



My Story: Returning Home to Help Afghanistan

IOM's Temporary Return of Qualified Nationals Project

"Afghanistan has suffered a lot in the last several decades. In the 1990s, when I left my country, there seemed to be little chance for progress and self-advancement.

I arrived in the Netherlands in 1997, with hopes to further my education and have a better life. Adjusting to my new country wasn't easy. It took me several years to learn Dutch and Frisian, and there were many differences between the customs and life in the Netherlands and Afghanistan.

Although I faced many challenges, I eventually began to feel at home in the Netherlands. I continued my studies in the field of management, and as my life became more comfortable I began thinking about how I could contribute something back to my home country of Afghanistan.

In 2011, I became aware of a programme run by IOM that enables Afghans like me to contribute their skills to the development of Afghanistan. The IOM office in the Netherlands helped place me as an advisor to the Afghan Ministry of Education's School Safety and Security Initiative. The initiative focused on building the capacity of local leaders to mobilize communities and parents to protect education facilities, students, and teachers.

My experience working on this initiative and helping to foster and protect education in Afghanistan was very positive. In 2013, I took another placement through IOM with the Peshgam Institute for Higher Education. Today, I am Chief Director of the institute. We have over 1,100 students studying in our B.B.A, B.C.S and law programmes. Almost 100 students have graduated from the institute since I started. I am really proud of the huge achievements made at the institute during my time here.

Drawing on my experience and education in the Netherlands, I have trained many teachers on management principles, marketing and other topics that will help build their capacity. Educating our students in these topics will help Afghanistan to have modern jobs and development.

I am glad that I had the opportunity to contribute what I have learned and achieved in the Netherlands back to Afghanistan, and I encourage others like me to do the same."

For further information visit <http://afghanistan.iom.int> or contact mnaim@iom.int