



Return assistance: a change of perspective

## Return assistance - in practice

### Iran, Gilan

Mr. A. returned voluntarily to his home country Iran in autumn 2016. Together with the return counsellor in Switzerland, he developed a business plan to open a kebab and shisha shop. The State Secretariat for Migration (SEM) approved the project and granted him financial assistance. The office of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Teheran was mandated to assist Mr. A. with the implementation of his project.



After the return, he changed his mind about the project and decided to buy arable land to grow flowers as he had already experience in this area. He discussed his new plan with IOM staff in Teheran and – after the plan was approved – submitted all necessary documents for the purchase of the land.



Nine months after Mr. A.'s return, IOM staff conducted a monitoring to evaluate his situation and the sustainability of his project. He was satisfied with his situation despite the fact that the financial situation was difficult given that he had to wait for the harvest time. However, he considered his situation as better than before he left the country because he had a business now where he could apply the skills he had acquired in the past few years.

*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.*

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