

# **Family tracing assistance from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in Bangladesh**

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# 1. Introduction

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This instruction sets out the policy and procedures for obtaining assistance from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) with endeavours to trace the families of unaccompanied children, who have made claims for asylum, in Bangladesh.

The processes set out in this instruction should be carried out in conjunction with the family tracing guidance set out in the [Processing an Asylum Application from a Child](#) Asylum Instruction (AI), which sets out the policy and procedures to follow when dealing with an asylum application from a child, and the KA (Afghanistan) interim guidance instruction.

## 1.1 Application of this instruction in respect of children and those with children

Section 55 of the [Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009](#) (2009 Act) requires the Home Office to carry out its functions in a way that takes into account the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in the UK. It does not impose any new functions, or override existing functions.

Officers must not apply the actions set out in this instruction either to children or to those with children without having due regard to Section 55 of the 2009 Act. The Home Office's statutory guidance [Every Child Matters – Change for Children](#) sets out the key principles to take into account in all Home Office activities.

Our statutory duty to children includes the need to demonstrate:

1. Fair treatment which meets the same standard a British child would receive;
2. The child's interests being made a primary, although not the only consideration;
3. No discrimination of any kind;
4. Asylum applications are dealt with in a timely fashion;
5. Identification of those that might be at risk from harm.

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## 2. Identity Checking and Tracing Process

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### 2.1 Summary

The British High Commission in Dhaka can provide assistance and advice on family tracing in Bangladesh.

Subject to the suitability of family tracing and the provision by the child of relevant information of sufficient quality and quantity, the family tracing assistance may include:

- Advice and assistance with utilising other family tracing avenues in Bangladesh, such as with writing to or telephoning the family.
- Where requested, providing copies of Visa Application Forms (VAFs).
- Taking steps to endeavour to conduct family tracing in person by a locally employed member of staff, which may include the following:
  - Where a valid family home address is already known or is identified, a home visit can be conducted to confirm the relationship between the child and their family and briefly ascertain their circumstances.
  - Where a valid family home address is not already known, to enable a home visit to be conducted, endeavours may also include:
    - A combination of visits to the local village/market/village elders to identify the family home address in cases where the name of the village or surrounding area is provided.
    - Checking the child's and their family's details against Bangladeshi Passport Office and police records and liaising with the child's schools to obtain contact details.

The findings of the enquiries will be compiled in a report. The time taken to process family tracing requests is subject to demand, resources, quality of information provided, political disruption (hartals) and, where assistance involves tracing in person, the geographical location of the family to be traced (Between June – July certain areas are prone to flooding). Requests for family tracing in person should usually be processed within 3 weeks.

### 2.2 Assessing Suitability

Caseworkers must assess whether, when and what types of family tracing checks are appropriate. When making this assessment, caseworkers must refer to the family tracing guidance in the [Processing an Asylum Application from a Child AI](#) and adhere to [Paragraph 339IA of the Immigration Rules](#).

### 2.3 Submitting Requests

Caseworkers should complete a [Tracing Pro Forma](#) in full and email it to the FCO's Migration Delivery Officer in the British High Commission in Dhaka.

The High Commission will use the information in the pro forma to consider what family tracing steps are possible and appropriate. The High Commission should be provided with

as much information as possible relevant to the tracing of the family, so to ensure tracing is conducted appropriately and to maximise the likelihood of success. Caseworkers must specify any limitations on the family tracing enquiries to be conducted. For example, family tracings steps which involve contact with the Bangladeshi authorities would not be appropriate if either:

- A decision has not been made on the asylum claim.
- Asylum has or will be granted.
- The Bangladeshi State is the alleged actor of persecution and either the asylum claim has not been refused or appeals rights have not been exhausted.

If the Bangladeshi State is not the alleged actor of persecution and a decision has been made to refuse the asylum claim, even if the decision has not yet been served, if family tracing in person is suitable there would normally be no reason to stipulate that family tracing enquiries which involve contact with the Bangladeshi authorities would not be appropriate.

Where family tracing checks are being undertaken before a decision has been served on the asylum claim, the service of the decision should be deferred until the checks have been concluded.

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## Document Control

### Change Record

Version	Authors	Date	Change Reference
1.0	SM	29/01/14	New guidance

## Annex – Family tracing pro forma

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### Family tracing pro forma

#### Submitting officer's details

Name	
Grade	
Team	
Contact number	
Email Address	

#### Child's basic details (please note if disputed)

Home Office/Port ref	
Name	
Date of birth	
Nationality	
Passport/ID number	
Place of birth	
Home address	
Home telephone number	

#### Family details

##### Father

Name of father	
Date of birth	
Nationality	
Home address	
Telephone number	
Last contact with child?	
Other details	

##### Mother

Name of mother	
Date of birth	
Nationality	
Home address	
Telephone number	
Last contact with child?	
Other details	

##### Siblings

Names of brothers	
Dates of birth	
Nationality	
Names of brothers	
Dates of birth	
Nationality	

Names of sisters	
Dates of birth	
Nationality	
Home address	
Telephone number	
Last contact with child?	
Other details	

**Other family members/friends**

Name of person	
Date of birth	
Nationality	
Relationship to child	
Home address	
Telephone number	
Last contact with child?	
Other details	

**Other information**

Name/address of school, dates of attendance and name of teacher(s)	
Name of employers and dates of employment	
Local hospital address	
Local place of worship address	
Local police station address	
Other relevant information	

**Suitability of contacting the State authorities**

Contact with State authorities is appropriate	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Insert photograph
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