Reaching a “Fair Deal” on Talent Emigration, Circulation, and Human Capital in Countries of Origin

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February 2016
Acknowledgments

This research was funded by the Bertelsmann Stiftung, with a shorter version of this report first appearing as a chapter in Bertelsmann Stiftung (ed.), A Fair Deal on Talent – Fostering Just Migration Governance: Lessons from Around the Globe (Gütersloh: Verlag Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2015).

This report was used to inform the discussions of the twelfth plenary meeting of the Transatlantic Council on Migration, an initiative of the Migration Policy Institute (MPI), held in Lisbon. The meeting’s theme was “Rethinking Emigration: A Lost Generation or a New Era of Mobility?”

The Council is a unique deliberative body that examines vital policy issues and informs migration policymaking processes in North America and Europe. The Council’s work is generously supported by the following foundations and governments: Open Society Foundations, Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Barrow Cadbury Trust, the Luso-American Development Foundation, the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, and the governments of Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden.

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Cover Design: Danielle Tinker, MPI
Typesetting: Liz Heimann MPI

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Executive Summary

Skilled migration brings widely acknowledged economic benefits for both destination countries and migrants themselves. The impact of skilled emigration on countries of origin has been the subject of much more debate. Despite a growing academic consensus that origin countries can benefit from emigration and the circulation of skills, it remains a challenge to enable the full exploitation of this potential. Equally formidable is the task of ensuring that migration does not waste the skills of those who move, and that migrants can use skills to their full potential—both at destination and if they return to their country of origin.

In recent decades, numerous policy measures and independent initiatives have sought to address these challenges. The initiatives can be broadly grouped into four categories. The first group comprises efforts to promote high-quality and internationally portable education and training for prospective migrants and for those who never move. Examples include attempts to adapt origin-country vocational or professional training to meet destination-country standards; partnerships with foreign education and training institutions or accreditors, to provide access to an internationally recognized education at home; and scholarships or placement programs that allow students and young professionals to receive training abroad. Numerous private-sector qualifications providers and professional associations have also entered the scene, creating a range of internationally portable qualifications for which prospective migrants and nonmigrants alike can study in countries of origin.

The second group comprises efforts to improve the recognition of migrants’ foreign skills and experience so that skills gained at home are not wasted at destination. These initiatives include international cooperation among origin and destination governments to reduce the costs of licensing in regulated professions such as architecture or medicine, training and retraining programs that help migrants gain the language proficiency or additional competences needed to practice their occupation abroad, and mentoring and job placement services designed to connect them more quickly with jobs.

The transferability of skills is at the heart of most of the initiatives, which—if successful—promise to reduce the waste of human capital that often accompanies migration.

A third set of initiatives seeks to facilitate circular migration and help returnees put their newly acquired skills to use back in their country of origin. Some programs—often driven by origin-country governments—target the most highly skilled and provide incentives to return, coupled with help finding jobs or business opportunities. Others target workers already intending to return, helping them find employment—although few provide support with qualifications recognition comparable to what is available in destination countries.

Finally, a host of initiatives encourage migrants and their descendants to “give back” to their country of heritage by sharing their skills and expertise in various ways that do not require permanent return. These include networking initiatives designed to encourage knowledge transfers or foster business connections, mentoring programs in which diaspora members support origin-country entrepreneurs, support services for diaspora entrepreneurs with ideas for business start-ups in countries of origin, and programs encouraging diaspora members to return temporarily to provide training or mentoring.

While these initiatives vary enormously in their goals, design, scale, and purpose, some common themes emerge. The transferability of skills is at the heart of most of the initiatives, which—if successful—promise
to reduce the waste of human capital that often accompanies migration. Many of the projects also recognize that merely certifying skills is not enough. To make full use of their training migrants also need local connections, work experience, and mentoring. Entrepreneurs, similarly, can benefit from assistance with regulatory and logistical requirements, not just financial support. These needs exist not just among migrants moving for the first time, but also among those who would like to return to their country of origin. Finally, the multitude of small-scale initiatives that have developed over the years provide excellent opportunities for learning and experimentation. While some programs have managed to reach a significant scale, creation of initiatives that can reach large numbers of beneficiaries in a cost-effective way remains a challenge for many.

I. Introduction

Skilled migration brings widely acknowledged economic benefits for both destination countries and migrants themselves, but many policymakers and analysts remain concerned about the impact of skilled emigration on countries of origin. In particular, the risk that "brain drain" will deplete human-capital stocks and undermine prospects for economic development is commonly cited. In recent years, however, the research debate on migration has shifted to emphasize potential benefits for origin countries. The most easily quantified benefit is migrants’ remittances, which far outstrip formal development aid and provide income directly to households in developing and emerging economies. Beyond purely financial assistance, the overseas skills, experience, and networks of migrants also provide opportunities for innovation and economic growth in sending countries. Specifically, emigration is thought to help open new markets for trade and investment, while the circulation of skilled workers among origin and destination countries offers opportunities to transfer new knowledge, technology, and business practice back home.

A few origin countries actively facilitate skilled emigration, for reasons that range from a lack of job opportunities at home to the desire to encourage remittances or establish the trade and investment links that migration can facilitate. The Philippines, for example, is well known for its decades-long, concerted push to encourage the emigration of middle-skilled workers. The Colombian government is pursuing several measures to help highly skilled professionals work in the United States and other trading partners, as part of a strategy to increase the export of professional services. And during the past two decades, several countries (including Australia, Chile, Singapore, and South Korea) have also pushed for mobility opportunities for their high-skilled workers in international trade and investment agreements.

The idea that migrants, origin countries, and destinations should all be able to profit from migration is compelling.

2 For detailed analysis on how diaspora members have contributed to institutional change in their country of heritage, see Yevgeny Kuznetsov, ed., How Can Talent Abroad Induce Development at Home? Towards a Pragmatic Diaspora Agenda (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2013).
4 Examples include the European Union (EU)-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), the EU-Korea free trade agreement, and U.S. trade agreements negotiated with Australia, Chile, and Singapore.
Researchers are a long way from ending debate over these questions. It is difficult to quantify the benefits of skilled emigration. Some analysts—and even more governments in countries of origin—remain skeptical that the benefits outweigh the costs. Nonetheless, the idea that migrants, origin countries, and destinations *should* all be able to profit from migration is compelling. This idea of mutual benefit to all parties is often termed the “triple win,” a phrase popularized in 2006 by former United Nations Secretary-General, Kofi Annan.

In practice, a clear roadmap to creating such benefits has been elusive. No single policy or set of policies can conclusively achieve the goal of balancing the benefits of migration more equitably, leaving policymakers instead to rely on a host of smaller policies and initiatives that tackle specific pieces of the puzzle. Many of the projects in question are highly specialized, small-scale, or difficult to evaluate rigorously. They are also scattered across policy fields, including education and training, international development, migration, trade, and foreign affairs. As a result, the actors that have driven the initiatives—including origin and destination governments, educational institutions of various kinds, nonprofit organizations, and the private sector—vary widely and bring different motivations and interests.

This report provides an overview of policy measures and initiatives in this field, focusing on projects that develop skills and human capital. The discussion covers four stages in the migration cycle: (1) developing skills in countries of origin before departure; (2) applying those skills productively at destination; (3) reintegrating into origin-country labor markets, for those who return; and (4) enabling diaspora members to contribute to the skills base in countries of origin without returning permanently. The lines between these categories are, of course, blurred and some policies and initiatives fall into more than one category.

*The relationship between training and emigration is complex and politically sensitive.*

In many cases, it is difficult to evaluate the benefits of a policy or program due to data limitations or the lack of control groups against which to compare beneficiaries. As a result, this report does not attempt to identify which projects represent the best investments or have the greatest impact. Instead, it seeks to explain and categorize the types of interventions that exist and provide some initial observations about the advantages and constraints they face.

II. Training in Origin Countries

Education and training systems in countries of origin are designed, first and foremost, to build the skills of the domestic labor force. With some exceptions for certain occupations in very high-emigration countries, the vast majority of people trained at home will not emigrate. Yet training in countries of origin affects workers’ options for overseas employment. Most international migrants to high-income destinations complete their formal education and training in countries of origin—between 50 and 70 percent of migrants in most Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries, according to a recent analysis. As a result, both origin and destination countries have a stake in the quality, content, and delivery of education and training systems.
cost, and financing of the training that takes place before people migrate—as well as the ease with which both formally and informally acquired skills can be transferred across borders.

The relationship between training and emigration is complex and politically sensitive. Workers who hope to move abroad have an incentive to seek out education that meets international standards—for example, that meets regulatory requirements or employers’ expectations in major destination countries. Facilitating emigration could thus be a byproduct of training workers to similar standards as major destination countries, whether or not it is an explicit goal. Policymakers in countries that experience significant emigration often fear the costs of losing workers they have paid to educate and train, and therefore may be concerned that training workers to international standards will encourage them to leave.

On the other hand, skilled emigration is unlikely to be an entirely zero-sum game. Some studies have found that the prospect of moving abroad raises the value of skills and thus encourages people to invest in training they would not otherwise have completed. While some who seek training for this reason successfully migrate, others remain at home—for example, because they fail to find work abroad or because additional training was an investment in an option they decided not to exercise.

At the same time, skills that position people to work abroad can also help raise standards at home. For example, health professionals with occupational English proficiency may find work abroad more easily; but even at home, English gives them access to the international research literature, allowing them to improve care by keeping abreast of new developments in their field. Similarly, several developing countries have sought to import education and training models from higher-income counterparts because they are seen as good practices for raising the quality of education.

This section reviews a spectrum of initiatives and policies designed to boost the supply of internationally transferrable skills, whether for individuals who are expected to migrate or for those more likely to stay at home.

A. Adapting Training to Destination-Country Standards

Several countries have developed internationally oriented education and training opportunities, although the purpose and the role that migration plays in such programs vary widely. Some are designed primarily to improve the quality of education in origin countries, while others aim more directly to facilitate emigration or circulation of migrants. In practice, it is extremely difficult to directly transpose one country’s training system to another, and in any case, some level of local customization is desirable. However, initiatives of this kind hold out the promise—at least in theory—of lower barriers to skilled employment abroad.

The Philippines’ Technical Education Skills and Development Authority (TESDA) is a commonly cited and relatively large-scale example. TESDA administers a certification and training system that aims to serve both domestic and international labor markets. These courses are inexpensive, with a nominal fee based on the costs of training materials, covered by the student or employer. As of January 2013, a two-month

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8 The authors are grateful to Allison Squires for this observation.
electric installation course cost around US $40, for example.\textsuperscript{10} The official certifications are used in the Philippine labor market and are not designed only for prospective migrants. Over the years, however, these certifications have gained recognition outside of the Philippines, and several have been drawn up with the assistance of industry representatives from destination countries such as Australia, Canada, and Germany.\textsuperscript{11} TESDA’s vocational education and training and its competency assessment and certification program were certified by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) in 2012.\textsuperscript{12} TESDA also offers skills-building courses more explicitly geared toward migration, discussed further in the next section. In addition, its Language Skills Institute offers basic language training and culture courses in six languages.\textsuperscript{13}

In other cases, migration-oriented vocational education has been created in close collaboration with destination countries. The Australian government, for example, funds the Australia-Pacific Technical College (APTC), which partners with existing universities and technical colleges in the Pacific region to use their facilities to deliver courses in subjects such as construction, electrical work, engineering, and plumbing.\textsuperscript{14} The Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) runs a multimillion-dollar scholarship program for APTC participants, covering training costs that would otherwise be inaccessible for many students: approximately AU$53,000 is spent on each student.\textsuperscript{15} The courses award accredited Australian Certificates in a variety of vocational careers at a mid-skill level.\textsuperscript{16}

Employers and graduates alike have praised the caliber of training;\textsuperscript{17} but very few graduates migrate to Australia or New Zealand upon completing their course.\textsuperscript{18} APTC’s 2014–15 annual report found that of the 7,011 APTC graduates, 160 (or 2 percent) had migrated to another country—with around 100 migrating to Australia or New Zealand.\textsuperscript{19} What started as an initiative to encourage migration from developing countries to Australia in certain in-demand, low- and mid-skilled sectors has thus become a more generalized, development-oriented attempt to improve vocational training provision in the Pacific.\textsuperscript{20} Failure to adapt APTC certifications to changes in immigration requirements has been blamed for the low level of poststudy migration.\textsuperscript{21} Courses were initially modeled on Australian curricula, targeting occupations on Australia’s Skilled Occupations List (SOL) that would facilitate migration to Australia, but have not been updated in sync with subsequent changes to this list and the Australian visa points

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{11} Author email correspondence with Matthew Lisiecki, co-author and Philippines researcher for Alampi et al., \textit{Creating Valuable Skills}.
  \item \textsuperscript{13} Nearly 7,500 candidates completed these courses in 2013. See TESDA, “TESDA: Foreign Language Next Hot Job Skill,” (news release, March 9, 2014), www.tesda.gov.ph/News/Details/384.
  \item \textsuperscript{14} The Australia-Pacific Technical College (APTC) was founded in 2006 and managed by the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), Australia’s overseas aid program. AusAID was integrated into the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in October 2013, which now manages APTC.
  \item \textsuperscript{15} Alampi et al., \textit{Creating Valuable Skills}, 32.
  \item \textsuperscript{16} The certificates are levels III and IV—more advanced postsecondary qualifications, but below a bachelor’s degree. By the end of 2013, more than 5,600 students had graduated from the programs. See Michael Clemens, Colum Graham, and Stephen Howes, “Skill Development and Regional Mobility: Lessons from the Australia-Pacific Technical College” (CGD Working Paper 370, Center for Global Development, Washington, DC, June 2014), 4, www.cgdev.org/sites/default/files/skill-development-regional-mobility.pdf.
  \item \textsuperscript{17} According to employer and student tracer surveys carried out by APTC six to 12 months after graduation. In the employer tracer survey, 91 percent were satisfied with the APTC training program, and would recommend courses to other people or businesses. AusAID representatives’ opinion from Alampi et al., \textit{Creating Valuable Skills}: 32.
  \item \textsuperscript{18} Clemens, Graham, and Howes, “Skill Development and Regional Mobility,” 1.
  \item \textsuperscript{20} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{21} Reforms placed a greater emphasis on work experience—not covered by the courses. See Alampi et al., \textit{Creating Valuable Skills}, 29–39.
\end{itemize}
Another study recommends work experience based in Australia as part of the course, to help graduates score more points, and to link prospective migrants with Australian employers (who can sponsor visas) and financial assistance to help meet the costs of relocation.\textsuperscript{23}

**Box 1. German Vocational Training in the United States**

In the United States, North Carolina’s Central Piedmont Community College (CPCC) offers a range of German-inspired training options. These include the Siemens Mechatronics Systems Certification Program, developed at Siemens’ technical academy in Berlin and offered in three exam-based levels—assistant, associate, and professional. Taught in English, this certification is available in a range of other local colleges in Abu Dhabi, China, India, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, the United States, and Thailand. At CPCC, students taking the certification exams also receive a U.S. qualification, an associate’s in applied science—mechatronics engineering technology degree. Like other private qualifications (see Box 2), these certifications are marketed as portable between companies because they are issued by an industry leader.

CPCC also offers vocational training qualifications endorsed by the Karlsruhe regional chamber of commerce (IHK-Karlsruhe)—the region in which many of the German companies that operate in the Charlotte, North Carolina area are headquartered. Qualifications are offered in Computer Numeric Control (CNC) technology and Programmable Logic Controller (PLC) technology. CPCC also plans to introduce other IHK-endorsed qualifications in pneumatics technology, energy management, and mechatronics. For students, the value of these qualifications is that IHK certification inspires the trust of local German employers. The courses offer training and content similar to formal vocational qualifications issued in Germany, though teaching is based in classrooms and laboratories, without an on-the-job training component. Unlike vocational training in Germany, which is fully funded by students’ future employers, the costs of these courses are lower but covered by students, often with federal-government grants.

Because these qualifications are tailored to the local context, they are not identical to the vocational certifications issued in Germany; currently, graduates would need to go through a credential recognition process before they can work in Germany. According to an official at CPCC, demand to formally incorporate these qualifications into the German vocational system on a par with those issued in Germany has been low, perhaps because of the costs this would imply for participating employers. However, as numbers of these company-led and adapted vocational qualifications increase, endorsement by German chambers of commerce may speed up the process for credential recognition upon arrival in Germany. Senior German government officials regard these qualifications (alongside more general cooperation through the German Office for International Cooperation in Vocational Education and Training [GOVET] and the VetNet programs) as a potential tool for facilitating skilled immigration to Germany.


\textsuperscript{22} An investigation by New York University’s Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service found that following immigration reforms, the average APTC graduate scored 55 points on a skilled migration test that requires 60 points. See Alampi et al., _Creating Valuable Skills_, 29-39.

\textsuperscript{23} Clemens, Graham, and Howe, “Skill Development and Regional Mobility.”
Germany has also made active efforts to export its vocational training model abroad, although with somewhat different motivations. Germany’s overseas vocational training endeavors are coordinated through its central education department and its overseas chambers of commerce and industry (AHKs), rather than its foreign aid division. In some cases, demand comes from foreign governments seeking to import elements of Germany’s highly respected dual vocational training system. Perhaps more interesting, however, is the demand from companies in other countries—typically German companies but in some cases local ones—looking to train their employees to German standards. With this goal in mind, local colleges across the world have collaborated with German chambers of commerce and companies that have invested in these countries to offer the qualifications German employers recognize and value. This includes both private qualifications designed by companies such as Siemens or Volkswagen and vocational qualifications similar to those offered in German training institutions and endorsed by German chambers of commerce—but typically tailored to the local context following input from businesses operating in the region. Box 1 discusses an example from the United States; similar initiatives have been developed in China, Brazil, and India.

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**B. Bringing in Foreign Education and Training Institutions**

Emerging economies often have high demand for skilled workers educated and trained to the standards of countries such as the United States or the United Kingdom, whose universities top world rankings. These skilled individuals may be needed to support ambitious infrastructure projects, for example, or help businesses move into higher-value, higher-productivity industries that offer higher-wage jobs for their citizens. But creating world-class educational institutions from scratch is a difficult, long-term project. In the short and medium term, therefore, several developing countries have turned to foreign education providers to meet this need—both by encouraging them to set up local branches or accredit local qualifications, and by funding scholarships for their nationals to study abroad.

1. **International Branch Campuses**

Over the past two decades, some of the world’s foremost universities have set up international operations that bring their instruction and qualifications to emerging economies. These include some major countries

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24 The German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) launched the German Office for International Cooperation in Vocational Education and Training (GOVET) to coordinate overseas vocational training provision.

25 Dual vocational training combines vocational training in school with practical, hands-on training (e.g. apprenticeships with a local company. Germany’s BMBF organizes dual vocational training assistance through GOVET and initiatives such as VetNet (a program running pilot projects for vocational training based on the German model in Brazil, China, Greece, India, Italy, Latvia, Portugal, Russia, Slovakia, Spain, and Thailand). See Deutsche Auslandshandelkammern (AHK), “VETnet – Berufsbildungsexport,” accessed January 7, 2016, [http://ahk.de/ahk-projekte/vetnet-berufsbildungsexport/](http://ahk.de/ahk-projekte/vetnet-berufsbildungsexport/).

26 The German overseas chamber of commerce (AHK) in China, for example, has established and continues to coordinate several local vocational training schools, modeled on the German dual system of vocational training but adapted to the Chinese context. These offer qualifications ranging from short-term training modules to full vocational training courses in industrial mechanics and mechatronics, depending on the needs of German companies operating in China. See Selma Koehn, “Behind the Scenes of Vocational Training in China,” German Chamber Ticker, June/July 2012, [http://china.ahk.de/fileadmin/ahk_china/Dokumente/GC-Ticker/GCT_JuneJuly2012.pdf](http://china.ahk.de/fileadmin/ahk_china/Dokumente/GC-Ticker/GCT_JuneJuly2012.pdf).
of origin for international migration—and particularly student migration—such as China. For students, these programs offer an opportunity to receive qualifications from internationally prestigious institutions, while also broadening their options to work or study abroad after graduation. For universities, these outposts represent an opportunity to break into new markets and extend their global brand. For emerging economies, partnering with foreign universities may help to meet a demand for high-quality higher education at home, encouraging students to study in-country while also attracting foreign students. It can be an extremely competitive business to attract and retain these institutions. Singapore, which has made high-profile branch campuses part of a broader strategy to attract and develop talent, offers start-up loans

**Box 2. Private Qualifications with Global Recognition**

In some fields with particularly global labor markets, employers and professional associations have developed international standards and qualifications for mobile professionals, largely without government intervention. Several of these certifications are designed to facilitate movement across borders, enticing for learners and policymakers with an interest in international migration.

Some certifications are offered by professional associations looking to facilitate mobility within the profession and standardize training, while establishing themselves as a global brand. Certificates issued by the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA), for example, are widely recognized by private-sector employers and regulatory bodies in countries around the world, including as of February 2014, 28 EU Member States, Canada, and some countries in Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean—though notably not the United States. Another example is the American Concrete Institute (ACI) which has chapters throughout the world that sponsor ACI Certification programs for workers in the concrete construction industry. ACI certification is approved and recognized by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI), an independent accreditation evaluator. In both cases, candidates seeking certification must pay to join the association, and for relevant study materials and examination fees.

Private companies in some industries like information and communications technology (ICT) may also offer certifications to demonstrate candidates’ proficiency in certain areas or specialties. The market leaders for certifications in ICT are CISCO, Microsoft, and Oracle, whose certifications each feature their own software. CISCO runs a Networking Academy, with more than 9,000 academies in over 170 countries and more than 1 million students enrolling each year. Cisco partners with educational institutions, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and community centers to help students prepare for entry-level ICT jobs by providing training via online curricula, virtual learning tools, teacher training and instructions, and professional development opportunities for instructors. Similarly, educational institutions worldwide can pay to become a Microsoft IT Academy, using Microsoft’s curricula and resources to train IT students. As of 2013, Microsoft issued more than 1 million certificates per year. For a fee, Oracle Corporation offers online courses and certifications for developers and administrators proficiency in its platforms and products, such as Java.


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27 A 2012 report found more than 200 international branch campuses (IBCs) around the world, most of which were offshoots of U.S., British, French, or Australian institutions. Most were in Asia or the Middle East; nearly one-third were located in the United Arab Emirates, although China was the fastest-growing destination country. See William Lawton and Alex Katsomitos, *International Branch Campuses: Data and Developments* (The Observatory on Borderless Higher Education, 2012), www.obhe.ac.uk/documents/view_details?id=894; Jason E. Lane, “Global Expansion of International Branch Campuses: Managerial and Leadership Challenges,” *New Directions for Higher Education* vol. 155 (2011): 7.

and continued grants and subsidies for those willing to locate in the city-state.29

One longstanding example is the University of Nottingham’s campuses in Ningbo (China) and Semenyih (Malaysia) that deliver university degrees with English as the language of instruction.30 Nottingham’s Ningbo campus was the first foreign provider authorized to deliver its own qualifications by China’s Ministry of Education; usually in China foreign partners must provide transnational education in conjunction with a local higher education institute.31 In 2014/15, there were approximately 33,000 students based at its UK campus, 4,700 at its Malaysian campus, and 6,000 at its Chinese campus.32 A 2012 evaluation of Nottingham’s Chinese campus—of which, 94 percent of students were from mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau, or Taiwan—found that 65 percent of its graduates went on to study at UK, U.S., or Canadian universities.33

2. Partnerships with Local Education Providers

Establishing successful international branch campuses (IBCs) can be difficult: foreign institutions can meet significant social and political resistance, and can require parliamentary approval.34 Other models rely much more on collaborations with local educational providers, alleviating some of these challenges and enabling access to international qualifications at somewhat lower cost.

Foreign accreditation of training organized and delivered by local institutions is another way to certify that education or training meets an international standard. The Commonwealth Association of Architecture (CAA) and the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA), for example, both validate degrees offered by overseas institutions, meaning that graduates of such programs may join these membership organizations without needing to sit CAA or RIBA examinations—and thus can pursue further study or work in other countries.35 As of October 2015, RIBA had validated courses by 35 overseas educational institutions in 17 countries.36 Bestowing full degree-granting powers to partner institutions requires quality assurance to ascertain whether degrees reflect the standards of the home-country institutions. With this in mind, RIBA representatives visit local institutions every few years and review course content and students’ work.

C. Opportunities for Study and Work Abroad

Developing countries cannot create world-class education and training institutions for their citizens overnight. They can, however, help students access opportunities overseas. Several countries of origin have promoted study abroad as a strategy to boost their own skills base, requiring graduates to return to their country of origin to work for a set period as a condition of their scholarship. Exchange programs and

30 These degrees are identical to those issued at the Nottingham campus in the United Kingdom.
34 McNamara, Knight, and Fernandez-Chung, The shape of things to come, 7-8.
overseas work placement initiatives have also been developed to give workers professional experience abroad—in some cases as a purely temporary training initiative, and in others as a first step to longer-term migration.

I. Scholarships for Study Abroad

Many governments run scholarship programs to facilitate study abroad—in some cases, on a substantial scale. These programs enable countries to send students or young professionals to acquire additional education or expertise at a level not readily available in their home country. Some are funded by origin countries themselves, and others by destination governments or philanthropic organizations with development goals in mind.

More than 2.5 million international students study at universities in high-income OECD countries; most do not stay on after graduation—making international study a substantial source of skills development for origin countries. Some destination countries contribute to this education by funding scholarships. Well-known examples include the U.S.-sponsored Fulbright Foreign Student Program, the UK-funded Chevening Scholarships, and the Australia Awards, all of which offer their nationals hundreds or thousands of fully funded scholarships to foreign students each year for higher education. Students are generally required to return home at the end of their studies, and are typically ineligible to apply immediately for other employment- or family-based visas. Other destination countries, such as Norway, do not charge tuition fees for international students—indirectly facilitating skills development for countries of origin, as the majority of students leave within a few years of graduating despite being eligible to apply for work permits after graduation.37

Many origin countries also fund study abroad. Saudi Arabia’s King Abdullah Foreign Scholarship Program, for example, sent some 200,000 Saudi students abroad between 2005 and 2012 to study for bachelor, master, or PhD programs (at an estimated cost in excess of US $5 billion).38 The Ministry of Higher Education encourages applications from students who wish to study science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) subjects; finance; accounting; or insurance—areas currently poorly provided for by the Saudi tertiary education system.39 This program imposes no contractual obligation for students to return home poststudy, although the vast majority chooses to do so after graduation, according to the Saudi assistant attaché for cultural and social affairs in Washington, DC.40 Saudi officials have lauded the program as a way to “expose our youth to new innovations around the world”—though there are also reports that some returnees (particularly female graduates) have struggled to find jobs.41

Other origin-country governments funding scholarships require participants to return to their country of origin to work at the end of the program, both to share their new skills or expertise and to discourage permanent migration. Brazil, for example, launched its Science Without Borders scholarship program in 2011, with the goal of sponsoring 101,000 Brazilian students, academics, and professionals wishing to

study abroad at a foreign institution in the STEM fields by the end of 2015. The scholarships fund up to four years of tuition or placements of up to one year, with the goal of using international exchange to promote technological advances in Brazil. While Brazil’s President announced plans in mid-2014 to significantly expand the program and offer a further 100,000 scholarships, subsequent budget cuts in 2015 have essentially frozen the program for 2016. To encourage return migration after graduation, the Brazilian government signed agreements with institutions in 26 countries in Europe, North America, Asia, and Oceania. Major student destinations such as the United States, Australia, and the United Kingdom have cooperated by providing visas that restrict pathways to temporary or permanent migration after graduation.

2. Professional Experience Abroad

For many occupations, professional experience is equally or more important than formal education for building skills. Both prospective long-term migrants and workers who plan to return to their countries of origin can benefit from professional expertise and networks gained abroad, especially if their experience brings them into contact with new technologies or practices underexploited at home. This type of tacit knowledge transfer can be valuable across the skills spectrum and in a range of industries, from agriculture to high tech.

Origin countries drive a number of programs promoting professional experience overseas. Taiwan, for example, offers various exchange programs for highly skilled nationals, particularly those working in science and technology. Taiwan’s Ministry of Science and Technology runs a number of placement programs for PhD students and postdoctoral researchers in the science and technology sectors to study at international institutions. Pursuing a different strategy, Mexico supported the creation of a special professional work visa in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) that allows Mexican and Canadian nationals to work in the United States on a temporary basis.

Destination countries have been in the driving seat for several other programs to facilitate professional experience abroad on a temporary basis. In a handful of cases, destination countries facilitating professional experience through specific visa programs have deliberately encouraged return migration to developing countries by providing strictly temporary visas that do not allow holders to switch visa categories or apply for permanent residence. The assumption that requiring professionals to leave the country after a certain period maximizes contributions to origin societies is controversial, since it limits individuals’ opportunities for development and ignores other ways they can contribute (as described in the next section). Nonetheless, the United States, for instance, trains large numbers of students and

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44 As of January 2015, the list is as follows: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Russia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, and the United States.
45 For example, in the United States, scholarship recipients must apply for the J-1 visa, which under the Immigration and Nationality Act requires them to return to their home country for two years unless they receive a waiver from their home government. In the United Kingdom, full scholarship recipients must apply for the Tier 4 (General) (Sponsored) Student visa, which only allows students to remain in the United Kingdom for one to four months after their course ends, depending on the length of the program. Australia allows sponsoring government agencies to request the issuance of subclass 573 visas (the Higher Education Sector Visa) with no further stay or further stay restricted conditions.
47 At least in theory; in practice, workers can use the visa as a stepping stone to other temporary visas that allow transitions to permanent residence.
professionals on the J-1 visa, which requires many to return.\textsuperscript{48} If participants in this “exchange visitor” program are funded by the home country or U.S. government, are deemed to have specialized knowledge and skills deemed necessary for the development of their home country,\textsuperscript{49} or received graduate medical training, they are required to return to their origin country for two years once their visa expires, and cannot apply for other U.S. employment- or family-based visas in that time.\textsuperscript{50}

At the low-skilled level, both New Zealand and more recently Australia, operate strictly temporary seasonal worker programs for Pacific Island nationals to work in the agricultural sector. These programs were deliberately designed to facilitate remittances without requiring the host countries to accept new permanent residents with low skill levels; skills transfers to origin countries have also been touted as potential benefits.\textsuperscript{51}

Beyond providing visas to facilitate temporary work experience, destination countries may also directly provide work placements to foreign nationals. Germany’s Federal Foreign Office (AA) ran a pilot project for engineers in Tunisia with ZAV (the international placement services arm of Germany’s Federal Employment Agency) from 2012 to 2013. The pilot provided 100 unemployed Tunisian engineers with five months of language and intercultural training in Tunis and Germany, before offering scholarships for six-month work placements at German companies.\textsuperscript{52} At the end of the project, more than 70 percent of participants had acquired jobs, either in Germany or at German companies in Tunisia.\textsuperscript{53} This program is similar to those that train and recruit foreign caregivers or nurses for positions overseas, such as the Philippines-Japan agreement to allow Filipino nurses and caregivers to move to Japan (see Section III: 2), and Germany’s pilot program to train Vietnamese nurses to become geriatric nurses in Germany.\textsuperscript{54}

\textsuperscript{48} Introduced by the Fulbright-Hays Act of 1961 (formally known as the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, section 109). J-1 visa categories include high school students, college and university students, government visitors, interns, scholars, teachers, trainees, physicians, and specialists.

\textsuperscript{49} Specialized knowledge or skills in countries of origin that qualify under this J-1 return requirement are identified on the U.S. Exchange Visitors Skill List (which lists particular in-demand occupations, by country, and primarily applies to developing countries—e.g. China has 36 occupations listed, Chile and Colombia have 18 as of January 2016. See U.S. Department of State, “Exchange Visitor Master Skills List – 2009,” accessed January 8, 2016, http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/en/study-exchange/exchange/exchange-visitor-skills-list.html.

\textsuperscript{50} J-1 students can apply for visas not related to employment or family, e.g. the F-1 student visa. See U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, “J-1 Visa Exchange Program: Common Questions for Participants,” accessed January 8, 2016, http://j1visa.state.gov/participants/common-questions/.


\textsuperscript{52} Maria Vincenza Desiderio and Kate Hooper, Improving migrants’ labour market integration in Europe from the outset: A cooperative approach to predeparture measures (Brussels: Migration Policy Institute Europe, 2015), 8, www.migrationpolicy.org/research/improving-migrants-labour-market-integration-europe-outset-cooperative-approach.


\textsuperscript{54} The latter is a program commissioned by the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology (BMWi), and implemented by the Ministry of Labor, Invalids, and Social Affairs (MoLISA), in Vietnam. Begun in 2012, and running until 2016, the program provides 120 candidates (with degrees such as college nurse or bachelor nurse) in Vietnam with intensive German language classes for six months (including specific modules on German for nurses), before selecting the 100 best candidates to go to Germany. These 100 candidates then undertake a two-year training course in Germany, supplemented by language classes and general integration support. Nurses receive residence permits (on the merit of having graduated a recognized VET course), and help with finding a job. See GIZ, “Training nurses from Viet Nam to become geriatric nurses in Germany,” accessed January 8, 2016, www.giz.de/en/worldwide/18715.html.
III. Tailoring Skills and Experience at Destination

Despite the strong economic and institutional forces that fuel large-scale, global migration among the highly skilled, the skills and experience that migrants take across borders are often underexploited. Genuine differences in education and experience gained in different countries, coupled with employers’ lack of familiarity with foreign credentials, can mean that workers make limited use of their training after they migrate. This phenomenon is exacerbated by language barriers, migrants’ lack of knowledge of job opportunities and recruiting norms, and licensing systems that require the foreign trained to reapply for the right to practice their profession after they move.

For policymakers concerned with making the impact of migration on skills development “fair,” ensuring that international migration does not inadvertently deplete skills in which migrants and sending countries have invested is a considerable challenge. Barriers to transferring skills across borders are thought to reduce opportunities for the circulation of skilled professionals that might be beneficial to both origin and destination countries; they also jeopardize migrants’ successful integration at destination. And this “brain waste” represents a cost to destination countries’ economies, which do not reap the benefits of immigrants’ human capital.\(^{55}\)

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The skills and experience that migrants take across borders are often underexploited.

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Several promising models have developed in recent years to improve the recognition of migrants’ qualifications.\(^{56}\) Some are designed primarily to encourage integration among long-term settlers at destination, while others are intended to facilitate emigration or to boost trade and investment opportunities for countries of origin. While a full review is beyond the scope of this report, this section reviews several key initiatives.

1. International Cooperation on Recognizing Qualifications

To reduce the barriers to mobility and integration created by professional regulation, governments and professional associations in several countries have negotiated mutual recognition agreements (MRAs). These agreements set out rules for licensing practitioners who move between signatory countries. Their goal is to reduce, or even eliminate, the need for case-by-case assessments when applicants have been trained in systems conferring essentially comparable skills and knowledge. If meaningful gaps in education and training exist, agreements may give applicants credit for their home-country qualifications but require a certain amount of additional testing, training, or work experience. Others provide temporary or limited registration that allows migrants to perform work for which they are qualified while avoiding tasks for which they are not.\(^{57}\)

It is difficult for countries to reach mutual recognition agreements, and relatively few successful agreements have been negotiated. (Mutual recognition of qualifications among European Union Member


56 For a more detailed discussion, see Sumption, *Tackling Brain Waste*; Hawthorne, *Recognizing Foreign Qualifications*.

States has been a large and notable exception.) More recently, the Canadian province of Quebec and France negotiated and implemented a series of recognition agreements in more than 80 regulated occupations, making this a relatively rare case of a wide-ranging agreement between territories that are not part of a single market. In each occupation, agreements define requirements for professionals moving between Quebec and France, and in some—though not all—cases considerably reduce the amount of retraining required. Some of them, such as nursing, provide for short orientation courses designed to fill any skills gaps quickly and at relatively low cost. Like most MRAs, this initiative governs movement between two countries with relatively similar levels of economic development; discussions are underway to assess the potential for additional agreements with Francophone countries in North Africa—a move which, if successful, would represent a significant step to extending mutual recognition to developing countries.

When gaps in education and training are large enough to make mutual recognition difficult, it may nonetheless be possible to reduce the cost of taking licensing exams by making them more widely available. In particular, offering professional examinations in origin countries can help migrants acquire qualifications more quickly and speed up their integration into regulated professions upon arrival (See Box 3).

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**Box 3. Preparing for Licensing Before Departure**

The United States’ National Council of State Boards for Nursing (NCSBN) offers its National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN) at international testing sites in eight countries. This includes the Philippines, India, and Canada—major source countries for internationally educated nurses in the United States. Additionally, candidates can participate in the Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS) Certification Program—a preliminary requirement by U.S. state boards in order to sit the NCLEX-RN examination—at more than 700 test centers in 100-plus countries. Other countries have developed more general predeparture programs. In Canada, the federal government provided funding to the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC) to develop the Canadian Immigrant Integration Program (CIIP), which prepares migrants in their countries of origin by providing information on the Canadian job market and professional requirements. The original pilot project, launched in 2007, became a fully funded project in 2010 (funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) through 2017), with CIIP offices in China, India, the Philippines, and the United Kingdom. CIIP’s services include free predeparture orientation sessions, and working with regulatory bodies in origin countries to provide examinations in regulated occupations, such as law: for example, following a pilot project, the CIIP office in Delhi now permanently offers Canadian legal examinations.

2. Training, Retraining, and Placement Services for the Foreign Trained

Migrants often require additional knowledge, training, or language skills before they can practice their professions overseas. In regulated occupations, they may need a host-country license or certification. Navigating licensing systems can be difficult, however, and there may be no options for migrants needing to fill small gaps in their knowledge without repeating years of training. As a result, governments, nonprofit organizations, and the private sector in several countries have designed and supported specialized programs to help migrants acquire any necessary local qualifications or knowledge. Some operate entirely in destination countries, while others involve cooperation across borders—in part to take advantage of the lower cost of training at home or to facilitate faster integration by beginning the process before departure.

**Box 4. Credentialing Health Professionals in Portugal**

Between 2002 and 2011, the Jesuit Refugee Services and the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation in Portugal ran a series of retraining projects to help immigrant doctors and nurses re-enter their fields. The first, a three-year pilot between 2002 and 2005, provided specialized support to 120 immigrant doctors to help them pass Portuguese medical exams and find work in their field. It included financial support for remedial Portuguese language classes tailored to medicine, study materials, and application fees. At the end of the pilot, nearly 89 percent of applicants were fully integrated and working as doctors. Other candidates struggled with professional placements (waiting periods, documents needed) and issues with medical schools and the Portuguese Medical Association. A second project aimed at nurses ran between 2005 and 2007, with 76 percent of participants passing exams to obtain nursing qualifications. In 2008, the Portuguese Ministry of Health ran a follow-up project for immigrant doctors with the original partners, admitting 83 participants after an initial interview process and Portuguese language tests. Participants received a bursary worth double the minimum wage for a maximum of 12 months, as well as support finding accommodation, employment for spouses, and child care. Of the 83 candidates who participated in the project, 80 percent had their qualifications successfully recognized and registered with the Portuguese Medical Association.


A good example of intensive retraining is NursesNow International (NNI), a company that offered a credentialing program between 2009 and 2012 for Mexican nurses moving for long-term staffing placements at U.S. hospitals. 58 Participants took three months of English classes for nursing, ten weeks of classes with U.S. nurses, and a six-week supervised work placement in a U.S. hospital to develop and practice their skills. Program graduates generally passed the U.S. nurse licensing examination, the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN), within four months, with first-time pass rates equivalent to those of U.S. nurses. Participants received a stipend to encourage program completion; this, and the general cost of training 80 nurses a year were covered by a venture capital firm and other private investors. Despite the success of the training and, initially, of its business model, NNI was...

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affected by the 2008 economic downturn and the subsequent collapse in U.S. demand for internationally educated nurses. Coupled with bureaucratic delays (such as obtaining educational transcripts from candidates’ nursing programs in Mexico, and slow credentials evaluation in the United States), this prevented NNI from becoming a self-sustaining, profit-generating business within three years as initially predicted; several investors pulled out, prompting the program’s closure in 2012. However, the model retains considerable potential for other efforts to provide quality training (perhaps on a nonprofit basis).

In the Philippines, the Technical Education Skills Development Authority (TESDA)—discussed earlier—has also developed programs to help Filipinos acquire credentials abroad. In 2011, it developed the Preparatory Japanese Language Training Program to prepare Filipino caregivers and nurses to work in Japan. Under the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement (JPEPA) of 2006, Japan matches up to 200 certified nurses and 300 certified caregivers from the Philippines with Japanese hospitals per year, allowing them to work for up to three years before sitting government qualification examinations. If they pass, Filipino nurses and caregivers become eligible for renewable residence permits. Pass rates remain low, however, as Filipino candidates struggle with the language requirements for the examination, which is written in Japanese. In response, TESDA introduced a Japanese program, funded by the Japanese government, that offers six months of compulsory predeparture language tuition in addition to the six months of postarrival language and skills training initially agreed in JPEPA. Critics have called for further measures to provide Japanese language tuition in the Philippines to help boost Filipino pass rates. Participants who do not pass the examinations must return to the Philippines.

In addition to vocation-specific training and assistance preparing for licensing exams, some organizations provide additional, broader support to help immigrants find jobs in their field and understand the local labor market. A number of successful models of this kind have developed in the United States. For example, the Welcome Back Initiative provides foreign-trained immigrant health professionals with information, language, and skills training, among other services in order to help them obtain licensing and credentialing required to work in the United States. Founded in San Francisco in 2001, it has since expanded to include ten international health-care worker assistance centers in eight states. As of the third quarter of 2014, the Welcome Back Initiative had validated more than 3,900 credentials, with more than 2,300 individuals passing licensing exams and more than 2,000 obtaining employment in the health sector in the United States for the first time. The Welcome Back Initiative’s San Francisco branch also developed a specialized English as a Second Language (ESL) for health professionals curriculum in 2004, to improve participants’ English language skills while providing instruction on health care issues in the United States and career development in this field. Welcome Back is just one of a number of initiatives that have invested in this field in North America (see Box 5).

The approaches these projects take vary—for example, they have different financing regimes, are driven by different actors, and serve different target groups. Indeed, the initiatives demonstrate the wide range

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62 Ibid.
63 Both the Welcome Back Initiative and Upwardly Global, described here, have been recognized as exceptional immigrant integration programs through the Migration Policy Institute’s E Pluribus Unum Prizes program. For more about the E Pluribus Unum Prizes program, see www.integratioawards.org.
65 Kaiser Permanente and the California Wellness Foundation funded the pilot project (which ran between 2004 and 2006) that developed this curriculum, which consists of 320 hours of instruction. The program still runs, and has been adopted by other educational institutions. See Welcome Back Initiative, “English Health Train—About,” accessed January 26, 2016, http://welcomebackinitiative.org/englishhealthtrain.org/about/.
of actors who have supported and funded retraining and credential recognition programs, including:
(1) the destination government (the Japanese case and one of the Portuguese pilots); (2) the private
sector or employers themselves (the U.S.-Mexico NNI initiative); and (3) nonprofit organizations (the
U.S. cases). A common feature, however, is that they provide more than theoretical or classroom-based
training, taking an active approach to connecting immigrants with jobs or providing work experience.
In some cases, job placement is an essential part of the licensing process; in others, it is a key step to
making contacts with employers and developing locally relevant skills.

Box 5. Guidance and Job Counseling for Foreign-Trained Professionals

Upwardly Global, a U.S. nonprofit, provides job readiness training, career counseling, placement services,
and mentoring to skilled immigrants and refugees across a range of occupations. Upwardly Global helps
immigrants overcome barriers to recognition, leveraging a strong employer network and mentoring
immigrants as they go through the requalification process. In 2013, it helped 400 job seekers who had
been unemployed or working in fast food restaurants or as janitors return to more skilled jobs as
electrical engineers or business analysts, for example. It has also launched an online employment training
program targeted at the foreign trained and addressing topics such as online job search techniques and
resume writing.

A Canadian project, Assisting Local Leaders with Immigrant Employment Strategies (ALLIES), runs a
national mentoring initiative that connects immigrants with Canadian professionals in their previous
field of employment. ALLIES is a partnership of the Maytree Foundation and the J.W. McConnell Family
Foundation, and has received funding from Citizenship and Immigration Canada. The project provides
advice to immigrants on Canadian workplace culture and getting their foreign-acquired qualifications
and experience recognized; drawing on a network of more than 100 participating employers, it also
connects immigrants with paid internship opportunities. ALLIES reports a high retention rate in the
labor market, with more than 80 percent of interns going on to find work in their field after the
internship. A 2013 outcomes assessment found that after 12 months mentees’ unemployment levels
fell from 73 percent to 19 percent; 71 percent of employed immigrants who had gone through the
mentoring program were working in their field, and their full-time income increased from $36,905 to
$59,944.

Sources: Upwardly Global, A Look at Skilled Immigrant Workers in the U.S.: Tapping into Global Talent Already
Here—Results in Clear Economic Benefit for Immigrants and for Nation (San Francisco: Upwardly Global,
2013), https://www.upwardlyglobal.org/UpwardlyGlobalEconomicImpactReportApril2013.pdf; Peter Paul and
Kim Turner, “Skilled Immigrant Integration around the Globe: A Look at What Other Countries are Doing,”
(webinar, IMPRINT, February 20, 2014), www.imprintproject.org/webinars/#feb2014; ALLIES and Accenture,
The Results are in: Mentoring Improves Employment Outcomes for Skilled Immigrants (Toronto: ALLIES and
IV. Facilitating Return and Reintegrating Returnees

Facilitating return migration and ensuring that those who do return reintegrate successfully represent the most direct strategy for origin countries to benefit from their emigrants’ skills. Some migrants may be willing to return in theory but need a nudge to overcome the immediate barriers to doing so—such as finding work, connecting with local contacts in their fields, or moving their families from one country to another. Various initiatives have developed to assist with this process. These projects typically target the highest-skilled, including scientists and entrepreneurs, and are often driven by origin-country governments—though in some cases development agencies or nonprofits have led the way.

People returning without specific job opportunities lined up constitute a second target group for return migration initiatives. This includes migrants whose visas have expired, who can no longer find work at destination, or who want to return for family or other personal reasons. These return migrants may find it difficult to reintegrate, particularly after a prolonged absence. A 2013 study of Mexican migrants returning from the United States, for example, found that only 28 percent of returnees were using skills acquired in the United States in their current work in Mexico and only 4 percent had received help from government programs upon their return. In other words, returnees’ skills may be wasted and origin countries may fail to retain them. Several initiatives have been developed to address this problem, connecting return migrants with job opportunities at origin, providing support for entrepreneurship, and helping returning workers have their foreign-acquired skills recognized at home.

Ensuring that those who do return reintegrate successfully represent the most direct strategy for origin countries to benefit from their emigrants’ skills.

A. Policies to Attract Overseas Talent

A 2011 global survey on countries’ emigration policies found that of the top 25 sending countries, 15 had targeted policies in place to try and encourage their citizens to return home. Attracting back overseas talent is, of course, easier for some countries than others. The most “desirable” returnees are the highly skilled professionals and entrepreneurs who also have good options at destination, and who will only move for compelling career opportunities back home. Not surprisingly, migrants are far more likely to return to a country with a stable political, economic, and social climate, and with similar levels of development to the destination country. Access to venture capital, research infrastructure, and educated workforces are also frequently cited preconditions for wooing successful emigrants. While not all countries provide these conditions, rapid growth and foreign investment in many developing countries—in Asia but also, more recently, in Africa—may make attracting emigrants and diaspora...
members to return a realistic aspiration for a growing range of countries of emigration.

Many sending countries have policies in place to encourage their overseas nationals to return, such as tax breaks.\textsuperscript{70} Fewer countries run programs that actively target and recruit their highly skilled émigrés for specialist professions in their country of origin. One set of initiatives targets highly skilled professionals—such as researchers—to match them directly with jobs in the origin country or provide them with resources to facilitate their return. For example, Taiwan’s National Science Council and Ministry of Education recruits Taiwanese academics living overseas to return on a temporary or permanent basis to Taiwanese universities.\textsuperscript{71} China also runs a number of programs aiming to recruit overseas Chinese academics to “serve the nation” either temporarily or permanently.\textsuperscript{72} Argentina’s Network of Overseas Argentinean Scientists and Researchers (RAICES) helped more than 1,000 scientists and researchers to return to work at universities in Argentina between 2009 and May 2014.\textsuperscript{73} RAICES covers the costs of participants’ relocation and offers a further subsidy to pay for additional costs.\textsuperscript{74}

Programs facilitating return have also been developed in destination countries. While many of these initiatives provide limited postreturn assistance and are primarily designed to remove unsuccessful asylum seekers or other unauthorized migrants, some have been more substantive and designed with development goals in mind. The German government’s Center for International Migration and Development (CIM), for example, has run a program for returning experts since 1980, which helps place and reintegrate foreign-born nationals with professional qualifications obtained in Germany, who wish to contribute to development goals in their country of origin.\textsuperscript{75} Funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), CIM provides prospective returnees with information on the job market and sources of reintegration support in their origin country. It advertises jobs to these nationals and puts them in touch with companies offering suitable positions, sometimes carrying out initial candidate screening for these firms. In some discretionary cases (those deemed to benefit development in the region) CIM also provides financial support, offering subsidies for relocating and setting up a new workplace, and supplementing candidates’ salaries for up to two years. Between 2004 and 2014, the program assisted more than 10,000 returning experts.\textsuperscript{76}

A second common program type targets overseas business entrepreneurs, connecting them with private-sector jobs, for example, or offering them space and funding to pursue business ventures. Technology hubs, or “science parks,” in Taiwan and China are well-known examples of the latter. These governments established special economic zones in which highly skilled returnees and foreign experts can set up business ventures in the science and technology sectors. China’s Zhongguancun Science Park (based in Beijing; often referred to as China’s Silicon Valley) has set up liaison offices in places such as California’s Silicon Valley and London to attract Chinese talent from overseas, and has close ties with overseas academic and professional associations. The park offers financial incentives to returnees, such as low-cost housing, reduced tariffs on equipment, subsidies, and simplified procedures for investment and trade.\textsuperscript{77}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{70} Examples include Ecuador which gives return migrants the ability to bring back their belongings without paying any tariffs, and Malaysia (through its Returning Expert Program) which offers a similar deal, along with a flat tax rate of 15 percent and permanent resident status for participants’ spouses and children.
\item \textsuperscript{71} Kevin O’Neill, “Brain Drain and Gain: The Case of Taiwan,” \textit{Migration Information Source}, September 1, 2003, \url{www.migrationinformation.org/feature/display.cfm?ID=155}.
\item \textsuperscript{72} David Zweig, Chung Siu Fung, and Donglin Han, “Redefining the Brain Drain: China’s “Diaspora Option,” \textit{Science, Technology & Society} 13 no. 1 (2008): 3-5.
\item \textsuperscript{73} Argentina Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation, “RAICES,” accessed May 14, 2015, \url{www.raices.mincyt.gov.ar/}.
\item \textsuperscript{74} Hebe Schmidt, \textit{Crónicas del Retorno: Motivaciones y Estrategias del Colectivo Argentino en España} (Madrid: Comunidad de Madrid, Consejería de Asuntos Sociales, 2014), 66-7.
\item \textsuperscript{75} Center for International Migration and Development (CIM), “Returning Experts Programme,” August 2014, \url{www.cimonline.de/documents/CIM-Flyer-prf-en.pdf}.
\item \textsuperscript{76} Ibid.
\end{itemize}
Financial incentives aside, the success rate of these programs in recruiting returning business entrepreneurs may depend on accompanying institutional reforms that favor enterprise. The Taiwanese government recruited technology companies and highly skilled members of the Taiwanese diaspora from Silicon Valley to create the country’s first high-tech hub, Hinschu Science Park (HSP), in the early 1980s. It provided financial incentives to returnees, including tax-free imports of supplies and equipment, and tax-free exports. The government also assisted with relocation, set up subsidized Western-style housing and commercial services, and sponsored international conferences on science and technology. There are now more than 520 companies based in HSP employing more than 152,000 people and generating more than NT$ 1 trillion (USD $30 billion) in revenue annually. According to one analysis, this success was possible only once Taiwanese companies (with government support in the form of tax incentives and matching funds) established the country’s first venture-capital firms—a foreign concept to Taiwanese family-oriented, risk-averse business practices—that could invest in technology startups.

B. Policies to Reintegrate Migrants upon Return

Return migrants may struggle to find work in the domestic labor market that fits their foreign-acquired skills and expertise. This may reflect poor recognition of foreign qualifications and experience in the origin country, or may be the result of migrants’ foreign-acquired skills and expertise not matching needs in the origin country’s labor market. Targeted employment services like job-matching, (re)training, and credential recognition initiatives are designed to mitigate some of these challenges.

Korea’s “Happy Return” program, for example, focuses on low- or mid-skilled migrants, matching foreign workers whose Korean visas are expiring with Korean companies in their countries of origin. In theory, this encourages temporary migrants to leave Korea while contributing to their reintegration at origin. The program offers free predeparture business skills workshops and advice on transferring benefits, and runs job fairs with Korean companies in the countries of origin. Employment levels upon return have been rather low: of the 2,000 returnees who attended job fairs in 2012, about 400 found employment. However, this may be partly attributed to an amendment to the Employment Permit System in 2012 that allows workers to return to their home countries for three months before then returning to Korea on a renewed work permit—as a result, some participants may not have been actively seeking jobs in their domestic labor market, but simply waiting for the three-month period to expire.

Return migrants may struggle to find work in the domestic labor market that fits their foreign-acquired skills and expertise.

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79 Ibid.
81 Saxenian, “From Brain Drain to Brain Circulation,” 43-44.
Initiatives based in destination countries can provide information and financial assistance and have the advantage of reaching individuals early in the process of returning to their country of origin. Programs based in countries of origin, however, may be better placed to provide ongoing, longer-term support for returning migrants as they reintegrate. Colombia’s “Plan Retorno” (“Return Plan”) scheme, for example, has established special offices for return migrants in some of the provinces that experience the highest levels of international migration, such as Antioquia and Bogotá D.C. These centers provide migrants with counseling services, information on training and apprenticeship opportunities through the National Service of Learning (SENA), assistance with finding jobs, and details of financial support available for starting businesses.\[84\]

Similarly, Mexico’s Ministry of the Interior launched “Somos Mexicanos” (“We Are Mexicans”) in March 2014 to assist returnees, including by providing referrals to job opportunities and education.\[85\] This builds on earlier work by nonprofits such as Mexicans and Americans Thinking Together (MATT). A MATT-commissioned study found that many Mexican returnees struggled to utilize their U.S.-acquired credentials and received very little support to facilitate their return and reintegration. MATT’s Yo Soy México initiative aims to fill this gap by researching where returnees want to settle, providing them with information on available social programs and support networks, and linking them with job opportunities in the private sector through an online portal.\[86\] It also works with the private sector and government officials on broader challenges facing returnees, including negative perceptions of migrants’ alleged criminality (arising from unauthorized crossings of the U.S.-Mexico border) and a lack of financial literacy that can discourage investment or entrepreneurship.\[87\]

Finally, support for returning migrants can come through mainstream institutions such as public employment services. In Albania, for example, a project funded by the European Union and implemented by the International Labor Organization (ILO) provided reintegration services for returning migrants as part of broader labor market reforms in Albania.\[88\] By March 2014, the initiative had established employment offices in five locations, and provided specialized training for its staff to advise returning migrant workers with foreign-acquired skills. The project included a skills certification initiative targeted at return migrant workers, to facilitate their reintegration into the Albanian labor market, and a pilot program in the textiles industry to formally recognize and certify vocational skills either developed informally in Albania or acquired overseas. This sought to develop a qualification structure in line with the current European Qualification Framework along with procedures to assess Albanians (trained in Albania or overseas) working in the textiles industry.\[89\]

V. Diaspora Engagement

If migrants choose to permanently settle overseas, they and their descendants are not “lost” to the origin country. In an age of swift global communication and deepening economic ties between countries, diaspora communities can maintain strong ties with their country of heritage and contribute...

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87 Author interview with Miryam Hazan, Research Director at MATT, April 25, 2014.
88 The EU Instrument for Preaccession Assistance (IPA) 2010 Project on Human Resources Development ran until January 31, 2015.
to its development in a number of ways without physically returning. The economic impact of diaspora remittances is well documented. But the diaspora can also be a resource of human-capital development and growth in origin countries, providing access to skills, experience, and overseas networks.  

After years of criticizing emigrants for abandoning their home country, many governments now celebrate their diasporas and attempt to benefit from their skills and resources. Numerous origin countries and diaspora members have set up initiatives to facilitate diaspora contributions, often with assistance from host countries’ foreign affairs or development agencies. These projects vary widely. Some focus on building networks of diaspora members to encourage contact with their origin-country peers and attract donations or investments for philanthropic or business purposes. Others require a more hands-on contribution with diaspora members delivering support in person: either to deliver specialist knowledge in a particular field, or providing more general capacity-building activities, through managerial experience. The variety of initiatives also reflects the composition of a country’s skilled diaspora, which may encompass entrepreneurs, academics, and other skilled professionals, each with discrete contributions to offer.

Many governments now celebrate their diasporas and attempt to benefit from their skills and resources.

A. Networking and Mentoring

A preliminary stage in efforts to engage the diaspora is outreach: identifying diaspora members and their skillsets, assessing their needs, and setting up networks to encourage them to contribute their expertise to their country of origin. One model is the academic network, which targets diaspora researchers, and has been a popular tool for organizations seeking to facilitate the transfer of knowledge and skills between origin and destination countries. Some of the best known efforts to set up diaspora networks have been in Colombia, whose first network for diaspora scientists was established in 1991. Red Caldas, as the network was known, encouraged networking among researchers in Colombia and in the diaspora, and prompted some diaspora members to return to Colombia. This network ultimately lost momentum and many members abandoned it for more specialized research forums, but Colombia subsequently established a new network for its overseas scientists with assistance from France and IOM. Colombia has also created an online platform.

90 See Clemens, Graham, and Howe, “Skilled Migration and Development;” Kuznetsov, How Can Talent Abroad Induce Development at Home?
92 A study on the potential for diaspora involvement in sexual and reproductive health (SRH) nonprofits in Nigeria carried out by Management Strategies for Africa (MSA) and funded by Comic Relief UK argued that diaspora members could contribute significantly to capacity building without needing any background in SRH. See MSA, Engaging Nigeria Diaspora and National Volunteers to Develop Civil Society (Essex, United Kingdom: MSA, 2012) www.msforafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/MSA-Final-DNVE-Research-Report-27-Sept-2012.pdf.
94 Agunias and Newland, Developing a Road Map, 174.
95 Ibid., 175.
(RedEsColombia) for diaspora members in academia, the arts, and the private sector, to provide a forum for new ideas for development. A Colombian government official described the latter as one of the country's most successful diaspora initiatives to date.

Some networks have been designed to encourage emigrants to make business connections and consider returning to their origin country. Advance Australia, founded in 2002 and funded by the Australian central and state governments and private partners, offers repatriation information, and has an online forum for posting job opportunities. More broadly, it tries to connect Australians with Australians in the diaspora and those whom count themselves as “Friends of Australia,” for business opportunities. It has specific industry networks—for example, in financial services, life sciences, and green technology—and runs more than 100 networking events each year. As of 2015, it had more than 25,000 members in 90 countries.

Some networks have played a more active role, relying on diaspora members to provide individualized mentoring to local entrepreneurs. GlobalScot, for example, draws upon a network of diaspora businessmen and entrepreneurs to provide mentoring services for individuals and businesses based in Scotland. It was founded in 2001 by Scottish Enterprise, a government agency, as an invitation-only network. Members must hold senior positions in business, and are personally welcomed by Scotland’s First Minister. It runs networking events in Scotland and overseas, but also organizes mentoring activities for entrepreneurs based in Scotland. GlobalScot helps Scottish entrepreneurs in the diaspora and fledgling entrepreneurs at schools and universities identify business opportunities in Scotland. It also provides some support for the entrepreneurial process, such as negotiating business deals, acquiring financial backing, and designing business plans. As of 2011, GlobalScot had around 650 members, and had generated GBP 30 million in revenue for Scottish enterprises. Other examples of networks providing mentoring are discussed in Box 6.

Networking initiatives are hard to evaluate. The desired outcomes (such as making fostering business connections and sharing knowledge) are intangible and difficult to measure or attribute to specific activities. Nonetheless, they can be a relatively inexpensive tool to encourage contributions from diaspora members such as mentoring or business and research collaborations—even if evidence on their impacts is largely anecdotal.

B. Support for Diaspora Entrepreneurs

Several development-focused initiatives have set as a key goal the encouragement of diaspora entrepreneurship. These projects have taken varying approaches, including support for diaspora members hoping to establish businesses in their country of origin or ancestry, or return on a temporary or permanent basis. This type of mentorship and tailored business advice is designed to build capacity among diasporas and countries of origin, leading to new businesses and wealth creation in countries of origin.

96 This was part of the Création d’incubateurs de diasporas des savoirs pour l’Amérique Latine (CIDESAL) project, which ran between 2009 and 2012. It sought to investigate the brain drain of highly skilled migrants from Latin American countries to Europe and elsewhere, and to build networks of highly skilled academics and professionals in science and technology, from the diasporas of Colombia, Argentina, and Uruguay. The Colombian government reported in July 2012 that it had built a database of nearly 11,000 highly skilled Colombian expatriates working in the science and technology industries. See María Ángela Holguín Cuéllar, Congressional Report 2011-12 (Bogota, Ministry of External Affairs 2012), 12, www.cancilleria.gov.co/sites/default/files/planeacion Estrategica/11. Memorias al Congreso 2011-2012.pdf.
97 Cesar Vallejo, advisor to the Colombian government agency Colombia Nos Une, interviewed on May 25, 2011 for Agunias and Newland, Developing a Road Map, 175-76.
98 Agunias and Newland, Developing a Road Map, 135.
100 Agunias and Newland, Developing a Road Map, 137-8.
Box 6. Networks that Provide Mentoring Services

Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE) is one of the largest and most well-known diaspora networks and also offers mentoring services for entrepreneurs. Originally established as a nonprofit for overseas Indians in the United States in 1992, it had expanded to 13,000 members in 61 chapters across 18 countries as of 2016. It runs networking events, entrepreneurship workshops, and one-on-one mentorship for aspiring Indian entrepreneurs. It holds hundreds of events on entrepreneurship each year across the world, including TiECon, which it claims is the largest entrepreneurial forum in the world. Since its foundation, TiE estimates its economic wealth creation at $200 billion (as of 2016).

Also focused on entrepreneurship, ChileGlobal—a diaspora network of Chilean-descent business professionals—provides mentoring services to Chileans. It was established by Fundación Chile, a nonprofit, in 2005. The network is relatively small and exclusive—as of February 2014, it had 1,000 members. Its activities have included running business networking events, providing expert consulting for government agencies, offering mentoring to Chilean entrepreneurs via an online platform, and setting up internships abroad for Chileans in member companies. By 2011, ChileGlobal had helped set up 76 companies, with the support of an estimated 50 domestic and international partners. The organization also successfully lobbied for Synopsys, Inc. to set up a $5 million center in Santiago, Chile, aided by ChileGlobal’s member Raúl Camposano, former Senior Vice President and Chief Technology Officer for Synopsys, Inc., to conduct feasibility studies with Fundación Chile for the Chilean government. The Universidad de Chile agreed to offer a specialized “Synopsys Programming Course” for engineering students, who could then apply for a position with Synopsys.


The International diaspora Engagement Alliance (IdEA), based in the United States, is an organization that seeks to encourage diaspora entrepreneurship, by running competitions for foreign diaspora members with ideas for businesses in their countries of origin or ancestry.102 Launched in 2011, with the Migration Policy Institute (MPI) as its incubator, IdEA now is managed by the U.S. Department of State, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and the Calvert Foundation, with partners from private foundations, companies, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). IdEA has run a series of business plan competitions for U.S.-based African, Caribbean, and Latin American diaspora entrepreneurs.103 These competitions offer grants between US $10,000 and $100,000,104 and provide boot camps for the winners to build up their business skills (for example, marketing, bookkeeping, and raising seed capital).

Another example is the French government’s Program for the Creation of Innovative Companies in the Mediterranean (PACEIM)—a partnership between France’s Institut de recherche pour le
développement (IRD) and government ministries in Algeria, Lebanon, Morocco, and Tunisia. The initiative sponsors North Africans with French graduate degrees in science and technology to start businesses in their countries of origin. Candidates with ideas for technology- or research-based businesses apply through a competitive process to receive up to 35,000 euros in startup capital, alongside an individualized plan of mentoring and logistical or technical support to help them with business development and implementation. The initial support is provided in France, with further assistance offered in origin countries; and while some of the participants plan to remain French residents in the long term, others have used the program to re-establish themselves permanently in their country of origin. France provides 80 percent of the funding, while origin governments supplement the remainder. The project aims to deliver opportunities for highly qualified émigrés to use their skills at home, create businesses with the potential to provide jobs for highly educated graduates from North African institutions, and help develop more competitive tech sectors in these origin countries.

**Box 7. Support for Diaspora Entrepreneurs from the Netherlands**

Established in the Netherlands in 1996, the IntEnt Foundation provided intensive support for diaspora entrepreneurs in setting up small or medium enterprises (SMEs) in Afghanistan, Curacao, Ethiopia, Ghana, Morocco, Suriname, and Turkey until 2013. To pick participants the foundation ran competitive selection processes including entrepreneurship tests and formal interviews. Once selected, the orientation phase offered group training on developing business plans, market research, and data collection, accompanied by individual counseling. Candidates were then provided with external evaluation and assistance in acquiring third-party support and startup capital. IntEnt encouraged participating entrepreneurs to take responsibility for funding their own businesses—the former CEO, Klaas Molenaar, claimed that the “vast majority” of participants used their own funds or loans from relatives to finance their businesses, with IntEnt providing additional information on private loans if necessary. From 2012, IntEnt could also invest up to 50,000 euros in an enterprise the foundation received a guarantee from the entrepreneur’s friends and family for half of the investment. Beyond the costs involved in setting up the business, the services offered by IntEnt were expensive and subsidized by stakeholders, and the foundation closed after financial setbacks. By 2009, more than 10,000 fledgling migrant entrepreneurs had contacted IntEnt for assistance—around 350 businesses were launched, more than 90 percent of which were still running after three years.

Sources: Klaas Molenaar, Enteringing Migrants in the Driver’s Seat: Dreams Cross Borders and Become Reality (The Hague: IntEnt Foundation, 2009); Agunias and Newland, Developing a Road Map for Engaging Diasporas in Development.

**C. Temporary Return for Skills and Capacity Building**

A range of initiatives focuses on capacity-building by drawing on highly skilled diaspora members who temporarily return to their origin country for a number of weeks or months to provide mentoring or training. While the costs of these programs can be substantial, they may help to foster deeper links between diaspora members and their countries of heritage. Indeed, anecdotal evidence from some projects suggests that some diaspora members chose to relocate permanently to the origin country after their temporary placement.

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106 Ibid.
IOM’s Migration for Development in Africa (MIDA) program, which has been in operation since 2002, sponsors the return of skilled members of the sub-Saharan African diaspora for temporary capacity-building and training assignments. The IOM Great Lakes program partners the diaspora in Belgium with Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Rwanda. It has funded a number of projects that engage diaspora members in Belgium in skills-building assignments, for example, returning to teach courses in their specialties and establish new departments at universities in their country of origin. IOM Netherlands ran a MIDA program in Ghana between 2005 and 2012 focused on the health sector. It worked with nonprofits in EU destination countries to encourage the temporary return of Ghanaian diaspora members to train staff in surgical procedures and nursing practices, deliver lectures and run workshops, set up outpatient clinics, and perform complex medical procedures. In total, nearly 300 specialists returned to Ghana and 15 Ghanaian health workers took up temporary placements in the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and Germany. Former interns and members of host organizations described the project as invaluable for capacity building in Ghana, particularly in remote areas.

Like other returning experts programs, MIDA funds the travel costs and living expenses of its participating diaspora members, leading to potentially high expenditures per returning expert. These returning experts deliver short-term training at a lower cost than deploying international consultants; nonetheless the high costs make it difficult to scale up the projects’ scope or duration.

Similarly, the African Foundation for Development (AFFORD) created opportunities for African entrepreneurs living in the United Kingdom to temporarily return and provide support for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Sierra Leone and Ghana. This program—Support Entrepreneurs and Enterprise Development in Africa (SEEDA)—was part of the Diaspora Volunteering Initiative (DVI), a three-year program funded by the UK government’s Department for International Development (DFID). It sent 150 volunteers in total, usually in groups of 15 to 25 people, for two to three weeks at a time to provide training on bookkeeping and business planning for new and existing businesses. SEEDA provided support to more than 800 businesses, and also established a business support development agency in Sierra Leone with an accompanying national business planning competition, which has provided more than US $200,000 in investment for SMEs. Some of the volunteers subsequently invested in SMEs in Ghana or Sierra Leone, or chose to relocate permanently. AFFORD sought to mitigate some of the costs of the program by asking volunteers to contribute around 10 percent of their expenses.


109 Ibid., 24.

110 Ibid.

111 Earlier iterations of these return programs—for example, the Return of Qualified Nationals programs—provided salary supplements for participants, which pushed up costs even higher. Encouraging participants to volunteer their time—and contribute to some of the costs themselves or strike deals with local providers—enables these programs to lower their costs somewhat. See IOM, The MIDA Experience and Beyond.

112 Ibid.

113 Details of SEEDA program from authors’ correspondence with Onyekachi Wambu, Director for Engagement and Policy, AFFORD, March 28-April 3, 2014.
VI. Conclusion

As the demand for skills increases worldwide, all countries have an interest in developing human capital and ensuring it is put to good use. Countries of emigration have historically been concerned about losing their best minds to destinations overseas, and with them the opportunity to raise productivity and living standards at home. After all, the vast majority of a country’s skills base comes from its permanent population. But an interconnected global economy, of which migration is an integral part, also provides wide-ranging opportunities to improve access to skills in less traditional ways. Under the right conditions, mobile workers—including emigrants who return permanently, workers who circulate between origin and destination, and diaspora members who bring expertise to their country of origin without returning for the long term—can make meaningful contributions. This prospect has generated new interest in projects and policies that facilitate these potential benefits.

This report has described a varied spectrum of such initiatives. While they were developed for different reasons and driven by different actors, some common themes emerge. First, the transferability of skills is at the heart of most of the initiatives—from programs designed to develop internationally recognized qualifications in countries of emigration, to those that enable the foreign trained to apply their skills at destination, help returnees do the same back home, and encourage diaspora members to share their knowledge and connections. If skills are depleted as people move across borders, the economic benefits of skilled migration and its potential to plug origin countries into the global knowledge economy could be considerably reduced.

Genuine portability of skills, however, remains a distant aspiration, in large part due to the sheer difficulty of the task. Curricula and standards in some fields may be converging—particularly the most globalized such as information technology (IT) or architecture—and students may have growing choices and purchasing power in an international market for qualifications. But local differences in the skills that individuals actually learn are inevitable. Training itself, as well as the ways in which it is applied, continues to respond to local norms and institutions. Even without these differences, merely creating processes for formal certifications of foreign qualifications is often not enough—internationally mobile professionals may also require new work experience, language instruction, and mentoring. Education and training alone are not always valuable if they are disconnected from the labor market and do little to channel participants into jobs on completion.

Several of the training-based initiatives designed to bridge migrants’ skills gaps explicitly recognize these facts, focusing on work experience and on-the-job training rather than classroom instruction alone. Others seek to foster local knowledge, for example through mentoring. Providing these more intensive programs can be costly and time-consuming, however, and as a result, barriers to transferring skills remain despite significant investments by nonprofit organizations or governments (such as the United States and Canada).

It is equally difficult to enable returning migrants to put their foreign-acquired skills to use at origin. These individuals do not face language barriers and have the benefit of local knowledge and cultural familiarity; but this does not mean they will find opportunities to use their new skills. Local employers may not be familiar with formal qualifications acquired abroad—especially if the latter do not have a global brand. Perhaps more importantly, returnees may find it hard to demonstrate the value of their...
foreign work experience. They may also find that domestic labor markets offer few job opportunities in the industries that employed them abroad. At the same time, origin countries’ limited capacity, as well as the more limited ecosystem of civil-society organizations in many developing countries, may make it more difficult to provide intensive support where returnees are seeking employment. Incorporating returnees into labor markets that already struggle to employ growing populations of domestic workers has not always been a high political priority.

Relocation support, information services, and job placement initiatives are among those that seek to respond to this problem; some origin countries have developed targeted strategies to entice people home and directly into jobs—particularly the “most desirable” returnees in fields such as science and business. At the middle-skilled levels, however, programs offering intensive support comparable to that available in some destination countries are less extensive. Many of the programs that do exist target entrepreneurs, leaving fewer options for the majority of migrants who are seeking regular employment.\textsuperscript{114}

The challenge of sustainability and scale represents another common theme. Many initiatives are run by nonprofit organizations or government contractors that rely on funding streams from host countries’ development agencies or international institutions. Small projects funded this way can provide excellent laboratories for experimentation, especially if evaluation is built into the project design. But many close or lose funding after just a few years, raising the question whether their lessons are ultimately lost.

Private-sector or fee-based models offer alternatives. Some of the most interesting innovations in broadening access to internationally recognized or accredited qualifications have come from independent actors such as universities, professional associations, and private companies. Many have succeeded because they exploit market demand, including from fee-paying students. Similarly, employers have often been willing to meet the costs of training prospective migrant employees when demand for workers is high. Employer-funded projects are particularly alluring for policymakers interested in the equitable development of human capital, since they are financed by the “users” of skills and more likely focused on real labor market needs. Such initiatives remain vulnerable to economic conditions, however. The U.S.-Mexico nurse training initiative described in Section III, for example, was a promising for-profit model but collapsed with the global recession in 2008 and the growth of the domestic U.S. nurse supply.

Governments also play an important role in developing many of the initiatives this report has described. Public-sector organizations may not be as well placed to respond to market demand on the ground or provide carefully tailored services to heterogeneous populations, but they bring the advantage of scale. Governments can rely on existing, mainstream institutions and bureaucracies to deliver services on a substantial scale—such as through public employment services. They can also facilitate the work of independent or private-sector organizations by collaborating on initiatives that require regulatory approval. And they control broader policy levers that may affect individuals’ ability or willingness to circulate between countries, such as the right to dual citizenship and the portability of social security benefits.

There is no perfect formula for making migration “fair” for origin countries that seek to develop their access to human capital. Reasonable analysts may disagree on which of the projects this report has discussed truly meet this definition and which have the highest impact. Evaluation remains a weak link, leaving real uncertainty about where to invest. At the same time, it is formidably difficult to create initiatives that are large enough to genuinely shift the costs and benefits of skilled migration. Nonetheless, the range of programs that have been developed and the diversity of actors that have supported them suggest that with enough political will, persistence, and commitment to evaluation, ample opportunities exist to get closer to a “fair deal” on talent.

\textsuperscript{114} Of course, entrepreneurship programs are particularly popular because they hold out the potential—though, of course, often not the reality—of a multiplier effect in the form of job creation. The French PACEIM project represents a good example of intensive support to entrepreneurs, offering tailored assistance to individuals who set up high-tech businesses.
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The Migration Policy Institute is a nonprofit, nonpartisan think tank dedicated to the study of the movement of people worldwide. MPI provides analysis, development, and evaluation of migration and refugee policies at the local, national, and international levels. It aims to meet the rising demand for pragmatic and thoughtful responses to the challenges and opportunities that large-scale migration, whether voluntary or forced, presents to communities and institutions in an increasingly integrated world.

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