

**EXPERT SYMPOSIUM ON
INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

Population Division

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**CONTRIBUTION
TO THE EXPERT SYMPOSIUM ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

Talent Beyond Boundaries (TBB)

¹The views expressed in the paper do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the United Nations Secretariat.

I. Introduction

The world today faces twin challenges: how to respond to the legal, economic and humanitarian consequences of over 244 million migrants and how to address demographic trends and skills gaps which undermine economic growth and sustainable development in countries worldwide.¹ The nations of the world convened in 2015 to create the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as a road map to realize peace and prosperity. Subsequently, in 2018 the UN Member States gathered in Marrakesh, Morocco to adopt the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM). As countries look to implement the Compact in the context of the 2030 agenda, innovative initiatives will be essential.

Talent Beyond Boundaries (TBB) is a non-profit organization pioneering innovative skills-matching, driven by private sector hiring needs, by linking displaced populations to global skill gaps, and supporting their movement through safe, regular labor migration.² TBB partners with the private sector and governments to expand regular economic immigration pathways to accommodate the unique barriers that displaced populations face in accessing these pathways. This solution provides countries talent they need, and assists in the global response to displacement by providing a regular immigration pathway for a population otherwise at risk of moving irregularly.

“Accurate and disaggregated data” is at the core of TBB’s project development. This data is serving as the basis to create “evidence-based policies” as put forward in objective 1 in the GCM. Since its founding, TBB has developed a data-driven approach to identify and overcome the barriers that keep refugees and other displaced populations from accessing existing regular labor migration pathways. Initiatives that enable displaced and otherwise vulnerable migrant populations to fill global skill gaps through regular labor migration routes is an implementation of objective 5 in the GCM to “enhance availability and flexibility of pathways for regular migration” and brings countries a step closer to realizing several of the Sustainable Development Goals, such as Goal 8 to achieve “decent work for all, and 10.7 to “facilitate orderly, safe, and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies.”

II. Data on the Skills and Employment History of Displaced Populations

Data on the skills and employability of displaced peoples, refugees, and others in precarious situations, if it exists, is typically cursory and designed for use by humanitarian or other aid organizations rather than by private sector actors or employers. This data gap presented a barrier to international job matches for displaced populations who may be able to fill global skill gaps and move through regular migration routes.

To address this barrier, in 2016, Talent Beyond Boundaries began developing a first-of-its-kind “Talent Catalog,” a database of work experience, education, and skills of refugees living in Jordan and Lebanon interested in being considered for international employment. This data collection tool was developed with significant input from private sector collaborators. By the end of 2017, the Talent Catalog had searchable information relevant to global employers on more than 10,000 refugees representing workers across more than 200 occupations from engineers, IT developers and healthcare professionals to carpenters, tailors and chefs. One-third have tertiary education, and more than 40 percent report some level of English, while another 4 percent speak French.³

¹ The International Organization of Migration, “World Migration Report 2018,” https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/wmr_2018_en.pdf, p. 13.

² TBB has received support from the U.S. Department of State; Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada; World Bank; The Rockefeller Foundation; Roy and Patricia Disney Family Foundation; Global Innovation Fund; Tent Foundation; Cameron Foundation; and Journey Fund.

³ For profiles of IT candidates in the Talent Catalog, see: <http://talentbeyondboundaries.org/s/TTB-IT-Candidates-Packet.pdf>; for information on the Talent Catalog, see: <http://talentbeyondboundaries.org/talent-catalog.html>; <http://talentbeyondboundaries.org/s/TBB-Analytics.pdf>.

TBB's Talent Catalog collects a detailed work history akin to a CV such that employers can evaluate suitability for employment.⁴ This data is unparalleled in its depth and a significant contribution to understanding the human capital in refugee populations. Such data has been and will remain critical to facilitating links to employers globally.

Summary: *Mechanisms to collect detailed information on the employable skills, work history, and human capital of displaced populations and other migrants in situations of vulnerability must be enhanced and collected in such a way that is relevant to the private sector. Such data allows for better evaluation of the potential of such populations to migrate safely and regularly for global work opportunities to fill global skill gaps, in line with the 2030 agenda and the GCM.*

III. Data on Global Skill Gaps and Global Migration Streams

Many developed countries are seeing trends of slowed population growth, aging populations, and education pipelines that do not match market demand, resulting in large skill gaps. Skill gaps in developing countries limit economic growth and investment by international employers. According to a study by Korn Ferry, nearly 70 percent of large organizations (250+ employees) report talent shortages that inhibit expansion. Unfilled roles, diminished revenue, and inhibited growth result from global skill gaps and inefficiency in matching people's skills to the areas of the global labor market most in need of them.

While high-level information about the presence of talent shortages exists, it is difficult to find aggregated, up-to-date and detailed information on private sector hiring needs. Likewise, aggregated and accurate information on the existing regular migration streams designed to facilitate the movement of workers to fill such skill gaps is difficult to identify. Such data is critical to be able to facilitate the efficient movement of people in such a way that advances global development.

Summary: *The availability, accessibility and accuracy of data on global skill gaps led by private-sector input and on the availability and requirements of global labor migration schemes must be enhanced. Such data would allow for more effective facilitation of movement of peoples in line with the 2030 agenda and the GCM.*

IV. Data on Barriers to Regular Migration for Displaced People and Vulnerable Migrants

Even when a displaced person, refugee, or vulnerable migrant meets the requisite skill or human capital requirements for regular migration and has been identified by an international employer as having needed skills to contribute to the development of an institution or community, they oftentimes face unique barriers to accessing regular economic pathways. For example, an in-depth interviews with 204 highly-skilled refugees based in Jordan and Lebanon between 2016-2018, Talent Beyond Boundaries collected the following data relevant to barriers to regular migration.

Applications for many economic migration pathways require valid passports, original birth certificates, and certified educational documents from applicants and their dependents.

- 35% of refugees interviewed did not have valid passports.
- 48% of refugees' dependents did not have valid passports.
- 17% of refugees interviewed did not have copies of their birth certificates.
- 15% of refugees interviewed did not have copies of diplomas from their highest levels of education.

⁴ See Annex 1 for data summary on the talent present in displaced populations in Lebanon and Jordan.

Economic migration streams often require applicants' continuous employment in their field for a specific period prior to their application.

- 84% of refugees interviewed were not able to work legally in their field of training.
- 43% of male refugees interviewed were unemployed or underemployed.
- 56% of female refugees interviewed were unemployed or underemployed.

Proof of employment, often in the form of a letter from an employer, pay-stubs, or other formal documentation, is a standard requirement across many economic migration streams.

- 47% of refugees interviewed did not have proof of employment for their current job.
- 52% of refugees interviewed did not have proof of employment for a previous job.
- 77% of female refugees interviewed did not have proof of employment for their current job, compared to 43% of male refugees interviewed.

By collecting such data, Talent Beyond Boundaries is well-equipped to make evidence-based policy suggestions to partner governments interested in understanding how they can fulfill their commitments in the GCM, and particularly to Objective 5.

Summary: *Enhancing data collection on the barriers displaced people, refugees, and other vulnerable populations face to accessing existing regular migration streams can inform policy development to remove such administrative barriers.*

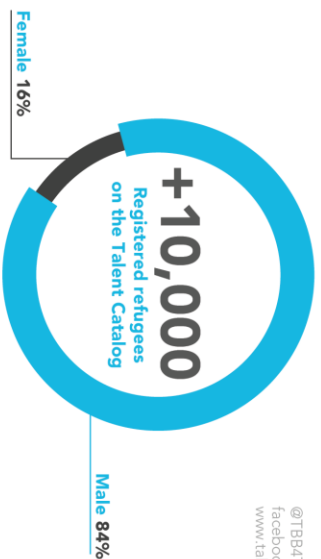
V. Conclusion

TBB's work to facilitate the use of labor migration pathways as an additional and complementary solution to displacement illustrates a data-driven approach to practically implement concepts put forward in the Global Compact and realize goals of the 2030 Agenda. Its findings also indicate areas where enhanced data collection would better serve the realization of both undertakings. As TBB's program progresses, its destination countries of operation will track the settlement outcomes of displaced populations who access labor mobility as well as policy changes and their outcomes.

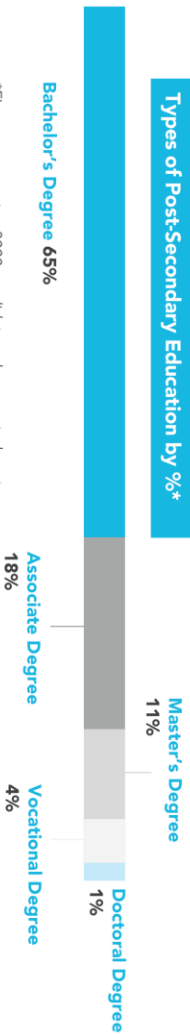
Snapshot of TBB's Talent Catalog

This analysis surveys refugees currently registered in Talent Beyond Boundaries' (TBB) Talent Catalog. Please note that all active TBB candidates are based in Jordan and Lebanon. TBB cooperates closely with UNHCR and can conduct targeted outreach to additional UNHCR-registered refugees.

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Types of Post-Secondary Education by %*



*Figure represents +3000 candidates who reported post-secondary education. Note, incomplete degrees not included.

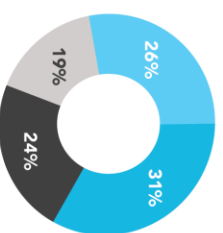
Top 5 Nationalities of Male Registrants

- 1 Syrian
- 2 Palestinian
- 3 Iraqi
- 4 Sudanese
- 5 Yemeni

Top 5 Nationalities of Female Registrants

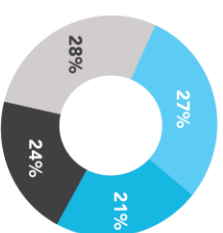
- 1 Syrian
- 2 Palestinian
- 3 Iraqi
- 4 Iranian
- 5 Yemeni

Language Skills. Over 15 languages are spoken among TBB registrants, with English, French, Turkish and German the most common. If an employer is interested in a candidate but requires stronger language skills, TBB works with the candidate to get him or her to the desired level. The following demonstrates levels in spoken English and French. Note, not all registered candidates have informed TBB of their language abilities and these results are from the +7,500 that responded for English and +900 for French.



Levels of Reported English Proficiency

- Full Professional
- Intermediate
- Elementary
- Native or Bilingual



Levels of Reported French Proficiency

- Full Professional
- Intermediate
- Elementary
- Native or Bilingual

Professional Skills. TBB registrants represent over 200 professions across various sectors. The following represents the top 5 most common among these in our Talent Catalog.



*Categories of engineers include: Civil (145), Mechanical (104), Electrical (80), Other (76), Electronic (56), Petroleum (17), Biomedical (10), Chemical (8); Categories of healthcare professionals include: Pharmacists (62), Nurses (80), Medical Doctors (49), Medical Assistants (25), Physical Therapists (18), Dentistry Professionals (44), Nutritionists (12), Other (110)

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