

YOUTH REFUGEE EMPLOYABILITY TOOLKIT

A resource for program implementers

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CBO – community-based organization
CSO – civil society organization
CV – curriculum vitae
EU – European Union
ICT – information and communication technology
ISKUR – Turkish employment agency
ILO – International Labor Organization
IYF – International Youth Foundation
LMA – labor market assessment
MEL – monitoring, evaluation, learning
MSP – multi-stakeholder partnership
NGO – non-governmental organization
PYD – positive youth development
SEEP – Small Enterprise Education and Promotion (Network)
SGBV – sexual and gender-based violence
SREP – Syrian Refugee Employability Program (IYF program)
S4YE – Solutions for Youth Employment
TOT – training of trainers
UNHCR – United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
YSI – youth-serving institution

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ABOUT SREP

SREP

The Syrian Refugee Employability Program (SREP) was an initiative of the International Youth Foundation (IYF) to support youth refugees in Turkey, implemented in 2017 and 2018. Through SREP, IYF strengthened the capacity of organizations in Istanbul to serve the employability and employment needs of local Syrian youth refugees.

IYF oversaw the creation of a holistic labor market assessment which examined the lives and livelihoods of Syrian youth refugees living in Turkey, as well as local market sectors with job absorption potential. Based on the assessment, IYF implemented a series of capacity strengthening workshops on employability program topics for three local organizations and created this toolkit as a resource for other implementers to address the employability and employment needs of refugee youth.

INTRODUCTION

How was this toolkit developed?

The Youth Refugee Employability Toolkit was created by the International Youth Foundation (IYF) and adapted from capacity-building materials that IYF developed for community-serving organizations (CSOs) under the Syrian Refugee Employability Program (SREP) in Turkey. The selection of topics the toolkit covers was informed by these materials as well as by a comprehensive labor market assessment carried out under SREP. Accordingly, the toolkit reflects IYF's learnings about the Syrian refugee context in Turkey and includes periodic references to Turkey-specific information. Nevertheless, most of the toolkit's guidance will be applicable to the work of organizations supporting Syrian youth refugees in other countries. The document also incorporates, and references tools and information taken or adapted from numerous other sources.

Who should use this toolkit?

The toolkit is a practical guidance tool for CSOs that offer – or plan to offer – high quality employability and employment programs for Syrian youth refugees in urban or semi-urban environments. Those organizations who have some experience designing and implementing employment or livelihood programming will derive the most benefit from the toolkit. These organizations should be familiar with core programmatic concepts such as work planning, budgeting, staffing, monitoring and evaluation, quality standards and control, business development, relationship management, etc., as the toolkit does not provide specific guidance on these topics. Organizations with less experience implementing programs should reference general program design tools such as those included in the Additional Resources section. Organizations who have no familiarity with employability programming, including such components as training, job placement and career guidance, should also refer to the Additional Resources section for more general guidance tools.

How can this toolkit be used?

This toolkit should help implementers improve their understanding of the unique needs and strengths of Syrian youth refugees in order to better design or modify programs serving this group. According to their current stage of programming, implementers can use the toolkit either as a starting point or as a mid-program checkup. In any case, the topics discussed in the toolkit should spark conversations within your organization around how to better facilitate workplace success for refugees.

This toolkit can also serve as a set of “talking points” to help implementers raise awareness among other stakeholders and partners, including supplementary service providers, host community leaders, educational institutions, vocational training centers, researchers and universities, business associations and business owners, public agencies, and others who are interested in fostering the employment and social integration of Syrian youth refugees.

This toolkit is not a comprehensive set of instructions for setting-up, designing and implementing an employability program for refugees or any other group, nor is it intended to provide exhaustive guidance for any of the unit topics or subtopics presented. Many of these topics are explored in detail in several comprehensive guides or toolkits, and a selection of these are collected and referenced in the Additional Resources section.

What is the situation of Syrian youth refugees in Turkey?

Turkey hosts the world's largest population of Syrian refugees – over 3.5 million individuals,¹ with most refugees – about 90% – living in or near urban and semi-urban environments. Estimates show that young people aged 18-29 make up over 24% percent of all Syrian refugees in Turkey; in Istanbul alone, this makes them a population of more than 140,000 people.²

Labor Market Status by Gender ³	Female	Male	Total
% Employed	36.9	55.3	51.8
% Unemployed	63.1	44.7	48.2
Total	100	100	100 <i>n=1,003</i>

In many cases, Syrian youth refugees share financial responsibilities for their household, but struggle to find work due to a diverse set of employment barriers in their host community. In 2017, 48% of Syrian youth refugees were unemployed, with female youth refugees facing unemployment rates of 63%.⁴

In 2016, the Turkish government granted all Syrian refugees with temporary protection status access to formal employment.⁵ Yet, in practice, the policy environment remains challenging – only 4% of Syrian youth have ever applied for a work permit, and most of them work informally and in low-paid jobs.⁶ As many as 87% of young Syrian refugees who are employed work over 48 hours each week.⁷

Recently, UNHCR identified the need for better living and working conditions for both Syrians and members of host communities. It suggested such advancements could be made through improving the capacity of service providers, enhancing skills training for job seekers, promoting broader awareness of employment regulations, and more effective multi-sector partnerships.⁸ In light of this, local organizations working with young refugees have a mandate to identify and address those factors limiting their ability to respond to the employment needs of refugees and their host communities.

What challenges do Syrian youth refugees face?

Youth refugees are at disproportionate risk of suffering from the direct and knock-on effects of conflict and displacement. Youth are made vulnerable from the disruption to their social circles and networks, the effects of physiological and emotional distress, insufficient ability to communicate effectively, financial instability, legal and power imbalances, societal invisibility and isolation, vulnerability to exploitation or abuse, identity-based discrimination, and exacerbation of gender stereotypes or inequalities.⁹

Other work-specific barriers can compound the negative experiences of youth refugees. These might include skills mismatch, thin personal and professional networks, limited social capital outside of the refugee community, lack of skill and qualifications documentation, lack of transferrable credentials, lack of knowledge of social and legal protections, lenient monitoring and enforcement of regulations, host community opposition, and customer and employer-based discrimination.¹⁰

What is the message of this toolkit?

Programs for Syrian youth refugees should deliver balanced solutions to basic and immediate needs, while simultaneously helping youth build the means to generate income and better integrate into their host country. This toolkit promotes a “whole-youth” approach that adopts a long-term and comprehensive view of employment and is grounded in the principles of positive youth development (PYD). PYD assumes that youth have agency and power to lead their own development and encourages caring and competent practitioners to better respond to the needs of youth in a healthy and productive manner.¹¹

Programs for youth refugees should create an enabling environment that addresses and meets basic needs (shelter, security), mitigates barriers to active participation (logistical, financial, identity-based, cultural), and constructs a rich field of activities and relationships that foster growth in areas both directly and indirectly related to employment.¹² This holistic approach requires stakeholders across sectors to work hand-in-hand to provide programming and relief, according to their expertise and ability. Identifying and maintaining strong relationships with relevant stakeholders is critical to the coordinated approach on which youth refugee programs will be based.

How is this toolkit structured?

The toolkit is organized into six units, each of which covers a programmatic area or topic. Unit themes are conceptual rather than chronological (i.e., unit guidance may be relevant during any number of chronological program “phases”). Unit themes are broken down and explored through a variety of sub-themes, each of which are paired with one or more “tools.” Tools consist of practical exercises, visual frameworks, checklists, self-evaluations and tip sheets. Many of these tools can be used as interactive exercises or discussion-starters for your team. Tools are collected in an annex and are hyperlinked in the electronic version of this document. For usability, tools are often simplified versions of more extensive guidance or exercises. It is recommended that your team consult the supplemental readings and sources referenced in the Additional Resources section for more detailed guidance on individual topics.

UNIT 1: YOUTH AND YOUR PROGRAM

Young Syrian refugees fleeing conflict in their home country, whether alone or with families, encounter unique and formidable challenges to starting over in a new place. Unlike their elders, youth refugees have suffered profound upheaval during one of life's most sensitive and transformative periods – youth and young adulthood. This lends them an exceptional capacity for recovery, while making it critical they receive adequate supports and services as they continue to mature.

Civil society organizations working with youth to reconstruct one area of their lives – career and employment – should adopt an integrated and “whole-youth” approach. This method considers a broad spectrum of needs – those that directly as well as indirectly affect employment-readiness and success – and responds with an array of interconnected services and rich, engaging programming.¹³

[KEY RECOMMENDATIONS]

1. Consider the entire spectrum of developmental needs and processes affecting youth work readiness.
2. Build programs on practical structural features (supports, opportunities, and services) which reinforce core skills training components.
3. Explore ways to integrate and incorporate youth contributions into programs at various stages.
4. Provide supplemental services that help youth overcome participation and access barriers or address basic skill and service needs.
5. Make program activities socially and gender inclusive by considering how vulnerable sub-groups can be supported to overcome unique obstacles.

A whole-youth approach is underpinned and informed by positive youth development (PYD) theory, and assumes that nurturing existing assets can help youth restore a needed sense of hope and agency.¹⁴ At the same time, young refugees face a profound set of challenges –discrimination, mobility restrictions, unstable living conditions, cultural miscommunication, social and cultural expectations, financial instability, and many others.¹⁵ Since young refugees have spent some of their formative years in a state of disruption, their ability to develop key aspects of personal identity and ability may have been impacted.

Nevertheless, Syrian youth refugees want and deserve what other youth want – the chance to build lives that are safe and fulfilling, and include opportunities to learn, grow and build relationships. Therefore, the employability programs that serve them should blend immediate-needs support, interventions to overcome barriers to participation, and personal development opportunities aimed at long-term achievement.¹⁶

A whole-youth approach

Employability programming can offer young Syrian refugees a chance to secure the skills and attributes that can lift them beyond informal or subsistence-level jobs. Just as importantly, these programs can be a means for refugees to access opportunities for growth in other areas of their lives. The focus of whole-youth programming is broader than a set of skills considered directly tied to employability (e.g., technical knowledge, educational qualifications, or basic soft skills). Instead, whole-youth programs attend in equal measure to the personal and social development of young people by improving a host of other intersecting soft skills and foundational personal attributes.¹⁷ Whole-youth employability programs consider social connection, community belonging, physical and mental health, cultural ability, self-confidence and efficacy, intellectual ability, hope in the future, and other factors that build long-term resilience.¹⁸

A program focused solely on teaching the technical skills for computer-repair, for example, could miss factors that profoundly influence the ability of youth to take full advantage of that program and the improved job prospects it offers. In contrast, the scope of a whole-youth development program might encompass weekly training-group debriefs or social-hours (fostering belonging and connection); moderated team-building and team-work activities (fostering interpersonal ability); culture nights, group field trips, or book clubs (fostering cultural ability); or public health guest-speakers (fostering physical health). To be sure, it is neither realistic nor appropriate for your program or program staff to be capable or qualified to address every aspect of development (mental health care needs especially should only be addressed through partnerships with qualified experts). Nevertheless, careful reflection about how your program takes place (i.e., with whom, where, how long, and through what systems), can point toward ways to address non-employment related aspects of life at the same time.

TOOL 1.1

Elements of Development Framework

Integrated and supportive youth programming

Whole-youth programs are implemented through practical programmatic structures. They build in **opportunities** for Syrian youth to practice skills, take on leadership roles, discuss ideas, be creative, and build relationships. They ensure youth receive the key **services** that let them access the program itself, as well as the interpersonal and systemic **supports** they need to participate in a meaningful way.¹⁹

The “SOS” (Supports, Opportunities and Services) Framework shows how these structures work together in a whole-youth program. Through the SOS rubric, the program’s services (training materials, training plans, curricula, evaluation tools, and facilities) are joined with supports and opportunities (the program’s manner and delivery methods).²⁰ In this way, even a straightforward employment program can include opportunities for youth to participate, overcome challenges, form healthy relationships, and bond with staff and peers. Whole-youth programs offer more value to the development process of a young person than narrowly defined employability initiatives.²¹

TOOL 1.2

Supports, Opportunities and Services (SOS) Framework

Youth voice and participation

Programs for youth should incorporate youth voices when possible and appropriate. In practice, this means youth have a measure of choice in the types of programs they are offered, as well as a voice in the way programs are managed and how decisions are made.²² Integrating the voices of young refugees into your program can provide them a robust platform to build a host of valuable competencies, including those particularly affected by crisis.²³ Doing so in a way that is meaningful and respectful to youth participants is of primary concern; it demands thoughtful consideration and planning, and significant buy in across stakeholders.

Appropriate use of youth voice (i.e., youth participation or youth engagement) should reflect both who the young participants are and how much support they will be offered. Consider the young person's personal characteristics (age, stage of cognitive development), their ability (experience, training, preparedness, motivation, interest, and self-confidence), the program's capacity (adults' ability/interest/willingness to support, oversee and coach youth; and organizational culture/rules) and importantly, the scope of the program (program goals and objectives, and the role of youth voice in achieving those goals).

Though meaningful youth participation takes many forms, it seldom happens by accident. Program implementers must intentionally build spaces for youth to give feedback, participate, and influence the program in some measure. Participation might resemble youth outreach meetings, youth program review boards, youth "junior assessors" in market assessments, youth board members, or youth peer trainers or mentors.²⁴ In a context where youth refugees feel robbed of power and belonging, youth voice programming can help them feel effective and important- more than simply beneficiaries of your program.²⁵

TOOL 1.3

Youth Participation Assessment Tool

TOOL 1.4

Framework for Youth Participations Levels ("Hart's Ladder")

Barriers to access and participation

Youth refugees may face obstacles other groups of young people do not when it comes to accessing your program. Some obstacles will stem from the day-to-day realities of many refugees, such as whether they live in a home that is comfortable and distraction-free, have access to services to meet their basic needs, feel at ease interacting across cultures, have work-appropriate clothing, or can overcome transit and scheduling constraints.²⁶

Consequently, a critical aspect of your work will be recognizing, assessing and addressing these extra-program factors. Your first step should be identifying the barriers to access that are relevant for the youth refugees in your group. Based on this, you can modify your programming or secure additional partnerships.

TOOL 1.5

Solution Matrix for Participation Barriers

Accessible and inclusive programming for diverse youth

Youth are not homogenous. Even narrowly defined groups like Syrian youth refugees are comprised of other subsets of youth whose educational or familial backgrounds, disability status, or sexual or gender identity may present barriers to access.²⁷ Young female refugees, for example, often experience time and mobility constraints - related to social responsibilities or expectations- that can be exacerbated by the displacement experience.²⁸ Though seldom intentional, your program may make it harder for these groups to participate in your activities because of the way it is advertised, the location in which it takes place, the recruitment and selection methods you employ, or even the type of language your staff use.

It may be impractical to do away with every obstacle facing every group. That said, a self-evaluation often highlights quick fixes that are well within reach. Addressing even minor details - extending hours, fixing a broken light in outdoor spaces, creating and posting rules, or drafting a non-discrimination policy- might expand the reach of your program. Better understanding these challenges will help you modify your program to be appropriate and accessible for a larger share of youth participants.²⁹

TOOL 1.6

Factors Affecting Vulnerability of Female Youth Refugees

TOOL 1.7

Checkup for Intentionally Inclusive and Accessible Programs

Problem analysis for focused programs

A broad and intersecting array of challenges confront youth refugees seeking employment, and the scope of the issue can seem overwhelming. Analyzing and specifying the problem you want to address will help you know where to begin, or how to focus your implementation strategy if your program is already underway.

A “problem tree analysis” (otherwise known as situational analysis or problem analysis) can let you visualize the causes and effects of the problem confronting you. Doing so helps you stay realistic about what your program can reasonably achieve (and what it can’t) and be maximally effective in a short period of time, without compromising quality. The exercise will help your team specify your program’s “angle” by pinpointing the issue you feel most capable of addressing. For instance, you might focus your analysis on identifying the primary causes and effects of low *female* participation and creating targeted interventions to respond to that issue.

Such an exercise is especially valuable in an environment like refugee response, which is characterized by multi-level challenges, accelerated implementation timelines, and pressure to produce quick wins.³⁰ Moreover, having clear objectives lets you set and communicate the right expectations to participants.

TOOL 1.8

Problem Tree Exercise and Analysis

UNIT 2: UNDERSTAND THE LANDSCAPE

The ecosystem of individuals refugee services in your country is likely broad, diverse and interconnected, with actors spread across multiple sectors – each with their own goals, programs and partnerships.³¹

What's more, any person or group affected by the issue of refugee employment and integration – including youth refugees themselves - should be considered a stakeholder for your program. Dedicating time to developing a working map of your ecosystem will position your program to identify risks early and take advantage of partnership prospects – a critical part of making a whole-youth approach function. Approaching this task systematically - by first brainstorming, mapping, and analyzing- will demand few resources upfront, and simplify choices about where to focus research and relationship building efforts later on.

[KEY RECOMMENDATIONS]

1. Map potential stakeholders from across sectors, and organize them based on their ability to support or influence the project in a meaningful way.
2. Identify the best approach for obtaining and using market data in program design and implementation.
3. Investigate how youth refugees operate in your market, including their motivations and constraints.
4. Understand the benefits and challenges of participatory assessment.

Brainstorm, analyze and prioritize stakeholders

Stakeholders for your youth refugee employment program can include any groups or individuals that have the motivation and resources to help refugees integrate into new communities and rebuild their career paths. Promoting youth refugee employment will appeal to an array of potential supporters, each with their own reason(s) for getting involved – whether to find qualified employees, ensure equitable distribution of resources, or increase local social cohesion. Whatever the reason, taking a wide-angle perspective lets you identify potential partnerships from every corner and construct a comprehensive picture of the system surrounding your project.

³²

Brainstorming will uncover relevant actors as diverse as community organizers, faith leaders, youth networks, local political leaders, government officials, education professionals, social service providers, small businesses, trade associations, and existing projects of other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community-serving organizations (CSOs). You can organize the results of your brainstorm by profiling stakeholders based on several domains, including their level of interest in the issue, how their goals align with yours, and the resources they can contribute.³³

Further mapping these stakeholders by their power and interest can narrow down those who are worth the effort of engaging in partnership or collaboration. These exercises can be carried out to inform new partnerships or checkup on existing relationships and reprioritize resources.

TOOL 2.1

Stakeholder Bubble Cloud

TOOL 2.2

Stakeholder Analysis Framework

TOOL 2.3

Power/Importance Mapping

Market data to inform programming

Youth refugees need employment programs that offer tangible value and set realistic career expectations. They want help embarking on improved career pathways that lift them beyond inconsistent or subsistence-level jobs. Therefore, they want programs that align with local market trends, now and into the future.³⁴

The technical and sectoral focal areas of your program should be chosen, examined, and re-examined in light of the information you collect about your local market (i.e., labor demand).³⁵ Every program will be different, and how you approach gathering and integrating market data will vary based on several factors (e.g., availability and appropriateness of other data sources, scope and timing of your program, stage of implementation, level of control over the training offering, and human and financial resources). Moreover, your program will be implemented in an environment where a sense of urgency - in addition to time, budget, and relationship constraints – may limit how many resources you can devote to getting data about the market.

Conducting a formal and in-depth market assessment will not always be possible or even appropriate. Indeed, much basic information might be accessible through relatively low-cost, readily available sources and methods (e.g., existing labor market studies, university research department data, public agency websites and labor ministry publications, interviews with colleagues, chamber of commerce information, United Nations' office resources, or NGO websites and publications).³⁶ While it cannot replicate the value of a formal, scientific labor market study, making critical use of available resources is a lean way to start understanding market dynamics. Depending on your constraints, you will ideally supplement this with more resource-intensive methods of market analysis, such as engaging external consultants, or arranging and conducting more primary source interviews and in-depth market observations.³⁷

TOOL 2.4

Check List for Market Data Approaches

Key youth refugee questions

Whichever way you create your snapshot of market conditions, it will be accurate and valuable for your program only if it also reflects the perceptions and experiences of youth refugees (i.e., labor supply). Youth often have unique interests and skill sets that make them a better fit for specific niches in the labor market.

They also experience constraints on their ability to access and succeed in formal jobs, such as lack of control over their time, resources, and decisions, and the negative effects of “adultist” (prejudiced) views and attitudes.³⁸ These constraints are magnified for young refugees, who face additional legal, cultural and social barriers their host country youth counterparts may not.

You can triangulate the experiences of youth refugees using a variety of methods (e.g., desk research, focus groups, advisory councils, surveys, semi-directed interviews, and key-informant interviews).³⁹ To be valuable for your intervention, make sure your youth refugee snapshot illuminates aspects of their lives both directly and indirectly related to employability (e.g., household context, home life, legal constraints, financial situation, social and emotional life, daily habits, cross-cultural interactions, job and education experience, and youth subgroup/minority experience).

TOOL 2.5

Framework for Youth Assessment

TOOL 2.6

Guidance for Gender Sensitive Programming

Youth engagement in market assessment

Your program can build in opportunities for youth refugees to be involved in assessing your local market. Doing so creates an added space where youth can build skills and relationships while taking on meaningful roles and tasks.⁴⁰ Being challenged to participate in an important effort like market assessment can offer youth first hand exposure to career tracks, and create a transformational effect on skills and aptitudes (e.g., self-confidence, self-efficacy, sense of agency, and skills like teamwork, cooperation, critical observation and analysis).⁴¹ Involving youth in your market assessment can also improve the type of information you gather (e.g., more youth-focused, granular, and actionable) and benefit your collection process overall (e.g., larger and more culturally diverse team to make market observations, collect and analyze resources and data, and connect with a wide array of employers and stakeholders).⁴²

Importantly, involving youth should never be used for participation’s sake; it should be a part of your process only if it is meaningful for the young people involved, contributes to your research objectives, and can be deployed with care and respect.⁴³ Youth participation activities should be designed in light of the youth-participation factors discussed in Unit 1, and so tasks will vary significantly (e.g., youth develop or provide input into research questions, help with locating or reviewing source material, provide light data analysis support, assist with or co-conduct a focus group, perform direct market observations, interview or call employers, accompany or assist professional assessors, or perform a mid-program check up with employers).⁴⁴ Finally, youth participants should always be thoroughly vetted and richly supported with training, and coaching, and deployed through careful groupings and pairings, equipped with user-friendly and adapted research tools, and allotted extra time and resources to carry out the task.⁴⁵

TOOL 2.7

Youth Interactive Market Assessment Tool

UNIT 3: INCLUSIVE MESSAGES AND STRONG RELATIONSHIPS

While actors like NGOs, faith-based charities, or vocational training providers may already be doing work related to yours and share similar objectives, others will need to be convinced why supporting refugee employment is in their best interest.

You should be prepared to motivate hesitant stakeholders by demonstrating the value of the partnership you propose and have a plan for maintaining it. Further, your activities should be framed within a compelling, positive message, based on facts and centered on the strengths and assets of young refugees.⁴⁶ This message should arise from your in-depth understanding of the pre and post migration experiences of the youth you serve, and tied to a deeper message of social inclusion and equity. Doing so will position you to support Syrian youth and develop fruitful and sustainable relationships with your partners and community stakeholders.

[KEY RECOMMENDATIONS]

1. Build the capacity of your staff to work across cultures with ease and competence.
2. Share a strengths-based message that highlights the win-win benefits of refugee employment programming.
3. Adopt a do-no-harm approach to programming that also addresses host-country needs and sentiments.
4. Identify specific points of contact (on your staff and your partner's) to build and maintain communication channels.
5. Sustain partnerships by understanding the incentives and needs of stakeholders.

Build cultural competence

Syrian youth refugees need caring and supportive adults in their lives, and the criteria for the adults who staff your program should be high. Even personnel who do not interface with youth refugees frequently - administrators, program designers or finance managers- should understand and meet certain standards for cultural competence.⁴⁷ More than cultural sensitivity or cultural awareness, cultural competence indicates an ability to manage one's own preconceptions, and work easily across cultures with respect and openness. Getting culturally competent and caring adults to staff your program is critical to making it a safe and inviting place for young refugees to focus on learning and growth. The best way to help staff internalize this approach to youth work is through dedicated training and reflection around cultural appreciation.⁴⁸

TOOL 3.1

(Youth) Cultural Appreciation and Value Exercise

TOOL 3.2

Culturally Competent Youth Work Principles

Understand the context to focus your message

If allowed the opportunity, youth refugees can enrich their host communities by contributing new perspectives and unique assets that have been shaped by their experiences. Oftentimes these same qualities can make them strong employees (e.g., resourcefulness, resiliency, flexibility, creativity, bilingualism, cross-cultural fluency, appreciation for education, and a strong incentive to retain employment.)⁴⁹

Nevertheless, refugee youth are more likely than comparable groups of young people to encounter discrimination in the workplace tied to prejudgments about their national background, economic status, traumatic experiences, cultural differences, or language ability.⁵⁰ They may find themselves the target of local resentment around job-competition or discover that local authorities and agency representatives are unwilling to defend their rights adequately.⁵¹

Considering this, your program should be grounded in specific, nuanced facts about the experiences of the young people you serve. This information will help you humanize the stories of young refugees in a way that is more powerful than platitudes or generalities. A youth-only focus group, conducted by a skilled facilitator, is an opportunity for Syrian youth to share and discuss their experiences (e.g., the perceptions Syrian youth have about themselves, their relationships with stakeholders, and how pre-judgements about their community affect their ability to get a foothold in the workforce).

TOOL 3.3

Youth Refugee Focus Group Guide

TOOL 3.4

Common Employer Perceptions of Youth

Compelling message, inclusive approach

Syrian youth refugees may lack the tools or social access to create and communicate their own positive narrative.⁵² On top of that, many stakeholders will spend little time keeping abreast of refugee issues, and instead be susceptible to whatever messages and imagery prevail in your community. For instance, employers might be reluctant to engage Syrian youth because of ideas about the extensive paperwork involved in doing so, underestimation of their skill sets, hesitation about host-community backlash, or the assumption that these youth will go back to their country and leave employment anyway.⁵³ The preceding exercises in this unit will prepare you to respond to many of these arguments with facts to the contrary.

Besides employers, host-county families and youth job seekers may not see much value in supporting refugee programming either. They may even actively oppose or resent your efforts and see them as diverting needed resources away from their own community.⁵⁴ The seriousness and potential impact of these views requires that you treat them with sensitivity. Your program should adopt a “do no harm” approach, which focuses on understanding and mitigating unintended consequences which can worsen the situation for youth refugees.⁵⁵ To start, create channels early and often to foster refugee/host-community connection, exchange, dialogue, collaboration, and collective problem solving.⁵⁶ This will make your program more credible and equitable, and will help to combat the rumors, misinformation, and fear, which can have an isolating and “othering” effect on Syrian youth refugees.⁵⁷

It is important your program adopt a positive, authentic, and clear message that describes the value of your work and how it can translate to positive outcomes for the entire community. Since refugee economic integration demands society-wide action, your message should be rooted in deeper or longer-term goals (e.g., social cohesion, long-term stability, and equity) that go beyond immediate needs or stakeholder self-interest.⁵⁸ In practice, you should create and formalize a strategic communication plan, including talking points adjusted to each sector or main stakeholder group and instructions for when and how often these should be communicated. Make sure that everyone in the organization – from leadership to staff – understands and is ready to communicate your message.

TOOL 3.5**Message Defining Exercise****TOOL 3.6****Advice for Do-No-Harm Programming**

Maintain healthy relationships with stakeholders

Effectively sharing your message and championing youth refugees relies on your team being credible and reliable partners to your stakeholders. This means being direct about the goals of your program and the values guiding your work, transparent about your model and methods, and consistent in carrying out the role you create for yourself in the partnership structure.⁵⁹ You should budget and staff the work of partnership maintenance adequately, promise only outputs or outcomes you can realistically achieve, and preserve a positive focus on youth refugees as the program rolls out.⁶⁰

Key stakeholders will shift as the program evolves (e.g., a university research department could be key during a market assessment process, and an employer HR department would be central during internships or job shadowing). Consequently, it is important that you map out not only who will be involved but also how their involvement will change according to project phase.⁶¹ Further, you should identify and prioritize specific points of contact within each partner organization with whom you will maintain open lines of communication, given your relationships will live at the person-to-person level. Finally, designate a relationship manager(s) on your staff with the skills and willingness to manage and document these relationships, and share information about them with the whole team.⁶²

TOOL 3.7**Tip Sheet for Collaboration with Stakeholders (Private Sector)**

UNIT 4: EMPLOYABILITY PROGRAMMING

Learning and training resources lie at the heart of your employability program and should cover a balanced cross-section of skill and competency groups.⁶³ Yet high quality training resources, while crucial, rely on the right methods and models to bring them to life. In other words, the way your content is used and disseminated (i.e., when, how frequently, in what environments, through what systems, and with whom) is as important to achieving good outcomes for youth as good content.⁶⁴

High-quality resources and learner-centered methods offer your youth refugee program a parallel opportunity to cultivate other elements of development without distracting from - and in fact supporting - the task of building up job skills and aptitudes.

[KEY RECOMMENDATIONS]

1. Create a program environment that is welcoming, youth friendly and safe.
2. Create a holistic menu of services that includes learning experiences in primary and secondary (supporting) skill groups.
3. Use updated and engaging training content and curricula (for classroom-based learning) and combine content areas into a well-rounded training package.
4. Employ trainers that understand learner-centered, youth centered, interactive and empowering teaching styles.

A supportive and welcoming learning environment

The setting you create for your program should make young trainees eager to learn there. It should make them feel safe attending lessons, stimulated and engaged, encouraged to ask questions and experiment, and comfortable sharing feedback and reflections.⁶⁵ This atmosphere is vital to creating safe spaces where youth refugees permit themselves to (re)engage with the learning process.⁶⁶

You can develop this environment by keeping your program learner-centered and youth-friendly. A learner-centered training approach incorporates sharing and interactivity into the classroom through a variety of methods (e.g., open discussions, role play, stories and case studies, project-based activities, group work, presentations, opportunities for skills application and practice, and peer-to-peer mentoring and training).⁶⁷ Youth-friendly spaces and classrooms are physically inviting and welcoming for young people (i.e., safe, well-lit, cheerful, well-decorated, clear signage, publicized rules and norms, and spaces for meetings, discussion, and collaboration).⁶⁸ See also: Unit 1 for tips on inclusive programming.

TOOL 4.1

Learning Environment Questionnaire

A holistic program model

Whole-youth employability programs for refugees should offer a comprehensive blend of components that connect in a logical way and use multiple pathways to build a cross-section of skills.⁶⁹ Your program should be multilayered, providing diverse opportunities and channels for learning across a continuum of competency areas such as basic (primary) skills training, core employment-related skills training, complementary practical

elements, and additional orientation and enrichment opportunities.⁷⁰ Each level or group of components should incorporate diverse delivery channels and contexts (e.g., in-class, extracurricular, co-learning groups, peer mentoring, etc.) See also: Tool 4.1 Learning Environment Checklist.

Furthermore, organizing these components logically and ensuring they work together effectively requires thoughtful planning (e.g., decisions about length, timing and frequency of each component, size and makeup of training groups, trainers and staff involved, and training facilities and locations).⁷¹ Planning is particularly crucial in cases where some components will be offered “in house” and others through partners or consortia (e.g., vocational training institutes, language providers, job-counseling agencies). Finally, a logical and organized structure, communicated clearly to refugees and their families in advance, prevents them from being confused or dissatisfied later with a program that does not match their goals.⁷²

TOOL 4.2

Sample Program Components

TOOL 4.3

Program Component Mapping

Effective selection and combination of training content

Defining your training model must go hand in hand with choosing your content– or the package of resources underpinning your training activities (e.g., training manuals, operational guides, student workbooks, standards, toolkits, and curricula), and the skill areas they cover.⁷³ Good content will be closely aligned with the professional profiles and associated skills found in your local market and focused on practical application of those skills (i.e., “know how”).⁷⁴

Choose content written in a style that engages youth, targets locally relevant sectors, covers a comprehensive set of skill groups, and is as up-to-date as possible. Content that meets these standards will help you keep staff and instructors engaged, while offering youth refugees a reason to stick with your program in light of other competing responsibilities (e.g. family, work, and daily life).

Working with an at-need population like youth refugees makes it especially important your training is targeted and relevant to the needs and profiles of the youth in your program. For instance, you may put more weight on literacy and numeracy skills for younger refugees with little formal education, focus more on professional work skills for young people with prior formal work experience, or emphasize interpersonal skills for youth with little team-work experience. A core part of your offering should be life skills (i.e., behavioral or non-cognitive skills), which help young refugees behave and communicate in a way that promotes their personal and professional success.⁷⁵ Strong employment-related life skills let young refugees make best use of their technical education and perform well in whatever job they secure.⁷⁶

TOOL 4.4

Example Employment-related Skill Groupings

Competent and caring trainers

The quality of instruction you offer is directly tied to whether young people leave your program having mastered skills and better equipped for job success. Trainers who can employ a variety of training styles and methods are foundational to quality instruction. Further, a positive and respectful relationship with a competent and attentive trainer can be effective in helping the youth reconstruct interpersonal capital and trust, in addition to gaining key job skills. Your trainers should know how to use interactive and learner-centered approaches to transmit knowledge effectively and create an empowering classroom environment for youth refugees.⁷⁷

While your program may be offered through partnerships, in part (i.e., technical or language training provided through a partner organization), you should control which trainers staff your program as much as possible. You can do so by defining and formalizing job descriptions that set selection criteria and priority key skill sets (e.g., empathy, interactive training ability, cross cultural fluency, language skills, and clear communication skills).⁷⁸ Further, you should formalize a process for periodically evaluating and training your trainers to ensure their skills and performance remain high quality (e.g., through Training of Trainers workshops, one-on-one coaching, and professional development).⁷⁹

TOOL 4.5

Trainer Criteria and Qualifications

Critical complementary training: language

Youth refugees who are not fluent in their host-country's language (the "target" language) are at a disadvantage when it comes to securing stable and decent work.⁸⁰ However, in many cases, refugees and their families had little time to prepare for relocation, making it unlikely they received prior training in the target language.⁸¹ Poor language skills will handicap youth refugees' search for quality jobs, regardless of their other skill profiles. It will also rob them of negotiating power when they do find jobs, since they will have less leverage to demand favorable terms around working conditions, working hours, pay scales, benefits, and contract durations.

Therefore, it is critical you plan to address the language needs of your youth participants, whether through modified trainings, additional trainings, strategic partnerships, or a combination of methods. Depending on your expertise, program model and available partnerships, you may offer the training in-house as a supplement, concurrent (integrated) with technical training, online or through tutoring, on the job site using job specific vocabulary, or as a pre-training intensive immersion course.⁸² Importantly, the same challenges that prevent refugees from accessing jobs or job programming can impinge on their ability to take part in language training. For instance, language training may be offered at times or locations that are difficult to access, paid language training may not be affordable, and free language training may not be of sufficient quality to be worth the time investment.⁸³ You should choose your language-training model strategically in order to provide the most value to participants and mitigate obstacles like time, income, mobility, and social constraints.⁸⁴

TOOL 4.6

Tips and Guidance for Language Training

UNIT 5: LONG TERM JOB MARKET INTEGRATION

Securing a formal job or (re) entering the job market can be difficult for young people in any circumstance. It can present a particular challenge for young refugees, who may be less familiar with local labor laws and work cultures, or accustomed to different job-search practices. Given this, your program must complement skills training with comprehensive services to support job integration and career planning.⁸⁵

This area of programming should feature supplemental support for job-search, attainment and retention, as well as practical, work-based learning opportunities.⁸⁶ This is where youth can apply the technical knowledge they acquired during classroom-based portions of your program and call into service the behavioral skills, professional job skills, and work attitudes they have been cultivating. When offered in a structured and whole-youth manner, these activities can help youth get recognized job experience and provide a controlled on-ramp to the labor market.

[KEY RECOMMENDATIONS]

1. Upskill youth in job-seeking and retention skills through targeted training and support.
2. Create a work-based program component that includes skills-application.
3. Offer extended support to youth refugees during and after work-based learning components.
4. Provide career guidance/planning services adapted to the needs of youth refugees.
5. Support youth refugees to (re) certify/qualify educational or employment history.

Practical skills application for youth refugees

Practical application or work-based learning components, such as apprenticeships, internships, and job-placements allow youth to internalize and master the skills and personal attributes they have worked to develop during your program.

Employers will be a key interlocutor during the skills-application phase in particular. As such, being clear about how your program will provide value to employers (and vice versa) – and making this known to both parties – can ensure the relationship remains positive and leads to better outcomes for refugee youth.⁸⁷

TOOL 5.1

Win-Win Employer-Program Relationships

TOOL 5.2

Internship Value for Youth and Employers

Prepare youth to link with employers

Matching the right candidates with the right jobs (or internships, apprenticeships, etc.) based on their skills and interests should be a core function of your intervention.⁸⁸ That said, your youth refugee employment program should be more than a simple job-placement system that maintains and updates information about current job openings and matches youth with employers on a rolling basis. Rather, your program should strive for a whole-youth approach to work-placement, by pairing youth/employer matchmaking with additional preparatory services.

These add-on services and trainings should focus on improving job-search, attainment and retention skills (e.g., mock interview opportunities, resume building support, professional etiquette classes, ensuring access to professional clothing, workweek scheduling and planning, and career track exposure and career planning). By arranging these ancillary trainings and support activities, your program will offer youth refugees a more meaningful chance to get and keep a job.⁸⁹

TOOL 5.3

Ways to Upskill Youth for the Job Search and Job Site

Extended support for placement success

Youth refugees need rich support systems that carry on outside of the classroom, during and after work-based learning components. This is especially critical for youth who have had minimal experience with employment in the formal sector, or who receive little professional guidance from their families or social networks.⁹⁰ Since follow up support for young refugees may be more involved than with other populations, you should allocate enough resources to underwrite your activities, and designate staff leads who are committed, skilled and trusted by the beneficiaries they are serving.⁹¹

The foundation of your extended support should be a centralized tracking system (whether a spreadsheet or database) which maintains information about each young person and their experiences during and after the placement activity. Further, you should organize a series of heavy and light touch points and support mechanisms for youth (e.g., in person follow-up coaching visits, phone and email check ins, coupled with social groups, peer and alumni networks, counseling or support groups, employee/employer conflict mediation services, and top-up trainings for new skill needs). Your program should also design employer-facing touch points that let you gather their feedback about youth performance and monitor to ensure employers are fulfilling their commitments to those youth.⁹²

TOOL 5.4

Extended Support Methods: Before, During and After Placement

Career guidance services adapted to refugees

Young refugees can feel pressure to find employment as soon as possible after relocating in order to start contributing to household income.⁹³ The jobs most readily available to them may be in informal or secondary labor markets within the refugee community; such jobs are often low skilled and low paying, and offer little in the way of job security or safe working environments.⁹⁴ Further, these jobs may not reflect the aptitudes or aspirations of the young person, and may, in fact represent an abrupt departure from their pre-migration career plans. Career orientation and guidance services might appear idealistic or even irrelevant to some refugees focused on the short-term goal of securing employment and earning income. Yet appropriate and adapted career guidance can help youth refugees feel more secure, look beyond current setbacks, and anchor their job choices in a future orientation.

Career guidance services adapted for refugees should couple an aspirational outlook with a clear-eyed acknowledgement of their day-to-day reality. The focus of this approach, similar to social cognition career theory,⁹⁵ should be to motivate youth to once again believe in positive future outcomes, help them (re) build a sense of self-efficacy, and guide them through practical exercises to create benchmarks and objectives. Main activities might include structured opportunities for skill and accomplishment building, constructive feedback sessions, connection with career mentors/coaches, connection to positive career role models/success stories, coaching to set career goals and benchmarks, and access to high quality and accurate job information resources.⁹⁶

Finally, your approach to career guidance should be modulated and targeted to individual participants (i.e., refugees from some backgrounds might be struggling with broken plans and disappointment; others might have no experience with career planning at all and feel lost and overwhelmed). Offering appropriate career guidance can provide a powerful antidote to negativity, and help refugees restore order and momentum to their lives.

TOOL 5.5

Guidance for Providing Career Guidance Adapted to Youth Refugees

(Re)- Qualifying and certifying skills and competencies

Syrian youth refugees might struggle to demonstrate their educational experience or training qualifications with formal documentation.⁹⁷ Roughly one fifth of surveyed Syrian youth applying for jobs in Istanbul were unable to prove their work history or educational experiences, provide certification of actual skills and competencies, or effectively transfer previous skills qualifications to their new work setting. Such challenges degrade the ability of young refugees to integrate into the labor force and make them increasingly vulnerable to discrimination or mistreatment in the workplace when they do.⁹⁸

Supporting youth refugees to become (re) qualified, to validate their skillsets, or achieve formal recognition for their work experience should be an integral component of your program.⁹⁹ Before anything else, you should ensure your team understands the problem clearly (i.e., lack of documentation altogether, incomplete verification, incompatible or non-transferrable qualifications, etc.). Next, develop a portfolio of the evidence and identification the youth does possess, and conduct an informal assessment of the young person's skills and experience.¹⁰⁰ Based on this, help them to reach out to national authorities (i.e., IKSUR in Turkey) who have the power to legally recognize their qualifications.

TOOL 5.6**Five Tips on (Re) certification and (Re) qualification****TOOL 5.7****(Re) certification and (Re) qualification Assessment**

UNIT 6: REFUGEE RIGHTS AND DECENT WORK

Syrian refugees have the right to decent jobs that offer equal rights and provide a pathway to integration into their new society.¹⁰¹ Gearing your program only toward helping young refugees get a job – any job – is not enough. Your program has an obligation to see that these jobs meet minimum standards for decent work, and that youth are participating in a labor market free from exploitation and abuse.

Doing so requires that you raise the awareness of young job seekers (both refugees and host country youth), community actors, and business employers about their obligations to respect and advance human and labor rights in your country;¹⁰² this effort will be informed by the message you develop and share (see also Unit 3).

[KEY RECOMMENDATIONS]

1. Thoroughly understand the prevailing legal framework in your country surrounding refugee work.
2. Designate staff to be experts about this legal framework, keep up-to-date about changes, and educate others in the organization.
3. Adopt and enforce standards for decent work and inform and educate youth refugees (and host country youth) about their rights.
4. Promote refugee labor rights by adopting an inclusive, “rights for all” approach to advocacy, awareness raising, communications and partnership.

Further, your organization should set standards and policies about the kinds of work both you and refugees can expect, share these standards and expectations with others, and ensure that partners are adhering to them through ongoing monitoring. This empowers refugees and gives them confidence that your program will address their employment needs in an ethical way.

Master the policy environment

The International Labor Organization (ILO) sets legal provisions around the rights of all workers, including all youth, to *decent work*. These provisions describe both the right to work and the labor rights workers have while engaged in work, such as the right to adequate wages, fair treatment, non-discrimination, and protection from exploitation and abuse.¹⁰³

While an international framework exists, policy application at the national level varies; in fact, few if any of the countries with the largest Syrian refugee populations provide a legal structure that lets refugees realize their work rights fully. National policy may have gaps around discrimination against refugees (no explicit prohibition), refugee status (no explicit legal status or classification), legal remedies (no right to recourse against maltreatment), work permit regulation (weak or no legal permissions), legal enforcement (inconsistent or unequal application of the law), or other areas.¹⁰⁴

Therefore, first ensure your team has a sophisticated understanding of the policy environment around refugee work rights in your country, including residency and employment permissions, and their practical effect. Doing so will equip you to provide Syrian youth and other stakeholders with the sound advice they need to make informed decisions.

TOOL 6.1**Refugee Labor Rights: Legal and Practical Considerations****TOOL 6.2****Standards for Decent Work**

Youth, the community, and work rights for all

In many contexts, both refugee and host-country youth are poorly informed about their available labor rights, meaning they offer little practical benefit. For example, though Syrian refugee youth in Turkey are legally eligible to apply for a work permit six months after obtaining a temporary status card, 37 percent did not know what a work permit was or how to get one, and only 4 percent had applied.¹⁰⁵ This indicates a breakdown in communication between youth refugees and the creators of legal systems designed to protect them.

Therefore, your program should take steps to advocate, communicate and raise awareness about workers' rights and standards, and do so in the context of workplace rights for all.¹⁰⁶ Programming that focuses on improving the knowledge gap around labor rights for everyone can more easily build a coalition of support and combat any perception of favoritism.¹⁰⁷ In practice this will involve creating inter-community spaces for dialogue around labor rights, such as networking events, town-hall discussions, parental engagement activities and workshops, and peer-to-peer sharing and mentoring opportunities.¹⁰⁸ Relationships and collaboration with specialized organizations and agencies (e.g., legal firms, advocacy and human rights organizations, labor and workplace regulatory public agencies) will be critical to guiding and training your own team as you raise awareness among others.

Syrian youth refugees need to be prepared to exercise their labor rights in practice, in addition to being informed about them.¹⁰⁹ You should offer supplemental orientation and training on the practical side of labor rights (e.g., the steps to obtain a permit, potential logistical obstacles, techniques for navigating job offers and contracts, tips for negotiating salary, working hours and working conditions, and help reproducing needed documentation).

TOOL 6.3**Strategies for Promoting Work-related Rights for All**

CONCLUSION

The six units and associated tools comprising this document should help implementers evaluate their interventions, raise stakeholder awareness, spark dialogue and conversation within their teams, and promote a society-wide approach to employing and integrating Syrian youth refugees. This toolkit proposes a model for improved youth refugee employment programming: one that is holistic, based on rights and inclusion for all, anchored in meaningful partnerships with stakeholders, and centered on the power and potential of young people.

Implementers are recommended to integrate the following core principles into their programming:

- 1) **Whole youth:** Take a wide-angle view of employment readiness and a comprehensive approach to employment programming. See your work as a chance to offer youth refugees growth opportunities in a broad spectrum of intersecting skill and competency areas. Carry out this approach by constructing a rich and targeted array of activities, interventions and relationships that foster growth in areas both directly and indirectly related to employment.
- 2) **Assets, strength, and resiliency:** Assume that youth refugees have agency and power to lead their own process of personal and professional development. While not ignoring the real vulnerabilities and needs of youth refugees, explore instead how validating their experience and nurturing existing skills in an empowering environment can improve employment readiness.
- 3) **Youth voice:** Understand the power of active youth participation to restore a sense of empowerment, agency and value to young people who have experienced crisis. Explore meaningful and appropriate ways for youth to have influence and choice in the way your program is implemented and understand the power of these experiences to help build employment-relevant skills and aptitudes.
- 4) **Needs and barriers:** Understand the obstacles that the refugee experience presents for many youth on a daily basis. Acknowledge basic needs (shelter, security) and access barriers (logistical, financial, identity-based, cultural), and assess how they affect young people's ability to learn about your program and engage in a meaningful way. Offer solutions through modified programs or strategic partnerships.
- 5) **Socially and gender-inclusive:** Recognize that youth are not homogenous, and that youth refugee subgroups may face unique constraints to participating in your employability program related to their background, identity, social status, and other factors. Evaluate these constraints and modify your program to become appropriate and accessible for as many youth participants as possible.
- 6) **Culturally competent:** Make your program a safe and inviting place for young refugees by instituting an approach to cross-cultural youth work that is respectful, open, and free from judgment. Recognize that their culture is an essential and integral part of the identity of youth refugees, while acknowledging that the way they experience their culture may vary.

- 7) **Partnership focused:** Develop a coordinated approach to delivering services by collaborating with implementers across sectors and specialties. Identifying, communicating with, and maintaining relationships with relevant stakeholders is critical to creating an enabling environment for your whole-youth employability program.
- 8) **Decent employment:** Understand your obligation to ensure the jobs youth refugees secure meet minimum standards for decent work. Help youth refugees participate in a labor market free from exploitation and abuse by promoting a *workplace rights for all* approach and raising the awareness of youth refugees, employers, and the host community about employment rights in their country.
- 9) **Effective messaging:** Adopt and disseminate a compelling, positive message about the social and economic value of your work with refugees. Actively combat misinformation and preconceptions by highlighting accurate and humanizing information about youth refugees and their experiences.
- 10) **Do No Harm:** Understand and mitigate the potential unintended consequences of your program that could degrade relations between refugees and the host community or could otherwise worsen the status quo. You should design program activities in a way that is open to all (including host community members), avoids favoritism or exclusion, minimizes existing divisions or tensions, and enhances connection through opportunities for exchange, collaboration, and collective problem solving.
- 11) **Cohesive program models and content:** Organize a rich, thoughtful, and diverse blend of training and learning components that engage and stimulate youth on multiple levels, through various modalities and formats. Include technical skills training, integrated soft skills training, crosscutting, and basic skills training. Recognize the critical importance of language ability and training.
- 12) **Professionally oriented:** Offer youth a supportive pathway toward job market integration with practical and adapted career services, assistance obtaining (re) certification of qualifications, and orientation around host country work practices and culture. Provide work-based and placement-based skills application components that solidify skill acquisition, and rich, interpersonal support before, during, and after youth secure a job.

TOOLS

Tool 1.1 Elements of Development Framework

As youth develop into adults, they should experience or secure the collection of developmental elements shown in the framework below. This tool helps you to understand each element, identify which may need to be reinforced in the youth you serve, and how your program might address this need.

Your program may put direct focus on building “employability” skills; the array of aptitudes and attitudes below, however, influence and reinforce one another. By modifying or augmenting your program – often very slightly – you can make it richer and more valuable to youth refugees.

1. Based on your knowledge of your target youth group (supplemented through additional conversations, surveys, focus groups and observations), identify the degree to which they need opportunities to strengthen this element (not secure = high need; totally secure = low need).
2. Consider how feasible it would be for your program to address this need through modifying your services.
3. Select those elements that are ranked highly in both columns. (“Not secure” combined with “totally possible” points to a priority to address through programming).
4. Identify specific programmatic structures, services, or systems which could give youth the chance to build or achieve this element of development. (Note: Tool 1.2 will help you think through programmatic features)

Elements of Development			How securely do youth possess this aptitude or attitude?	How feasible is it for your program to address?	How specifically can your program support?
			1) totally secure 2) mostly secure 3) somewhat secure 4) not secure	1) not possible 2) somewhat possible 3) mostly possible 4) totally possible	(Activities, content, systems, relationships, policies, etc.)
IDENTITY	Belonging	Youth values, and feels valued by, others in the family and community.			
	Connection	Youth feels intimately attached to their family, cultural group, community, higher deity, etc.			
	Hope and Agency	Youth feels hope for success in the future, and that they have the capacity to succeed in life.			
	Responsibility and Control	Youth feels some control over daily events, and some autonomy /responsibility for their own actions.			
	Safety and Structure	Youth feels physically safe, and their daily lives have enough structure to allow them to plan.			
	Self-Worth	Youth feels they are a good, valuable person who contributes to people and situations around them			

Elements of Development Framework, continued.

ABILITY	Cultural Ability	Youth is able and motivated to respect and successfully navigate differences between other groups, backgrounds, traditions, etc.			
	Employability	Youth is able and motivated to gain the skills and competencies necessary to obtain and retain decent employment.			
	Intellectual Ability	Youth is able and motivated to learn, gain knowledge, use critical thinking, solve problems, and think creatively.			
	Mental Health	Youth is able and motivated to understand and regulate their emotions, cope with adversity, and care for their mental well-being.			
	Physical Health	Youth is able and motivated to care for their physical health now, and into the future.			
	Social Ability	Youth is able and motivated to work and live among others and forge and maintain meaningful relationships with other people.			

Tool 1.2 Supports, Opportunities and Services (SOS) Framework

The “SOS framework” is a practical tool for mapping the “how” of your program: the structures, systems, resources and relationships that will characterize it. The interlocking pieces of the SOS framework function cohesively to help your program work toward the goals (developmental elements) you have identified in Tool 1. Supports, Services and Opportunities are analogous to the walls and foundation of a house, combining to provide a stable and enriching environment in which youth refugees can mature and advance.

- Building in **opportunities** will address the need for young refugees to express their own ideas and creativity through discussion, application, relationship building, taking on leadership roles, belonging to groups, and critical reflection
- **Supports** address the need for young refugees to have supportive and caring adults in their lives, who provide motivation, encouragement, norm and boundary setting, directions, guidance, coaching and training.
- **Services** address the need of many young refugees for the basic inputs that allow programs to function and facilitate program access, such as informational and training resources, financial supports, transit, logistics, facilities, and basic life supports like food, housing and clothing.

Service type	Will youth have or receive this through one or more aspect(s) of my program?	Description of relevant program aspect
	1) never/not at all; 2) occasionally/somewhat; 3) often/mostly; 4) always/totally	(activity, partnership, etc.)
OPPORTUNITIES (The ways in which young experience active learning, critical thinking, expression, exploration, belonging, autonomy, responsibility)		
Reflect on, think critically about, and apply knowledge		
Learn and build skills actively (involving projects, activities, engagement with others)		
Practice and test new skills and knowledge		
Discuss, debate and express ideas, opinions and choices		
Express creativity and sense of play		
Explore new settings, people, places, situations		
Engage with community and family members		
Lead and take on defined roles and responsibilities		
Belong to and contribute to groups		
Perform acts of support or service to others or wider community		
Be employed/earn income		

Supports, Opportunities and Services (SOS) Framework, continued

SUPPORTS (The emotional, interpersonal, facilitative and strategic supports that young people receive or access, often from or through adult program staff or peers)		
Nurturing and caring		
Affirmation and validation		
Motivation and encouragement		
High-standards and expectations		
Boundaries, norms and rules		
Coaching, guidance, mentoring and constructive feedback		
Interactive skills and knowledge training		
SERVICES (tangible and intangible/ informational resources and services)		
Information		
Curricula and training resources, or non-interactive training		
Basic resources (food, clothing, housing)		
Financial resources (grants, tuition)		
Transportation		
Facilities		

Tool 1.3 Youth Participation Assessment Tool¹¹⁰

Youth participation in your programs should reflect the characteristics and ability of the young person, and the capacity, scope and goals of your program. The following organizational self-assessment tool can help your team understand the way and the degree to which youth are participating in your program.

Youth Involvement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Youth take lots of initiative working on projects.					
2. Youth are always busy with things to do.					
3. Youth arrive to meetings/events on time.					
4. Youth take ownership when responding to specific tasks.					
5. Youth rely on themselves to make key decisions.					
6. Youth always share ideas about things that matter to them.					
7. Youth help one another learn new skills.					
8. Youth are fully committed to their duties.					
9. Youth are very excited about their involvement with this project.					
10. Youth are involved at all levels of program development.					
Youth Engagement (within the Community)	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
11. Youth display a willingness to accept leadership responsibilities in their community.					
12. Youth have full access to information that is needed to make decisions.					
13. Youth express a genuine interest in the community.					
14. Youth display a desire to help others in their community.					
15. Youth display a desire to mentor other youth.					
16. Youth take part in discussions at community forums/hearings.					
17. Youth are applying what they learn by getting involved in other community activities.					
18. Youth take pride in their community.					
19. Youth seek the advice of adults in the community.					
20. Youth come up with their own ideas for improving the community.					
21. Youth are involved in several community-based projects.					
22. Youth express a sense of belonging toward their community.					
23. Youth are very concerned about community change.					

Youth Participation Assessment Tool, continued

Youth Retention	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
24. Youth are recruiting their peers to join the program.					
25. A majority of the projects are led by youth.					
26. Youth consult with adults on project activities.					
27. Staff/volunteers (adults) have the skills to serve as mentors to youth.					
28. The ideas of this project were generated mostly by youth.					
29. Most youth have no difficulty in getting to the meetings.					
30. Adults feel comfortable working with assertive youth.					
31. Youth make decisions based on their own experiences.					
32. Some youth have been involved in this project for one year or more.					
33. As older youth leave the program, they are replaced by their younger peers.					
34. Youth see this experience as a chance to socialize with friends.					
35. Youth choose to work on this project instead of other activities (playing sports, watching TV).					
36. Youth are routinely recognized for their accomplishments.					
37. Youth make efforts to attend every meeting.					
38. Most of the youth return to this program year after year.					
39. Youth are passionate about the issues addressed through this project.					
40. Youth recognize their strengths in working as a member of the team.					
41. Youth feel challenged to do their best.					

Tool 1.4 Framework for Youth Participation Levels (“Hart’s Ladder”)¹¹¹

This tool presents a framework for categorizing “levels” of youth voice, engagement, or participation. When youth have an active voice in programs, they are given opportunities to make choices about how they participate in activities, give meaningful input about the program, influence how the programs are run, or share in the leadership of and responsibility for the program.

Engagement Level	Rung	Meaning	What systems or activities has your project or organization instituted at this level?
Engagement “Youth as Partners”	8. Full Partnership	Youth initiate, lead and direct program activities, and share equal decision-making power with adults.	
	7. Youth-Driven	Youth initiate and lead activities or interventions and adults provide some support and advice.	
	6. Shared Decisions	Adults initiate the program, but youth can share in decisions about program activities.	
Partial Engagement “Youth as recipients”	5. Consulted & Informed	Adults lead the program, but young people give advice and input on program activities. They are informed how their input will be used, and the outcomes of the activity are shared with them.	
	4. Assigned & Informed	Adults lead the program and assign youth a specific role. Adults fully communicate to youth the purpose of the activity and of their involvement.	
Non-Engagement “Youth as Objects”	3. Tokenism	Adults lead the program, and youth representatives appear to be given a “voice” but youth have no meaningful choice in how they participate in the program.	
	2. Decoration	Adults use the presence of youth to “decorate,” or improve the appearance of, adult-led programs. Youth may understand the purpose of the activity but have no input.	
	1. Manipulation	Adults lead the program and require young people to participate in activities without considering what youth want. Youth do as directed without understanding the purpose of the activities and do not give input.	

Tool 1.5 Solution Matrix for Participation Barriers

Refugee youth may face important challenges to achieving even a basic level of participation in your employment program's activities. This solution matrix can help your organization identify and prioritize some of those common barriers to participation and access. These challenges are often the result of secondary or extra-program factors (basic needs issues, family environment, cross-cultural and social issues, health and emotional issues, or economic or logistical access issues). Nevertheless, they can significantly degrade refugees' ability to engage in and benefit from your program.

Based on your knowledge of your target participant group (supplemented by additional surveys, conversations and data collection), use the following solution matrix to analyze their participation barriers, prioritizing those which are most likely to occur, and most feasible for your program to address.

Participation barrier	Is this a barrier faced by youth in my program?	How feasible is it for your program to address?	Description of Solution
	1) totally 2) mostly 3) somewhat 4) not at all	1) not possible 2) somewhat possible 3) mostly possible 4) totally possible	(Activities, content, systems, relationships, policies, etc.)
Transport <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I cannot get to the program, or the location is too far away from me and from public transport. I don't feel safe taking public transport alone. The program is held in an unfamiliar or unsafe location. 			
Timing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The program or some of its activities are not offered at a convenient time for me (work conflicts, family responsibilities). The program does not provide flexible hours. 			
Family obligations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> My family objects/does not support my attending the program. I have household responsibilities and chores which pose a conflict. I have caregiving responsibilities for my younger siblings or older relatives. I don't have anyone to care for my child while I'm away. My primary care givers are gone or absent all or most of the time. 			

Solution Matrix for Participation Barriers, continued

Expenses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – I can't afford tuition, books or other education-related expenses. – I can't afford the cost of transport to get to the program. – I'm experiencing hunger and don't have enough to eat on a regular basis. – I can't afford presentable/business clothes or personal hygiene items. 			
Social or cross-cultural barriers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The trainer in my group does not seem to understand or respect my ethnicity or culture. – I feel ostracized by others in my training group because I belong to a minority group (gender, racial, disability, HIV status, sexual orientation, socio economic status). – I feel physically threatened or unsafe attending the program or some features of the program because of an aspect of my identity. – I'm not familiar/comfortable with the professional work culture (practices, policies, norms) in this country. – I don't understand the culture or language well enough to be comfortable attending the program. 			
Technology related <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – I don't have access to needed technology (computer, internet) at home. – I don't know much about how to use, or feel comfortable using computers/IT. 			
Mental and physical health** <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – I'm having trouble dealing with the stress or trauma of my experience. – I don't have a strong social/friend circle and it's making me feel lonely or depressed. – I have an addiction or substance abuse problem (drugs or alcohol). 			
Legal issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – I have a criminal record that might interfere with my employment. – I can't get my work authorizations and documentation sorted out. – I'm not aware of/don't understand how to access the social services that are available to me. 			
Education and learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – I have a learning disability. – I have large gaps in my academic knowledge/training. – I'm unable to document my education history. 			

*** Solution should be offered through or in partnership with qualified mental health practitioners.*

Tool 1.6 Factors Affecting Vulnerability of Female Youth Refugees¹¹²

Female Syrian youth can be disproportionately affected by the refugee experience in a way that makes it challenging for them to access the workforce or workforce programming. The factors contributing to this vulnerability may concern the way women operate in their home culture/ country and may be exacerbated by conditions in the host country. Some or all of the following conditions may affect young female Syrian refugees in your program. Considering this, you should be sure to explicitly consider these factors when looking at overall access barriers.

Factors Affecting Vulnerability	
Skill background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Less likely to have developed formal work-related skills – Less likely to be familiar with job-search or job-site protocols – Less likely to have prior experience/responsibility being breadwinner for family
Socio-cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Likely to have more recently arrived in the host country (likely to have stayed longer in the home country before leaving due to less danger from military conflict) – Less likely to have/have had opportunities to develop foreign language skills – Likely to have smaller social networks – Less likely to have opportunities to develop social networks through social / extracurricular programming – Fewer opportunities (both before and after relocating) to develop cross-cultural fluency
Visibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Home country norms around dress/behavior may make females more visible/obvious – Home country norms around dress/behavior may put females at greater vulnerability of harassment, violence or discrimination as a result
Mobility and Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Less likely to be in control of/have decision-making power over family finances – Face greater mobility constraints (cannot operate as easily outside of the home) – More likely to face constraints to accessing work or workforce programming that are related to safety, control of resources, etc.
Domestic life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – More likely to experience negative outcomes as a result of a shift in domestic dynamics (i.e., men more frequently at home, financial frustrations, change in roles and responsibilities) – More likely to experience gender-based violence as a result of a shift in domestic dynamics – More likely to have responsibilities at home which conflict with work or training – May experience expectations around gender norms that adhere to established patterns from the home country (i.e., that do not adapt to new displacement context)

Tool 1.7 Checkup for Intentionally Inclusive and Accessible Programs¹¹³

This tool illustrates the types of services or features that an intentionally inclusive program may offer. Making your program more inclusive begins with greater awareness of the obstacles youth refugee confront, which relate to their backgrounds, or lack (or presence) of certain program features. While it may not be feasible or relevant for your program to meet every standard below, becoming aware of these barriers lets you identify the ways you can modify your program to allow refugee youth of all backgrounds to feel safe and included.

Characteristics	Does this describe my program?	Can I modify my program to address?
	0) N/A 1) not at all 2) somewhat 3) mostly 4) totally	1) definitely 2) probably 3) maybe 4) unlikely
Friendliness and accessibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Program has convenient and flexible working hours, during times convenient to youth and families (evenings, weekends) – Verbal discourse and communication materials based on user-friendly (non-technical) language – Culturally diverse and representative imagery used in communications and décor (pictures, posters) – Written and enforced program rules aimed at maintaining a positive, tolerant and respectful environment (e.g., an antidiscrimination policy) – Staff trained in conflict resolution and management 		
Physical spaces <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Buildings and physical locations are accessible by people with reduced physical ability or mobility – Well-maintained, physically stable and safe facilities – Well-lit and safe outdoor spaces – Separate facilities (bathrooms, changing rooms) exist for different genders – Location is near to or accessible by public transportation – Includes spaces conducive to gathering/events/socializing – Clear and readable signage and labels (name tags, offices, etc.) 		
Extra services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Referrals to/opportunities for education on health issues (sexual and reproductive health, substance abuse, nutrition, mental health, SGBV) – Referrals to/opportunities for psychosocial support and counseling – Referrals to/opportunities for remedial education (basic literacy and numeracy training, language training, computer skills) – Provision or access to translation services for non-native speakers – Mechanisms, programs or systems for participants to receive small grants or petty cash support for miscellaneous needs and services (clothing, hygiene, transport) 		
Family and community relations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Opportunities for participants' family members to engage in training, dialogue, sensitization – Communication channels with families established and used to keep families informed, motivated and supportive – Community service and community involvement opportunities – Mechanisms for sharing and collecting feedback from youth (message board, complaint or suggestion box, user friendly phone system or website) 		

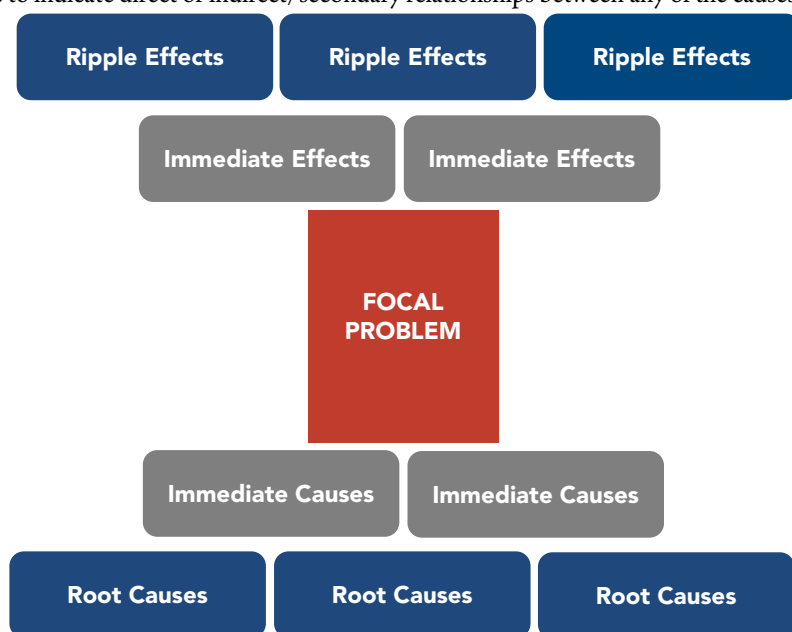
Checkup for Intentionally Inclusive and Accessible Programs, continued

Recreation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Cultural education activities (theater, dance, singing) – Opportunities for physical education or organized sports – Structured and regular opportunities for participants to socialize (social hours, group lunches) 		
Operations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Agency mission and goals are clearly posted – “Open door” policy for participants to meet with staff – A participant selection/recruitment system (criteria and processes) that is consistent, objective, unbiased and transparent – Written and enforced policies and procedures around sexual harassment, identity-based discrimination, physical/verbal abuse etc. 		

Tool 1.8 Problem Tree Exercise and Analysis¹¹⁴

Problem tree analysis helps to define and solidify the problem(s) you want to address through your programming by mapping out the cause-effect structure of the problem in a logical way. The exercise will point you toward the stakeholders who play a role in the issue and the subjects about which you need to learn more (further explored in Unit 2).

1. Gather a small group with a few supplies (flip chart, white board, markers)
2. Discuss and agree on the focal problem you want to analyze. Write down the problem statement in the middle of the page (the “trunk” of the tree).
3. The problem statement can be broad, such as “refugee youth can’t get decent jobs” or “insufficient employment rates for refugee youth.” The analysis will allow you to modify it and break it down into further detail.
4. Identify the causes of the focal problem (the “roots” of the tree) as well as its effects or consequences (the “branches”). It may be helpful to write causes and effects on post-it notes so you can reposition them on your chart as needed, based on discussion.
5. Underlying and “root” causes should be visualized below causes more directly connected to the problem. Many of these most basic causes will have to do with attitudes, knowledge, beliefs and norms.
6. Similarly, immediate effects and consequences should be visualized closer to the problem than ripple effects.
7. Use lines and arrows to indicate direct or indirect/secondary relationships between any of the causes and effects.

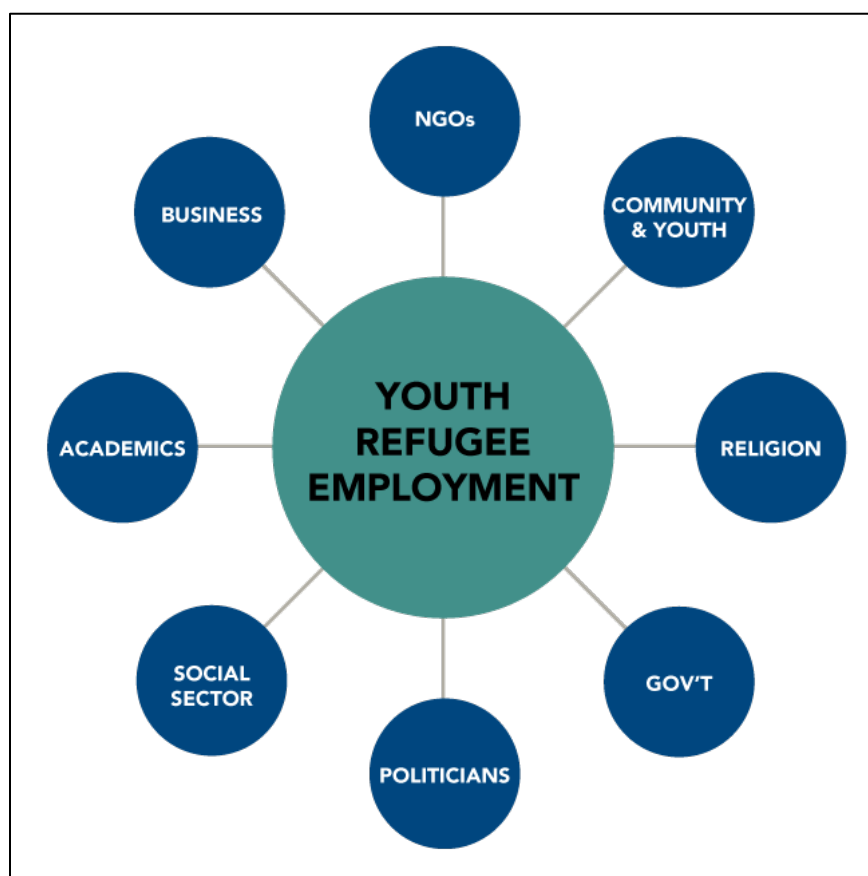


8. Once your group has mapped out the issues, attempt to prioritize those you will address through your programming, by asking:
 - Which part(s) of the tree is most responsible for the problem?
 - Which part(s) of the tree - if reduced or eliminated - would best contribute to solving the overall problem?
 - Which themes repeat or recur throughout different parts of the tree?
 - Which part(s) of the tree isn’t being addressed well enough by other actors?
 - What part(s) of the tree is it possible for us to focus on?
9. The objective of the problem tree exercise is the robust discussion, debate and dialogue that it may inspire. This can allow your group to develop a sense of shared understanding, purpose and action.

Tool 2.1 Stakeholder Bubble Cloud

This brainstorming exercise helps you identify potential stakeholders and partners for your refugee youth employability program. It can allow you to identify areas of collaboration you may not have considered and highlight those stakeholders you want to analyze further.

1. Gather a small but diverse group of staff from your organization and a few materials (flip chart paper, white board, markers, etc.).
2. Pose the question: who are the potential partners, competitors, influencers (positive or negative), or other important stakeholders for our refugee employment program?
3. Start by identifying major groups or categories of stakeholders and showing them in large circles/bubbles.
4. If you need to break down the major group into more detail (individuals or smaller groups) simply add another bubble near the large group. Continue breaking down into as much detail as needed.
5. Use lines to indicate connections and relationships between groups, sub groups, or individuals.
6. Use short phrases within or next to the bubbles to describe the stakeholder's role or interest in the partnership.
7. Use symbols or color coding to show how the stakeholder could **potentially** contribute to your program's goal (through funding, political will, publicity/marketing/raising public support, knowledge/informational resources, human resources, physical/location resources, other in-kind donation or support).



Tool 2.2 Stakeholder Analysis Framework¹¹⁵

This exercise helps you better analyze the incentives, motivations, value, and influence of a selection of 3-5 stakeholders.

For each stakeholder, write brief descriptions of your potential partnership in terms of the following domains: their interest, involvement, knowledge, available resources, ability to mobilize resources, support or opposition, influence and authority, and priority.

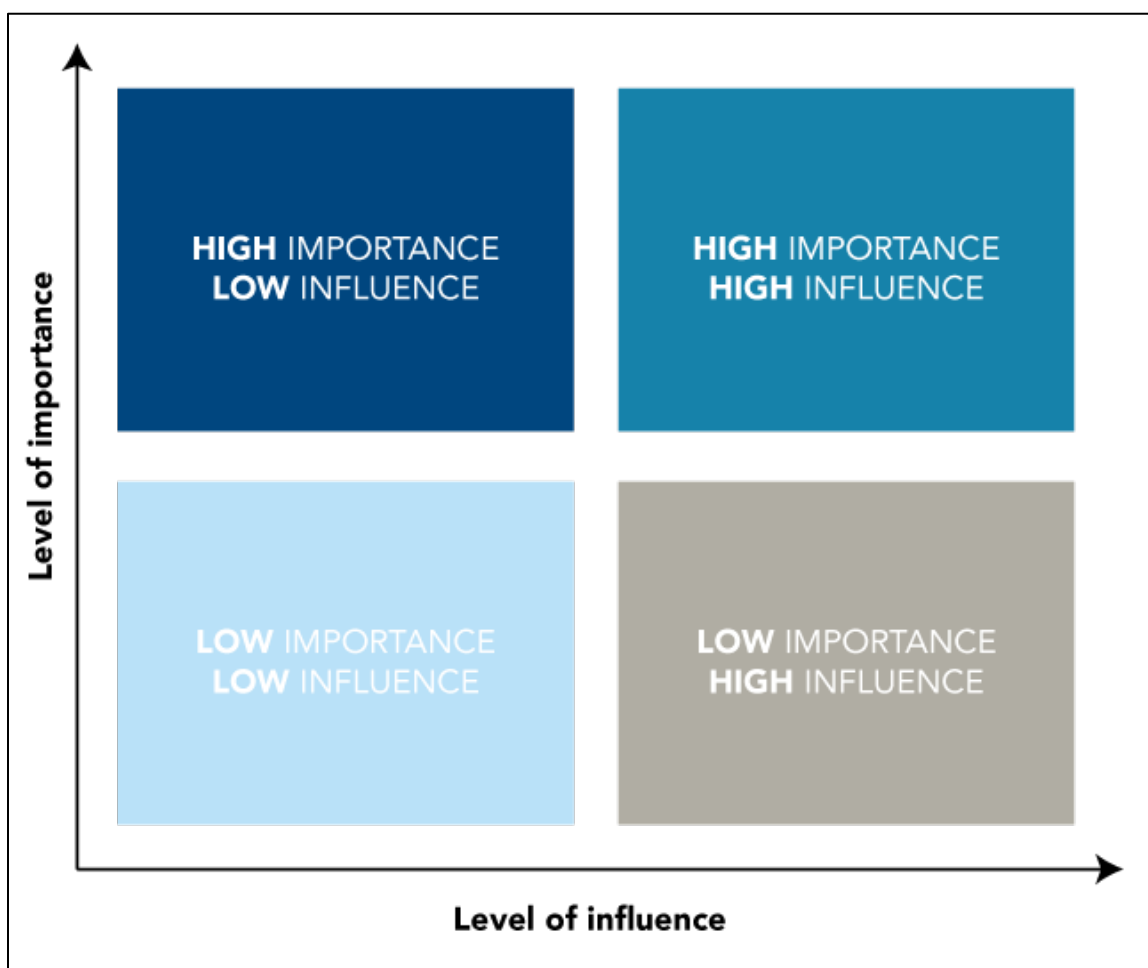
Domain	Stakeholder 1	Stakeholder 2	Stakeholder 3	Stakeholder 4
Level of interest: Why and how much are they interested in being involved? Is their interest primary (related to their main activities or business) or secondary?	Description	Description	Description	Description
Level of involvement: Would you consider them “internal” or “external” to the refugee services system? If currently involved, describe their involvement.				
Level of knowledge: How much do they know about refugees and refugee employment efforts? How valuable, unique or accessible is this information?				
Available resources: What resources do they have or have access to (human capital, time, financial and legal resources, technology, information)?				
Ability to mobilize resources: How easily could they use and mobilize these resources for the benefit of your program? What barriers exist to them doing so?				
Proponent/opponent: Would they support the project’s mission or goals (proponent) or hinder it (opponent)? Do their goals compete with yours?				
Influence/Authority: What level of authority do they have to make decisions or changes that could influence your work?				
Priority: What level of concern do they have about the project (how important is it to them)?				

Tool 2.3 Power/Importance Mapping¹¹⁶

The Power/Importance (or Influence/Importance) exercise is a visual mapping of stakeholders on the x/y axis based on their relationship to the issue of refugee employment. This exercise should draw on the insights and information you generated during the previous stakeholder mapping and analysis exercises and should help you form tailored and focused strategies for working with each priority stakeholder.

Where you decide to plot stakeholders on the grid will depend on many factors, including their level of authority and hierarchical position, control of critical resources, knowledge or skills, relationships to other stakeholders, influence over others, ability to create obstacles or roadblocks, etc.

1. Gather your team around a large flip chart or white board with markers.
2. Make a simple grid like the one shown below.
3. Select a few stakeholders (from the brain storm and analysis activities) and decide where to plot them on the grid as a group.
4. Reevaluate their placement as a group and discuss further as needed to arrive at consensus.
5. Select several of the stakeholders and write down a rough plan for engaging them in the near future (timing, key personnel, objectives, message, etc.).
6. Many of the stakeholders your target for inclusion will likely fall in the upper right corner of the grid (high importance, high influence).



Tool 2.4 Check List for Market Data Approaches¹¹⁷

The following tool can help you clarify your approach for getting the data you need about your local labor market. Depending on your resources and your program, you may be integrating information from several sources, updating existing but outdated data, or creating a plan for collecting new data – a process that may require the use of external expertise. More detailed guidance on designing and performing a youth-focused labor market assessment can be found in the Additional Resources section.

Area of Inquiry	Does this describe my approach?
	0) N/A 1) not at all 2) somewhat 3) mostly 4) totally
SOURCES	
<p>Are you being efficient and creative in your approach? Be clear about the questions you need to answer, and don't duplicate efforts if the information you need is available elsewhere. Take advantage of the variety of existing data sources (reports, studies, assessments, or databases created by other NGOs, local implementers, local governments, or media outlets) and tap into your contacts for informal interviews. You may be able to answer many of your key questions through these relatively accessible sources. The objective should be to get enough reliable data to be able to be confident in your program design.</p>	
<p>Are you using a diverse range of secondary as well as primary sources? Even with robust secondary source data, you should also include some degree of primary source information from local labor market stakeholders, particularly employers. At the same time, be careful not to rely heavily on information provided by one large employer. Overdependence on any single employer (i.e., building a training program around them) can be detrimental if circumstances change (business closes, moves, shrinks or stops hiring).</p>	
<p>Are you taking advantage of experts? Local experts on the labor market (university research institutes, think tanks, market research group) can help develop your research protocols or validate your findings, and may have their own resources to contribute. This might be through the formation of ad hoc advisory group, use of a board of directors, or one on one consultation.</p>	
<p>Are you planning for challenges? The realities of refugee service might make it difficult for you to collect the data you need. Challenges might include difficulty obtaining a random sample (no centralized record/database of youth refugees from which to obtain a random sample), difficulty gathering primary-source information (refugees may be hesitant, fearful or uncertain about participating in your efforts and providing information about themselves or families), or legal changes (regulations around refugee rights or status classifications may change during your implementation - see Unit 5).</p>	

Check List for Market Data Approaches, continued

SCOPE	
<p>Are you paying attention to your target demographic? Look at the context and backgrounds of refugee youth. What are the underserved sub groups within this group, what obstacles make it difficult for them to secure decent employment, what information and services do they need, and how do refugee-host country relations and cultural differences play a role?</p> <p>Are you considering host-country views and relationships? Taking a ‘do no harm’ approach is essential, meaning your market assessment should aim to understand the effects of the refugee population on local labor markets, and the relationship with the host communities (e.g. competition for jobs and displacement of local labor) to ensure the program does not worsen the status quo.</p> <p>Are you looking at gender dynamics in the market? Identify what are the barriers to entry, retention, and advancement for women, and to what degree bias, discrimination, family obligations, and mobility issues play a role.</p> <p>Are you identifying new opportunities, thinking long term and looking at growth sectors? Have new opportunities or industries been created as a result of the refugee crisis? Focus on likely future needs, identify growth sectors, and focus on occupational categories and competencies rather than on specific job openings.</p> <p>Are you using the assessment process effectively and strategically? Assessments present a valuable opportunity for your program to build and fortify relationships with employers and understand various labor market actors. If your assessment includes participatory (i.e., youth-led or youth-included) aspects, the process can have significant additional value to the program through helping youth build skills and relationships.</p>	
PLAN AND PROCESS	
<p>Are you approaching this iteratively? Remember that assessing the labor market is not a one-time activity. Labor markets change all the time – sometimes in unexpected ways – and ensuring that programs are in tune with local opportunities requires re-examining the market and again and again. Build in feedback loops to stay abreast of ever-changing market challenges and opportunities. Monitoring youth internships and job placements is one way to track ongoing trends; another might be creating mechanisms and structures to gather employer feedback (employer advisory boards, periodic job fairs, etc.).</p> <p>Are you dedicating time for training? Train the individuals who will conduct the fieldwork and data entry and analysis to be sure that they are prepared with both technical skills and contextual knowledge. If you have youth-included or youth-led portions of the assessment, it is even more critical to plan and budget extra time and resources for training. When using an outside organization, consider assigning permanent staff to work alongside their researchers so that you build in-house capacity for future assessments.</p>	

Tool 2.5 Framework for Youth Assessment¹¹⁸

Your program will not be able to offer adequate services to youth refugees unless it devotes resources to identifying and assessing the way this population lives and operates. The below illustrates some of the types of questions that should be covered through the youth profile portion of the market assessment. More detailed sample questionnaires can be found in the Annexes of Opportunities for Syrian Youth in Istanbul, A Labor Market Assessment, found here: iyfnet.org/library/opportunities-syrian-youth-istanbul.

Youth background questions	Data source or collection method
Household <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Do you or your family own the house that you are living in? If no, please describe your living situation. – How many people are in your household and who are they? – What are your duties within the household? – What do you spend most of your time doing now? 	
Financial situation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Who is the main “breadwinner” in your family? – How is money coming into your home (what are people doing to earn money)? – Are you currently working to earn income? If yes, what are you doing? How did you find this job? If no, do you want to work to earn income? – How do people in your neighborhood make money? – How did you and others in your household earn money before the crisis? – Does your household have any non-wage income? If yes, what is the source of this non-wage income? (Government aid, transfers from individuals or institutions abroad, municipality, etc.) 	
Socio-emotional <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Who are the people with whom you have the strongest relationships? – What causes you to feel stressed/distressed? – What activities do you enjoy doing? – What is your goal in participating in a training program? 	
Daily habits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – How do you allocate your time (school, home, work, social events, etc.)? – Are you free to come and go in and out of your home and your community (is your movement restricted)? 	
Cross cultural issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – What views or sentiments do you hear host country residents express about Syrian refugees? – Do you feel that your level of ability/familiarity with the host country language and/or culture presents barriers for you? – Do you face discrimination or maltreatment from host-country residents? If yes, where? By whom? How? – Are there any viewpoints your culture or community holds around work or types of jobs that are inhibiting you from joining the labor force? Would your family support you if you wanted to find a job in your host country? – Did you have any experience living or working in this country before the crisis? 	
Jobs and Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – What is your highest level of education? – What kind of job experience do you have? – What kind of job do you want? – Do you understand the laws and rules around jobs in this country? – Do you currently hold any type of temporary or permanent residency or work permit in your host country? If yes, which? – Do you currently or have you in the recent past been employed in your host country? If yes, was this a formal or informal position? – Have you attended a training course in this country or elsewhere? If yes, where and what type of course? If no, what is the main reason that you have not attended any training courses? 	

Tool 2.6 Guidance for Gender Sensitive Programming ¹¹⁹

Gender sensitive indicators and monitoring, evaluation, learning (MEL) systems are critical to understanding how the gender of program participants affects their experiences and outcomes. Keeping an eye on areas of operations and programming like those in the following tool (and integrating related indicators into your monitoring system) can help your program operate in a gender-sensitive and inclusive manner.

Programmatic Area	Issue to monitor
Program operations and structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – How many of your program staff and consultants are female? – How many staff members receive gender-related training or orientation? – How does participation in program governance structures (youth councils, boards, representatives, steering committees, etc.) vary by participant's gender?
Program participant baseline conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – What percentage of program participants are women and girls, and how does this vary by age? – How does participant background (educational attainment, workforce experience, health status, etc.) vary by their gender? – What portion of female participants are heads of their household? – What portion of female participants are living in other types of households (polygamous, extended family, etc.) – What characterizes existing gender-relations in the household (power dynamics, control of resources, division of labor, household and childcare responsibilities), and how does the program affect this? – What are participant's attitudes around the role of women and girls and female workforce participation, and how does the program affect this?
Program participant outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – What are the main barriers to participation faced by participants, and how does this vary by gender? – How do retention or dropout rates vary by gender? – How does participation in various program services (training, skills application, supplemental trainings, and career guidance) vary by gender? – How does job-attainment (during or post program) vary by gender? – How do job-site or working conditions vary by gender (for participants placed in jobs)

Tool 2.7 Youth Interactive Market Assessment Tool¹²⁰

This exercise is an example of how young people can be provided with opportunities to interact with the market directly in the context of your program. Through this exercise, youth visit, examine and take note of economic and business activity in a local market or business district. A full market assessment toolkit with more youth interactive tools has been produced by the Women's Refugee Commission and can be found in the Additional Resources section.

Break young people into small groups (2-5 people)

1. Explain to youth that you will walk down one of the main streets of your local market in small groups. They will be recording their answers in the chart below.
2. Ask youth to focus on the businesses with the most customers and the businesses with the fewest customers.
3. Ask youth to think about the following questions and write down their information in the appropriate spot in the framework.
4. Tell young people they can use notes or drawings to help them remember their observations, and afterward you will come back together as a large group to share and discuss.

Question	Business 1	Business 2	Business 3	Business 4
Type of business				
Name of business				
Does this business have many customers or few customers?				
Does the business have many employees or few employees?				
What goods or services is this business selling?				
Who is buying these goods or services?				
How and how often do you think these goods are used? (every day needs, for recreation only, every so often, special occasions, etc.)				
What do you notice most about the appearance of this business? (inside, outside, location, etc.)				
What are the prices for the goods or services? (mostly low, medium, high or mixed)				

Tool 3.1 (Youth) Cultural Appreciation and Value Exercise¹²¹

In many ways, youth have a distinct and valuable culture that can be approached as one would approach any other culture. Youth culture can sometimes be challenging for adults to understand, leading to assumptions and prejudgments based on incorrect or incomplete information.

The first part of the tool is an exercise to appreciate different aspects of youth culture. The second part of the tool is an exercise to create “value statements” that express the value youth bring to our lives (e.g., social value, economic value, cultural value, spiritual or religious value). Note: Making slight changes to the wording of the exercises can make them more focused on Syrian youth specifically.

Youth Culture (15 mins)

1. Gather a group of 10-25 people. Ideally, they will represent a cross-section of teams/areas within your organization.
2. Ask: when we try to get to know another culture, how do we normally do it? What kinds of cultural aspects do we look at? Start a flip chart and take several minutes to write down responses. *Responses may include language, food, clothing, shared traditions, routines, language, food, clothing, appearance, communication styles, music, art, spirituality, social structures, attitudes, beliefs, laws, physical mannerisms, etc.*
3. Have everyone stand and divide themselves into 3 or 4 small “diverse” groups (a mix of ages, genders, heights, technical areas, experience levels, clothing type, etc.). Give each one a flip chart and several markers.
4. Select some of the “cultural aspects” generated in step 1 (such as language, social structures, use of technology, art, beliefs) and assign one to each group.
5. Give the following instructions:
 - Imagine you are taking a “cultural appreciation” course on youth culture;
 - You need to create a presentation for the rest of the class about a specific “aspect” of youth culture, using flip chart and markers;
 - You will talk in detail about your cultural aspect (such as what kinds of language/words? What specific kinds of food? What specific clothing?);
 - Consider how your aspect can vary based on gender, ethnicity, economic status, faith group, etc.
 - Draw on your experiences observing, interacting and working with youth.
6. Once finished, have each group present their cultural aspect to the room.
7. Wrap up with a few discussion questions:
 - Are you accustomed to thinking about youth as having their own culture?
 - What are some positives and negatives of this approach?
 - What advice would you offer to someone who wants to better understand or relate to youth and youth culture?

Valuing Youth (15 mins)

1. Give the following instructions:
 - We’re going to close out by creating “value statements” about youth;
 - While adultist statements reflect our unchecked assumptions, **value statements** express the value youth bring to our lives (but which we sometimes fail to acknowledge or recognize);
 - This can be social value, economic value, cultural value, spiritual or religious value;
 - Turn to a neighbor and complete your value statement.
2. Distribute the following value statement “starters” cut into slips of paper (one per group/pair):
 - Youth are valuable to our local communities because
 - Youth are valuable to our families because
 - Youth are valuable to our religions or faith practices because
 - Youth are valuable to our economy because
 - Youth are valuable to social movements/social change because
 - Youth are valuable to art and culture because
 - Youth are valuable to science and technology because ...
 - Youth are valuable to each other because
3. Once finished, ask each group to share their statement.

Tool 3.2 Culturally Competent Youth Work Principles¹²²

A culturally competent approach to programming should start with staff and trainers who acknowledge and strive to adhere to the best practices below. A variety of additional training workshops and resources, focused on building cultural competency, have been developed by the Center for Multicultural Youth (CMY) in Australia, among other organizations. These are included in the Additional Resources section.

Culturally Competent Youth Work	
Core Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Recognize that the cultures and cultural backgrounds of young refugees deserve acknowledgment and respect – Recognize that culture is an essential and integral part of identity, and that it is dynamic and touches every part of life – Recognize that culture is not homogenous; each person's experience of their culture is shaped by age, class, ethnicity, family, sex/gender, religion, political beliefs, age and migration experience
Transparent and Open Manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Acknowledge and check the unconscious beliefs and biases that come from your own culture – Adopt an empathetic and open-minded attitude when dealing with youth refugees – Try to understand and sympathize with the unique pressures of the refugee experience – Pay attention to first impressions, and try to welcome young people and their families in a culturally appropriate way – Be open to new values and points of view – Don't make assumptions about culture or language – Ask questions to learn about cultural aspects you aren't familiar with – Proactively gather feedback and comments about your services (using specialized email addresses, "office hours", suggestion box, etc.)
Friendly environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Give care to proper pronunciation of names, honorifics, and titles, and ask for help if uncertain – Proactively seek opportunities to value and showcase the rich variety of experiences of young refugees – Use culturally inclusive environments and visuals (posters, décor, furniture appropriate to culture) – For first meetings, use familiar faces when possible (e.g., the person who referred the young person)
Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Clearly communicate the roles and responsibilities of each person who will interface with youth – Have key documents and signage available in both the host country and home country language – Have dual language materials /publications available; even if the young person is fluent in the host language, they can share with their families – Employ staff from a variety of cultural backgrounds – Use a variety of techniques to meet, provide outreach and flexible service delivery to young people (home meetings, school visits, phone calls)
Family and Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Proactively learn/seek out information about the communities in your area and the main issues confronting them – Attempt to understand the young person in the context of their family and community, but resist making assumptions – Outreach to and include parents and family members (parent/family information sessions) to help the understand and be comfortable with services and operations – Adopt a culturally sensitive way of describing your programs/services (i.e. not seen as pushing youth out of the home, displacing parents or shifting family dynamics) – Accept gestures of hospitality, and recognize that offers to share food, tea, or attend events can be expressions of trust and build relationships

Tool 3.3 Youth Refugee Focus Group Guide¹²³

Youth focus groups are valuable tools for getting nuanced and personal information that can inform your programming. Performing a youth focus group such as the one below can be done in connection with the market assessment and can illuminate the perceptions Syrian youth have about themselves, their relationships with stakeholders, and how pre-judgements about their community affects their ability to get a foothold in the workforce.

Opening Statement	
<p>Say: I am XXX from XXX Organization. I am part of a research team working on behalf of XXX Program to find out about different aspects affecting the employment and employability of young people in your community and others like it. Welcome and thank you for your participation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – We are confident that your voices and thoughts will lead us to better support youth. – We plan to use your thoughts and ideas – not your names. – We encourage everyone to be honest and open. – You are not obligated to answer any questions, and you can ask questions at any time. 	
<p>Record start time, number of participants (including sex and age). Use nametags (optional) & 'r1' (resp. 1), r2 etc. – use 'r1' (not names) on transcripts to denote who said what. Record location, record age group, date, and venue.</p>	
Key questions	Probing Questions**
1. What are the most important issues for young people in your community?	This is a question to get people talking. Do not spend too much time on it and use the answers about employment to move to the next questions.
2. How and where do most young people you know earn money?	<p>Do you and your friends earn money working for someone else?</p> <p>In your age group, what differentiates the employed from the unemployed?</p> <p>What types of jobs are most available to young people like you?</p> <p>How does this differ for males and females?</p> <p>What do you plan to do if you can't find work?</p> <p>How does your family feel about you working?</p>
3. How do you/did you/would you go about finding a job?	<p>Is it easy to find work in this district/town?</p> <p>How does this differ for males and females?</p> <p>Where do you hear about job offers?</p> <p>What tools or resources do you use to look for jobs?</p> <p>Do you or your friends make use of job placement agencies?</p> <p>Do you or your friends use the internet to look for opportunities?</p>
4. How did you or your friends get the skills to become employed?	<p>What training institutions are in your local area?</p> <p>Are these accessible to people like you (e.g., cost, location, qualifications required)?</p> <p>What do you think about the quality of training they offer (range, relevance, etc.)</p> <p>Are they good at placing young people in jobs?</p> <p>Are there job opportunities with the government? In the private sector? With informal business owners?</p> <p>From your friends who have jobs, have most received training from an institution? What are the main training institutions used?</p> <p>Do companies train young people after hiring them?</p>

Youth Refugee Focus Group Guide, continued

<p>5. What experiences have you or your friends had related to looking for, finding and securing jobs?</p>	<p>What job experiences did you have before having to leave your home country? How would you describe your work ethic? Why do you think you could be a successful employee? Which of your skills or assets do you think would be most valuable to an employer? How do you think this has changed since your relocation out of Syria? Do you face obstacles related to your background? Do you find others, including employers, hold negative perceptions around you? What are some of the perceptions or messages you hear or have heard others report? What would you like employers and others to know about you?</p>
<p>6. What type of program would help you find a job in this area?</p> <p><i>NB: Refrain from alluding to or promising future programs in response.</i></p>	<p>Which skills do you need to acquire or build up to get employed? What would getting a good job mean for you (i.e., how would it impact your life?) Are there training institutions or companies or even individuals around here that you know of that offer training in these skills? Who? In your opinion, what qualities does a good employer offer (e.g., security, chance for advancement...)? Who would be your dream employer, or what would be your dream job? What qualities would you look for in an employer or job site/job type? Do you have a mentor or role model? If so, who? What qualities do you admire?</p>
<p>Close: Ask if the youth have any more questions and respond as needed. <i>**“Probing questions” listed here are illustrative. The Focus Group Facilitator should make special effort to probe on areas that are both relevant to conversation as well as the research questions. The Facilitator should also explain any terms and questions that seem unclear to youth participants.</i></p>	

Tool 3.4 Common Employer Perceptions of Youth¹²⁴

The following tool illustrates some of the ways employers commonly perceive youth. Reading through the list and checking those positive perceptions you would like to reinforce (and negative images you would like to combat or reframe) through messaging, can provide useful direction for your messaging strategy.

Positive	Reinforce/Address?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – More productive and flexible than adults – Less expensive to hire compared to adults – Ambitious, motivated—work with a lot of hope – Deliver quality work with enough guidance – Strong business acumen – Energetic, creative, and able to adjust quickly to new challenges – Dynamic, fearless, and willing to take risks – Loyal and focused (fewer family responsibilities) – Good listeners, eager, and quick to learn – Friendly, good attitude, and strong interpersonal skills – Easy to mobilize, team spirit – Willing to do anything to gain experience – Vocal and passionate about youth issues – Less prone to corruption – Have potential to give back to community 	
Negative	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Need more practical knowledge, skills, and work experience – Need more soft skills (problem solving, work ethic, critical/creative thinking) – Need more financial management skills because of tendency to waste money – Lack of patience and easily frustrated – Demanding (higher salaries) – Desire to make quick money (sometimes resulting in petty theft) and live extravagantly – Not always committed or responsible – Highly mobile, leading to high turnover – Undisciplined, stubborn, and provocative – Low self-respect and confidence – Prone to alcohol and drug abuse 	

Tool 3.5 Message Defining Exercise¹²⁵

The following exercise is a way for your team or organization to begin clarifying and defining the message you want to promote about your work with refugees.

1. Gather a diverse team from across your organization (5-10 people).
2. Say: the objective of the exercise is to better define the message(s) we want to promote around our work with refugees, refugee integration and employment (*You can modify the objective of your messaging, but ensure it remains aligned with step 5*).
3. Give each person a set of 10 blank note cards or post-it notes. Ask them to write down one adjective on each (Consider having them keep two of their cards blank, to fill in during steps 5-8 as needed, based on missing words/concepts/descriptors).
4. Suggest the guidelines below to help the group create their list of words:
 - a. Choose words that can be used to describe an organization or its work (i.e., physical descriptors like “tall, beautiful” will not be applicable).
 - b. Take words from a pre-culled list from other existing sources (industry literature, your own organization’s reports or mission statement, terms from focus groups, other feedback, etc.).
 - c. Choose words that are specific and nuanced, instead of broad and generic.
 - d. Aim for a balanced mix of “positive” and “negative” descriptive words.
 - e. Use tools like a dictionary or thesaurus to help provide inspiration.
5. Once finished, lay out the cards together on a big table, on the ground, or posted on a white board, and let everyone read and review.
6. Start separating the cards into three groups:
 - a. What do people currently think about (what is the prevailing message about) ****X- issue **** (i.e., refugee employment, refugee training, social integration, etc.) *Choose the most relevant subject issue for your program, or the one you defined in the Problem Tree Exercise.*
 - b. What do people not think about ****X- issue ****?
 - c. What do we want them to think about ****X- issue ****?
7. Take 30-60 minutes to sort the cards, remembering that the value of the exercise is the conversation, discussion and debate it encourages among your team. Each team member describes, defends and clarifies their views.
8. Once you have sorted the cards into three groups, take another 15 minutes to further organize the third group (what we want people to think) into a rough hierarchy that indicates how different parts of the message are prioritized.
9. Document the findings about your message and share it with a larger group of stakeholders for review.
10. Ensure that all stakeholders understand the message and continue to disseminate it in a consistent way.

Tool 3.6. Advice for Do No Harm Programming¹²⁶

Your program staff are advised to review the following checklist to be aware of the best tactics for ensuring your program is adopting a conflict-sensitive, do no harm approach.

Consider the context

- Acknowledge the effect of traumatic experiences of refugees and the fears, resentments and sensitivities of the host community
- Consider and adapt to the cultural identities and needs of community sub-groups when designing activities
- Recognize that displacement removes peoples' sense of control
- Work with and consult a diverse cross section of leaders to avoid alignment with one group over another
- Assess needs of the whole community using transparent assessment criteria (considering gender, disability, and age specific needs)
- Be aware of existing leadership dynamics among community groups (and consider the formal and informal leaders among women, youth, elderly, and disabled groups)

Consider your program's activities

- Engage host community stakeholders in community assessments, in a meaningful way
- Share and review proposed program activities and outcomes in consultation with diverse key community members
- Aim for your program to minimize existing divisions and/or enhance connections in the community and continually observe and adapt program to reduce risk of harm to or tension
- Avoid implementing activities that the community can do for themselves, and consider potential negative effects on existing markets, distribution networks, suppliers, or local services
- Avoid any alignment with specific groups/leaders over others, and ensure to provide support, neutrally, based on need
- Recognize the needs of the host community, some of which may relate to the strain displacement places on resources

Consider the way you work

- Employ program staff who are diverse in gender, ethnicity and age, to promote communication with all community groups
- Avoid allowing your own or other team member's personal prejudices or past experiences to affect the activities
- Avoid any forcing of unwanted interventions or methodologies onto individuals or a community
- Ensure that there are confidential information and complaints mechanisms, available to both literate and non-literate beneficiaries
- Communicate program details to the host community equally and transparently
- Coordinate with other implementers to coordinate programs and support, to avoid confusion and resentment over inequitable treatment

Consider potential dividers and connectors

- Model or promote tolerance and acceptance of differences in communications and activities
- Be aware of historical and current relations, interactions and tensions within or between communities
- Be aware of sensitivities and perceptions around competition over space, resources or power
- Be aware of who will be served by the program and who will be left out, and what effect this could have
- Be aware of ways and places that community members (males, female, young and old) naturally come together and share resources
- Be aware of spaces where the communities come together and feel safe
- Be aware of shared cultural practices or shared perceptions
- Be aware of how conflict or tensions are traditionally dealt with (formally or informally)
- Be aware of who in the communities is responsible for maintaining intergroup stability

Tool 3.7 Tip Sheet for Collaboration with Stakeholders (Private Sector)¹²⁷

Nonprofits and civil society organizations may differ from other sectors in the way they collaborate, communicate, assess their work, define success, and remain accountable to clients and beneficiaries. Knowing what these differences are and modifying the way you work to accommodate them will improve the success of your partnerships and your work serving young refugees. The following tool suggests key areas to keep an eye on and tips for successful relationships.

Preparation

Mindset: Adopt a dual client mindset and approach. Understand and assume that your program should be a win-win, providing value for both your participants and partners/stakeholders. This requires that you understand the stakeholder may operate under different incentive structure and define “value” in different ways.

Outreach: You can start building private sector relationships by referring to your personal and professional contacts, creating a centralized database, begin attending a variety of events and exploring a diversity of relationships. Learn about events and associations from getting on list serves, mailing lists and joining online groups. Attend job fairs, trade fairs, and events put on by business associations, chambers of commerce, trade groups, industry alliances, rotary clubs, public agencies, employment ministries, training and language schools, etc.

Publicity: Develop a variety of promotional materials, differentiated by sector/stakeholder group and plan to use various methods to disseminate them (printed promotional materials and brochures, print media articles, TV, radio, podcasts, email, Facebook groups/pages).

Research: Have good quality data about the local market, track trends, and know the legal and tax structures that could affect employer (un) willingness to collaborate. Have a clear idea about how up to date and relevant your program’s training offering is (and if it isn’t, update it), and how it corresponds with employer needs.

Planning: Budget and plan for the costs of relationship building and maintenance (staffing, communications, promotional materials, event attendance, database maintenance, etc.)

Roles and Responsibilities: Agree on/formalize with the partners the activities you will carry out/provide through a potential partnership, and the standards that will inform your relationship. Ensure that the employers with whom you are linked comply with current labor laws and adhere to decent jobs standards (see also Unit Six).

Communication style and content

Language: In meetings and communications, be conscious of your use of development and industry jargon that is specific to your work and may not widely understood. Use business language and sector specific technical terms appropriately (e.g. beneficiaries/program participants vs clients/customers).

Transparency: Be clear and honest about what you can and cannot offer your partner, what you are asking for from them, and what the relationship would entail.

Efficiency: Get to the point and respect your stakeholder’s time, and use a variety of methods (in person, phone, email) to communicate in a way that is convenient to them.

Value Add: Develop and understand the value your program can offer to businesses, such as providing access to well-educated, motivated young workers, human resources support, improved credibility and socially minded reputation, etc. Emphasize the qualifications and professionalism of your team, talk about the methods you use to ensure your own program quality (MEL practices and quality standards) and show proof of concept from prior programs where available.

Learning

Listen: Ask a business partner how their business is running (or for other sectors, the trends and challenges of their industry), what is working and not working, what challenges they face internally and in the market. Give them plenty of time to describe their context.

Motivation: Know/find out and keep in mind the partner's incentive structure: what motivates them (income, employee retention, ease of hiring, social capital, reputation), what factors make them hesitate to engage in partnership, and know what you can do to mitigate risk and create a more attractive proposition (co-investment, stipends for trainees/apprenticeships, ongoing support for employees, etc.)

Experience: Find out what experience the stakeholder has partnering with the civil society sector – what has worked well/not worked well, to draw comparisons with your organization. Understand what other actors (civil society and others) are doing locally so you can have an informed conversation.

Adapt: If partnership conversations don't lead anywhere, keep doors open for future collaboration, get recommendations for other contacts or connections, and consider your relationships with the employer as an opportunity to learn, and refine your approach for the next iteration.

Ongoing information sharing and relationships

One to one: Understand that relationships are built on one to one, personal relationships with the right individuals. This means connecting with the partner is not enough – you need to find the right people with whom to create your relationship, who have not only interest, but also the resources and authority to support the work, make decisions, and follow through.

Consistency: Time and patience are necessary to creating mutual trusting relationships, especially if it is a new relationship or if your private sector experience is limited. Keep your communication lines open and constant and do so through all phases of the project (even slow periods).

Stability: Maintaining relationships with private sector employers (or other partners) demands resources in the form of staff time, telecommunications, marketing and publications, travel costs, etc. Budget or support the work with your own resources. Also explore innovative methods like fee-for service relationships with employers which reflect the market value of quality job-placement/recruitment services

Tool 4.1 Learning Environment Questionnaire¹²⁸

The following checklist can help you evaluate your program's learning environment while pointing toward areas for improvement to ensure it is safe, welcoming and youth friendly.

Training component	Y/N/Somewhat/NA	Detail
Pedagogical approach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Are your staff and trainers well-qualified and experienced? (see tool 4.5) – Are your staff and trainers familiar with positive youth development and participatory, student-centered teaching and facilitation? – Do you have ways of recognizing and accommodating different learning styles (visual, aural, kinetic, etc.)? – Are you setting aside structured pockets of time for trainees to apply and practice skills? – Are you devoting adequate time to each lesson? – Have you created a well-paced schedule for learning (neither too condensed nor too spread out)? – Have you identified common themes/competency areas you want to reiterate and reinforce across learning components? – Have you identified ways to tie those themes together and use them to connect classroom-based and extra-classroom learning? 		
Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Do you have enough learning materials (pencils, pens, notebooks) to allow each student equal access to them? – Do you have enough furniture/supplies (desks, chairs, benches, whiteboards, blackboards, flipcharts) to allow each student equal access to them? – Do you have enough learning resources and sources (textbooks, workbooks, supplemental readings) to allow each student equal access to them? – Are your learning resources up to date, accurate, user-friendly, complete and well maintained? 		
Training group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Are you using appropriately-sized training groups (trainer to youth ratio approximately 1:20) – Are you providing opportunities for youth to receive one on one, heavy-touch support where needed? – Are you using a variety of training group sizes (small and large), one on one practice, randomized groups and strategic pairings? 		
Training space and location <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Do you have enough training/meeting spaces and locations? – Are your locations/spaces available on a regular basis? – Are your locations/spaces big enough to accommodate your group sizes? – Do trainers have enough space to meet with youth during training as well as one on one for additional support? – Are the locations/rooms/ buildings safe, well maintained, well-lit and inviting? – Do your locations meet any requisite safety standards for your area/country? – Are your training spaces located in a safe area, and free from undue distraction and disturbance? – Are your training spaces located in an area that is accessible to the majority of your target participants (refer to section on supplemental services/obstacles)? – Can participants reach the training space using public transport? 		

Tool 4.2 Sample Program Components

Whole-youth employability intervention should offer a rich, comprehensive blend of components that connect in a logical way and use multiple pathways to build a cross-section of skills. Your program should be multilayered, providing diverse opportunities and channels for learning, spread across a continuum of competency areas. The below provides an example method for understanding and organizing the components your program may offer, depending on your resources and scope of work.

Basic skills training to allow functional participation

- Literacy skills training and testing/certification
- Numeracy/math skills training and testing/certification
- Technology/computer use skills (ICT) and testing/certification
- Second language training and testing/certification

Central/core employment-related skills training

- Technical skills (job/function/sector-specific)
- Foundational soft skills training
- Entrepreneurship skills and entrepreneurial mindset training

Practical elements that complement core skills training

- Career counseling and exposure
- Career/life planning
- Job-shadowing opportunities
- Connection with job mentors
- Internship opportunities
- Apprenticeships
- Job placements
- During/post-placement support

Additional orientation and enrichment opportunities

- Supplemental/additional soft skills training
- Job-seeking/preparation skills (interviewing, CV preparation)
- Workplace culture training
- Leadership training
- Volunteering or community service opportunities
- Cultural and group experiences
- Connection to scholarship/financing support
- Connection/referral to counseling services

Tool 4.3 Program Component Mapping

The following tool is a simplified framework to plan the flow of your program components, such as skills trainings, supplemental trainings, mentoring and coaching, practical application and placement components and wrap around services. The tool can help you ensure your program is balanced and cohesive by illuminating gaps or opportunities for additional activities. Visual or graphical tools like simple logic models or Gantt charts will provide additional detail and insight.

Component detail	Component 1: Basic skills training	Component 2	Component 3	Component 4
Service type	<i>Ex: Training in Microsoft Office programs</i>			
Activities offered	<i>Ex: One three-hour workshop per week in the evening, and three hours on Saturday morning</i>			
Need/ intended outcome	<i>Ex: Participants have low computer skills ability. Training improves knowledge, comfort and alternative method for language acquisition (taught in host country language)</i>			
Delivery model & Provider	<i>Ex: Delivered at in-house facility, taught by teacher from a partner community college</i>			
Timing & Duration	<i>Ex: Training cycle is 36 hours over six weeks, consecutive with technical skills training. Five cycles offered per year</i>			
Participants / beneficiaries	<i>Ex: Required for all program participants, based on results of skills assessment</i>			

Tool 4.4 Example Employment-related Skill Groupings¹²⁹

Your training and support activities should be selected to correspond with and advance those skills that are most in-need and applicable to the job/sector needs of your participant group. In addition to industry/job-specific technical skills, behavioral skills (i.e., soft, non-cognitive, transversal skills) should make up a critical component of your training offering. The below tool provides sample skill groupings to help you decide which to prioritize through your program.

Skill Group	Example of Skills	Which skills will your program reinforce?	Detail /How?
Basic competencies (skills needed for core functions)	Reading, writing, verbal communication, numeracy		
Self-care (skills for mental and physical health)	Reproductive health, sexual identity, healthy habits and behaviors, personal hygiene		
Social & interpersonal skills (skills for successfully interacting with others)	Team work, adaptability, flexibility, respect for others, asking questions, giving and receiving feedback, cultural competence, listening skills		
Self-regulation (skills for controlling behavior and emotion)	Managing emotions, self-control and discipline, stress management, conflict management		
Basic personal competencies (skills for core functions and behaviors)	Self-confidence, self-identity and values, positive attitude, assertive behavior, ethical behavior and integrity, hope in the future, self-motivation/initiative, responsibility and dependability		
Higher level personal competencies (skills for growth and advancement)	Adaptability, flexibility, creative thinking, love of learning, compromise, determination/grit, creative problem solving, goal setting		
Financial literacy skills (skills for healthy and productive finances)	Money management, budgeting and saving, understanding credit, financial planning, managing a bank account		
Technical skills (skills for core job tasks and functions)	Job/sector specific hard skills defined in accordance with your program and local market needs		
Technology and ICT skills (skills for making adequate use of technology)	Computer operations, software and applications use, online literacy and etiquette, mobile app usage		
Professional/work skills group (skills for obtaining and maintaining job and career)	Job-seeking, career planning and awareness, CV writing and interviewing, investigation and research skills, professional hygiene and dress, planning and organization, time management, project design		

Tool 4.5 Trainer Criteria and Qualifications¹³⁰

The trainers staffing your program should be highly qualified individuals who recognize the importance of creating a positive relationship with young refugees and can help build a welcoming environment for your program. Trainers who are most effective at working with young refugees will demonstrate many or all of the following knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

Knowledge

- The culture and community of the youth
- The resettlement process: what it includes, who is involved
- Current field of training: approaches, theories, best practices
- Approaches and techniques for working with people from different backgrounds
- Appropriate learner-centered facilitation strategies and techniques
- Knowledge of a variety of pedagogical teaching techniques/learner styles: when to use different techniques and with whom
- Training and learning assessment tools

Skills

- Good communication: body language, voice, tone, choice of words
- The ability to learn quickly
- Ability to use and master a variety of teaching techniques to engage different types of learners
- Ability to use good judgment and exhibit professional behavior
- Ability to work with an interpreter: knowing when to allow time for interpretation, how to break down information, etc.
- Ability to understand, administer, and analyze assessments
- Good time management skills
- Experience designing or adapting curricula or lessons

Attitudes and qualities

- Motivated and interested in working with refugee youth
- Willing to work as a team player
- Eager to learn
- Flexible
- Energetic
- Able to make or admit mistakes
- Self-reflective, in order to develop her-/himself as a trainer
- Empathetic

Key attributes for working with refugee and immigrant populations

- Familiarity with the local country context, resettlement programs, knowledge about local programs, etc.
- Cross-cultural communication: communicating with others who are in or from a different culture
- Insight gained from personal experience interacting with or living in other cultures, which helps trainers understand some challenges refugees and immigrants may encounter in resettlement
- Respect for people from different places, and an interest in assisting others in the process of resettlement and integration

Tool 4.6 Tips and Guidance for Language Training¹³¹

Your employability programming should have a plan for connecting youth refugees with language training. The way the training is delivered should be efficient, effective, convenient and available to youth, and allow them to take full advantage of your program activities. The below tool provides tips and guidance for incorporating language training components into your program.

Tip	Explanation	Check if describes your language component
Early and continuous training	Integrate language training as early as possible to allow youth refugees to derive maximum benefit from other training components	
Variety of training levels	Acknowledge, plan for, and assess variation in young people's language abilities, and address through differentiated/segmented course offerings, or extra / "catch up" tutoring or classes	
Timing of trainings offered	Offer trainings at times compatible with household responsibilities and schedules.	
Course providers <i>Local/specific vs open/mainstream</i>	<p><u>Consider pros and cons of various course providers. Weigh the benefits of each and use the method most appropriate for your group</u></p> <p>Courses offered through organizations, faith centers, or youth centers (targeting the community and culture) may provide more comfort convenience and flexibility, increasing attendance</p> <p>Courses offered through mainstream channels (i.e., not refugee community-specific) such as public agencies, community colleges or NGOs, may offer another opportunity for youth refugees to become more socially integrated, through forming relationships and networks with members of the host country or other nationalities.</p>	
Incentives and motivation	Consider "gamifying" language training through contests among youth, or incentivizing attendance and attainment of learning goals, such as certificates, badges or small gifts. Integrate foreign language nights or class presentations into other program training sessions as a way of engaging youth in active learning	
Literacy as well as language ability	While functional verbal language ability may be a primary goal, illiteracy in the host language can present similar barriers to gaining decent employment or present road blocks to job advancement. Language programs should give equal weight and attention to literacy levels of youth refugees.	
Dual agenda learning	Language acquisition can serve a dual purpose, by taking place through learning about content areas like host country culture, services available to refugees, work rights, professional vocabulary related to their prior work backgrounds or their current vocational study area.	

Tips and Guidance for Language Training, continued

Intensive Courses	Where intensive courses are appropriate, practice has shown intensive daytime courses may have better attendance outcomes. Intensive courses should be offered at times that don't conflict with work hours and permit youth to work part time if needed.	
Extra supports	Consider gender-based access barriers that prevent women from receiving language training (stemming from family obligations or cultural considerations). Provide daycare or childcare alongside or at the same location as language training or offer women-only classes at appropriate times of day if cultural considerations are an obstacle to attendance.	
Alternative training methods	Tap into local host country volunteer networks or service groups, or students seeking school or internship credit. These groups can provide free, informal group training classes at times and locations convenient to the youth or provide one-on-one tutoring.	
Qualification and Certification	Keep in mind available government or public language training resources and standards, and orient training youth receive toward a recognized certification whenever feasible.	

Tool 5.1 Win-Win Employer-Program Relationships¹³²

Employers will be a key player and stakeholder during the work-based learning or skills-application phase of your program. As such, be clear about how your program will provide value to employers (and vice versa) – and make this known to them, to keep the relationship positive and mutually beneficial.

1. **Recruitment:** Your program can be valuable to an employer by lowering recruitment costs, providing access to new groups/markets, or providing access to well-trained youth with updated skill sets and educational backgrounds. Internships and placements also give employers the chance to vet/ try out employees, leading to better employee retention in the long run, and a support system for those employees.
2. **Intermediation:** The follow up, mentoring and intermediation services you provide young people during and after placement are valuable to employers as well. The support makes young people better and more satisfied employees, improves their workplace relationships, and keeps them informed about professional development courses, while also creating a channel to catch and address performance issues early. Reliably providing this support can position you as a trusted partner that an employer will engage to fill future job opening.
3. **Reputation and morale:** Hiring or engaging young refugees can help employers advance social responsibility publicly, while improving their own workplace/company culture and fostering improved morale and retention of existing employees. This is especially true in situations where employers meaningfully engage with your program by providing speakers, trainers, mentors for classes, or training facilities/spaces/resources for practical trainings.
4. **Exchange of information and expertise:** Participation in your program lets employers vet and provide input into training curricula to make sure the pipeline of future employees is receiving relevant and quality training. You can also keep abreast of and share with employers new industry research, updates about services provided, institutional newsletters, and research of interest to them, such as new trends in hiring personnel, human resource training, etc.
5. **Visible partnership:** You can ensure your partnerships with employers are visible by getting included in their internal communications, showcasing them in your newsletters or at development industry events, jointly organizing or attending trade fairs and events, hosting a round table events, or attending business association meetings.

Tool 5.2 Internship Value for Youth and Employers¹³³

Internships are one option for work-based learning and provide a valuable and practical way of establishing a relationship with a business partner, since it lets youth refugees get a foot in the door and practice skills and only requires businesses to commit for a short period.

Benefits for youth	Benefits for employers
Gain valuable career-related experience in a real-world environment Internships enable youth trainees to gain valuable experience by taking on real responsibilities in a company or organization. It helps bridge the gap between classroom teaching and an actual work environment.	Evaluate youth for potential full-time employment Internships provide a low-risk opportunity for employers to evaluate youth as potential employees before committing to a permanent contract. This can help them to find high quality candidates for future employment and fill any job vacancies quickly.
Increase confidence in newly acquired skills and abilities Classroom training can help in acquiring certain skills, but a work environment provides an opportunity to put them into practice. Successfully doing so can boost the confidence of trainees.	Gain access to quality candidates Because interns have completed a training program, they are often more qualified for entry-level positions than employers might otherwise be able to recruit. The organization's training program acts as a sort of "quality control" for employers, providing a trusted supply of high-quality candidates.
Evaluate and try out a career path Internships are an opportunity for youth to determine whether they wish to seek employment in the industry where they are completing their internship. If so, it helps them determine next steps necessary to find employment in this field.	Save time and reduce the cost of selection and hiring Because of access to this pool of well-trained interns, employers can save time, energy, and money in the employee recruitment process and do not need to use external recruitment companies to find candidates.
Expand knowledge of career options in specific industries Youth can learn about different career paths within a specific industry and explore which field of specialization they may choose based on experience gained during internships.	Increase capacity and productivity on short-term assignments As short-term additional labor within a company or organization, interns can be placed on specific projects to increase the capacity of the staff when needed
Cultivate important professional contacts for future employment Internships are a stepping stone into the professional world and enable trainees to network and build contacts within the company and the industry where they would like to work. This may help them to secure employment in future.	Capture new energy and bring innovative ideas to the workplace The interns can bring in new and useful ideas and contribute to the growth of a company or organization. A young person can infuse energy and vigor at work and challenge traditional ways of operation in a constructive manner.
Build and strengthen CVs An internship provides a valuable opportunity for youth to put tangible professional experience on their CV and hence increase their chances of employment in a competitive job market.	Increase cost-effectiveness Interns can often do the same work as a regular employee at a much lower cost to the employer. Thus, adding interns to the workforce can prove cost-effective for an employer.
	Serve as corporate social responsibility Hiring interns, particularly disadvantaged youth who may not have other opportunities to gain their first experience in the labor market, is an important way for companies to contribute to society and gain recognition as a positive actor in the local community.

Tool 5.3 Ways to Upskill Youth for the Job Search and Job Site

Beyond training youth in core job skills and matching youth with employers, your program should offer training, mentoring and support geared at improving the ability of youth to navigate a crucial middle step – finding, securing and maintaining a job. The below tool offers suggestions for relevant activities and support types your program can provide.

Supplemental supports and training for job integration	
Job search	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Inform youth about all the job search channels available to them, beyond informal networks – Set up, maintain, and make available a database of job openings, and link to other databases – Help youth interpret/understand/respond to job postings and announcements and understand qualification requirements – Provide information about current labor market (trends, occupations, career paths, salaries – see Unit 6, career guidance) – Provide information about your country’s labor rights, duties, and legislation (see also Unit 5) – Create a cheat-sheet of all local employment-related social services and service providers youth have access to
Technology and social media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Tap into specialized social media groups or platforms aimed at helping young people access jobs – Create new social media sub-groups to better connect with and inform youth participants – Use social media platforms to follow and support alumni and track longer-term job outcomes and success stories – Provide links to industry job search websites on your website and social media platforms
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Have dual-language resources available whenever possible – Establish links to partner translation services, and support youth’s translation needs (CV or transcript translation) – Offer dual language CV and resume writing workshops
Job-search skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Offer supplemental training or one-on-one coaching support focused on work habits and skills, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Mock interviewing/interview practice and etiquette o Help with CV and cover-letter writing o Post-interview follow up etiquette o Social media use o Self-presentation/marketing/promotion o Channels for job seeking o Contacting employers
Effective work habits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Offer supplemental training or one-on-one coaching support focused on work habits and skills, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Being a good employee o Getting to work on time/time management o Team work/relations o Working in a culturally diverse workplace o Working within hierarchy/respecting authority o Understanding rights and resisting exploitation o Approaching performance review/evaluation o Dealing with feedback
Follow up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Explain and ensure youth understand the steps in the selection/hiring/recruitment process in your country – Establish or organize youth to create job clubs – Coach youth on techniques for network building and maintenance – Provide information about supplemental opportunities for study or entrepreneurship

Tool 5.4 Extended Support Methods: Before, During and After Placement¹³⁴

Your program should provide comprehensive and extended support to youth participants before, during and after their off-site experiences (internships, apprenticeships or job placements). These activities should be done in a collaborative, interactive way (*with* young people, not for them) and should be aimed at building experience and cultivating competence. The goal of your activities should be making youth feel informed, prepared, connected, and supported, allowing them to take fullest advantage of the practical experience component.

Preparation for placement

- Formalize and vet work agreement/contract/job description or scope of work, and make sure all parties agree on it
- Make sure all parties are aware of and agree on any other responsibilities for youth
- Make sure all parties are aware of and agree on the need for youth to have any specialized skills or supplemental resources/technology
- Formalize any employer responsibilities, including the designation of supervisors/mentors
- Ensure the youth understands work-day and work-week structure (breaks, start and end hours, days off etc.) and the importance of timeliness
- Ensure the youth understands or is made aware of/trained on any specialized employer policies (e.g., dispute resolution, overtime pay, etc.)
- Ensure the youth understands appropriate workplace habits, attire, language, and behavior
- Designate a resource person/main contact/ombudsman on your staff to be available for young people

Maintaining contact and community

- Agree on in advance with youth about the communication method(s) you will use and communication frequency
- Create a “hotline” (designated phone number, WhatsApp contact, etc.) for open ended support
- Set up systems for youth to connect with each other during placement about work issues (e.g., peer-to-peer mentorships)
- Create extracurricular opportunities for youth to socialize or connect each other during placement
- Promote knowledge sharing about job/internship experience with community/family members through opportunities for socialization
- Set aside resources/funds/petty cash to address impromptu youth issues during placement (e.g., lack of transport to job site, lack of cell phone, lack of professional clothing, etc.)

Monitoring and enforcing standards

- Create and communicate (to youth, families and employers) standards and enforcement procedures/protocols to ensure youth experience decent work conditions
- Establish open channels with employers where they can voice challenges, concerns or other feedback about employees
- Independently monitor employee performance and attendance
- Set up channels and protocols for conflict mediation, and fill the role of mediator, should employee/employer conflict arise
- In the event of performance issues, explore whether additional support methods can resolve them

Tool 5.5: Guidance for Providing Career Guidance Adapted to Youth Refugees¹³⁵

Your program's career guidance activities should be adapted to the needs of youth refugees and be based on an approach that focuses first on promoting self-efficacy, hope in positive future outcomes, and practical planning and goal setting activities.

Validate the experience of the young person

- Acknowledge the fact that youth refugees have experienced a challenging and often overwhelming experience
- Acknowledge and validate a possible loss of a sense of power, control, efficacy and optimism
- Acknowledge the fact that their social, familial, cultural and economic context may have a big influence on their career choices and options
- Foster an open dialogue where the young person can feel free to talk about what is going on in their lives, how it is affecting them and how they see it affecting their career plans or prospects

Take an individualized approach

- Modulate your approach to the context of the individual young person you are serving (i.e., youth refugees are not homogenous)
- Acknowledge and understand how the experiences and barriers young women and other minority sub groups face may affect their career options
- Support youth to choose ongoing/continued education and have information about education opportunities available, as needed and appropriate
- Recognize the limits of your expertise and avoid psychological or socio-emotional counseling if your staff is not qualified
- Have available referrals and connections to re-direct youth to safe spaces or services with other specialized NGOs, public agencies or private providers, should the need arise

Encourage and allow youth to lead

- Help youth better understand their preferences, interests and motivations through encouraging career-related self-discovery and self-awareness
- Encourage young people to make autonomous, responsible career decisions and choices
- Provide guidance in interpreting results of aptitude/interest testing (how they link with job and career tracks)
- Use assessments and testing as a tool for youth self-exploration/self-knowledge (do not use to limit/cut off young people's options)
- Resist the urge to inordinately influence, lead or direct young people's decisions, or act in an adultist way (impose your own opinions assuming that you know what the young person needs/what is best for them)

Empowering, motivated mindset

- Coach youth to adopt a practical and solution-oriented approach to dealing with career challenges (instead of a hopeless, fatalistic attitude)
- Help youth see how overly low expectations and negative perceptions may affect what careers they see as attainable
- Encourage youth to validate their strengths by drawing their attention to the skills and aptitudes they have developed through your program
- Provide interventions to boost self-confidence and self-efficacy, such as structured, monitored opportunities for youth to achieve, succeed and build accomplishments through new experiences
- Draw on/ build up networks (family, friends, community) to offer youth moral support, advice for career planning and objective setting
- Find and showcase relevant examples, success stories and role models to demonstrate that career success as a refugee is attainable

Provide tools, knowledge and guidance

- Discuss/evaluate the young person's current expectations, knowledge of the job market, knowledge of job requirements, and existing or prior career planning
- Provide tools and tests for youth refugees to explore their interests, aptitudes and capacities, and train youth how to use them
- Understand and share accurate data about the local job market, and the requirements of specific career tracks, to give good advice to youth about career paths
- Be solution oriented and use planning, goal setting and benchmark setting to help young person define and set a series of career goals and objectives

Tool 5.6 Five Tips on (Re) certification and (Re) qualification¹³⁶

Young refugees who have inadequate formal proof of training, education and professional qualifications are handicapped in their search for decent employment. Your program should have a strategy for helping youth obtain necessary qualifications. Start with the tips below and refer also to the Additional Resources section for more guidance and tools.

1. **Be knowledgeable:** Your team is responsible for providing good quality knowledge and advice to youth refugees who need help certifying and qualifying their skills. Take time to do the research necessary to understand the specific professional certification and licensing requirements in your country for the careers or educational paths that are relevant to your refugee beneficiaries.
2. **Understand what the barrier is:** Often the barrier to getting proper documentation is logistical or financial (e.g., youth refugee cannot afford the fee for transcripts, cannot contact their educational institution or employers by phone or internet, do not have a reliable address to receive mail, do not know how to navigate the postal system, etc.). If a youth refugee has documentation but the language or format is wrong, support them to access translation services or mapping of existing qualifications onto new form, templates, or requirements. Many of these obstacles can be addressed through guidance and financial/logistical support.
3. **Be organized:** Help the young person collect what documentation does exist into an organized file. This can be supporting letters, address and contact information, alternative or supporting ID cards, alternative educational records (copies of class documents, tests, incomplete transcripts, letters from prior employers, references). Once collected, support the youth to create electronic records or scanned copies (using, for instance, scanner apps available on smartphones) where relevant and feasible, and keep physical records in a secure place.
4. **Be creative:** Where other methods do not solve the problem, explore alternative solutions (e.g., connect with agencies who provide (re)testing to meet new national criteria, explore alternative means of showing educational or job backgrounds, create highly detailed CVs, use alternative photographic evidence, show partial equivalency where possible, consider related professions in the same field with less stringent documentation requirements, etc.).
5. **Get help:** When you are unable to address the problem adequately, tap into sources and communities who may have more experience, such as universities or schools with large exchange student or foreign student bodies (who have experience with recognition of foreign qualifications) or groups/networks within the refugee community (who may have access to alternative channels/contacts to obtain documentation).

Tool 5.7 (Re) certification and (Re) qualification Assessment¹³⁷

The following survey can help your organization perform an initial informal evaluation of the skills and work experience of youth job seekers. Refer also to the Additional Resources section for more guidance and tools.

Personal information		
General Information	Contact information	Migration information
Skills Identification		
Languages		
What is/are your mother tongue(s)?		
Can you communicate in the host country's language for general purposes?		
What is your preferred language for communication in a professional context?		
Education and Training		
Have you attended any kind of education and/or training, including primary education and informal training?		
What was your highest level of education and/or training?		
Do you have some prior learning recognized?		
Professional skills		
Do you have any professional/work experience? If yes, how long?		
When was your last professional/work experience?		
Please indicate briefly your professional/work experience history.		
Please add a line for each significant job or professional/work experience you have had.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Please describe the nature of your professional work experience: – How long did this experience last? – In which country/countries was this experience? – Which language(s) did you mainly use? – Please indicate the occupation from the list that best fits the type of work you carried out. – Which skills did you need to do your job well? 		
What was the size of the organization? (number of people in the working in the organization)		
What was the size of your workplace? (number of people working at your workplace)		
Do you have any proof of this professional/work experience with you? Yes/no		
Skills acquired outside the workplace		
For the following activities that you are familiar with/used to, please indicate for how long or often you have practiced those activities and in what context:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Caring for children? – Caring for elderly people? – Caring for sick or disabled people? – Making / mending clothing? – Preparing meals? – Cultivating crops? – Taking care of livestock? – Making pottery? – Selling or trading products? – Making furniture? – House construction? 		
Other basic and transversal skills		
Please select the statements below which best suit your general working style. I am confident to:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Work independently – Make decisions independently – Work in a structured way – Solve problems – Work with others/collaborate/network – Work with people of different cultures/backgrounds – Work with customers/clients – Manage projects – Provide a service to others – Work in stressful conditions/under time pressure 		

Tool 6.1 Refugee Labor Rights: Legal and Practical Considerations¹³⁸

The below tool points to the areas of law, regulation and common practice you should investigate in your local context to understand how refugee access to work plays out on the ground.

Legal and Practical considerations around refugee labor rights	Y/N/Unsure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Is there a legal framework or set of policies explicitly governing or protecting the right to work (for everyone)? – Is there a legal framework or set of policies explicitly governing or protecting the right to work (for refugees specifically)? – Are these national policies clear and well understood? – Are these national policies well known and accessible by employers and refugees alike? – Is there a specific document, permission or permit needed to work? – What is involved in obtaining a work permit? (cost, timing, documentation, status) – What is the cost involved in the work permit application and who pays (employers or job seekers)? – What attitudes seem prevalent in the community around refugee employment? – What attitudes seem prevalent in the workplace around refugee employment? – Are refugee employees subject to an atmosphere of discrimination/xenophobia/harassment? – What legal action or recourse is available to refugees against discrimination or harassment? – Are there particular job types, sectors, or work site types that are more or less welcoming to refugees? – Is there a national minimum wage regulation? – Is the minimum wage commonly followed and enforced? Does this regulation protect refugees? – Are there regulations around gender pay equity? – Are the regulations around gender pay equity respected and enforced? – Is there common gender disparity in pay between men and women in practice? – How do work conditions vary across sectors and between different subgroups and genders? – In the event of workplace grievances or policy violations, do refugees have recourse/sufficient recourse? – Do refugees have legal and practical freedom of movement? – If no, do refugees face limits/obstructions to their mobility or movement within the country or region? (curfews, off limit neighborhoods, etc.) 	

Tool 6.2 Standards for Decent Work¹³⁹

Your program should help youth refugees access decent and safe employment opportunities with reputable employers who respect the dignity of the individual. The following tool illustrates standards you should monitor when arranging work placements for youth in your program and provides a framework for you to monitor and enforce these standards.

Working standard	Definition	Data points and Indicators to track	Steps to take if not met
Adequate earnings and productive work	Employees receive at least a minimum and livable wage	<i>Hourly pay rate or salary in relation to national poverty threshold, and national minimum wage; gender pay differential, other costs of living (housing, food)</i>	
Decent Working Time	Employees work a maximum number of hours per week and receive paid leave	<i>Hours worked per week, access to overtime pay, access to paid leave (medical, vacation, bereavement)</i>	
Work and family	Employees have access to maternity leave (females) and parental leave	<i>Appropriateness/timing of work hours to family responsibilities, access to parental and/or maternity leave, duration of leave, rate of compensation while on leave</i>	
Illicit work	Employees work in an environment where child labor and forced labor are prohibited	<i>Existence of anti-child labor policy, or child protection policy, enforcement mechanisms for policy</i>	
Stability and security of work	Employees are able to receive advance notice of job termination, and unemployment insurance	<i>Procedures and policies around termination of employment, contract duration and terms; ratio of full time to part time employees; ease of access to unemployment or injury benefits</i>	
Equal opportunity and treatment in employment	Employees receive equal pay regardless of gender, have equal opportunity to advance at work	<i>Gender pay gap, gender differences in occupation/task type, and management/leadership roles</i>	
Respectful work environment	Employees work in an environment where colleagues and supervisors treat them with respect and they are free from harassment based on identity (gender, national origin, age, sexual orientation, disability status, etc.)	<i>Existence of policies, procedures, and enforcement mechanisms, and workplace culture prohibits harassment around gender and identity-based treatment and harassment; existence of logistical features to facilitate access for females (e.g., separate bathrooms) or physically disabled youth</i>	
Safe work environment	Employees work in a work environment that is subjected to regular physical inspections, meets occupational health and safety standards, and employees have access to injury/temporary disability benefits	<i>Injury rates broken down by occupation/task, level of seriousness; procedures for dealing with work-place injuries; frequency of workplace safety inspections and adherence to code; access to injury compensation benefits</i>	
Social security	Employee has access to medical leave and old-age and social security or pension benefits	<i>Access to contribution system for social security or pension benefits</i>	
Social dialogue, workers' and employers' representation	Employees have the freedom to associate and the right to collectively organize	<i>Freedom of association and the right to organize; collective bargaining right; presence of trade union/ union membership; history of strikes</i>	

Tool 6.3 Strategies for Promoting Work-related Rights for All

Tip	Description
Understand the framework in your area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Understand how international frameworks on rights are put in practice in your country (see practical considerations in Tool 6.1)
Take a community approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Develop strategic partnerships with advocacy organizations, law firms or others that specialize in human rights or advocacy – Host social activities/culture nights at your facility and offer fact sheets and brochures on refugee rights – Conduct sensitivity trainings for other organizations, community groups, and schools – Host information sessions and town-hall meetings jointly with partner organizations – Advocate for local authorities to formalize informal sectors and prevent informal labor market exploitation of refugees
Inform youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Create a one-page fact sheet or cheat-sheet to inform youth about their rights under the law in your country – Provide youth with web links, blog posts or analysis about the local laws, customs and other applicable regulations – Talk the talk – consistently use the terminology/ language of rights in your program activities and communications – Continue to bring up the issue with employer partners, and ask hard questions when needed to ensure youth are accessing safe work environments free from abuse
Inform and vet employers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ask employers to describe the working conditions available to employees and their own existing policies around decent work spaces – Create a one-page fact sheet or cheat-sheet for participating employers about their rights and obligations under the law in your country – Visit employer partners on site and observe their facilities in person – Create a sample pledge or agreement and encourage employers to sign – Design a procedure and plan for ongoing monitoring, discussions, visits to facilities, etc.
Institutionalize within your team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Designate and identify a staff member within your team to be the resident expert – Resident expert should know current regulations, keep updated about changes in regulation, and – Create a plan for sharing regulatory information with others at your organization and with employers – Adopt explicit language around ethical programming for decent work – Embed this information in your training sessions, organize supplemental awareness-building workshops, extra- sessions as placement services

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Career Guidance Services

International Youth Foundation, Guide for Providing Integrated Career Guidance Services for Disadvantaged Youth
iyfnet.org/library/guide-providing-integrated-career-guidance-services-disadvantaged-youth

Communication and Messaging Strategy

USAID, The NGO Communications Guide
msh.org/sites/msh.org/files/ngo_communications_guide_final_version_may_15_2013_0.pdf

Community Partnership Building

John Snow International, Inc., Engaging Your Community: A Toolkit for Partnership, Collaboration, and Action
jsi.com/JSIInternet/Inc/Common/_download_pub.cfm?id=14333&lid=3

Cultural Competence

Center for Multicultural Youth, Cultural Competency Trainings
cmy.net.au/tags/cultural-competency

Disability Inclusive Programming

Plan International, Disability Awareness Toolkit
plan-international.org/disability-awareness-toolkit

Employability Programming

Making Cents, Demand-driven Training For Youth Employment
youtheconomicopportunities.org/sites/default/files/contentupload/73868/Making_Cents_101717_Interactive_V3s.pdf

Gender Inclusive Programming

Overseas Development Institute, How to Design And Implement Gender-Sensitive Social Protection Programmes
odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/6262.pdf

Internship Services

International Youth Foundation, Best Practices for Promoting Youth Employment through Internships
iyfnet.org/library/promoting-youth-employment-through-internships-guide-best-practices

Job Placement Services

International Youth Foundation, Guide for Designing Job Placement Services for Disadvantaged Youth
iyfnet.org/library/guide-designing-job-placement-services-disadvantaged-youth

Labor Market Assessments

International Youth Foundation, How to Conduct an Effective Labor Market Assessment
iyfnet.org/library/ensuring-demand-driven-youth-training-programs-how-conduct-effective-labor-market-assessment

Life Skills Programming

International Youth Foundation, Strengthening Life Skills for Youth: A Practical Guide to Quality Programming
iyfnet.org/library/strengthening-life-skills-youth-practical-guide-quality-programming

Program Management (General)

Mercy Corps, Program Management Manual
mercycorps.org/sites/default/files/programmanagementmanualpmm.pdf

Quality Standards

International Youth Foundation, Quality Assurance Guide for Youth Employability Programs
iyfnet.org/library/quality-assurance-youth-employability-programs-assessment-guide

Refugee Labor Rights and Protections

Refugees Work Rights Campaign, The Global Refugee Work Rights Scorecard
refugeeworkrights.org/scorecard

(Re) Qualification and Certification

WES Research, Recognizing Refugees Qualifications: Practical Tips for Credential Assessment
knowledge.wes.org/WES-Research-Report-Recognizing-Refugee-Credentials.html

Syrian Refugee Youth in Turkey

International Youth Foundation, Opportunities for Syrian Youth in Istanbul, Labor Market Assessment
iyfnet.org/library/opportunities-syrian-youth-istanbul

Turkish Labor Laws

Turkish Labor Law, Turkey Fact Sheet 2018
turkishlaborlaw.com

Youth Participation (Youth Voice)

Family Health International, Youth Participation Guide: Assessment, Planning, and Implementation
unfpa.org/resources/youth-participation-guide

Youth Participation in Market Assessments

Women's Refugee Commission, Market Assessment Toolkit for Vocational Training Providers and Youth
womensrefugeecommission.org/resources/document/463-market-assessment-toolkit-for-vocational-training-providers-and-youth

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