



Return assistance: a change of perspective

Return assistance - in practice

Ghana, Accra Region

In January 2016, Mr. T. voluntarily returned to Ghana with the help of the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The Swiss State Secretariat for Migration (SEM) granted him return assistance for the implementation of a reintegration project.



With the support of his return counsellor in Switzerland, Mr. T. first established a plan to continue his university studies, but changed his mind later on in favor of a construction material shop. The SEM examined and approved Mr. T's new reintegration project idea.

Only a few days after his arrival in Ghana, Mr. T. visited the IOM office in Accra.

The IOM staff explained him the administrative procedures for the implementation of his project and together they took all necessary steps to enable the setup of Mr. T.'s shop.

In July 2016, a monitoring visit was organized by IOM Accra during which Mr. T. stated that he was satisfied with his current situation. He stated that his shop allowed him to cover his living costs and also those of an additional person. For the first time in his life, he said, he was financially independent. Furthermore, Mr. T. was persuaded that the regular income will soon allow him to pursue his planned university studies. These are the reasons why Mr. T. sees the future center of his life in Ghana.



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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