

## Completion Assessment Executive Summary

### Talent Beyond Boundaries

July 2021

Investee	<a href="#">Talent Beyond Boundaries</a>
Main implementation country	Jordan and Lebanon
Additional implementation countries	Morocco, Australia, Canada, and United Arab Emirates
Funding amount agreed	US \$230,000
Funding amount disbursed	US \$230,000
Co-funding (concurrent)	None
Investment Date	10 October 2017
Expected PYI range at year 10 (ex-ante)	24K - 44K
Expected PYI range at year 10 (ex-post)	TBD

#### Innovation

Talent Beyond Boundaries (TBB) is the first organisation seeking to demonstrate that labour mobility is a viable, market-driven, and cost-effective model for refugee economic self-sufficiency and that this model is an alternative and complementary solution to resettlement.

The global skills gap will cost the global economy \$8.452 trillion in lost revenue by 2030. Meanwhile, there are 26.4 million refugees globally, many of them highly skilled, living in refugee camps or urban settings with limited or no prospects of local employment. TBB seeks to increase access for refugees to existing labour mobility pathways and create new pathways which refugees can use to migrate for work. This approach allows refugees to migrate based on their skills rather than their vulnerability, enabling them to transform their own lives while also making an economic contribution to their new communities.

TBB works to identify potential talent, facilitate recruitment, and support candidates through the process. TBB also collaborates closely with immigration authorities in seeking the flexibility that will enable candidates to access existing visa programs.

#### Investment Goal

The overall goal of the grant was to catalyse labour mobility and economic self-sufficiency solutions for refugees that are viable, market-driven, and cost-effective.

To achieve this goal, the pilot had three specific objectives:

- i. Placement: Securing skilled employment and legal work permits or visas in Morocco and the United Arab Emirates for 20 refugees located in Jordan and/or Lebanon. The grant agreement provided for specific safeguards to be met in case of placement, including cooperation with UNHCR and ensuring placement does not increase risk of refoulement (return of individuals to areas where they would be at risk of irreparable harm);
- ii. Mapping and documentation: Generating process maps and related documentation for scaling up the labour mobility model for refugees; and

- iii. Evidence, learnings and dissemination: Generating and disseminating evidence and practical learnings on labour mobility for refugees.

### Type of investment

GIF provided TBB a grant of US \$230,000.

### Implementation

The TBB pilot was implemented between October 2017 and October 2020. GIF’s flexible and responsive funding approach allowed TBB to explore the feasibility of implementing its labour mobility solution across different country contexts, achieve its learning objectives under the grant, and develop a strong strategy for scaling in the future. For example, GIF funding enabled TBB to initially explore the potential of Morocco as a destination country. While TBB identified favourable factors, such as employer demand, external political pressures at the time posed a significant challenge. Thus, over time, TBB shifted from the destination countries that had initially been proposed to contexts where with favourable policies and committed government partners, in particular Canada and Australia, and GIF amended its grant agreement to accommodate the changed locations.

### Performance against Investment Goals

The TBB pilot required proof of concept of the labour mobility model and had a very strong learning focus, with two out of three objectives aimed at generation of evidence and dissemination. Performance against objectives at time of investment is presented in the table below.

Objectives	Outcomes over the grant period
1. Placement	<p>TBB placed 18 refugees, who moved with 28 dependents, a total of 42 people, in jobs in Australia, Canada and the UK (1 person with 3 dependents).</p> <p>A further 48 candidates with 94 dependents have received job offers and are in different stages of the placement process.</p>
2. Mapping and documentation	<p><a href="#">A process map spanning TBB’s end-to-end process for the labour mobility pathway</a> was produced and is being tested with two partners. A <a href="#">“Guide for Employers on Arrival and Settlement”</a> has been published, drawing on the relevant section of the process map.</p>
3. Evidence, learnings and dissemination	<p>TBB created several public goods in the form of published research and lessons learned on labour mobility. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A white paper on <a href="#">The Promise of Labour Mobility</a> launched at the Global Refugee Forum in 2019.</li> <li>• An internal, <a href="#">global evaluation</a> of TBB’s work on labour mobility pathways.</li> <li>• Learnings <a href="#">from</a> the EMPP in Canada, <a href="#">including contributions to publications such as</a> a chapter in a Metropolis e-Book, <a href="#">Beyond 2020: Renewing Canada’s Commitment to Immigration</a>; a <a href="#">brief on Policy Principles and Lessons Learned</a> by IRCC and UNHCR; and this <a href="#">project brief</a> by IRCC.</li> </ul> <p><a href="#">In addition</a>, evidence and learnings from TBB’s pilot were covered in 45 different papers, articles, or blog posts, and TBB engaged with 91 events.</p>

TBB has also made significant progress in four broad categories that were identified in the pilot as barriers that often prevent refugees from accessing labour mobility pathways: (1) informational, (2) policy, (3) operational, and (4) financial barriers. Addressing these barriers is key to enable wider uptake of this solution. A summary of the most important barriers, and related progress, is presented below.

Barriers identified	Progress in addressing barriers over the grant period
<p><b>Informational barriers</b> The two critical informational barriers are a) navigating destination countries’ economic migration programmes and b) eligibility and identification of refugee skills.</p>	<p>The Talent Catalog, developed by TBB, specifically addresses this awareness gap, enabling employers to search for candidates who meet their requirements from now nearly 20,000 refugee profiles<sup>1</sup>.</p>
<p><b>Policy barriers</b> Policy barriers encompass legislative and administrative requirements that disadvantage refugees and other forcibly displaced people based on their circumstances (e.g. work permit criteria, visa processing requirements, valid passports, resettlement funds).</p>	<p>During the pilot, TBB worked directly with governments and on a case-by-case basis to overcome policy barriers, pursuing options such as priority processing for permanent residence applicants referred by TBB, enabling candidates with expired passports to apply using alternative proof of identification, and philanthropic support from TBB to help candidates cover costs and fees required.</p>
<p><b>Operational barriers</b> Operational barriers encompass procedural issues and practical circumstances that put refugees and other displaced applicants at a disadvantage when applying for economic migration pathways. The main operational barrier lies in the complexity of immigration applications.</p>	<p>Key to scaling this solution is making the case to employers for investing in good legal advice, and TBB supporting more immigration advisory services to develop the capacity required to effectively serve TBB candidates. TBB has built a global relationship with international immigration firm Fragomen among other practitioners, who are providing technical knowledge on economic migration programs and building their internal expertise in serving a displaced population</p>
<p><b>Financial barriers</b> Refugees face a number of costs associated with migration as well as barriers to accessing mainstream finance and credit options. At the same time, they have a lower capacity to pay and willingness to borrow. TBB has estimated the cost for an applicant to Canada at nearly \$14,000 CAD and to Australia at \$14,000 AUD.</p>	<p>Employers are willing to pay for a substantial portion of the cost of international recruitment, but some additional costs accrue to the candidate themselves. TBB has been subsidizing immigration costs for some candidates and has also brokered in-kind support to alleviate candidate costs, such as donated frequent flyer miles or pro bono legal support.</p> <p>In the later stages of the pilot, TBB brokered relationships for candidates with philanthropic partners including Cameron Foundation to pay refugee expenses on the basis that candidates would repay once they arrived at their destination and had generated sufficient savings or connected with existing migration loan schemes, where these exist. As TBB’s model scales, partnerships with ethical loan providers will become increasingly important.</p>

<sup>1</sup> Numbers as of publishing date are at 30,000.

## Outcomes

Over the pilot period from 2017-2020, TBB delivered outcomes across multiple thematic areas.

### 1. Supply and demand for refugee talent:

- TBB's Talent Catalog reached close to 20,000 entries from refugees living in Jordan and Lebanon, thereby providing a detailed picture of the depth and breadth of the talent pool in these countries.
- TBB ascertained interest from employers to fill skills gaps with refugee talent, with 272 employers engaging at the corporate outreach stage, 117 moving to candidate selection and 26 making offers.

### 2. Impacts for refugees, destination countries and family members:

- TBB showed that labour mobility has clear, transformative effects for candidates and their families, as TBB alumni see an average increase in income of 550%, to an average salary of over USD \$41,825.
- TBB estimated that candidates generate an average of USD \$1.5 million in lifetime earnings and through spending and contributions to income taxes provide wider economic benefits to destination countries.
- TBB found that six months after resettlement, 60% of candidates were sending remittances to support their families in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria or other countries.

### 3. Government and multilateral partnerships:

- A successful pilot with the Canadian Government has resulted in a commitment to increase their labour mobility visa program from 15 to 500 refugee applicants and to implement several policy changes that will make economic migration more accessible to refugees.
- Similarly, Australia is building on the success of the initial Skilled Refugee Pilot to expand its commitment from 10 to 100 visas through a legally binding Labour Agreement which makes reasonable concessions for those coming from refugee circumstances.
- TBB deepened its partnership with UNHCR, which has been an enabler, collaborator and champion since TBB's inception, by collaborating on initiatives to influence the global policy landscape.

### 4. Global policy landscape

- TBB secured commitments to labour mobility for refugees and vulnerable migrants in the Global Compact on Refugees and its three-year strategy, as well as the Global Compact on Migration.
- Alongside UNHCR, TBB is central to plans for a new Global Taskforce for Refugee Labour Mobility.