



TALENT BEYOND
—BOUNDARIES—
مواهب بلا حدود

Evaluation key insights

**Global evaluation into Labour Mobility
Pathways Pilot 2016-2019**

26 June 2020

talentbeyondboundaries.org





Talent Beyond Boundaries
Key Insights from Global Evaluation 2020

26 June 2020

Cover: Anas and Marah and their baby boy, at their new home in Niagara Falls where Anas is working as a Tool and Die Maker. Photo: Drew Sommerville, The Westbound Creative.

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Introduction

Talent Beyond Boundaries (TBB) is the first organization in the world dedicated to supporting international labour mobility of refugees and other forcibly displaced people. The organization's vision is a world where forcibly displaced people have equitable access to labour mobility and can use their skills and talents to move to secure futures.

Between 2016 and 2019 TBB conducted a series of pilot activities to test whether and under what conditions an employer-driven model of labour mobility can provide an additional and viable durable solution for refugees and other forcibly displaced people. In early 2020 TBB conducted a comprehensive evaluation of this pilot phase to inform TBB's future programming. The full evaluation findings are available on TBB's website.¹ This document summarizes the key insights.

Evaluation approach

The evaluation set out to answer the following key questions:

1. Were TBB's pilot phase objectives achieved?
 - Objective 1 (proof of concept): Demonstrate the viability of a labour mobility solution for refugees by testing preconditions and establishing baseline data and knowledge for the international community.
 - Objective 2 (barriers identification): Identify and document barriers preventing refugees and other forcibly displaced people from accessing international labour mobility opportunities and identify solutions to overcome these barriers.
 - Objective 3 (fostering enabling environment): Contribute to creating a global consensus that labour mobility is a viable and desirable complementary solution for refugees and other forcibly displaced people, in order to create the enabling environment required for scaling the solution.
 - Objective 4 (partnerships and replication): Identify and begin galvanizing other actors to support, replicate and build on TBB's work to help create a scalable labour mobility solution to displacement.
2. Who were the pilot beneficiaries and what impact (positive and/or negative) did the program have on them?

¹ Talent Beyond Boundaries, Global Evaluation 2020, June 2020. Available from: <https://www.talentbeyondboundaries.org/s/TBB-Global-Evaluation-2020-Final-External.pdf>

The evaluation involved a range of qualitative and quantitative research methods including a survey of 259 refugees involved in TBB's program in Jordan and Lebanon and 38 employer representatives in Australia, Canada and the UK; focus groups and surveys with 15 alumni of TBB's program; internal reflections with TBB staff and volunteers; semi-structured interviews with 25 key stakeholders regarding their observations of the program impact; analysis of publicly available reporting and research of TBB's program; and analysis of other monitoring data gathered during the course of the pilot.

Findings

Through its pilot TBB has demonstrated the viability of an employer-led labour mobility solution to displacement. The model designed by TBB has had a transformational impact on the lives of the refugees involved in the pilot phase and has also generated a range of complementary positive benefits for employers, destination country economies and refugees still living in displacement. This report outlines the findings of TBB's pilot phase, with results summarised in a box at the start of each section for easy reference.

Talent supply

TBB has produced empirical evidence through its Talent Catalog database and employer feedback which, together with evidence of post-secondary education rates in refugee communities around the world, gives a high degree of confidence that the talent supply is sufficient in such communities to support a large-scale labour mobility solution to displacement.

TBB has 18,880 refugees on its digital Talent Catalog,² to enable job matching with employers around the world.³ The Talent Catalog data is a reflection of a limited outreach effort in refugee populations across two countries - Lebanon and Jordan. The data therefore represents a small - yet promising - sampling of skills in the global refugee population.

Eighty-three percent of the registrants on the Talent Catalog are Syrian, reflecting the significant proportion of Syrian refugees in Jordan and Lebanon. The next most common nationalities are Palestinians (6%) followed by Iraqis (3%). There are also 295 Yemeni and 270 Sudanese registrants,

² Talent Beyond Boundaries, *Talent Catalog*. Available from: <https://tbbtalent.org/candidate-portal/>

³ As at 23 May 2020. The number of registrants was over 20,000 in December 2019 but after TBB decided to rewrite the Talent Catalog database and remove duplicate and incomplete entries this number has reduced.

and 33 stateless people registered. Over a third of the registrants on the Talent Catalog have completed a Bachelor’s, Master’s, or Doctoral degree. In addition, approximately 2,000 registrants (13%) have incomplete degrees. Eighty-four percent of registrants indicate they have an intermediate level or higher in English.

There are over 150 occupations represented on the Talent Catalog, and there is significant overlap between these occupations and talent gaps around the world. For example, 7 of the top 10 occupations indicated in the Talent Catalog are professions that are in-demand globally, according to Manpower’s global 2019 Talent Shortage Survey (see table below).⁴

Table 1: Top 10 occupations indicated in the Talent Catalog

| *Professions in-demand globally according to ManPower data highlighted in blue | | |
|--|--|------------------------|
| # | Occupation | # of Registrants on TC |
| 1 | Skilled Industrial & Construction Tradesperson | 2399 |
| 2 | Educator (Teacher, Professor) | 1405 |
| 3 | Engineer (Civil, Mechanical, Electrical, Electronic, Petroleum, Biomedical, Chemical, Other) | 1355 |
| 4 | Information Technology Professional | 934 |
| 5 | Healthcare Professional (Pharmacists, Nurses, Medical Doctors, Dentists, Medical Assistants, Physical Therapists, Dentistry Professionals, Nutritionists, Other) | 920 |
| 6 | Business Professional (Business owner, HR professional, Administrative professional) | 861 |
| 7 | Sales & Marketing Professional | 742 |
| 8 | Accountant / Finance Professional | 668 |
| 9 | Cook or Baker | 665 |
| 10 | Driving and logistics | 330 |

⁴ Manpower Group, The Talent Shortage. 2019. Available from: <https://go.manpowergroup.com/talent-shortage>

Eighty-four percent of the Talent Catalog registrants are men and 15% are women. One percent have not specified their gender.⁵ This reflects a range of factors that constrain the ability of refugee women in Jordan and Lebanon to seek work internationally, including discrimination and cultural factors such as women's caring responsibilities.

Recognizing that the Talent Catalog is descriptive of a subset of the refugee population and not predictive, during the pilot period TBB conducted analysis of the potential extent of talent in refugee populations around the world, applying post-secondary education rates as a proxy measure to assess the number of refugees with skills that would qualify them for an economic visa. As a result of this research TBB estimates there are at least 600,000 eligible refugee candidates for a labour mobility solution, in addition to their family members.⁶ This is a very conservative estimate as it did not capture the 4.5 million people displaced from Venezuela, where nearly 40 percent of the population over 25 has some tertiary education.⁷

TBB can build on the successes of its pilot phase by expanding candidate outreach into new refugee communities and increasing outreach to talented refugee women.

Employer demand

TBB identified strong employer demand for international refugee talent during the pilot phase, and employers reported a strong positive response to hiring refugees through the program. Employers are motivated to participate in order to fill skills gaps, increase diversity and make a contribution to solving global challenges.

Our labour shortages are critical and although we will always be hiring local, there are currently not enough qualified candidates now or in the foreseeable future to fill the positions we have open. We are working on parallel paths, local and global, to secure more qualified candidates.

Lisa M Smith, CEO, Glen Haven Manor⁸

⁵ Talent Catalog analytics data extracted 15 May 2020. Note - 245 respondents were undefined.

⁶ TBB, *The Promise of Labour Mobility: How skills can be a passport out of displacement for refugees*. December 2019. Available from: <https://talentbeyondboundaries.org/s/TBBGRFReport2019.pdf>

⁷ World Bank data, <https://www.ceicdata.com/en/venezuela/education-statistics?page=2> cited in TBB, as above, p. 27.

⁸ The Advocate, Glen Haven Committed to Parallel Paths of hiring local and global. February 2020. Available from: <https://pictouadvocate.com/2020/02/20/glen-haven-committed-to-parallel-paths-of-hiring-local-and-global/>

TBB engaged actively with 117 employers during the pilot period. Twenty-six employers (more than one in five) have so far made offers of employment to TBB’s candidates in Australia, Canada and the UK, including 8 employers who have made offers to more than one candidate (ranging from 2 to 9 job offers per employer).⁹ Employers that have hired represent a wide range of industries and include large and very large businesses as well as small to medium-sized businesses (SMEs).

Table 2: Recruited candidates 2017-2019

| Profession | Number of Offers | Hiring Companies |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|--|
| Nurse | 6 | Closing the Gap Healthcare (CA) Glen Haven Manor (CA) VHA Home HealthCare (CA) |
| Physiotherapist | 2 | Princes Court Homes (AU) |
| IT Professional / Software Engineer | 6 | Bonfire (CA) Deloitte (AU) IRESS (AU, UK) Minderoo (AU) |
| Chef | 2 | Paramount Fine Foods (CA) Wimmera Meats (AU) |
| Butcher | 3 | Harvey Beef (AU) |
| Civil Engineer | 1 | Deluxium (AU) |
| Mechanical Engineer | 11 | Ceramic Oxide Fabricators (AU) John Holland (AU) Ice River Springs (CA) |
| Executive Assistant | 1 | EY (AU) |
| Business Analyst | 1 | Accenture (AU) |
| Legal Assistant | 1 | Maurice Blackburn (AU) |
| Tool & Die Maker | 1 | Davert Tools (CA) |
| Client IT Support Analyst | 2 | Shopify (CA) |
| Carpenter | 1 | Emanuele Furniture Design (CA) |

⁹TBB monitoring protocol, cited 1 May 2020.

As part of this evaluation TBB surveyed 38 representatives of businesses involved in the program. Sixty-three percent of respondents said they were motivated to engage with TBB as a way of filling skills gaps, but also saw a range of other benefits from hiring refugees (see table 3 below).

Table 3: Primary reasons for considering hiring refugees from abroad through Talent Beyond Boundaries

| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES | |
|--|-----------|----|
| Filling skills shortage that cannot be filled locally | 63% | 24 |
| Fulfilling corporate social responsibility and purpose goals | 47% | 18 |
| Creating a talent pipeline to meet future skills needs | 45% | 17 |
| Meeting diversity and inclusion goals | 34% | 13 |
| A personal passion of yours | 29% | 11 |
| Advancing regional economic development | 13% | 5 |
| Other (please specify) | 8% | 3 |
| Total Respondents: 38 | | |

These answers indicate there is a clear business case driving employer participation in supporting refugee labour mobility - rather than the program being seen as purely humanitarian. This is an important finding, given demand is more likely to scale where the business case for employer participation is clear.

Just over 50% of the 38 employer representatives surveyed for this evaluation felt that the candidates provided by TBB “exceeded their expectations” and another 31% felt the candidates “met their expectations” in terms of skills and qualifications.¹⁰ Only two respondents felt the candidates were below or far below their expectations and three respondents were unsure.

Fifty-nine percent of employers surveyed said they are either extremely or very likely to recruit again through TBB in future, and 35% were somewhat likely to recruit again. Only 1 respondent said they were not so likely to recruit again.¹¹ Ninety-three percent of employers surveyed said they were either “extremely likely” or “very likely” to recommend TBB’s program to other employers, with only 7% saying they were “somewhat likely” and no employers responded that they wouldn’t recommend the program. This indicates employer participation in the program is likely to fuel growth in employer demand for hiring in this way (including through repeat hiring as well as

¹⁰ TBB Employer feedback survey, May 2020

¹¹ Employer respondent from Canada, who highlighted “Although the senior leadership team feels good about recruiting through TBB, it is a slower recruitment process”. This feedback underscores the importance of addressing visa processing timelines identified as barriers in the pilot phase which TBB has designed solutions for. TBB employer feedback survey, May 2020.

employer recommendations to other employers). Indeed, a number of participating businesses are actively promoting TBB hiring through industry media.¹²

Proof of concept

Through the pilot phase TBB developed a robust recruitment and mobility model to facilitate international employment and mobility pathways for skilled refugees and their families. This model has delivered durable solutions, with refugee candidates in Jordan and Lebanon securing international job opportunities and relocating to build new lives in Australia, Canada and the UK during the pilot phase.

TBB took it from an idea and made it practical for jurisdictions, for employers like ours to be able to think about how you would scale up. Nobody else was really doing it in a comprehensive way until TBB came and did that. I think more people are thinking in that way now, but again I think that's credit to TBB in a lot of ways.

Ben Rempel¹³

In order to prove the preconditions for a labour mobility solution were met, TBB aimed to develop a model of labour mobility and to test the model by assisting a small number of candidates to secure international employment and relocate during the pilot period with their families. The model designed by TBB (see table 4 below) brings together the two strands of supply (talented refugees and other forcibly displaced people) and demand (employers) and facilitates access of both parties to regular migration channels in order to bring about two main outcomes: a new talented employee for an employer; and a durable solution for the refugee and their family.

In applying this model since 2017 TBB has:

- Assisted 750 skilled refugee candidates in Jordan and Lebanon to compete for international jobs by providing professional CVs, referrals to English language resources and courses, career coaching and assistance preparing job ready candidates for recruitment processes with employers abroad.
- Assisted 39 candidates to secure international job offers with employers in Australia (16), Canada (22), and the United Kingdom (1) in a diverse range of fields including healthcare,

¹² Andrew Walsh, Iress CEO, "Tackling skills shortages by changing lives", *Australian Banking and Finance*, March 2020. Available from:

<https://www.rfigroup.com/australian-banking-and-finance/news/tackling-skills-shortages-changing-lives>

¹³ Key informant interview with Ben Rempel, Assistant Deputy Minister, Manitoba Immigration Ministry. 24 April 2020.

engineering, IT, professional services, and a range of skilled trades (butchers, chefs, carpenters etc).

- Facilitated a migration solution for 127 people once all candidates with job offers and their family members have moved. This includes: 42 men and 23 boys; and 31 women and 31 girls (or 49% women and girls; 51% men and boys).
- Assisted 39 refugees to relocate to their new country through this labour mobility model (with 88 more awaiting visas or travel approvals).

In addition, TBB has worked with RefugePoint to start trialing labour mobility for refugees in Kenya, as part of Canada’s Economic Mobility Pathways Project (EMPP). So far RefugePoint has assisted 13 candidates to accept job offers through the EMPP.

Table 4: TBB recruitment and mobility model

| Demand side | Supply side |
|--|--|
| <p>Pitching/corporate outreach A “sales” process whereby TBB or partner explains the program to an employer, costs involved (for visa fees etc) and timeframes, and secures commitment to initiate a recruitment process for a particular role/s.</p> | <p>Candidate outreach Process of outreach to encourage candidates to sign up to the Talent Catalog - using various communication, in-person and referral channels.</p> |
| <p>CV review The employer shortlists from a list of CVs provided by TBB.</p> | <p>Candidate selection TBB identifies suitable candidates from the Talent Catalog on the basis of a specific role, and interviews them to ensure program and visa eligibility and skill alignment before providing to the employer.</p> |
| <p>Interview/skills validation The employer assesses and selects the candidate/s they would like to hire.</p> | <p>Interview preparation TBB assists shortlisted candidates to prepare for interviews or skills tests including providing them access to mock interviewers for soft skills or technical skills.</p> |
| <p>Job offer The employer issues the job offer. TBB or partner reviews against employment laws and clarifies the costs employers will contribute for relocation; TBB provides the offer and information to the candidate.</p> | <p>Informed decision-making TBB conducts an informed decision-making session with the candidate and discusses arrangements for any costs the candidate may need to pay (eg. if the candidate has no access to funds, a loan can be arranged by TBB or third party). Candidate accepts or rejects the offer.</p> |

| | |
|---|---|
| Visa preparation and lodgment | |
| Employer and candidate are connected with an immigration advisor/lawyer and TBB supports both parties as they complete and lodge an application, with employer as sponsor. TBB liaises with government on refugee-specific mobility barriers as needed. | |
| Settlement planning | |
| TBB or destination settlement partner works with the employer and candidate to plan arrangements for their relocation and settlement while waiting for a visa decision. | |
| Visa decision | |
| Government authorities issue visa decision to immigration lawyer. Decision is communicated to all parties. | |
| Relocation arrangements | |
| Candidate, employer and community partners at the destination end coordinate with TBB's assistance to arrange flights, arrival and initial orientation. | |
| Welcome and onboarding | Arrival and orientation |
| Employer welcomes their new employee and family and initiates induction and onboarding process for new employee. | Candidate and family are collected from airport and taken to accommodation and given initial welcome/orientation support by local actors. |
| Post-placement monitoring | Settlement monitoring |
| TBB or local partners check in with employer and employee to ensure work is going well and put in place remedial measures if required. | TBB or local partners monitor how candidates and their family members are and put in place remedial measures if additional support is required. |
| Durable solution | Employment success |
| Candidate and their family have achieved permanent resident status and stability as a result of the program. | Employer has gained a valuable employee, who has passed probation. |

Impact on program beneficiaries

TBB's program has had a demonstrably positive impact on candidates involved by increasing their hope, confidence and motivation to build skills and reducing their likelihood of taking dangerous journeys out of desperation. The program's impact has been most profound for those candidates who secured jobs and have moved with their families to Australia, Canada and the UK (the TBB Alumni). Employers who have gained employees through the program also report significant benefits and TBB has documented economic benefits to both source and destination countries.

Candidates

In order to understand the impact of the program on candidates TBB designed a feedback survey which was sent to 750 targeted registrants on the Talent Catalog based in Jordan and Lebanon in May 2020. Registrants targeted had engaged directly with TBB services (such as being referred to English language support or being involved in a recruitment process). Within five days TBB had received 259 responses, meeting TBB's target response rate of 35%, indicating a high degree of confidence the results are representative of the sample.¹⁴

When asked about their various motivations for registering with TBB more than three quarters of respondents said because they do not have access to a durable solution in their host country (78%). The next highest response was creating a better life for their family members (69%); followed by finding employment that matches their skills (62%) and being able to work legally (59%). Fifty-eight percent of respondents want to be able to access another citizenship; and 43% said their motivation was primarily seeking international protection.

Engagement with TBB services

In addition to working with candidates in relation to specific job opportunities, TBB provides candidates with referrals to a range of services to help them improve their job readiness:

- **English language:** TBB provides referrals to free online English language courses (via Coursera, Really English and other providers) and English resources. 64% of registrants are using the online services at least once a week, 21% using them monthly and 15% not using them at all. Half of the respondents noted that the services offered by TBB have been either very or extremely beneficial to improving their English language skills; 39% say they have been somewhat beneficial.
- **Mock interview support:** TBB arranges mock interviews for all candidates in active recruitment processes, facilitated by 60 professional volunteers from diverse professional backgrounds across Australia, Canada, and the US. Eighty-six percent of respondents had participated in a mock interview and 63% said they used feedback from the mock interviews to help make them more employable internationally.

¹⁴ This equates to a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5% when applied to the population sample of 750 targeted registrants. TBB used Survey Monkey's sample size calculator (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/mp/sample-size-calculator/>) and margin of error calculator (<https://www.surveymonkey.com/mp/margin-of-error-calculator/>) to determine confidence level and margin of error.

- **Employer interviews:** Forty-seven beneficiaries responded that they have participated in a TBB facilitated interview or interviews with an employer abroad. Ninety-seven percent of respondents felt either “very” or “extremely prepared” for their interview thanks to preparation materials provided (including mock interview support). Overall, 75% found their employer interview very or extremely positive.

The candidate survey identified a number of benefits of TBB’s program on candidates who have not (yet) relocated or secured a job offer.

Motivation to maintain skills

Candidates noted their engagement with TBB has inspired them to continue investing in their skills. Eighty-three percent of respondents said their engagement with TBB has motivated them to work harder to improve their English skills and 77% feel an increased motivation to keep skills up to date or improve skills.

When I registered in the program I felt very motivated to improve my skills in the field of Mechatronics Engineering.

TBB has stimulated my efforts to further gain certification through enrollment in continuous training programs that fall in the domain of my work (welding industry and welding inspection). TBB has always explained the importance of international certification and continuous development to get better chances in working in first world countries.¹⁵

Several TBB candidates have been rewarded for improving their skills over the course of their engagement with TBB. For example, Mohammed Hakmi, a software engineer who was the first candidate to secure a job through TBB in Canada, was unsuccessful in several interviews with companies before he was ultimately successful with tech firm Bonfire. These initial setbacks prompted Mohammed to upskill in an area he realized global tech firms would be looking at. This was one of the key skill areas that impressed Bonfire enough to offer Mohammed a job.

Perceived alternative to irregular migration

Candidates were asked if they had ever attempted or considered attempting irregular migration in order to build a new life in a stable country (eg. travelling to Europe by boat). Thirty-six percent said they had considered it, and 10% had already attempted it. Fifty-one percent said they would never consider this option, and the remaining 3% of respondents had a range of answers. When

¹⁵ Respondents to TBB candidate survey, May 2020.

asked whether their engagement with TBB had influenced whether they would consider attempting an irregular migration journey, 48% said they were less likely to consider an irregular journey now, and 10% didn't know. Thirty-six percent were neutral on the question and 6% felt they were more likely to take an irregular migration journey now.

Participating with TBB has greatly impacted my life, as I had previously decided to travel illegally and decided to send my wife and children to Syria, but I changed my mind since registering with TBB.

TBB organization gave me hope and motivation to reach my goals. So that I am less likely to consider an irregular migration journey now.¹⁶

Hope

Many candidates spoke of a renewed sense of hope and optimism in being able to have a secure and stable future through pursuing labour migration and/or legal employment.

A light of hope in the darkness that we live in, and I felt that it was possible to achieve something that I deserve.

Optimism and hope for building a better future for me and my family in a country that respects human rights.¹⁷

Some respondents, however, raised concerns that the hope they had felt about the program has dwindled over time, underscoring the importance of managing candidate expectations about securing a solution through the program.

Confidence and self-worth

Many candidates noted increased confidence not only that they can compete and participate in international labour markets, but that they have the skills and preparation to compete, either with TBB's support or independently.

I now have much more confidence in myself in getting a job opportunity in Canada and Australia.

My self-confidence has grown and I now believe that I can get an international work opportunity and develop professionally.¹⁸

¹⁶ Respondents to TBB candidate survey, May 2020.

¹⁷ Respondents to TBB candidate survey, May 2020.

¹⁸ As above.

Some candidates rejected for international opportunities noted in contrast that the experience left them feeling doubtful of their capabilities. This feedback highlights the importance of employers providing constructive feedback to unsuccessful candidates.

The TBB Alumni

When I was living in Jordan I was looking for any opportunity to get out from that situation that I lived in so I knocked many doors, suddenly I saw your advertisement on Facebook and I hoped that it will be real. So I just applied ... and it worked, and you changed my life.

TBB Alumni focus group¹⁹

Moving to Canada was the best thing that happened to my life. My rights, my duties, everything is perfect.

TBB Alumni survey respondent

The impact of TBB's program is most obviously felt by the candidates who have been successful in securing jobs on their own merits and relocating with their families to rebuild their lives. TBB and its partners are in frequent contact with TBB's alumni after they relocate to a destination country and begin work, and TBB conducts surveys at regular intervals with the TBB alumni to monitor program impact on their lives. So far pre-departure surveys have been conducted with 15 alumni; ten have been conducted at the six-month post-arrival mark, and five have been conducted at the one-year mark.²⁰ The results from these surveys show strong positive benefits of the program.

Quality of life

*We are all together as a family. I'm not worried about paying for school. Also we have access to parks - spaces for kids everywhere and activities for kids. We can go everywhere - we feel safe. And able to move. We can afford the life here.*²¹

Six months after arriving in their new destination country all alumni surveyed highlighted their quality of life is above their quality of life before, with 60% saying it is far above. All alumni also agreed with the statement "I feel welcome in my community" at the six-month mark, with 80% saying they "strongly agreed" with this statement. All alumni had positive reports of their experience with healthcare systems and education for their children.

¹⁹ TBB Alumni focus group, 26 April 2020.

²⁰ TBB alumni experience survey, results at 1 May 2020.

²¹ TBB alumni experience survey respondent - 6 months

Safety and rights

Safety was consistently highlighted as a positive outcome for alumni at the six-month mark. No alumni had experienced any incidents since arriving that made them feel unsafe. Alumni also highlighted the sense of security they had achieved by being able to work legally and without fear of being discovered working without a permit:

*One of the main things that you guys made possible is actually making us working in a legal way ... I'm actually able to work and be actually proud to say I'm from Syria.*²²

Experience at work

All candidates surveyed said they were satisfied with their employment experience, with 50% saying they were very satisfied at the 6-month mark. All were confident their jobs were secure, with 90% of candidates saying they were either very or extremely confident. Several alumni highlighted how they are enjoying their new roles and learning new things:

Working on site is my favorite thing. For me this is a great experience to see things in real life.

The client facing aspect. I enjoy being able to sit in workshops with the client and listen to their problems and try to figure out a solution.

My team is working²³ on the latest technologies. That means my knowledge is updated regularly.

Several candidates also highlighted the positive work culture and work/life balance they were enjoying. When asked to describe any challenges they may be facing at work at the 6-month survey mark, universally candidates highlighted the challenge of working in English, understanding new accents and colloquialisms. Promisingly, by the 1-year survey candidates appear to have significantly improved and are less worried about communication issues.

All TBB alumni surveyed six months after their arrival told TBB they were satisfied with the support provided by employers in assisting them to settle in their new country and 90% were “very

²² TBB alumni focus group, 22 April 2020.

²³ TBB alumni experience survey, results at 1 May 2020, 6-month responses.

satisfied".²⁴ Employers were acknowledged for providing free initial accommodation, assistance with home search, orientation services and cash allowances/transition payments.²⁵

Financial situation

*All the charity organizations give you money and support you financially but none of them can support you forever. The only thing can support you forever is to having a way to earn money ... This one which TBB provides to their candidates.*²⁶

The income of alumni since relocating has increased by an average of 550% to an average annual salary of US\$41,825. For several candidates who had no source of income prior to relocation, the percent change in income is more drastic, reaching up to 3901%. Salaries vary widely depending on industry and role. Ninety percent of candidates working at the 6-month mark said their income is enough or more than enough for the daily necessities of life, but one candidate said his income was too low. Some remarked how excited they were to be saving.

*I am saving money - for the first time in my life I'm able to save money. I want to have enough money by the time I become [a] Permanent Resident that I may be able to purchase a house.*²⁷

Building new lives

As TBB alumni have started to celebrate their one-year anniversaries survey results show how settled they have become. Many have had significant life events – one is now married to an Australian citizen, another has had a baby born an Australian citizen - and many feel a greater sense of confidence speaking English and mastery in their work. Candidates have taken up new hobbies like surfing, curling and video editing, and have embraced new foods and culture, arts and entertainment. These experiences show just how enormous the impact of this program is at an individual level for those involved.

*No obstacles now. Everything is good. I can do anything. I can address anything. I'm very comfortable with my new situation.*²⁸

²⁴ As above, based on first 10 candidates who have reached 6-month mark

²⁵ Data from TBB Alumni feedback survey at 6 month interval

²⁶ TBB Alumni focus group, 22 April 2020.

²⁷ TBB alumni survey respondent at 1-year mark

²⁸ TBB alumni survey respondent at 6-month mark

Employers

TBB has received strong positive feedback from employers about the benefits of hiring through this program. Seventy-three percent of the 38 employers surveyed for this evaluation highlighted “greater diversity” and an “opportunity to achieve social impact and gain greater understanding of refugee issues” as major benefits. Employers also highlighted the benefits of new skills to their companies.

*He has become one of our best employees, he is attentive, skilled, wants to do more, intelligent and learns quickly. He has a great attitude towards life in general.*²⁹

*We've had two high-quality engineers to join us - and we absolutely celebrate when that happens. We have a real focus on making sure that we both attract and retain the best talent that we can get our hands on.*³⁰

In addition to acknowledging the skills refugees have contributed to their businesses, many employers also highlighted the resilience of people who have experienced displacement as an advantage. For example, one respondent explained: “Refugees’ different and often challenging life experience develops skills and character that complement their technical skills”. Another said: “Beyond the skillset/core competencies I feel refugees can bring diversity of thought, grit, tenacity, and perspective to the team”.³¹

When asked if there had been any negative consequences as a result of hiring through TBB's program all respondents answered “no”.³²

Economic benefits

While labour mobility clearly benefits refugees and their families and employers, there are also a range of flow-on economic beneficiaries from this model that should be highlighted.

Remittance flows to refugee hosting countries

According to candidate survey data 60% of TBB candidates are sending remittances to their families who live abroad in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria or elsewhere at the 6-month mark. At their current monthly rates, candidates who are remitting funds will send an average of US\$1,820 in

²⁹ Respondent to TBB employer survey, Canada, May 2020.

³⁰ Andrew Walsh, CEO of Iress, interviewed for TBB short film *Connecting skilled refugees with global employers*, 20 January 2019, available from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hLOv59A1BFY&t=3s>.

³¹ TBB Employer feedback survey, May 2020

³² TBB employer feedback survey, May 2020.

remittances over the course of their first year in destination countries. This is likely to be a significant under-estimation of their future annual rate, given candidates in the first year of their arrival in a new country face significant expenses relating to setting up new homes and potentially repaying loans.

Skills lift effect

Many candidates have talked about how their engagement with TBB in general (including pre-departure) and their work experience (post-arrival) has helped motivate them and give them exposure to knowledge to improve their technical and soft skills (see candidate section above). While these skills are obviously of benefit to the candidates themselves, and to employers in destination countries, they are also a potential benefit in rebuilding conflict-affected countries. Several TBB candidates have indicated an intention or preference to return to their country of origin when it is safe to do so. TBB is monitoring these intentions and actions through surveys in order to assess the flow of benefits of this labour mobility solution on economies and societies recovering from war.

Economic benefits to destination countries

As a collective, the 15 candidates who have relocated through TBB's program earn together an approximate annual US\$627,000 in salary. The average age of the candidates who have relocated to date is 31. Assuming an approximate retirement age of 65, if all work at a constant salary, the fifteen candidates will generate an approximate US\$21.3 million to spend in destination country economies in their lifetimes. Of course, it is likely the candidates will earn much more than this due to wage rises, and household incomes will rise as spouses too enter the workforce.

All candidates are paying income tax in accordance with destination country regulations. On average, the 15 candidates who have moved through TBB's program are paying 25.15% income taxes to their destination countries. Candidates have paid or will pay on average US\$11,372 in income taxes in their first full financial year in their destination countries. These calculations do not include other forms of taxation, such as sales taxes.

Unlocking immigration pathways

Through the pilot phase TBB demonstrated that many of the barriers to labour mobility - including information, policy, operational and financial barriers - can be efficiently overcome without undermining the integrity of migration systems. Overcoming barriers requires leadership from governments, employers and the community sector.

Through the pilot phase TBB deliberately tested a range of skilled visa pathways including both temporary and permanent skilled visas.³³ TBB initially focused on visa pathways to Australia and Canada, given both countries' sizable economic immigration programs and the willingness of government authorities to explore labour mobility pilots, and later began exploring the UK.

Overcoming policy and operational barriers

There are a multitude of policy and operational barriers that prevent refugees from accessing skilled visa pathways - including documentation and passport requirements, recent work experience requirements (which refugees often cannot meet due to work rights restrictions in countries of first asylum), fees and settlement funds requirements, and requirements that temporary visa applicants must have a country to return to. Every destination country's immigration system is unique and undergoing constant evolution, and it became clear through the pilot that immigration lawyers or registered migration agents are crucial to advise employers and candidates on visa pathway options and barriers.

To overcome specific immigration pathway barriers TBB established relationships with the governments of Australia and Canada:

- TBB became the lead partner in Canada's first refugee labour mobility pilot, the Economic Mobility Pathways Project (EMPP), launched in April 2018.³⁴ The EMPP involves five provincial and territorial governments (Manitoba, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Ontario, and Yukon) as well as TBB partner organization RefugePoint in Kenya and

³³ TBB has also utilised a limited number of humanitarian visas in Australia under a temporary arrangement with the government for candidates who could not access skilled visas due to administrative barriers. In future TBB will utilise skilled visas exclusively as part of Australia's Skilled Refugee Pilot.

³⁴ Government of Canada and UNHCR, The Economic Mobility Pathways Project – Policy Principles and Lessons Learned: A Canadian Perspective on Complementary Pathways for Admission, June 2019. Available from:

<https://www.unhcr.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/The-Economic-Mobility-Pathways-Project-Policy-Principles-and-Lessons-Learned-June-2019.pdf>

the UNHCR. Through the EMPP TBB has been able to work with Canadian federal and provincial governments to overcome barriers, such as allowing candidates to access economic immigration pathways using expired passports and other alternative forms of identification and travel documentation - solutions that can extend to thousands of future refugee applicants.

- As a result of the pilot phase TBB has also secured a commitment from the Australian government to roll out a two-year Skilled Refugee Pilot to “offer skilled employment in Australia to up to 100 skilled refugees ... within our existing, permanent skilled visa framework”.³⁵ TBB has been working with the Department of Home Affairs on the details of the scheme, which will be achieved through the creation of a Labour Agreement between Australia and TBB which gives businesses the ability to sponsor candidates identified by TBB for a number of skilled visas under more flexible arrangements that give candidates certain concessions (eg. in relation to skills documentation and English language test requirements). This program gives TBB significantly increased scope to support refugees to access skilled visa pathways to Australia.

TBB’s experience piloting in Australia and Canada has informed the organisation's approach in the UK, where TBB is currently using existing visa pathways and working with partners to advocate for the creation of a Displaced Talent Visa stream within the UK’s Tier 2 skilled immigration program.

Overcoming informational barriers

Refugees often have low or no awareness that they could qualify for economic immigration. According to TBB pre-departure surveys, just 20% of candidates who have moved with TBB had attempted to apply for international employment prior to working with TBB.³⁶ Employers generally are also unaware of the talent present in refugee populations and have had limited ability to independently access it. There is a need to support the availability of data on refugee skills and qualifications and provide employers with the means to recruit from this talent pool on an ongoing basis. TBB’s creation of the Talent Catalog and role providing candidates with information about labour mobility (via social media, webinars and in-person session) has demonstrably contributed to overcoming this barrier.

³⁵Australian Government, Address to the Menzies Research Centre, Melbourne, 7 February 2020. Available from:

<https://minister.homeaffairs.gov.au/davidcoleman/Pages/address-menzies-research-centre-20200207.aspx>

³⁶ Analysis of 15 TBB pre-departure surveys, May 2020.

Overcoming financial barriers

There are significant costs involved in migrating internationally for work - in the form of visa fees, legal fees, language and skills assessment fees, costs of securing documents and document translation, medical screening costs, airfares, exit fees and costs associated with arrival and settlement (eg. renting accommodation and buying furniture). TBB believes these costs can be shared among each of the beneficiaries of the labour mobility outcome - namely: the candidate themselves, their employer, and governments (particularly the receiving government who benefits from the workers' economic contribution and taxation revenue).

TBB sought to use the pilot phase to test the willingness and capacity of employers and candidates to contribute to these costs. Several larger employers expended as much as US\$20,000 or more assisting candidates to relocate, whereas smaller employers, particularly SMEs without existing international recruitment programs, committed as little as US\$3,545 towards the cost of recruitment and relocation.³⁷ Under these circumstances TBB (backed by philanthropy) bridged the gap by providing funding and securing in-kind support to offset candidate costs (for example, by partnering with Miles4Migrants, a non-profit that uses donated frequent flyer miles to provide flights for refugees to relocate).

In the later stages of its pilot project, TBB began notifying candidates at the outset of their engagement with TBB that they would be responsible for covering any costs associated with their migration that are not covered by employers. When candidates have lacked sufficient funds to cover these costs (as is frequently the case given their difficult financial circumstances), TBB has paid for expenses on the basis that candidates repay TBB once they arrive at their destination, thereby overcoming this financial barrier. TBB does not charge interest and has guaranteed that candidates will not be responsible for repaying these loans in the event of an unsuccessful visa application. Of the small number of candidates who have received loans from TBB and have been in their destination countries for over one year, all have repaid in full within the first six months.

Focus groups with successful candidates undertaken as part of this evaluation indicate candidates are willing to contribute to the costs of immigration either through savings or loans under appropriate conditions:

³⁷ Costs documented by TBB based on expenses reported by employers and candidates.

It's a good idea to get the candidate involved with the financial aspect. The employer might not be able to cover everything ... If the candidate already is earning an income, then the candidate can also give back to TBB.

Some people pay a lot of money, sometimes over \$10,000 to go illegally to Europe, so offering them a financial alternative to go legally can be a good idea.

It's a good approach. The concern is at what point the candidate is going to be expected to pay back, how much it is, and how long they would have to pay it back. It's a good idea that candidates can contribute back.³⁸

Building global consensus

Since 2015, TBB has contributed to building significant momentum behind labour mobility as a viable and desirable complementary pathway for refugees and solution for forcibly displaced people - to the point that this solution is firmly accepted and enshrined in the Global Compact on Refugees and the Global Compact on Migration. TBB contributed to embedding language in these international agreements which provide strong incentives for states, international and civil society actors to support labour mobility initiatives for displaced people.

TBB has been instrumental in raising the profile of labour mobility as a durable solution.

Durable Solutions Platform³⁹

TBB has sought to build an enabling environment during the pilot phase for labour mobility by pursuing change on two fronts: encouraging actors in the global *refugee system* to accept a solution for refugees based on their skills; and encouraging actors in the global *migration system* to embrace forcibly displaced people as legitimate beneficiaries of regular skilled migration. From the outset TBB recognized the importance of embedding these concepts into international standards and agreements, which have long-term effects on international and state policy, funding programs and civil society priorities.

³⁸ Responses during TBB Alumni focus groups on 22 April 2020 and 26 April 2020.

³⁹ Access to Resettlement and Complementary Pathways for Syrian Refugees, The Durable Solutions Platform, June 2018, p. 20-21, <https://drc.ngo/media/4676369/dsp-resettlement2.pdf>

Global Compact on Refugees

The Global Compact on Refugees, affirmed by the UN General Assembly in December 2018, is the most significant inter-governmentally negotiated agreement at a global scale on the management of refugees in decades. The GCR has set the global agenda for addressing the challenge of displacement in the decades ahead. Signatory states are expected to align their refugee policies and programs with the principles stated in the Compact.

Prior to TBB's engagement in the drafting process, labour mobility was not highlighted as a priority solution to be pursued. TBB fed into consultations in the drafting process of the GCR and provided text edits to the drafters, which were included in the final Compact. TBB contributed to successful advocacy for the following language to be adopted as part of the GCR (see emphasised text):

- *Public-private partnerships will be explored*, in full respect of the humanitarian principles, including: possible new institutional arrangements and methodologies for the creation of commercial business venture conditions and financial/business instruments; *to support refugee and host community employment and labour mobility*; and to enable greater opportunities for private sector investment...⁴⁰
- Other contributions in terms of complementary pathways could include humanitarian visas, humanitarian corridors and other humanitarian admission programmes; educational opportunities for refugees (including women and girls) through grant of scholarships and student visas, including through partnerships between governments and academic institutions; *and labour mobility opportunities for refugees, including through the identification of refugees with skills that are needed in third countries.*⁴¹

Flowing from the GCR, TBB participated in a UNHCR-led multi-stakeholder process to develop a Three-Year Strategy on Resettlement and Complementary Pathways (2019-2021) to guide implementation of the Compact. TBB attended several consultations and provided text edits to the strategy. The 3-year strategy commits to make complementary pathways for admission, including labour opportunities, "increasingly available to persons in need of international protection" and recommends Governments in receiving countries "open up existing or establish new protection

⁴⁰ Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Part II, Global Compact on Refugees, A/73/12 (Part II), 8[42] available from: https://www.unhcr.org/gcr/GCR_English.pdf

⁴¹ Global Compact on Refugees, as above, 19[95].

sensitive family reunification, employment or education pathways for refugees, including through removing legal, administrative, and physical barriers limiting refugee access”.⁴²

The strategy also includes a specific reference to TBB: “In partnership with UNHCR, Talent Beyond Boundaries, a civil society initiative, has developed a talent catalog to facilitate employment of refugees in third countries through labour mobility schemes”.⁴³ TBB also successfully advocated for the inclusion of a commitment to create “Tools to match refugee profiles and skills with existing complementary pathways opportunities”, paving the way for the expanded use and uptake of TBB’s Talent Catalog or similar data-based matching systems.⁴⁴ There will be an annual yearly review of the strategy and countries will be held accountable for their progress, providing significant opportunities for TBB to leverage additional government international, state and civil society engagement in scaling labour mobility as a durable solution.

Global Compact for Migration

Since 2016 TBB has also engaged actively with the Business Mechanism of the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD), the platform for businesses to engage with Governments and other stakeholders on issues and policies concerning the mass migration of people around the globe.⁴⁵ Prior to 2016, refugees were generally considered out of scope of discussions on migration in the GFMD and were, instead, seen within the purview of UNHCR’s protection mandate.⁴⁶ TBB’s contribution to the GFMD has been to promote the concept and reality that refugees, like other migrants, are fully capable of contributing to economic development and that skilled people among the displaced should be able to move through work visas.

Through its role on the Business Mechanism TBB sought to inform and influence the negotiation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), adopted by 164 states during an Intergovernmental Conference in Marrakech in 2018, and endorsed in December that year by the UN General Assembly. In 2017, TBB led one of the four subcommittees of the Business Mechanism entitled, “Innovations for Migrant and Refugee Access to Labour Markets.” Over that year the Business Mechanism and GFMD suggested inputs to the GCM, and TBB’s

⁴² UNHCR, The Three-Year Strategy (2019-2021) on Resettlement and Complementary Pathways, p. 29, June 2019. Available from: <https://www.unhcr.org/5d15db254.pdf>

⁴³ UNHCR, as above, p. 25.

⁴⁴ UNHCR, as above.

⁴⁵ TBB’s pro bono Corporate Outreach Advisor, Gary Slaiman, serves on the executive committee of the Business Advisory Group to the Business Mechanism, representing TBB in this capacity.

⁴⁶ Key informant interview with Gary Slaiman, Corporate Outreach Advisor. 23 April 2020.

recommendations were included in the GFMD's input, with TBB was cited as a best practice example in a report prepared by the GFMD to guide GCM negotiations in 2017.⁴⁷

TBB contributed to successful advocacy to include the following language in Objective 5 of the GCM relating to enhancing the availability and flexibility of pathways for regular migration (see emphasised text):

- *We commit to adapt options and pathways for regular migration in a manner that facilitates labour mobility and decent work reflecting demographic and labour market realities, optimizes education opportunities, upholds the right to family life, and responds to the needs of migrants in a situation of vulnerability, with a view to expanding and diversifying availability of pathways for safe, orderly and regular migration.*⁴⁸
- "To realize this commitment, we will draw from the following actions ... *Develop or build on existing national and regional practices for admission and stay of appropriate duration based on compassionate, humanitarian or other considerations for migrants compelled to leave their countries of origin, due to sudden-onset natural disasters and other precarious situations, such as by providing humanitarian visas, private sponsorships, access to education for children, and temporary work permits, while adaptation in or return to their country of origin is not possible.*⁴⁹

TBB's efforts to secure concrete language in the GCM on displaced peoples' access to labour mobility has created opportunities for partnerships to support implementation. As one indicator of this, the Government of Canada entered into a grant agreement with TBB in 2019 citing the project as a contribution in line with the goals of the GCM.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ GFMD, Thematic Recollection 2007 – 2017 prepared for the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, Geneva, 22 November 2017, p. 42. Available from: https://www.gfmd.org/files/documents/gfmd_thematic_recollection_2007_to_2017_-_contribution_to_the_gcm.pdf.

⁴⁸ Intergovernmental Conference to Adopt the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, Annex 1: Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, A/CONF.231/3, adopted 11 December 2018, Objective 5, 11[21]. Available from: <https://undocs.org/A/CONF.231/3>.

⁴⁹ Global Compact for Migration, as above, 12[21(g)].

⁵⁰ Grant Agreement between Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada and Talent Beyond Boundaries dated 22 March 2019.

Partnerships and replication

TBB has built a number of successful replicating partnerships during the pilot phase, and evidence from the pilot and stakeholder feedback shows there are a wide range of willing partners to adopt parts of TBB's recruitment and mobility model so the solution can scale. Critical success factors to replicating partnerships include alignment of vision, mission and values; clear expectations about capacity/support required of TBB and the partner; and a funding model that enables partners to participate in a sustainable way.

The reality is that the more people you move, the more people you will need on the ground. Partnerships and grafting is the approach you need to take now because it is the easiest way to industrialize.

Senior official, Australian government⁵¹

From inception TBB's mission has been to serve as a catalyst for a new durable solution rather than a sole service-provider. TBB has hypothesized that partners replicating or "grafting" elements of TBB's labour mobility model onto their own refugee programs would be an essential strategy for reaching scale.⁵² These elements include TBB's processes, generated knowledge, and technology (in the form of the Talent Catalog). This approach reflects TBB's awareness that as a small organization in an ecosystem of many existing refugee-serving organizations, the most viable path to scale would be through replication as other organizations incorporate the model into their programming.

Evidence from the pilot and stakeholder feedback suggests there are a range of willing partners to adopt parts of TBB's recruitment and mobility model. Examples include:

- **RefugePoint:** TBB has partnered with RefugePoint in Kenya to provide candidates for the EMPP in Canada. RefugePoint has extensive experience in resettlement, but did not have previous experience supporting clients through economic mobility. TBB supported RefugePoint to establish processes for candidate selection; eligibility assessments based on immigration pathway criteria; and CV building. The partnership proves parts of TBB's model

⁵¹ Key informant interview with Senior Official in the Department of Home Affairs, Australian government. 22 April 2020.

⁵² For explanation of "grafting" see Management Systems International, *Scaling Up—From Vision to Large-Scale Change: A Management Framework for Practitioners*, p. 6, available from: http://msiworldwidewjzvcctpx.devcloud.acquia-sites.com/sites/default/files/additional-resources/2018-11/ScalingUp_3rdEdition.pdf

can be adopted by other organisations working with refugees at source to facilitate labour mobility solutions. So far, RefugePoint has facilitated job offers for 13 candidates bound for Canada. The RefugePoint team had existing relationships, trust and credibility with the refugee community which was a critical success factor.

- **Refugee Talent:** TBB has also partnered with the job-matching social-enterprise Refugee Talent to engage employers in Australia (and more recently New Zealand). The partnership has involved technology integration (TBB sends anonymised data from the Talent Catalog to Refugee Talent’s job matching platform so that these candidates are visible to Australian employers); and recruitment services (TBB provides Refugee Talent with a retainer to assist with recruitment processes and provide post-placement monitoring and support to candidates and employers). The partnership has been mutually beneficial, with Refugee Talent opening opportunities for TBB candidates to access many of the 600 employers they are connected with, and TBB referring businesses to Refugee Talent and providing a regular source of income. In the long-term, TBB plans to hand over its Australian operations to Refugee Talent and the two organisations are working on creating a sustainable funding model to support this (exploring Refugee Talent charging recruitment fees).
- **UNHCR:** TBB has partnered with the UNHCR to advocate for labour mobility as a complementary pathway and conduct outreach to refugees about this option. TBB and UNHCR signed a cooperation agreement in May 2016. Through the partnership UNHCR has given TBB access to knowledge as well as legitimacy and credibility with a range of important stakeholders, including governments, donors and refugees. In turn, TBB has provided the capacity and business-ties required to implement labour mobility - capacity UNHCR recognised it did not have prior to TBB starting.⁵³
- **Immigration legal firms:** TBB has partnered with Bates Wells, Ernst and Young (EY), Fragomen, Playfair Visa and Migration Services, Roots Immigration Law, and Segal Immigration Law to provide employers and candidates with access to trusted migration advice. These partnerships have been critical to securing a 100% positive visa approval rate during the pilot period. The pilot demonstrated these partners can be engaged on a commercial basis by employers so that it is scalable.
- **Other civil-society organisations:** TBB worked with a range of organisations at the destination end to support relocated refugees to settle in and orientate to their new workplaces and lives. These included non-profit employment focused organisations, such as Jumpstart Refugee Talent; as well as large professional settlement organisations like AMES Australia, the Red Cross and Settlement Services International; and smaller localised

⁵³ Key informant interview with Kate O’Malley, UNHCR. 22 April 2020.

community organisations, such as Cheltenham Welcomes Refugees. These organisations have made a critical contribution to the positive settlement outcomes reported by TBB Alumni.

Through these partnerships TBB has learned the significant added value that organisations with deep roots into refugee and local receiving communities can have in replicating the model. Those working with a stakeholder population have a better sense of how a new labour mobility initiative will be perceived, and can adapt messaging and processes accordingly. They can better understand sensitivities and potential unintended consequences of particular processes.

Where partnerships formed during the pilot phase were ultimately successful, it was when TBB and the partners had an alignment of vision, mission and values. But TBB also learned that values alone are not sufficient. TBB's experience with RefugePoint and destination partners such as Refugee Talent in Australia and Jumpstart in Canada, reinforced that labour mobility is resource-intensive, particularly in the start-up phase.⁵⁴ To expand partnerships TBB needs to begin with clear expectations about staff resources and funding needs for the partner, expectations of support required from TBB and plans for a sustainable funding model. Future partnerships can also be strengthened by TBB adopting a more proactive approach to capacity building and facilitating exchanges of knowledge to share and leverage each other's unique technical expertise.

Finally, TBB's experience sharing de-identified refugee CV data automatically with Refugee Talent's job matching platform has been positive in increasing the visibility of displaced candidates and initiating recruitment opportunities. If TBB can establish similar arrangements with job matching services around the world this would have powerful replication potential.

⁵⁴ Key informant interviews with Anna Robson from Refugee Talent, 22 April 2020, Janet Ouma from RefugePoint, 24 April 2020, and Mustafa Alio from Jumpstart, 22 April 2020.

Conclusion

Through the pilot phase TBB developed a robust recruitment and mobility model that has successfully facilitated international employment and mobility pathways for skilled refugees and their families. Refugee candidates in Jordan and Lebanon have secured international job opportunities and relocated to build new lives in Australia, Canada and the UK during the pilot phase, thereby proving the concept of labour mobility as a durable solution for refugees. TBB has also produced empirical evidence that the supply of refugee talent and demand from employers is sufficient to support scaling of this solution to benefit many thousands of displaced people each year.

TBB has learned the importance of securing systemic changes to economic immigration programs to enable refugees to access them and to overcome information, policy, operational and financial barriers. Having now secured official labour mobility programs with the governments of Australia and Canada, and tested a number of innovative measures such as candidate loans, TBB is ready to scale this solution with partners. TBB has helped to foster an enabling environment for this scaling to occur by contributing to successful advocacy to embed commitments to opening up labour mobility opportunities for displaced people in the Global Compact on Refugees and Global Compact for Migration.

TBB's program has benefited candidates by increasing their confidence and motivation to build skills and explore international labour mobility options, providing a much needed alternative to irregular migration. The program's impact has been profound for the TBB Alumni and their family members who have relocated to Australia, Canada and the UK and who report significant improvements in quality of life, wellbeing, safety and their financial situation. Employers also have demonstrably positive feedback on the impact of the program, both in terms of gaining a valued new employee and having an opportunity to make a difference. The pilot phase has also demonstrated the model has significant economic benefits for receiving and sending countries through tax revenue, more productive employment, skills-lift and remittances.

The next frontier for TBB will necessarily be ramping up its engagement with suitable partner organizations to support them to replicate parts of TBB's model. Lessons from engaging with partners through the pilot phase, including ensuring mission alignment and sustainable funding arrangements, will need to inform TBB's approach to scaling.

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