	Interview not conducted, due to lack of response
Local NGOs and Societies	NIDOS Foundation (B)	Netherlands	Interview not conducted, due to lack of response
Local NGOs and Societies	Norwegian Red Cross (A)	Norway	Interview not conducted, but referred to: Norwegian Red Cross (B) & Norwegian Red Cross (C)
Local NGOs and Societies	Norwegian Red Cross (B)	Norway	Interview not conducted, due to lack of response
Local NGOs and Societies	Norwegian Red Cross (C)	Norway	Interview not conducted, due to lack of response
Donors / Private Sector	Omidyar Network	n/a	Interview not conducted, no FTR engagement
Local NGOs and Societies	Refugee Action	UK	Interview not conducted, no FTR engagement
Local NGOs and Societies	Refugee Family Reunification Trust	New Zealand	Interview not conducted, due to lack of response
International NGOs	Refunite	Kenya	Interview conducted (in person)
Local NGOs and Societies	Safe Passage	UK	Interview conducted (via Skype)
International NGOs	Save the Children UK (A)	UK	Interview conducted (via Skype)
International NGOs	Save the Children UK (B)	unknown	Interview not conducted, but referred to: UNICEF (C)
International NGOs	Terres des hommes (A)	Hungary	Interview conducted (via Skype)
International NGOs	Terres des hommes (B)	Hungary	Interview not conducted, but referred to: Terres des hommes (A)
International NGOs	Terres des hommes (C)	Hungary	Interview not conducted, but referred to: Terres des hommes (A) & Terres des hommes (B)
International Organisation	UNHCR (A)	Kenya	Interview conducted (in person)
International Organisation	UNHCR (B)	USA	Interview not conducted, due to lack of response
International Organisation	UNHCR (C)	Switzerland	Interview not conducted, due to lack of response
International Organisation	UNHCR (D)	Ethiopia	Interview not conducted, but referred to: UNHCR (A)
International Organisation	UNHCR (E)	Ethiopia	Interview not conducted, but referred to: UNHCR (A)
International Organisation	UNHCR (F)	Kenya	Interview not conducted, but referred to: UNHCR (A)
International Organisation	UNICEF (A)	USA	Interview conducted (via Skype)
International Organisation	UNICEF (B)	South Sudan	Interview conducted (via Skype)
International Organisation	UNICEF (C)	unknown	Interview conducted (via email)
International Organisation	UNICEF (D)	USA	Interview not conducted, but referred to: UNICEF (A)
International Organisation	UNICEF (E)	India	Interview not conducted, due to lack of response
International Organisation	UNICEF (F)	South Sudan	Interview not conducted, but referred to: UNICEF (B)
Academic or Additional Experts	University of Lucerne	Switzerland	Interview conducted (via Skype)
International NGOs	World Vision Somalia	Somalia	Interview not conducted, due to lack of response
International NGOs	World Vision Sudan	Sudan	Interview not conducted, no FTR engagement
International NGOs	World Vision Uganda	Uganda	Interview not conducted, due to lack of response

ANNEX 4 - FRAMING FTR: DETAILED VERSION

The beginnings of FTR

During the Franco-German War in 1870/71, the Red Cross movement set up politically neutral communication channels, via written messages, to provide soldiers wounded in the battlefield with contact to their families at home. Later, the experiences of the First and Second World Wars in Europe led to a further expansion of professionalised services and actors committed to tracing, reunifying or, at least, keeping up communication between family members. During this time, the International Social Service (ISS) was founded and the Red Cross movement established its Central Tracing Agency (CTA).

Over the course of the second half of the 20th century, the technology for FTR did not change significantly. Written communication within agencies and networks – such as ICRC, Save the Children and UNHCR – were common practice, accompanied by searches ‘on the ground’: going to places of presumed location, talking to families and community members face-to-face, and documenting this on paper. Nonetheless, a slow but steady professionalisation of these processes occurred:

- In 1983, UNHCR published their Guidelines on Reunification of Refugee Families, including a typology of family member definitions and practical recommendations.
- Over the course of the 1980s, conflicts in Africa and Southeast Asia continent triggered the creation of practical FTR methodologies by humanitarian actors; especially targeted at separated children.
- Since then most FTR programmes “have followed a five-step process: identification, documentation, tracing, verification, and reunification [IDTR].”

The ‘norming’ phase in the 1990s

A major shift in the FTR landscape in terms of tools, coordination and approaches occurred in the 1990s, during and following the violent conflicts in the Great Lakes region, namely Rwanda, and in former Yugoslavia. In response to the latter, the International Commission on Missing Persons (ICMP), which follows a rule-of-law based approach focused on the issue of missing persons in post-emergency situations, was founded in 1996. The Rwanda crisis marked an even greater change for a wide range of humanitarian actors:

- 1) “After the genocide in Rwanda, [we saw] more than 160 different organisations coming in and wanting to work with children and on tracing and family reunification. In 1994, when we saw that – we welcome other organisations to work with children because the needs are so huge – but there was a need for coordination. When you are so many people, you really need a coordination body.”
- 2) The initial lack of coordination and the sheer extent of separation during this crisis led to stronger coordination between actors, and the very first centralised and digital database for FTR was created for this particular crisis situation. Simultaneously, actors ‘on the ground’ tested and professionalised new and participatory yet analogue tracing methods – for example, so-called ‘Historical Mobility Maps’. These experiences and efforts cumulated in the creation of inter-agency working groups related to FTR (for children), various guidelines and handbooks, and an increase of academic literature on the topic: “[T]he body of evidence [...] was largely generated in the 1990s and early 2000s. This may be considered a ‘norming’ phase in the development of FTR programming.”

The rise of digital and online FTR

At the same time, first attempts to utilise the growing importance and availability of the internet for FTR occurred, namely ICRC's first website that listed missing persons for particular emergencies and which later featured a self-registration functionality. However, "this early development did not maintain its initial pace, and by the mid-2000s the website had become fairly outdated." The neglect of digital and collaborative tools for tracing and reunification by the existing providers sparked the founding of Refunite in 2008, an online platform specifically designed "to help the world's hundreds of thousands of refugees who desperately wanted to reconnect with long-lost relatives and friends," which now holds more than 600,000 profiles worldwide.

Since then, the use of digital and online technology for FTR purposes has been on a slow but steady rise, leading to the development of specific software for formal FTR purposes and more participatory tools, like ICRC's *Trace the Face* website – online tools are now also getting used for capacity building, as ISS' Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) on alternative care and family tracing showcases (in progress). All these developments have also been catalysed by various crises around the world, such as the so-called 'refugee crisis' in Europe, ongoing conflict and insecurity in places like Afghanistan and Somalia, very acute crises in Syria and South Sudan, the 2010 earthquake in Haiti and the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake.

FTR programmes and actors, both old and new, have significantly expanded their capacity and have become more and more professionalised. This positive development has led to increase in rates of reunification and faster response mechanisms as well as to a surge in publications on the topic, such as handbooks, guidelines, policy briefs and few academic publications. Yet, all of them have to better adapt their services to the needs of separated persons, their situations and new forms of communication. The landscape seems to call for further disruption and innovation, as the most recent example of the *Find Me in Kakuma* app highlights, a 'grassroots' initiative by Belgian filmmakers (see Chapter 3).

The legal landscape

While "everyone, especially civil society, agrees that everyone should be with his family", the concepts of family unity and therefore family reunification are legally contested areas. This is despite the fact that: "The family is universally recognized as the fundamental group unit of society and as entitled to protection and assistance from society and the State. The right to family life is recognized in universal and regional as well as in many national legal instruments." This body of international legal instruments include, for example, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948; International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966; African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, 1981; and Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1990. Despite this body of legal documents, the right to family unity or family reunification is not as universal but "weakly codified, and very restricted." This is particularly the case in two scenarios:

- 1) Cross-border separation: when families are torn apart through voluntary or forced migration between nation states, (supra)national immigration laws create a significant barrier to family reunification and, thus, unity: "Immigration law encompasses a complex web of bureaucratic, judicial, and administrative processes." Current negative examples include hardening legal frameworks in European countries and the US, but also many non-Western countries.

2) Separation of children: when children are separated from the parents or legal guardians, FTR becomes also impacted by questions of child protection and rights. While (identified) separated children usually receive special care and protection, by state or humanitarian actors, they are also characterized by a “lack of legal capacity.” This lack results in a third party with newly established guardianship taking responsibility for the (legal) decisions of the child, according to the ‘best interest’ of the affected minor – at least in situations of functioning (institutional) support. As the reasons for separation are manifold, family reunification might, thus, not be in the best interest of the child, because tracing and reunification could mean exposure to further harm.

The enormous impact of legal frameworks on actual FTR possibilities is further emphasised by the lack of an internationally accepted definition of the word/concept ‘family’: “There is no one single, internationally accepted definition of the family, and international law recognizes a variety of forms. Certainly the ‘nuclear’ family is the most widely accepted for family unity and reunification purposes.” The focus on the ‘nuclear family’ is rooted in a Western understanding of family relations, which does not necessarily reflect the socio-cultural realities of the many displaced and separated of the non-West. And while “legal protection for extended family members and alternative families is developing domestically, little such development seems apparent in relation to family reunification.”

In sum, the circumstances and legal frameworks for separation, tracing and potential reunification are highly diverse, depending on local and regional contexts. Still, what is important to acknowledge is the convoluted, sometimes confusing and constantly changing legal landscape, in which separated persons and the providers of FTR services have to navigate in. Accordingly, “there cannot be a ‘one size fits all’ solution” for addressing the legal and individual demands for FTR.

FTR needs around the globe

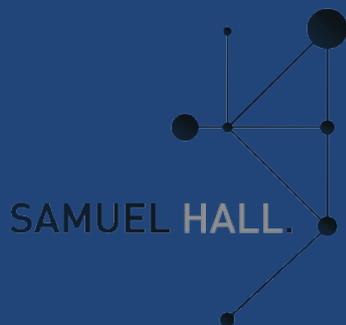
While people all around the world are separated from their families (see Chapter 1), it is hard to impossible to estimate the actual extent of global separation of families for two primary reasons:

1. Separated persons, including children, may stay voluntarily or involuntarily unidentified if they actively avoid being registered or seeking help (see Chapter 2), or when they slip through identification procedures. UNHCR, for example, primarily detect separated persons at entry and exit points of cross-border separation, and the FTR services of ICRC and the Red Cross movement primarily rely on separated persons actively approaching local offices. Hence, the ‘dark figure’ of separated persons worldwide is expected to be significant.
2. Apart from ICRC, no major organisation involved in FTR efforts publishes full numbers on their FTR cases. The information is either scattered in various documents covering various time periods or is ‘hidden’ in reports that only give case numbers of more general support to potentially separated persons, eg in cases of child protection or refugee assistance. Hence, even an estimation of recorded worldwide separation and/or actual FTR cases is currently impossible.

While separation and FTR needs are a global phenomenon, it is hugely important to understand where current geographic hotspots are located, because FTR support systems and tools require adaptation to local circumstances – including socio-cultural, technological and language aspects (see Chapter 2). The world map (Figure 1) highlights potential hotspots for FTR, based on current migration routes, refugee populations and ICRC’s tracing request for 2016.

From the indicative overview in Figure 1, it becomes clear that the following global and geopolitical areas should be of particular interest to FTR stakeholders:

- Middle East: given the ongoing violent conflicts in Syria, Iraq and beyond, the number of displaced and potentially separated persons in the region is unparalleled in global comparison. The situation of separated persons, especially children, in the region is being met with large scale efforts from various humanitarian actors, mostly embedded in general protection support; there are indications that actual tracing needs are not as extensive as the emergency level would indicate, because connectivity between families often remains high within the region.
- Eastern Africa / Horn of Africa region: the continuing conflict in Somalia and the current crisis in South Sudan are only two examples of various conflicts leading to significant migration and displacement in the region. While UNHCR, UNICEF, Save the Children, Refunite and many others are highly active in the region, the support for FTR is challenged by access (in terms of security) and connectivity (in terms of mobile networks) constraints.
- Further hotspots: while Central America (including the US-Mexican border) and the Mediterranean and Europe are experiencing enormous human movement and influx, and migrants and refugees from various countries of origin are getting separated from their families along the way. In addition, various reasons (conflicts, displacement, natural disasters, migration, etc) are causing the separation of families in many parts of Western Africa, in Afghanistan and its neighbouring countries (namely, Iran and Pakistan), and parts of Southeast Asia (particularly, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Myanmar).



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