



## Request for Proposals:

# Labour Mobility Pathways for Syrian Refugees: Barriers and Opportunities

### Background: Complementary Pathways as durable solutions for Syrian refugees in Jordan and Lebanon

Given the persistent lack of durable solutions options for many of Syria's displaced, *complementary pathways to resettlement* have become an increasingly core component of holistic policy and advocacy responses on behalf of Syrian refugees. These pathways are commonly framed as alternatives to refugee resettlement and thus of primary relevance to refugees. Complementary pathways are "safe and regulated avenues that complement refugee resettlement and by which refugees may be admitted in a country and have their international protection needs met while they are able to support themselves and potentially reach a sustainable and lasting solution" to their displacement and displacement-related vulnerabilities. This can take a variety of forms, including: labour mobility programs, education programs, family reunification programs, community sponsorship programs, and humanitarian visas.

### Labour Mobility: an emerging, yet understudied, durable solution

Despite the benefits of **labour mobility** for some refugees, and the large numbers of displaced Syrians who have the relevant skills to pursue a labour mobility pathway, few Syrian refugees have successfully migrated via a work permit or other labour mobility program. Preliminary research suggests that barriers exist, at both the host country and third country levels, which are disproportionately preventing refugees from taking advantage of these opportunities. A forthcoming research report by the Migration Policy Institute has outlined key challenges in third countries, while UNHCR, Talent Beyond Boundaries (TBB), and others have begun work to highlight challenges at the host country level.

### Objective

This research aims to further map **host country-level barriers to labour mobility**, focusing on the specific challenges facing Syrian refugees, **identifying lessons learned** from previous attempts to overcome them, and **highlighting possible ways to overcome barriers** that have not yet been attempted. In doing so, this report hopes to play a role in unlocking some of the persistent challenges that have prevented labour mobility from becoming a commonly utilized complementary pathway for refugees alongside the three formally recognized durable solutions to displacement. This research will seek to answer the following question:

1. *What are the key host country barriers in 2021 facing Syrian refugees wishing to access labour migration?*
2. *What are the ways in which actors have sought to overcome, successfully or unsuccessfully, barriers to labour mobility for Syrian refugees? What lessons can be learned from these experiences?*
3. *What can be done to improve support to refugees who pursue these pathways?*

### Host-country barriers to labour mobility

Despite the benefits of labour mobility for some refugees, and the large numbers of displaced Syrians who have the relevant skills to pursue a labour mobility pathway, few Syrian refugees have successfully migrated via a work permit or other labour mobility program. Preliminary research suggests that barriers exist, at both the host country and third country levels, which are disproportionately preventing refugees from taking advantage of these

opportunities. A forthcoming research report by the Migration Policy Institute has outlined key challenges in third countries, while UNHCR, Talent Beyond Boundaries (TBB), and others have begun work to highlight challenges at the host country level. Some tentatively identified challenges, which have not yet been verified and analyzed through dedicated research, include:

- **Barriers to engaging in labour migration:**
  - A lack of awareness among eligible refugees of their labour migration options;
  - Distrust of labour migration pathways and fear of labour exploitation;
- **Barriers to being recruited for a job or program:**
  - Lack of access to the internet and reliable technology;
  - Lack of access to local work permits and employment opportunities;
  - Poor economic and social stability in countries of asylum;
  - Lack of internal and external mobility options (particularly for refugees who are living out of status in their current place of residence);
  - Inability to access required testing or professional licensing;
- **Barriers to visa processing:**
  - Lack of access to identifying documentation
  - Lack of access to educational diplomas and certificates
  - Inability to prove work experience
  - Language requirements (such as language cutoff scores for some skilled worker programs);
  - Challenges accessing banking and loan options;
- **Barriers to Departure:**
  - Complicated and expensive exit permit procedures:
  - Restrictions on departing with cash savings;

## Research Methods

Literature review, key informant interviews, online surveys, refugee interviews.

## Eligibility

Independent researchers or research organizations are invited to submit proposals.

## Applicant Requirements

- Familiarity and experience with: research methodology design; migration, refugee, and/or immigration law research; quantitative and qualitative research; research publication writing and production;
- Familiarity with refugee livelihoods contexts in Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey
- Experience in authoring high quality publications;
- Lived refugee experience is preferred
- Arabic language written and spoken fluency preferred

## Key Deliverables

1. One English-language report of 30 to 35 pages in length.
2. One shorter briefing paper.
3. Stakeholder dialogue and dissemination activities.

## Areas of Investigation

1. Labour mobility
2. Refugee relocation

3. Immigration processes (specifically skilled visas)
4. Refugee livelihoods

### Duration & Location

This work is expected to take place between July 2021 and November 2021. The position is based remotely.

### Application Process

To apply, submit a technical proposal (3 pages maximum) and CV of the lead researcher and 2 recent references to [hr@talentbeyondboundaries.org](mailto:hr@talentbeyondboundaries.org) by **28 June 2021 at 19:00 in Amman, Jordan (GMT+3)**. When submitting the proposal. Subject line: "Technical Proposal: Barriers to labour mobility"

The technical proposal should clearly outline:

- a. the researcher's key skills and experience that are relevant to this evaluation;
- b. a concise description of the desired research approach and key standards and principles that will inform your work;
- c. an identification of possible data limitations and ways to mitigate them (recognizing that the applicant is operating with only the limited information provided herein);
- d. a proposed timeline; and
- e. a short cost justification.
- f. Note that TBB may ask for examples of previous work after reviewing the application materials.

Pre-submission requests for information: submit by e-mail to [hr@talentbeyondboundaries.org](mailto:hr@talentbeyondboundaries.org) before 14 June 2021 at 19:00 Amman, Jordan (GMT+3), so that we have ample time to respond to your request.

*Only short-listed applicants will be contacted.*

For more about Talent Beyond Boundaries visit: [www.talentbeyondboundaries.org](http://www.talentbeyondboundaries.org)

For more about the Durable Solutions Platform visit: <https://www.dsp-syria.org/>

**Note:** This research will be produced by Talent Beyond Boundaries in partnership with, and through anticipated funding provided by, the Durable Solutions Platform. In the unlikely event that the anticipated funding for this project is not secured, the RFP will be rescinded.