



Return Assistance: a change of perspective

Return Assistance – in Practice

Ghana



Mr. D. was staying in a Swiss reception and procedure centre when he heard about the possibility to return voluntarily to his home country with the Swiss Return and Reintegration Program financed by the Swiss State Secretariat for Migration (SEM) and implemented by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM). After he received a negative decision on his asylum request, he decided to return to Ghana in spring 2013. However, he was anxious to fly for the first time in his life, so he requested IOM assistance for the organization of his journey to his home town.

Before his departure he developed a small business plan for setting up a hairdresser's shop in Ghana. His project idea was submitted to the SEM who approved its funding upon return. A few days after his arrival, he started looking for a room for his family and for a place to start his business, as well as for the necessary equipment.



After he submitted all the requested documents, IOM Accra made the payment for the rent directly to the landlords, and paid for the scissors, hair extensions, shampoo and chairs directly to the suppliers.

At present, Mr. D. and his wife work together in the hairdresser's shop. As there is always more demand for haircuts and hair extensions in Ghana, it seems likely that the couple's business will be successful and profitable in the future.

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 valuable contribution to a sustainable and successful return. It is conceived so as to rule out undesired pull factors in the direction of Switzerland.