



Return assistance: a change of perspective

Return assistance - in practice

Iran, West Azerbaijan Province

Mr Q. returned voluntarily to his home country Iran in autumn 2016. The State Secretariat for Migration (SEM) granted him financial assistance to open a microenterprise. The office of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Teheran was mandated to assist Mr Q. with the development and implementation of his business idea.

After his return, he contacted IOM Iran to discuss the next steps. He found an opportunity to invest in an engine oil store and become a partner. This allowed him to start immediately after his return and access an already existing customer base. To become partner, he had to buy a stock of products for the store. After submitting all necessary documents, IOM paid the granted amount directly to the vendor.



One year after Mr Q.'s return IOM staff contacted him to evaluate his situation and the sustainability of his project. He was satisfied with his current situation and informed that he is earning an income from his business which allows him to cover his daily needs. He was grateful for the support he has received in the framework of the reintegration program before and after the return. He was happy with the decision to return to his home country and saw his future in the place of return: *"My migration was not a well-informed decision and I could not achieve what I was expecting. So the return was the last and best way for me. I live in a stable situation and I am satisfied with my current situation."*

As a humanitarian and, at the same time, reasonably-priced solution, the concept of Return Assistance has proved itself and gained acceptance in many European countries. The object of Return Assistance is to harmonize the justified interests of migrants with those of Switzerland and the countries of origin. Return Assistance makes a valuable contribution to a sustainable and successful return. It is conceived so as to rule out undesired pull factors in the direction of Switzerland.

SEM/IOM, March 2018