



REINTEGRATION ASSISTANCE FROM SWITZERLAND (RAS)

Since 2002, within the framework of the RAS programme, IOM Switzerland has been supporting the implementation of individual return assistance for asylum seekers returning voluntarily from Switzerland to their country of origin. The programme is financed by the Swiss State Secretariat for Migration (SEM).

IOM Switzerland is responsible for the local coordination between the Swiss authorities and/or NGOs and relief organisations on the one hand, as well as the IOM representation in the respective countries of origin on the other.



Procedure

1. **Contact:** The person wishing to return, contacts a return counselling office (in the canton or in the Federal Asylum centers) with an application for return and reintegration assistance.
2. **Development of a reintegration plan:** A reintegration plan is developed together with the return counsellor. Often, IOM Switzerland is consulted to check the feasibility of the project with the help of the Return Information Fund (RIF) programme – where country-specific information is provided – or by offering virtual counselling with the respective IOM mission in the country of return.
3. **Submission to donor:** The return counselling office submits the application for individual return assistance to the donor. If this is approved, the donor can commission IOM Switzerland to support the implementation of the beneficiary's reintegration project.
4. **Coordination:** IOM Switzerland informs the IOM office in the country of return and coordinates between the mission and the Swiss donor. The IOM mission then provides individual support to the beneficiary (e.g. setting up a micro-enterprise, assistance in reintegration into local structures) and assistance in any adjustments to the individual reintegration project.

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Applications for return assistance are examined on a case-by-case basis to determine the feasibility and sustainability of the proposed reintegration projects. This is done in consultation with responsible partners, concerned cantonal return counsellors, and if needed, with the IOM offices in the country of return. However, the decision as to which projects and applications are approved ultimately lies with the donor.



The offer

Reintegration assistance under the RAS programme may offer

- Financing of micro-enterprises
- Medical care
- Housing / reconstruction
- Education and training
- Assistance with the issuance of documents
- Other reintegration-related services (social support for reintegration, cash for care, cash for shelter, etc.)
- Professional reintegration, e.g. job placement

Monitoring

If requested by the donor, IOM can also carry out a monitoring visit to evaluate the beneficiary's situation on site. The visit is usually carried out between six to twelve months after the voluntary return. This helps to evaluate the impact and sustainability of the approved return assistance as well identify areas for improvement. Some examples of reintegration projects are available on: www.youproject.ch.

Business training in the country of return

In some countries beneficiaries have the opportunity to participate in business training sessions and obtain a certificate. They will gain the necessary skills in a respective field, to help facilitate the successful implementation of their reintegration projects. This option is available in the following countries:

- Iran
- Iraq
- Sri Lanka
- Nigeria
- Guinea



For more information:
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Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
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These projects are implemented by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Switzerland with funding from the State Secretariat for Migration (SEM) and the cantons of Vaud & Geneva