Family Reunification – Mohammad's Story

I was a member of a political party in my country which opposed the government. The soldiers came in the middle of the night and burned my house with all my belongings. It was too dangerous for me to stay and so I left my wife and family behind to save my life. I came to Ireland and when I got my refugee status and family reunification permission to bring my family to Ireland it was 5 years since I had seen them. One of my friends told me that the Red Cross could help me to organise their travel through their Travel Assistance Programme. After a few month my family arrived and I felt so happy that at last we could be together as a family.

Family Reunification – Leila's Story

My name is Leila and I am 16 years old. Before coming to Ireland I lived with my family in Somalia. I witnessed my father being killed at our village by a soldier after he grabbed hold of my mum. Dad went to help her and the next thing he was on the ground not moving. My mother was screaming and crying. I was so frightened. He then set our house on fire and we ran into the bush and stayed there for one week. My mum made arrangements for us to leave Somalia but I lost contact with her in the crowd. After a long time travelling I reached Ireland. The police found me on the street and took me to a hostel. The next day a social worker talked to me and helped contact the Red Cross to start looking for my family. After a year she contacted me to say they had found one of my brothers. I asked the Irish authorities to allow me to bring my brother here to be with me and they agreed. I knew that the Red Cross had a Travel Assistance programme and six months later my brother was with me in Ireland. I still do not know where my mum and other brother are but I pray that someday we will find a way of being together again.

RESTORING FAMILY LINKS