

HOME IS THE BEST MEDICINE

The story of Ismael S., 42 years, a voluntary returnee who opened a pharmacy and received rent allowance for a new apartment under the IOM project “Integrated Reintegration in the Kurdistan Region, Iraq”



Ismael S. together with his wife in his newly opened pharmacy

“Through the help of IOM, I was able to open my own pharmacy in Iraq again and to build a new life here.”

Ismael S., 42 years

Ismael S. studied pharmaceuticals at the University of Mosul and, following his graduation, he opened a small pharmacy in the nearby town of Tel Keppe. At the time, he could provide his wife and their five children a comfortable life. However, as ISIS forcibly captured large areas of Mosul, including Tel Keppe, the family felt compelled to flee to relatives living in the area of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG).

With the hope for a better life, the father put up all his savings to bring his family to Germany via Turkey. After a one-month long journey and one year living in a transition accommodation, the family was granted their right of residency. There were positive developments such as the family participating in language and integration courses, and Ismael

working for a EUR 400 salary in a pharmacy. For personal reasons the pharmacist decided to return to Iraq alone in October 2015. He applied for return and reintegration assistance through IOM. Upon his arrival in the KRG, he went to the local IOM office in Dohuk to realize the reintegration business plan he had already drawn up with the help of IOM Iraq prior to his voluntary return.

With the support of EUR 4,000, the 42 year-old was able to purchase medication for his new pharmacy and an additional EUR 1,000 served him and his second wife as rent allowance. Currently, Ismael provides about 100 clients a day with medicine, this not only generates a secure means of living, but also improves the medical supply and thus the quality of life of the local community.