

# Stories of Return and Reintegration

Assisted Voluntary  
Return and Reintegration  
from Austria



 Federal Ministry  
Republic of Austria  
Interior



The project "RESTART III - Support for the Austrian return system and the reintegration of voluntary returnees" is co-financed by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) of the European Union and the Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior.

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# Introduction

The present booklet has been compiled by the IOM Country Office for Austria in cooperation with key stakeholders from the return and reintegration field such as the Austrian Ministry of the Interior and Caritas Austria as well as the respective reintegration partners in the countries of return. IOM Austria would like to thank all the organizations and partners involved in this process, and especially the migrants who contributed with their personal stories.

The booklet provides an insight in the life of 11 migrants who voluntarily returned from Austria to their countries of origin with the support of the Austrian return and reintegration system. The stories will guide you through different regions of the world – from South Asia to the Middle East all over to North and Sub-Saharan Africa – by bringing you in touch with migrants who currently live in Bangladesh, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Mongolia, Nigeria, the Russian Federation (Chechen Republic), Somalia (Somaliland) and Tunisia.

Through their return stories, migrants share their personal experiences. They reflect the diversity of people and realities in different regions and countries, of various ages and backgrounds and with various reasons for returning. The booklet reveals different feelings and concerns of returnees but also shows perspectives and possibilities.

## **The Return and Reintegration Assistance Process**

Return is an integral part of human mobility. The figure on page 4 and 5 shows the model process of an Assisted Voluntary Return from Austria.



# Austria



Migrant



Return counselling



Decision for  
voluntary return



Application for  
return & reintegration  
assistance

The returnees, who are portrayed in the booklet, received assistance through the reintegration programmes/projects **ERRIN** (Bangladesh, India, Iraq, Nigeria, Russian Federation/Chechen Republic), **IRMA plus II** (Mongolia), **RESTART II** (Islamic Republic of Iran) and **RESTART III** (Tunisia, Somalia/Somaliland).

## Country of return



Reintegration assistance: business, education, housing, etc.



Organization  
of return



Return travel

This booklet was produced with the help of



 Federal Ministry  
Republic of Austria  
Interior



# Bangladesh



**NAME:** MR. S.

**AGE:** 34 YEARS

**RETURN COUNTRY:** BANGLADESH

**RETURN YEAR:** 2022

**DURATION OF STAY  
IN AUSTRIA:** 14 YEARS

**REINTEGRATION  
PLAN:** YARN FACTORY





## WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO RETURN?

I applied for political asylum in Austria and during the hearing of my case, I was granted temporary permission to stay and found work in restaurants to sustain my life there. Eventually, my case was rejected, and I was unable to stay in Austria. Therefore I returned to Bangladesh in February 2022.



## WHAT WERE YOUR BIGGEST FEARS BEFORE YOUR RETURN?

I had many concerns prior to my return to Bangladesh. I had lived in Europe for many years and not seen my family in all that time, so I was concerned about how my family would react to my return and how I would integrate back with them and my wider community. My return happened during the Covid-19 pandemic, so I was also anxious about how this might affect my return and my planned business set up.



## HOW DID YOU FEEL UPON RETURN?

After my return I found it hard to adjust and faced many challenges in helping my family understand why I had returned empty handed, without them seeing me as a failure.



## HOW WAS THE ASSISTED VOLUNTARY RETURN AND REINTEGRATION PROCESS FOR YOU?

What helped me gain validation from my family and to integrate back into my community was the reintegration assistance of 3,000 Euros that I received through the ERRIN funded project.

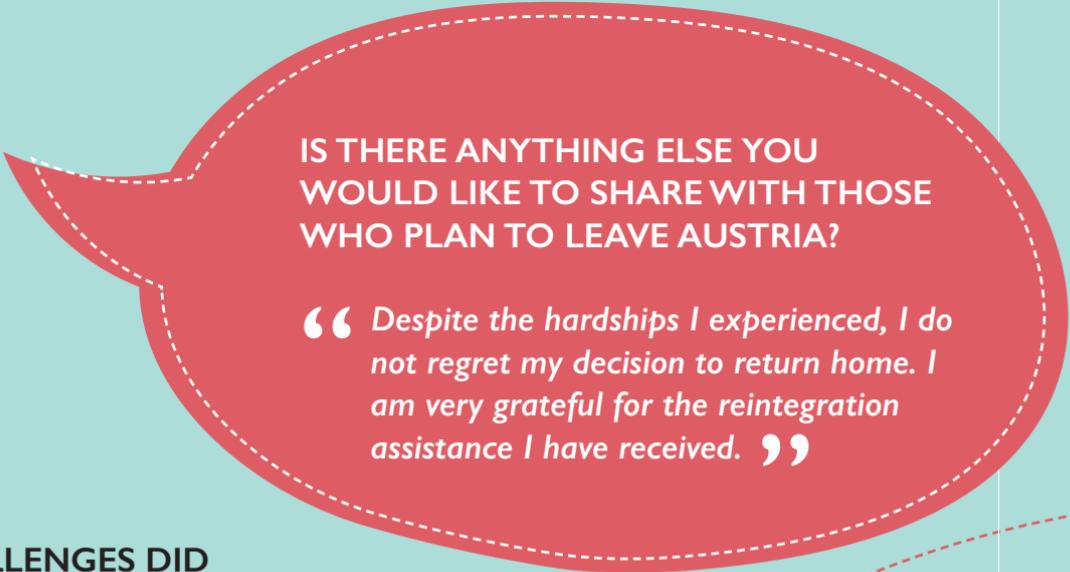
After setting up the business, I felt more accepted by my family and I am now happily living with them in an area of Narayanganj and contributing to the overall family income. The reintegration assistance that I received has also helped me to provide an important service for the local community by making yarns that are used by tailors and many other



businesses throughout the local area.

I plan to continue with this business and would like to expand it and employ up to three more workers, thanks to the high demand for this product.

The business advice and the financial investment that I received have helped me to improve my self-esteem, get back on my feet financially and also to gain respect from my family and my wider community.



**IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU  
WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH THOSE  
WHO PLAN TO LEAVE AUSTRIA?**

*“ Despite the hardships I experienced, I do not regret my decision to return home. I am very grateful for the reintegration assistance I have received. ”*



**WHAT CHALLENGES DID  
YOU EXPERIENCE DURING  
YOUR REINTEGRATION?**

No family members were willing or able to loan me any money to start a business. On top of this, the economic, political and social landscape had changed a lot in Bangladesh since I had left; it took me some time to acquaint myself with and begin to feel settled in my home country.



# Bangladesh



**NAME:** MR. Z.

**AGE:** 41 YEARS

**RETURN COUNTRY:**  
BANGLADESH

**RETURN YEAR:** 2021

**DURATION OF STAY  
IN AUSTRIA:** 11 YEARS

**REINTEGRATION  
PLAN:** CEMENT BUSINESS





## WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO RETURN?

As an irregular immigrant in Austria, I found it hard to support myself and took on many menial jobs, even selling newspapers on the streets at one point in order to survive. After a number of years, I applied for asylum but the authorities rejected my application as well as my appeals, and so I decided to return to Bangladesh.





## HOW WAS THE ASSISTED VOLUNTARY RETURN AND REINTEGRATION PROCESS FOR YOU?

The voluntary return and reintegration assistance process went very smoothly for me. The authorities in Austria first prepared all my documents and arranged my return flight. I received reintegration assistance through the ERRIN programme.

After the counselling sessions on my reintegration plans, I decided to utilise the skills I had acquired prior to leaving Bangladesh and start a cement business with the 3,000 Euros of reintegration assistance.



I am now happily living in a rural area of Bangladesh called Koshba in the Brahmanbaria District with my parents, wife and two children. With my successful cement business, I am contributing to my family's financial situation. I am planning to expand this business in the future.

As well as gaining financial independence, the reintegration support has helped me to re-acquire respect and credibility among my family and peers.

## IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH THOSE WHO PLAN TO LEAVE AUSTRIA?

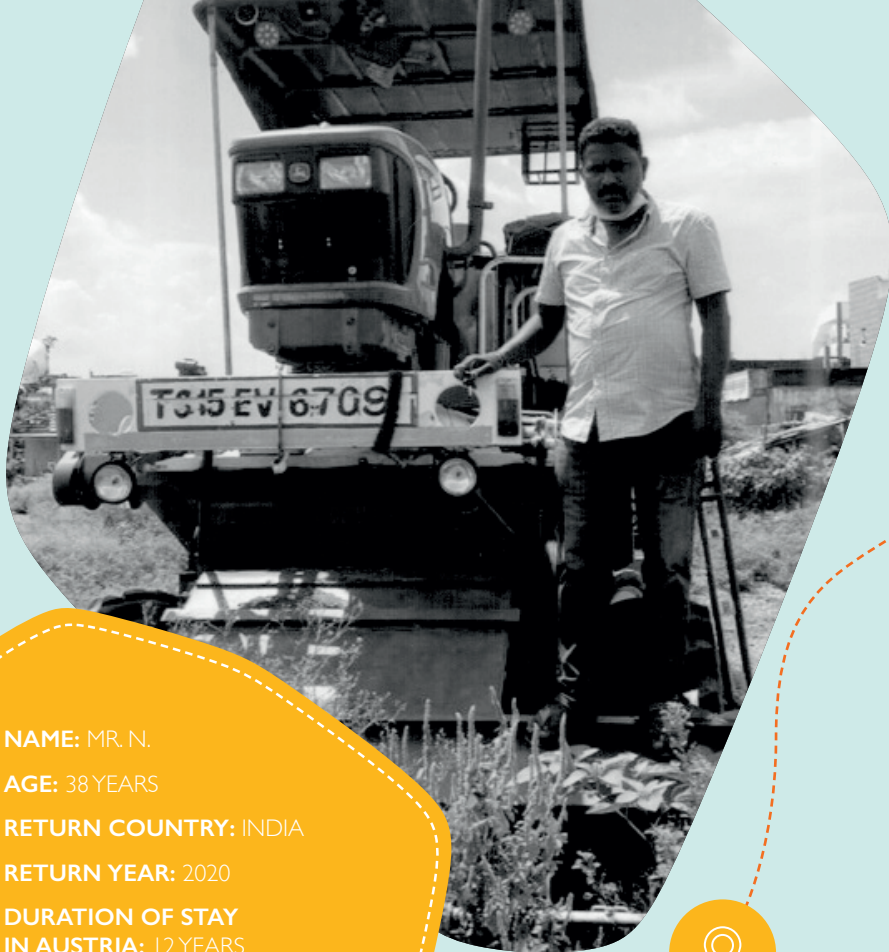
My advice to those thinking of leaving Europe to return to their home country is to go through the proper legal process and seek help from the authorities, as they will provide return assistance and ensure they are considered for any reintegration assistance they are eligible for.



## WHAT WERE YOUR BIGGEST FEARS BEFORE YOUR RETURN?

“ I had mixed feelings about returning to Bangladesh; on the one hand, I was looking forward to being reunited with my family and neighbours, but I was apprehensive about my financial future and how I would generate income. ”

# India



**NAME:** MR. N.

**AGE:** 38 YEARS

**RETURN COUNTRY:** INDIA

**RETURN YEAR:** 2020

**DURATION OF STAY  
IN AUSTRIA:** 12 YEARS

**REINTEGRATION  
PLAN:** AGRICULTURAL BUSINESS



## WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO RETURN?

During my stay in Austria, I was not able to find a decent earning job which would suffice both mine and my family in India's requirements. Hence, I made the difficult decision to return back to India.



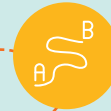
## WHAT WERE YOUR BIGGEST FEARS BEFORE YOUR RETURN?

My biggest fear before my return to India was whether I would be able to settle back home in a place which changed so much after all those years that I was in Europe. My fear was not to find a well-paid job to look after my family. It was a fear to be a failure to my family.



## HOW DID YOU FEEL UPON RETURN?

The initial months of my return were a bit dicey and scary. Though I knew I would get some assistance through ERRIN, I still had the feeling that nothing would go well. But indeed, I was happy reuniting with my family, that was the biggest joy in a long time.





## HOW WAS THE ASSISTED VOLUNTARY RETURN AND REINTEGRATION PROCESS FOR YOU?

Through Caritas Austria, I was assisted in a very well dignified return to India. And after my voluntary return, Caritas India assisted me in achieving my business needs which helped me to earn on a daily basis. I got reintegration assistance to buy a second hand tractor, as I had experience in driving and also because agricultural work has more scope in my local community. With the help of Caritas Austria, I was able to find a seller who wished to sell his tractor. I am planning to continue with the same work as it is profitable for the future.



## WHAT CHALLENGES DID YOU EXPERIENCE DURING YOUR REINTEGRATION?

The biggest challenge was to adapt to the Indian way of living again. It had been so long that I had not been in India. A lot of things had changed, therefore it was difficult in the beginning to fit into the local society and to get accepted by the community. Also, the initial two months I was struggling to get back to tractor driving as I had done many years ago.

## WHAT WAS YOUR MOST MEMORABLE MOMENT?

“ The most memorable moment was when I paid the fees of my children with my first earning from the business. I had the feeling that I could start over due to the reintegration assistance. I will never forget that moment. ”



## IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH THOSE WHO PLAN TO LEAVE AUSTRIA?

My advice would be: If one plans to leave Austria and return to India, one should be prepared for legal documentation. Depending upon the state of return, the time duration may vary. Also, keep patience and cooperate with the staff and the organizations, then you will achieve your goal.

# Mongolia

ULAANBAATAR ●



**NAME:** ANONYMOUS

**AGE:** 30 YEARS

**RETURN COUNTRY:** MONGOLIA

**RETURN YEAR:** 2020

**DURATION OF STAY  
IN AUSTRIA:** 7 MONTHS

**REINTEGRATION PLAN:**  
RESTAURANT





## WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO RETURN?

I had interviews in Austria, all applications were negative. I then learned from Caritas that I could return to my home country voluntarily with support and decided to do so.



## WHAT WERE YOUR BIGGEST FEARS BEFORE YOUR RETURN?

I fled Mongolia out of fear of a certain person and knew that I would not be able to return to Ulaanbaatar. Therefore, I decided to settle outside the capital (in another province) and I feel safe here.

## HOW DID YOU FEEL UPON RETURN?

I did not tell anyone before returning that I would come back to Mongolia. Only one friend knew about it; she picked me up from the airport and I spent the first days with her. I was very restless the first one to two months, I worried a lot about the future and I had not yet arrived mentally in Mongolia. Only after this time normality slowly returned.





## HOW WAS THE ASSISTED VOLUNTARY RETURN AND REINTEGRATION PROCESS FOR YOU?

Reintegration support from Caritas has been the only help I have received after returning home. It has been a great help for me and has changed my life.

In the beginning I was often afraid; I hardly left the apartment and could not start anything new. It

took me two to three months to be able to move on with my life and accept being back in Mongolia. However, since I needed to make a living, I started looking for a job. I then decided to rent a restaurant with the reintegration assistance where I am currently working.

I would like to set up a coffee shop (or a coffee corner) in my restaurant, so that we can offer coffee (also as take away) to the customers. It is my dream and I really hope that I can realize the plan.



## WHAT CHALLENGES DID YOU EXPERIENCE DURING YOUR REINTEGRATION?

“ The most difficult thing for me is that the costs for small entrepreneurs, like me, are very high which makes it hard to generate a profit with my restaurant. ”



## WHAT WAS YOUR MOST MEMORABLE MOMENT?

I will always remember the support I received from Caritas.



# Russian Federation/ Chechen Republic



MOSCOW



**NAME:** MS. K.

**AGE:** 69 YEARS

**RETURN COUNTRY:**  
RUSSIAN FEDERATION/CHECHEN REPUBLIC

**RETURN YEAR:** 2017

**DURATION OF STAY  
IN AUSTRIA:** 2 YEARS

**REINTEGRATION PLAN:**  
BEEKEEPING BUSINESS



## WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO RETURN?

Over time, I began to yearn for my homeland although my children were by my side in Austria. This homesickness was the main reason for me to return to Chechnya.



## HOW DID YOU FEEL UPON RETURN?

Fortunately, after my return, I was well supported by a few of my relatives in Chechnya. On their advice, I started a beekeeping business. One of my relatives helped me launch and run the business. In the first months I began to generate quite a good income.



## WHAT WERE YOUR BIGGEST FEARS BEFORE YOUR RETURN?

After return there was a definite fear of being alone and not being able to make income for a living.



## HOW WAS THE ASSISTED VOLUNTARY RETURN AND REINTEGRATION PROCESS FOR YOU?

I greatly appreciate the assistance I received from the ERRIN project. It was useful not only in the material but also in the psychological sense. The staff of Caritas Russia was also a great help on a mental level.

I am still doing the business until now. I again earn enough to cover my daily needs. Despite my age and state of health, I continue bee-keeping. I am a very responsible and proud woman who wants to have her own income and not rely too much on others.





## WHAT CHALLENGES DID YOU EXPERIENCE DURING YOUR REINTEGRATION?

Unfortunately, my situation today is different than what I had in mind. I suffered from a serious sickness for a couple of months. In addition, the relative who helped me running the business, suddenly died. I was going through a rough time because of this loss in the family. This period was very hard for me, both emotionally and financially.

## IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH THOSE WHO PLAN TO LEAVE AUSTRIA?

“ I would recommend returnees to make sure you are well prepared for your return. It is hard, especially to re-adapt to the Russian way of life and to keep chasing your goals. If you want to achieve something, you will need to work hard, and it will all come to a good end. ”



# Islamic Republic of Iran

● TEHRAN



**NAME:** MR. H.

**AGE:** 34 YEARS

**RETURN COUNTRY:** ISLAMIC  
REPUBLIC OF IRAN

**RETURN YEAR:** 2017

**DURATION OF STAY  
IN AUSTRIA:** 1.5 YEARS

**REINTEGRATION**

**PLAN:** TYRE PUNCTURE REPAIR SHOP



## WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO RETURN?

I returned to Iran because my mother was alone in Iran and needed someone to take care of her. The hardships I faced during my residence in Europe as an irregular migrant dashed all of my vain hopes and brought me to reality.

## HOW DID YOU FEEL UPON RETURN?

I had a difficult time during the first months of my return to rebuild my life and business as I did not have much support in Iran.



## WHAT WERE YOUR BIGGEST FEARS BEFORE YOUR RETURN?

My biggest fear was my reintegration process, as I had sold all of my vocational equipment to emigrate from Iran. So, when I decided to return after two years, I had no opportunity and money to restart my business.





## HOW WAS THE ASSISTED VOLUNTARY RETURN AND REINTEGRATION PROCESS FOR YOU?

It was a very smooth process starting from Austria to my city of residence in Iran. I could feel that the International Organization for Migration (IOM) was taking care of all steps during this process until the end of my re-integration.

Thanks to my single-minded and tenacious character, I managed to re-establish my tyre puncture repair shop from scratch and used the reintegration assistance to buy some needed equipment. I had more or less ten years of work experience in this field and had a business license for that. Now, after five years, I am still running my shop and live with my mother.

## WHAT WAS YOUR MOST MEMORABLE MOMENT?

“ Reunification with my mother after two years was the most memorable moment I had in that time. ”





## WHAT CHALLENGES DID YOU EXPERIENCE DURING YOUR REINTEGRATION?

The poor economic situation of the city and unfair competition as well as the location of my shop were challenging, as not many people approach me to have their cars repaired; so it requires more of an effort to establish a presence, and I have to rely mainly on the network of friends and relatives as my loyal customers. To address this challenge, I consider equipping my shop with a new machine that helps me improve my business and income.



# Iraq

BAGHDAD ●



**NAME:** MR. A.

**AGE:** 51 YEARS

**RETURN COUNTRY:** IRAQ

**RETURN YEAR:** 2022

**DURATION OF STAY  
IN AUSTRIA:** 7 YEARS

**REINTEGRATION  
PLAN:** MINI MARKET





## WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO RETURN?

I wanted to be with my family and I preferred to receive health care from them. I also became psychologically tired, as I felt isolated. In addition, I had difficulties of not obtaining residency and not being able to work and complete my studies.



## WHAT WERE YOUR BIGGEST FEARS BEFORE YOUR RETURN?

My greatest fear was that my family would not welcome me in my country of origin, or that I would be a burden to them. I was afraid that the security situation had become worse than it was before I emigrated.



## HOW DID YOU FEEL UPON RETURN?

I am very positive because my family, represented by my brother and nephew, welcomed me warmly at Baghdad International Airport. I was willing to settle with my brother and his family at that time and until now.



## HOW WAS THE ASSISTED VOLUNTARY RETURN AND REINTEGRATION PROCESS FOR YOU?

The Austrian authorities facilitated the return process by giving me all the details that I needed about my return and explained me the necessary procedures to return to my country of origin.

I further received reintegration assistance; through it I managed to open my own business, which is a mini-market that helped me improve my financial situation.

My life now is going somewhat smoothly, continuous support is provided by my brother. I also feel that I can adapt to the current situation in my country of origin and that I was able to communicate with my old friends to have a social life.



## IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH THOSE WHO PLAN TO LEAVE AUSTRIA?

“ I advise migrants in Europe, if they have experience in a specific field, to return to their country and use the in-kind assistance grant to open a business so that they can live in peace in their country with their families. ”



## WHAT WAS YOUR MOST MEMORABLE MOMENT?

The most memorable moment for me is on my way to immigrate to Austria, where the journey was fraught with dangers, especially the sea route. Terrified, I did not know my destination and feared whether the boat I was riding would be safe, or if I was exposed to drowning. The sea was the biggest threat to my life and the most memorable moment.



## WHAT CHALLENGES DID YOU EXPERIENCE DURING YOUR REINTEGRATION?

Similar businesses are the main challenge to my business.



# Iraq

BAGHDAD ●



**NAME:** MR. L.

**AGE:** 33 YEARS

**RETURN COUNTRY:** IRAQ

**RETURN YEAR:** 2022

**DURATION OF STAY  
IN AUSTRIA:** 7 YEARS

**REINTEGRATION  
PLAN:** MOBILE ACCESSORIES  
SHOP

## WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO RETURN?

I decided to return to my country of origin because of my family obligations: I returned to support them as well as my parents who are getting older and their health conditions are deteriorating.



## HOW DID YOU FEEL UPON RETURN?

I feel good about my return, and my family is the main reason behind that, since they welcomed me with open arms at my family-owned house. My parents and siblings were very happy too.



## WHAT WERE YOUR BIGGEST FEARS BEFORE YOUR RETURN?

I was afraid of the possibility of not reintegrating well with the community in my country of origin since I lived outside of the country for more than seven years. In addition, I was afraid of not getting job opportunities and my future was unknown.



## HOW WAS THE ASSISTED VOLUNTARY RETURN AND REINTEGRATION PROCESS FOR YOU?

The Austrian authorities helped me with my voluntary return procedure and gave me the necessary help to return safely to my country of origin. After the meeting conducted with the reintegration counsellor from the ERRIN project, I decided to use in-kind assistance in starting up a mobile accessories and maintenance shop. In addition, I also work part-time in a local air conditioning service company which all helped me to get a stable income; and in return, it helped me improve my living condition.

I now live with my family including my parents and siblings in their own house. I have enough income to cover my daily living expenses.



## WHAT CHALLENGES DID YOU EXPERIENCE DURING YOUR REINTEGRATION?

I faced a lot of challenges starting up my business, one of them were the high rent prices in the area where I chose to open the business and which was close to my home. The other challenge was the difficulty in finding a reasonable wholesale shop to purchase the necessary items for my business.



## IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH THOSE WHO PLAN TO LEAVE AUSTRIA?

The ETTC reintegration team and the in-kind assistance helped me a lot with the reintegration process while I was going through rough times because of the bad decision I had made in the past.

## WHAT WAS YOUR MOST MEMORABLE MOMENT?

“ My first day in my country of origin was special, since I had been away from my family for such a long time, and I was very eager to see them. ”



# Tunisia



**NAME:** MR.W.

**AGE:** 29 YEARS

**RETURN COUNTRY:**  
TUNISIA

**RETURN YEAR:** 2022

**DURATION OF STAY  
IN AUSTRIA:** 2 MONTHS

**REINTEGRATION**

**PLAN:** SHOP WITH DECORATION ITEMS  
AND LOGISTIC SERVICES FOR CEREMONIES



## HOW DID YOU FEEL UPON RETURN?

I felt angry when I got on the plane, but now I feel good. When I reunited with my family, I was very happy and my family was happy too. They welcomed me very warmly.



## WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO RETURN?

I had to leave Austria because I had no legal papers, I did not have any other option.



## WHAT WERE YOUR BIGGEST FEARS BEFORE YOUR RETURN?

I was afraid of my family's reaction because of the money they spent on me.





## HOW WAS THE ASSISTED VOLUNTARY RETURN AND REINTEGRATION PROCESS FOR YOU?

Before returning, I was in a detention center in Austria where I was counselled by a BBU return counsellor, who explained all the procedures for returning to Tunisia. He told me about the reintegration project and the financial support I would obtain once back in Tunisia. In the beginning, I did not want to return voluntarily, but after some days of reflection I decided to participate in the reintegration project and to return to my country. When I returned, I first wanted to buy a

taxi and then a kiosk, but the reintegration assistance was not sufficient for a sustainable business. I then decided to open a shop with decoration items and logistic services for ceremonies, especially marriages. My father supported me financially with this business. Since the business is seasonal and marriages are held mainly in summer, I also work as a taxi driver. The salary is not high, but I think that it is better to get a small salary than to stay at home and to not do anything.



## WHAT WAS YOUR MOST MEMORABLE MOMENT?

“ I remember that upon my return, my family welcomed me very warmly. This was a great moment for me. ”



# Somalia/ Somaliland

● MOGADISHU



**NAME:** ANONYMOUS

**AGE:** 23 YEARS

**RETURN COUNTRY:**  
SOMALIA/SOMALILAND

**RETURN YEAR:** 2021

**DURATION OF STAY  
IN AUSTRIA:** 7 YEARS

**REINTEGRATION  
PLAN:** GROCERY STORE





## WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO RETURN?

This was the biggest decision that I took in my life. My decision to return is based on two reasons: I was sick and I felt that no family member is next to me, I felt alone. Furthermore, I was homeless, I have been in Austria for seven years and I did not receive any legal document.



## HOW DID YOU FEEL UPON RETURN?

Upon arrival I met with my family, which was nice.

## WHAT WERE YOUR BIGGEST FEARS BEFORE YOUR RETURN?

My fear was that I was away for seven years, I was afraid to adapt to the country and was wondering how the country would be now, whether it changed or not.





## HOW WAS THE ASSISTED VOLUNTARY RETURN AND REINTEGRATION PROCESS FOR YOU?

Overall, the process was good, it was fantastic. Before departure I received information about my return. The process ran smoothly. Upon arrival, I received reception assistance. I am satisfied with the assistance I received. My life is good now, however, I am still sick and my biggest concern is how I can become healthy.

The business (grocery store) is run by my brother; he also has another business in another location and takes care of me and other family members. My first priority is to find a solution for my health condition and to become healthy.



## WHAT WAS YOUR MOST MEMORABLE MOMENT?

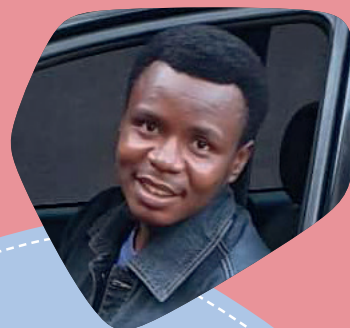
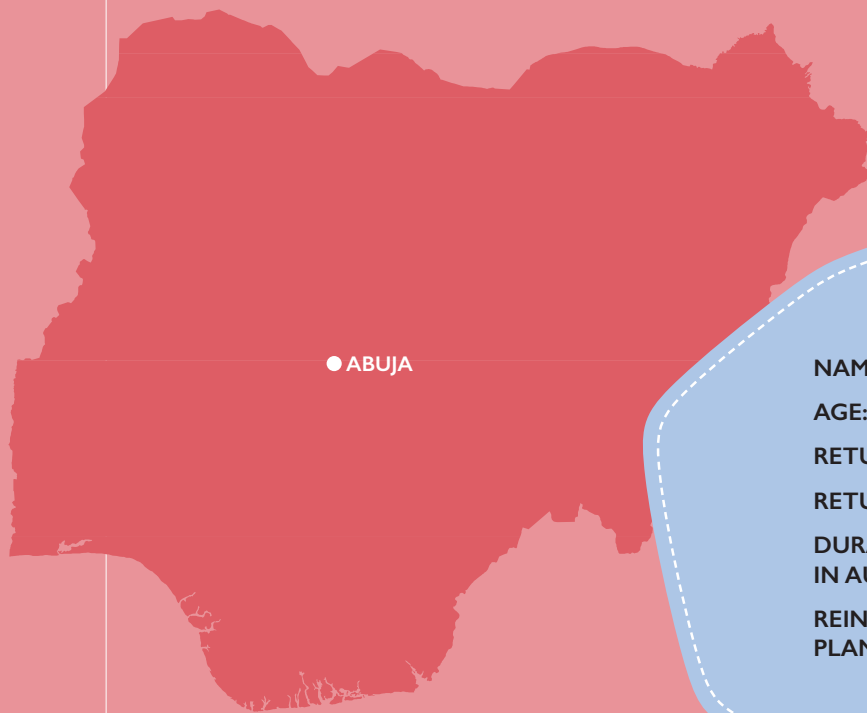
“ *The most memorable moment was that I was sick and I always remember me being sick and alone in Austria.* ”

## WHAT CHALLENGES DID YOU EXPERIENCE DURING YOUR REINTEGRATION?

Initially, I decided to use my reintegration assistance for a Tok Tok, but during that time I felt that I couldn't drive. After I changed the business into a grocery store, this was fine. Now I get the benefits from the business and I feel good.



# Nigeria



**NAME:** ANONYMOUS

**AGE:** 34 YEARS

**RETURN COUNTRY:** NIGERIA

**RETURN YEAR:** 2022

**DURATION OF STAY  
IN AUSTRIA:** 4 YEARS

**REINTEGRATION  
PLAN:** TAXI BUSINESS



## WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO RETURN?

There were many options available to me to cut corners and remain in Austria. Genuine love for God and the nation and my unflinching poise for peace are what made me decide to return instead.



## WHAT WERE YOUR BIGGEST FEARS BEFORE YOUR RETURN?

I was not prepared to deal with the stigma associated with being tagged a “deportee”. So, I have never believed it; for the many times I was reassured by the BBU personnel that I was not being deported and that I would have a reintegration package to start life with. This was my biggest fear throughout the process, the fear of deportation and not being assisted in Nigeria.



## HOW DID YOU FEEL UPON RETURN?

There is no place like home. I feel relieved, happy, loved and much more fulfilled.

## HOW WAS THE ASSISTED VOLUNTARY RETURN AND REINTEGRATION PROCESS FOR YOU?



The process is awesome, flawless and helpful and a noteworthy platform for restoring and upholding the dignity of man.

I have received two support services. First, I got the 1,000 Euros “Sonderangebot” stipend at my point of departure from Austria by the Austrian authorities. This sum at that point in time was indeed substantial; therefore, I had no big problems with offsetting bills for accommodation, feeding and other logistics necessary for my initial settlement upon arrival. The second is the ERRIN reintegration grant with which I began life again in my home country. Contrary to the negative testimony of my friends about non-availability of what to do for a living, I noticed that transportation business is lucrative within my state of residence.

For now I am doing taxi business and it is going well. But for my long-term plan I have bigger ideas: I want to be an exporter of agricultural produce.



## WHAT WAS YOUR MOST MEMORABLE MOMENT?

My most memorable moment was a day after I landed in my country, Nigeria. There were so many emotions on that day. At one point I felt very scared for everything new to come but it did not take much time for me to feel at home again in my motherland.

## IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH THOSE WHO PLAN TO LEAVE AUSTRIA?

“ For those who plan to leave Austria these are my few words for you: Assisted voluntary return is NOT deportation. Do not be afraid. ”



## WHAT CHALLENGES DID YOU EXPERIENCE DURING YOUR REINTEGRATION?

My first and recurrent challenge is to convince people that I actually have come back home and that I will stay here. Nobody, unless for a few, believe me and thus extend a hand for fellowship to me. There is the challenge of learning how to live life with the realities here.

# Imprint

This publication was funded through the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) of the European Union and the Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior. The stories featured in this publication are true and have been relayed by migrants who have received return and reintegration assistance through the Austrian return and reintegration system.

The opinions expressed in the booklet are those of the protagonists and do not necessarily reflect the views of IOM. The designations employed and the presentation of material throughout the book do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of IOM concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area, or of its authorities, or concerning its frontiers or boundaries.

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# Publisher

## **International Organization for Migration (IOM)**

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