

## A GREAT SUCCESS

The story of Sherzad M., 24 years, a voluntary returnee who established a car wash service in Zakho, Dahuk, under the IOM project “Integrated Reintegration in the Kurdistan Region, Iraq”



Sherzad M. working in his car wash service

“Reuniting with family is the most beautiful thing that can happen in a person’s life.”

Sherzad M., 24 years

Sherzad M. and his family, consisting of his widowed mother and two older brothers, have always depended upon the daily wages of each other. When the time came to decide whether Sherzad would attend secondary school, it was not a matter of the young man’s ambition and talent, but the family’s lack of financial resources. With this sad realization, Sherzad had to start looking for a job to support his family. After temporarily working as a day-worker, the thought of leaving his home and looking for a better life in Europe seemed to be more and more appealing. Some of his friends decided to join him on his journey and they traveled to Turkey where the 14 day-trek to Germany began. The long march by foot stretched the physical and financial resources of the young men to the limit.

After three months in a reception center in Berlin, the wait and hopes for a residence permit came to a sudden end: “asylum request denied”. To avoid his deportation and considering his family’s request to return home, Sherzad decided to voluntarily return

back to Zakho. With the help of a return counselling center, the young Iraqi filed an application for reintegration assistance with the wish to build upon his experience in the car wash service industry.

After his return to Zakho in December 2015, the 24 year-old turned his business plan in reality with the help of reintegration experts of IOM in Dohuk. Within a month of his arrival, he received various items with a total value of EUR 4,000, including a high-pressure water blaster and a car vacuum cleaner. These items enabled him to open his own successful car wash business in Zakho.

As a result, Sherzad can provide for his family, has hired two additional employees and is now planning to open a second car wash service. Along with his positive attitude, his family and his motivation, the young man accomplished so much despite the exertions and deprivations he encountered. Sherzad managed to fulfill his dream of financial independence.