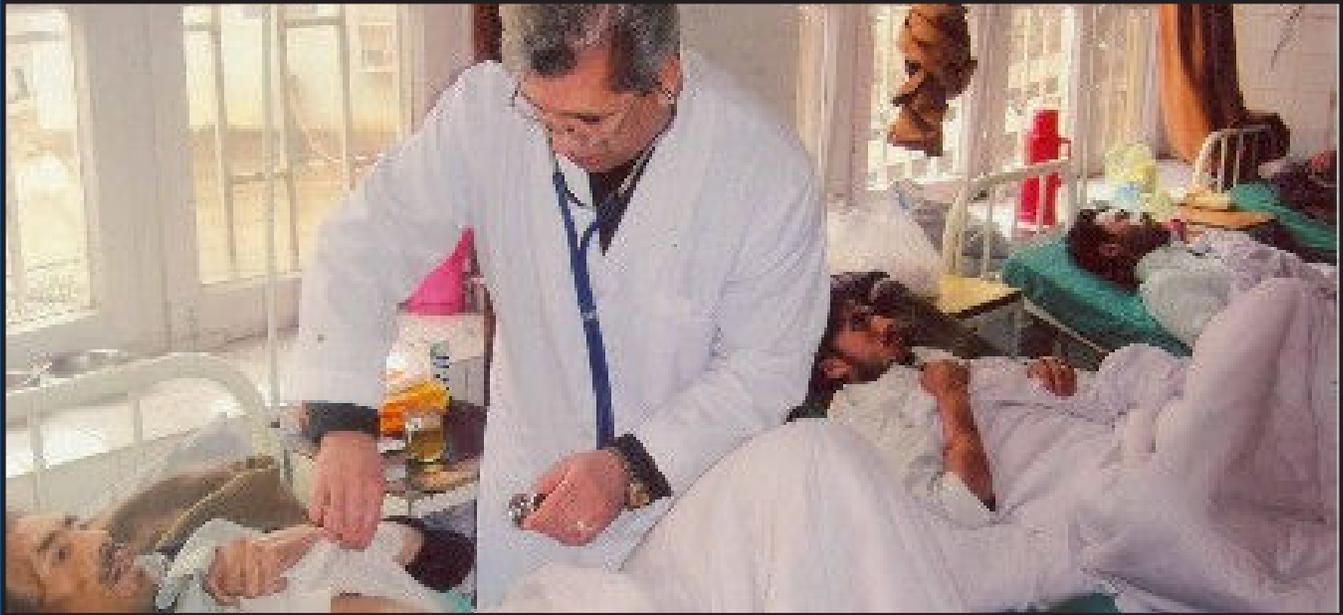




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IOM AFGHANISTAN

## RETURN OF QUALIFIED AFGHANS (RQA) PROGRAMME



### Overview

Maximizing the positive relationship between migration and development has long been a strategic focus of IOM's work. In an era of unprecedented levels of human mobility, the need to develop a fuller understanding of the linkages between migration and development is particularly urgent, as is the need to act in practical ways to enhance the benefits that migration can bring to development.

IOM approaches the linkages between migration and development from the perspective that international migration, if properly managed, can contribute to the growth and prosperity of countries of origin and of destination, as well as benefiting migrants themselves. It therefore tries to harness the development potential of migration for the benefit of both individual migrants and societies.

In response to continuous conflict, which has severely damaged Afghanistan's infrastructure, economy and productive capacities, IOM started its RQN activities in Afghanistan in 1999 through the contribution to the rehabilitation of social services through the

return of skilled Afghans (1999-2001). The Return of Qualified Afghan Nationals (RQAN) project facilitated the return of skilled Afghans from Pakistan with a focus on education and health sectors. Under this project the relocation assistance (transport and accommodation as well as a special support package for female returnees according to needs) and supplementary training was provided to over one hundred qualified Afghans, more than half of whom were women.

Following the formation of the Afghan Interim Administration and the declaration of its priorities for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of Afghanistan in the Tokyo conference in 2001, as well as the country's appeal

for international assistance to recover the expertise of qualified Afghans living abroad and to engage them in the reconstruction process, IOM started the "Return of Qualified Afghans" (RQA) programme in December 2001. The RQA programme focused on the return of qualified Afghan nationals<sup>1</sup> scattered worldwide, who are motivated to contribute their skills for the benefit of the reconstruction process on short or long term basis<sup>2</sup>.

Until now, IOM recruited and assisted the return more than 900 Afghan experts from 31 countries through the different RQA components, who work

<sup>1</sup> Under the auspices of RQA the term qualified was applied to those Afghans who have graduated from the universities and presented the programme with the documentary proof of their academic credentials.

<sup>2</sup> Permanent return was encouraged but was not obligatory.

in 33 Ministries, governmental institutions, NGOs, international organizations operating in Afghanistan.

**TEMPORARY RETURN OF QUALIFIED NATIONALS PROJECT (TRQN) – PHASE 2**

IOM provides services to qualified Afghan nationals in the Netherlands and enables them to make a temporary contribution to the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the infrastructure and public and private sectors of their home country. The Netherlands-funded project is demand-driven, based on priorities identified by the Afghan authorities and business leaders.

Following a needs assessment for reconstruction and selection of priority sectors in Afghanistan, the project will facilitate the temporary transfer of 60 - 70 qualified nationals from the Netherlands to Afghanistan for assignments of at least three months each.

The assignments are expected to transfer knowledge to local staff and contribute to sustainable development. The project is implemented from

July 2008 to June 2011.

This project builds on the achievements of the TRQN Phase I project, which facilitated the temporary transfer of 30 qualified nationals from the Netherlands to Afghanistan from April 2006 to June 2008.

**RETURN AND REINTEGRATION OF QUALIFIED AND SKILLED AFGHANS FROM IRAN (RARQSA)**

This project aims to contribute to the reconstruction of Afghanistan through capacity building in the country's administration, restoration and development of essential social services, such as education and health, construction and transport, rural development and agriculture, and commercial development through the return and reintegration of skilled or semi-skilled Afghans into the country's economic life thereby contributing to the country's capacity to receive and reintegrate a greater number of Afghan returnees in the long run.

The project will provide for the return of up to 300 qualified,



skilled or semi-skilled Afghans residing in Iran to their home country, with the aim of maximizing the number of durable returns.

During the implementation of RQA projects in past it was found out that Afghanistan needs also in skilled people to contribute to the development of private sector like construction or small business enterprises. There are a numerous Afghans who have sufficient experience in their fields but had no opportunity to receive any kind of certification.

The project is implemented from March till December 2010 and supported by the Government of Japan.

**BY NUMBERS (FROM 2002)**

1,307	Afghan experts have returned to Afghanistan with IOM's assistance
31	Number of countries where experts have been returned from
24	Number of Afghan ministries where experts have been placed
33	Number of government offices/ institutions where experts have been placed
75	Number of NGOs, international and other organizations where experts have been placed
145	Number of female experts that have returned
28	Number of provinces where experts have been placed

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