



RescueWorks

# Building economies and communities that thrive

*The case for investing in refugee workforce development*



## THE CHALLENGE & THE OPPORTUNITY

**Unprecedented levels of global displacement, decreasing government budgets and complex political and economic dynamics present challenges for displaced people across the globe looking for work in their new communities. At the same time, growing demand for employees in developed economies is prompting employers to seek a broader workforce - in terms of language, cultural and technical abilities - to match a diversifying public and stay competitive in a globalizing economy.**

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*“Through the Rescuing Futures programme with the IRC, we are empowering young adult refugees today and helping create greater economic prosperity tomorrow, not just for the individual, but their families and the community at large.”*

Brandee McHale, former Head, Corporate Citizenship, Citi and President, Citi Foundation

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Companies have the opportunity to build a quality future talent pool, create a new customer base, diversify supply chains and encourage business innovation while empowering refugees and host communities on their path to self-sufficiency and financial independence. The International Rescue Committee's (IRC) corporate partners and their



**In a recent study by the Fiscal Policy Institute and the Tent Foundation of 29 employers interviewed, 73 percent reported a higher retention rate for refugees than for employees overall.<sup>1</sup>**



**Refugee business owners are employment creators – according to the University of Oxford Humanitarian Innovation Project, 21% of refugee owned businesses in Kampala employ 2.4 people on average, 40% of whom are Ugandan.<sup>2</sup>**

expertise, talent and resources have been crucial for both humanitarian response and long-term community building, as well as influencing policy globally and at home.

The IRC's RescueWorks programming deploys evidence-based solutions that not only save lives and rebuild livelihoods, but also contribute to the economic vitality and growth of local communities. Collaborating with the IRC on RescueWorks offers a chance to grow the workforce and talent in new markets and expand business while affirming company commitments to social impact and community engagement.

Join us in ensuring refugees, displaced and host communities have access to the resources and opportunities that will help them rebuild their lives, while contributing to the economic vitality of their new communities. Continued engagement and investment are more critical than ever.



**Refugee women  
could generate up to  
\$1.4 Trillion  
to annual global GDP**

— if employment and earnings gender gaps were closed in each of the top 30 refugee-hosting countries.

## Why partner with the IRC?

### ACCESS & IMPACT

By working with the IRC, one of the leading organizations responding to the world's worst humanitarian crises, partners can help restore opportunity and power to people devastated by conflict and disaster around the world. Working in more than 40 countries and 25 U.S. cities, the IRC engages with communities from Syria to the United States.

### EXPERTISE

IRC's on-the-ground experience and innovative, evidenced-based, flexible approaches deliver workforce, employment and value chain programs with measurable impact. The

IRC invests in the world's most vulnerable populations by providing critical skills training, market access, business startup support and job counseling that improve lives while building strong and economically vibrant communities.

### ADVOCACY

By collaborating with the IRC, corporate partners can challenge hostile rhetoric and use their voice to influence public perception, state actors and local and global policies regarding the immense benefits – economic and social – that refugees and displaced populations provide to the workforce.

# THE APPROACH

## Workforce Development Programs

- Work readiness and soft skills
- Individual employment coaching
- Direct job placement assistance
- Career pathway programs
- Vocational language training
- Youth focused programs



## Microenterprise Development Services

- Business planning
- Start up grants & loans
- Micro-entrepreneur academy
- Business counseling
- Savings and asset development
- Basic business and life skills training



## Supply & Value Chain Development

- Training to improve and increase production and post-harvest processing
- Extension services
- Promotion of ICT and other technologies to increase access to production, weather, and market information
- Producer organization building and collective marketing
- Market linkages between producers and buyers, input suppliers or service providers and producers
- Community farming



## Advocacy, Communications and Investment

- Partner in speaking out for the right to work for refugees and displaced populations
- Feature and highlight partnerships in local and international media
- Support removal of barriers to business start up for refugees and displaced
- Promote access to finance and skills recognition
- Promote flexible multi-year funding



Strong partnerships are grounded in shared values, while addressing the core business challenges, social impact goals and needs of partner organizations and clients. Importantly, there are opportunities for partners to invest in a resilient future global workforce at every scale, from institutional corporate partners to regional, local medium and small businesses. The strongest and most effective partnerships are comprehensive and multi-faceted. They continuously invest in people and communities to drive transformational change and maximize impact for clients and partners.

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*“Chubb is proud to support the IRC’s efforts to provide refugees with a path to transition into economic security and self-sufficiency,” said Evan G. Greenberg, Chairman and CEO of Chubb. “Immigrants are fundamental to our nation’s identity, history and future prosperity. The IRC serves as a beacon of hope to those seeking a better and safer life for themselves and their families.”*

Evan Greenberg, President & CEO, Chubb

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**IRC and its partners create thriving, welcoming economies by:**

- Investing in upskilling
- Defining key skills and industry standards for employees to succeed
- Targeting recruitment for job trainings
- Providing mentorship and business development advice
- Integrating appropriate, essential services to support economic opportunities for women and marginalized groups
- Supporting entrepreneurs with financial products and services
- Promoting and strengthening inclusive global supply and value chains
- Crafting policy to support an inclusive, less restrictive and diverse workforce and business community

**CALL TO ACTION**

To partner with the IRC and create solutions to global challenges:

- Invest in our work
- Train, hire and develop products and services for our clients
- Source and procure products from our clients
- Share your expertise, time & talent
- Advocate with us



Learn more at:  
**[Rescue.org/RescueWorks](https://rescue.org/RescueWorks)**

Contact us at:  
**[partnerships@rescue.org](mailto:partnerships@rescue.org)**

# CASE STUDIES: INVESTING IN PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES

## TripAdvisor – Hospitality Link

In response to the Syrian refugee crisis in 2015, the IRC and TripAdvisor Charitable Foundation launched a new collaboration. What began as a fundraising campaign has evolved into a robust, multifaceted partnership including grant support and a Crisis Response Fund, extensive technical support, continued thought leadership and joint communications and advocacy. TripAdvisor also uses its platform to galvanize its employee, traveler, and business partner communities to support solutions and innovate opportunities to support refugees across the arc of the crisis. TripAdvisor supports Hospitality Link in 6 IRC offices, a workforce development program designed to prepare refugees in the U.S. to secure entry-level employment in the hospitality sector and to encourage them to consider the hospitality sector for their long-term career advancement. Between January 2017 and January 2019, IRC enrolled 800 participants, with 74% of participants employed by more than 250 companies upon completion of the program.

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*“This is a protracted crisis that is not going away overnight. It is reshaping economies and societies for the long-term... it’s incumbent upon the private sector to leverage our unique expertise, resources and capabilities in partnership with nonprofit organizations.”*

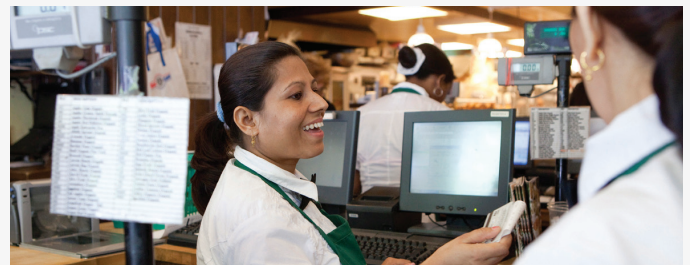
Stephen Kaufer, President & CEO, TripAdvisor

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TripAdvisor Charitable Foundation's experience, investment, and leadership were critical in bringing the program to scale and supporting the technical infrastructure needed to deliver a consistent, high-quality national training program. The Hospitality Link partnership not only allows for this essential job readiness training to continue but, importantly, allows these two voices – refugee advocates and the travel and hospitality industry – to come together to raise awareness about displacement and the need to support and welcome newcomers into our communities and workplaces.

## Chubb – Jobs 2 Careers

The Chubb Charitable Foundation and the IRC started Jobs 2 Careers in 2015, a two-phase program focused on capacity building for expanded career programming in IRC's U.S. program offices. Jobs 2 Careers aims to significantly increase the IRC's ability to help new Americans move beyond their initial entry-level jobs into promising careers trajectories to realize the incredible workforce potential presented by refugees and immigrants. The comprehensive approach includes individual employment coaching, soft skills classes, occupational skills training, and direct assistance moving into higher skill, higher wage jobs. From February 2018 to February 2019, the IRC served more than 1,000 individuals in career pathways programs, helping these individuals enter careers in healthcare, transportation and logistics, and other in-demand sectors.



Jobs 2 Careers is designed to achieve key long-term outcomes. Equipping refugees and vulnerable immigrant populations with the skills, knowledge and support needed to transition into career pathways offering higher wages and opportunities for growth is critical to realize lasting economic independence. The long-term approach reflects a mutual goal to not only support vulnerable populations' self-sufficiency, but to help them access employment pathways that offer a continuous upward career path so individuals and their families can thrive economically.

## Citi – Rescuing Futures

In partnership with the Citi Foundation, the IRC started Rescuing Futures in 2017. This comprehensive business and development training will support 990 young refugees and vulnerable local youth in Athens, Greece; Amman, Jordan; and Yola, Nigeria. Recognizing the entrepreneurial potential of refugees who want to start their own businesses, the Rescuing Futures program provides a suite of programs including entrepreneurship training, mentoring, apprenticeships, business development and local market analysis. Upon completion of the program, participants with feasible business plans, as assessed by local entrepreneurs and financiers, will receive seed funding to kick start their business.

The ongoing partnership between the IRC and the Citi Foundation has been robust, including contribution of technical expertise, funding for this training program,



engagement with local bank branches and staff, support for research, and a communications campaign highlighting the value of refugee entrepreneurship through original digital content, events and media. Citi and the IRC have also engaged with city governments and local communities to start conversations about supporting new businesses that contribute to community cohesion as well as the clients' own economic wellbeing.

## Intel – Creating Opportunities for Refugee Employment

Following the influx of refugees to Germany in 2015, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and the Intel Foundation partnered to prepare refugees for local employment. An assessment of the labor market revealed increasing demand in the booming German tech industry. Intel's expertise in the technology sector, paired with the IRC's cultural understanding and programmatic experience, led to Project CORE (short for Creating Opportunities for Refugee Employment), which helped upskill over 1,000 refugees to prepare them for tech jobs. The IRC is also collaborating with local partners in Germany to present different training tracks for refugees to develop basic tech skills such as data entry and programming, with options to later advance into specialized services. Participants will have tailored training with both group work and personalized learning to ensure each individual has the tools to succeed in securing employment.

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*“The Intel Foundation’s investment in Project CORE resulted in transformational change by leveraging our customized curricula platform and hands-on training to equip refugees with skills to apply for local jobs. Our partnership with IRC demonstrates the power of collective impact.”*

Pia Wilson-Body, President, Intel Foundation

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By creating a new and more sustainable workforce development pipeline in the tech industry, Project CORE aims to empower refugees with skills to overcome employment barriers and achieve lasting economic success. The collaboration between IRC and the Intel Foundation leveraged each organizations' respective strengths, resources and connections with potential German employers, while working towards a mutual goal of supporting a more diverse and inclusive workforce.

## Olam – Pro Jeunes

In the rural Tchologo region of Ivory Coast IRC partners with Olam/SECO to work with young agriculturalists over the course of four years to integrate them into the company's cotton supply chain. In this partnership, Olam facilitates access to their producer communities and in collaboration with IRC negotiates improved access for youth to productive land and participation in the program. In addition, Olam accompanies youth participants over the course of 1-2 production cycles with technical training. In parallel, IRC provides comprehensive business-skill training, mentorship and support around business plan development.

The partnership between the IRC and Olam/SECO has been a truly collaborative approach to working with this population to foster their economic integration and to reignite youth interest in agriculture as a business. Efforts that both partners



have pursued together include the engagement of successful female producers as role models to engage young women in a highly male dominated cotton value chain, on-going technical and mentoring support to youth, advocacy and communication of the project to relevant stakeholders.

<sup>1</sup> Dyssegaard Kallick, D. and Roldan, C. (2018). Refugees as Employees: Good Retention, Strong Recruitment, TENT and Fiscal Policy Institute.

<sup>2</sup> Betts, A. et al. (2014). Refugee Economies: Rethinking Popular Assumptions, Humanitarian Innovation Project, University of Oxford.

*Illustrations by Pilar Torcal*

The International Rescue Committee responds to the world's worst humanitarian crises and helps people whose lives and livelihoods are shattered by conflict and disaster to survive, recover and gain control of their future. In more than 40 countries and in 26 U.S. cities, our dedicated teams provide clean water, shelter, health care, education and empowerment support to refugees and displaced people.

### **International Rescue Committee**

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**Rescue.org**

