



UK Youth Leadership Advisory Board

Supporting the integration of displaced youth

Co-Design Report

January 2023

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About DOT UK & wider partnership ecosystem

DOT is a youth-led movement of daring social innovators who have the tools, knowledge, and networks to create opportunities and transform their own communities.

We mobilize and inspire all underserved and disadvantaged young people with digital literacy, 21st-century skills and the self-confidence that will enable them to thrive in an inclusive digital economy. We support youth to become innovators and leaders, and to create and apply digital solutions that have a positive impact in their communities.

DOT UK's focus is to increase the digital skills of displaced youth across the UK.

DOT UK is part of a larger partnership ecosystem. The consortium of partners was brought together through a shared interest to advance the skills and opportunities of displaced communities in the UK.

The more immediate aim is to gather support for the establishment of the Youth Leadership Advisory Board to inform collaborative strategy, to learn more about both their entrepreneurial and migration journeys and contribution to the UK tech economy.

Members of the Consortium include [Techfugees](#), [Kiron](#), [Buffalo Grid](#), [TERN](#) and [Tech Nation](#). Additional outreach partners include: [Migrateful](#) and [Code Your Future](#).



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This co-design process aimed to realise the purpose and vision for the UK Youth Leadership Advisory Board. By designing with 7 participants (all potential board members) rather than for them, the co-design process enabled us to co-create a board that would add the most value for members and the mission of DOT UK and the ecosystem of partners..

What is YLAB? YLAB aims to bring together young displaced youth to work together with DOT and the wider Consortium partners. The purpose of YLAB is to ensure young people are at the centre of DOT and partner collaborative implementation plans and that programming and initiatives serve displaced youth effectively. DOT has strong youth presence embedded in its governance. Each country where DOT operates has a YLAB and a Global YLAB works closely with the DOT Global Board to feed into the direction of DOT's work.

What were the key problems identified that the board will help address?

Difficulties in Accessing Work and Information: The current ecosystem presents barriers for displaced youth to fully grasp opportunities to work and access information.

Displaced youth face misperception: Being in the UK presents difficulties of misperception and persecution.

Lack of Skills Development Opportunities: There is a gap to provide vital digital skills and wider skills to displaced youth at a low cost and have low barriers to entry.

What were the recommendations?

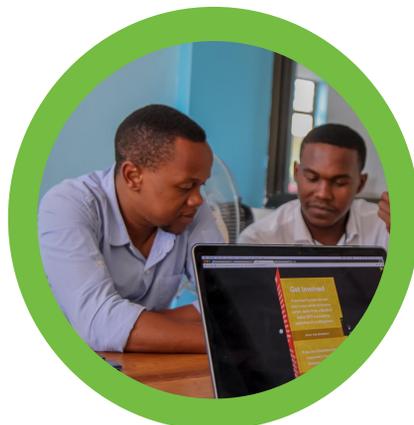
Lived experience should lead: During the co-design youth shared their experiences of coming to the UK as displaced youth. These experiences gave them unique insights into the situation displaced youth find themselves in the realities of the challenge.

Focus on Displaced youth: Given the makeup of the board and the participants expertise, the group noted that the focus of the board should focus on displaced youth or those with lived experiences of displacement.

Integration is the aim: Through its work, the YLAB and consortium partners should focus on providing support for the integration of displaced youth in the UK. Digital and administrative skills, language and workforce skilling were highlighted with importance.

What are the next steps?

- A meeting in Q1/23 will bring the Partner ecosystem together to hear the findings of the co-design.
- A final Terms of Reference will be drawn together to further outline the role and purpose of YLAB.
- Funding will be sought to support the efforts of YLAB.
- Members will be recruited to sit alongside members who took part in the co-design.



INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE OF CO-DESIGN

What is Youth Leadership Advisory Board (YLAB) and why is it needed?

The purpose of the Youth Leadership Advisory Board (YLAB) is to help inform and guide DOT's current and future programs through an effective feedback loop that prioritises youth voices and local context. The Board is composed of a select group of young leaders who play a key role in capturing new insights on youth realities, covering topics that range from digital engagement to economic opportunities. In this voluntary leadership role, Board members will primarily serve as a strategic counsel to the Consortium Partners and as ambassadors.

What is the purpose of the co-design?

The purpose of the UK YLAB Co-design is to define the role of youth in the consortium's efforts. Through the process we wished to define a Terms of Reference (outline) to explain how the youth will work with the consortium partners as it starts to implement its interventions.

The consortium recognised the importance of the youth voice in its focus and wanted to ensure that youth and their needs were embedded in any future activities. Adopting a co-design culture means adopting a spirit of continuous engagement with and responsiveness to users. Groups or organisations use co-design to:

- Increase the impact and effectiveness of programming.
- Speak directly to the needs of groups they work with.
- Enable users, clients and employees to be active agents of change.
- Develop relevant, inclusive and credible solutions.
- Boost collaboration across disciplines.
- Increase motivation and push to openness to innovations and change

DOT has a long history of adopting co-design to allow for interventions that directly meet the needs of young people, for greater and lasting change.

DOT's Co-Design History

DOT is committed to co-design as a methodology. We place youth at the centre of program design, community socio-economic development, and, more broadly, international development. When incorporated successfully, co-design helps teams build more impactful, accessible, inclusive, and valuable end products and services. By starting with the human experience, we can make viable, desirable and feasible solutions.

Past Co-Design Projects



Speaking Out, Reaching Out: African Youth and the Pandemic

Through a participatory process involving DOT, Mastercard Foundation, 60 Decibels and DOT's Youth Leadership Advisory Boards, we engaged a diverse range of stakeholders to build on an investigation framework previously developed between DOT and Mastercard Foundation. During co-creation meetings, youth, 60 Decibels and Mastercard Foundation transformed the framework into survey questions.

There were two key decisions that led to the success of this co-design. Identifying key stakeholders from the start defined the success of this participatory process. As well as knowing which stakeholders to include, knowing when to include them was pivotal, ensuring that their input added the most value at critical points. Spreading engagement of different stakeholders also allowed for a wider variety of stakeholders to be consulted and involved.

Daring to Shift

DOT's Youth Leadership Advisory Board and ecosystem partners implemented a series of co-design labs in 5 countries, engaging young women and men in the development, testing, and iteration of programmatic strategies. Insight and recommendations from the sessions informed programmatic design and implementation.

DOT will further refine its learning experiences through future co-design work to ensure training is more responsible to the shifting needs and realities of young people, especially women

What was the co-design process?

The co-design process brought together stakeholders from the Consortium Partner ecosystem to learn and shape the future of the YLAB. The three stage process included potential board members (all young displaced people who now live in the UK) to decide the purpose and vision for the board. The co-design process followed the popular co-design formula to observe, reflect, make, test and iterate.



Through the co-design we set out to understand how the YLAB might play a role as an isolated unit, as well as in interaction with the aims of DOT, the Consortium Partners and the wider ecosystem. Questions included:

- ❓ What are the pain points that displaced youth face when settling in the UK?
- ❓ What would be the most strategic role that YLAB could play in the ecosystem of support for displaced youth?
- ❓ How could a board like this best serve the aims of DOT UK and the consortium partners?

The co-design process took place over three sessions over November- December 2022.



THE CO-DESIGN PROCESS

Session 1, Setting the Scene: The first session allowed participants to get to know each other, the process and background of the co-design. Co-designers were introduced to the YLAB, the work of DOT and the purpose of the UK Consortium. The first activity the participants took part in, asked them to reflect on the challenges they faced. Participants spent time in breakout rooms to discuss and learn from each others experiences. Challenges highlighted included language barriers, a lack of social networks as well as the cost of services. Following the shareback of Activity 1, participants were then put back into the same breakout rooms to discuss roles that different stakeholders played in the displaced youth/ digital skills ecosystem. This included activism to influence refugee policies as well as emotional and peer mentor support for displaced youth.

ACTIVITY 1 Challenges Barriers

DISCUSS TOGETHER:

What are some of the challenges or barriers you face? Provide examples of your journey experience .

1. Each group **nominate a scribe** to capture on a Google Slide
2. Each group **nominate a presenter** to share back
3. Take **15 minutes** and then come back to plenary for next activity

Activity 2 | Group 1 Notes

Record your notes here

Assisting with basic digital skills/applications/forms

Trainings (Skills)

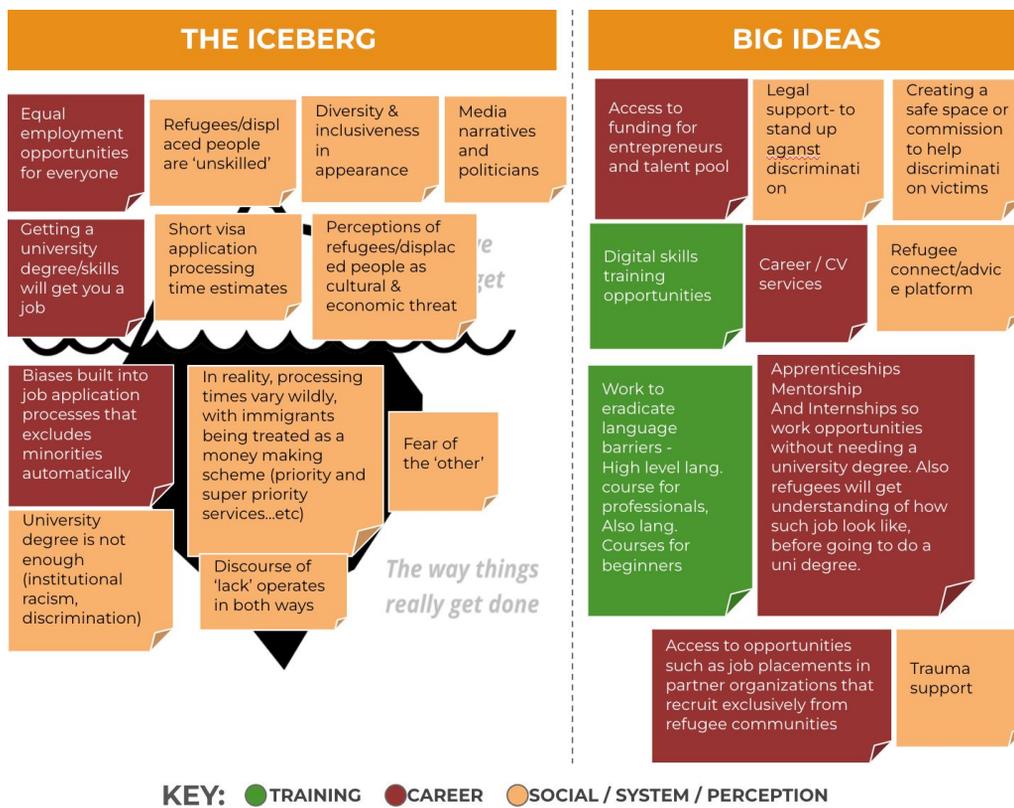
Connecting them with the right person/organization

Emotional support

Activism to influence refugee policies

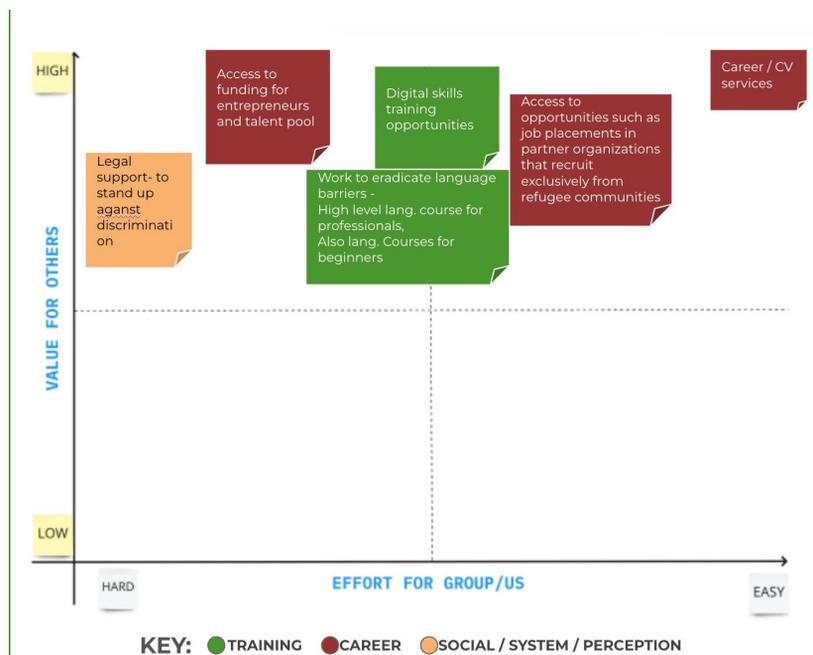
Information sharing

Session 2: The second session sought to build on session 1, bringing together the co-design team to continue to work towards the goal of determining the focus of YLAB as an advisory board within the aims of DOT and the wider Consortium partnership. The session started off with a brainstorm around “the way we say things get done” and “how they actually get done” in the ecosystem. The participants were led through this using the iceberg model, the purpose of which is to get a high-level overview of the current system and the relationships between elements within a system. The participants then brainstormed ‘big ideas’ defined as “an experience that a user might have from a solution”. Big ideas were generated around the statement “The YLAB needs a focus in order to support stakeholders to scale impact, what might this look like?”. These ‘big ideas’ were then prioritised based on “which ideas were the most important ones to tackle as an advisory board?”



7 youth took part from London, Huddersfield, Newcastle, Kent, Basingstoke, Wolverhampton and represented 4 UK partners CodeYourFuture, Tern, Techfugees and Migrateful. 4/7 of the youth that participated were women. Co-design team members contributed their expertise based on their lived experiences of navigating the reality of coming to the UK as a displaced person. The co-design sessions led participants through reflection exercises to better understand the problems with this process, explore potential solutions, and make concrete recommendations for the purpose and vision of the board.

Session 3: In session 3, Participants mapped their 'big ideas' onto a graph. This graph allowed participants to place ideas based on impact and effort to begin prioritising objectives and activities. The participants then broke out in to breakout rooms for one final time to explore some key questions like *given its mission, who will be in the YLAB and Who will the YLAB represent? How do you wish to present YLAB?*



MAIN PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED

- 1 **Lack of Skills Development Opportunities:** There is a gap to provide skills to displaced youth at a low cost and with low barriers to entry. These include digital skills, peer support and learning, skills required to fill out forms and applications relating to jobs or administration.
- 2 **Difficulties in Accessing Work and Information:** The current ecosystem presents barriers for displaced youth to fully grasp opportunities to work and access information. This includes government administrative processes including DBS, ID registration and credit checks. Links to the correct organisations as well and links to mentors and guidance professionals, means making the most of opportunities and information is difficult. Additionally, it was noted that access to funding was a concern among displaced youth who were interested in or practicing entrepreneurship. Points were made about the difficulty in translating previously earned qualifications in home countries into host country standards and that the accreditation and ranking systems were inherently biased towards western educational establishments.
- 3 **Displaced youth face misperception:** Being in the UK presents difficulties of misperception and persecution. Uncertainty around the future, increased hostility towards displaced communities and lack of systems to support integration leads to youth lacking social networks and distrust in authorities.

dot. A wider point was made that the types of support that are available to displaced youth are not often sustained. Interventions lack long-term applications, and don't often support youth beyond an initial interaction or intervention.

PROPOSED FOCUS OF THE BOARD

When asked what YLAB should focus on and prioritise in order to support stakeholders to scale impact, participants highlighted many areas for intervention.



Lived experience should lead: During the co-design youth shared their experiences of coming to the UK as displaced youth. These experiences gave them unique insights into the situation displaced youth find themselves in the realities of the challenge. Participants noted during the co-design that youth with lived experiences of displacement, or those with knowledge of displaced youth should be part of the YLAB and lead the direction of its work.



Focus on Displaced youth: Given the makeup of the board and the participants expertise, the group noted that the focus of the board should be on displaced youth. There was a broad understanding adopted of this, spanning across the UK, and for youth who have been displaced for any reason.



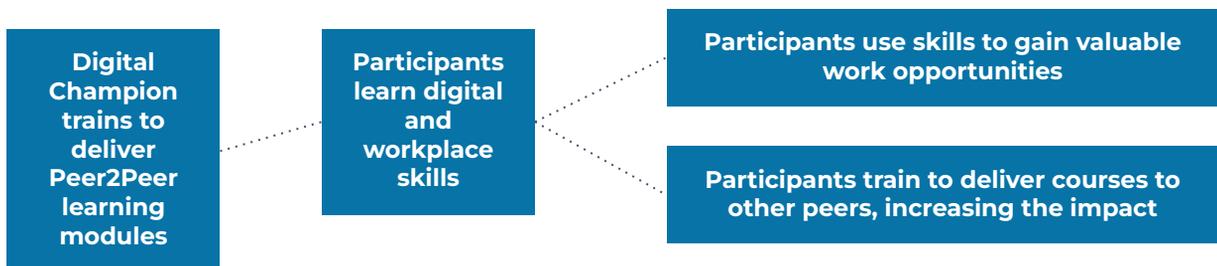
Integration is the aim: Through its work, the YLAB and consortium partners should focus on providing support for the integration of displaced youth in the UK. These would broadly address the 3 key problem areas as outlined previously, including creating skills learning opportunities for young displaced people, access to work/ livelihood opportunities and information, dispelling misperceptions of displaced youth.

INTEGRATIVE UPSKILLING SCALED

Building on DOT's experiences in the sector, there is an opportunity to leverage DOT's proven peer-to-peer model which empowers Digital Champions within communities to deliver ICT and 21st Century skills – from basic informative learning to advanced – enabling their access to and application of digital technology in creative and innovative ways.

DOT's track record in Africa and MENA have been recognised by Governments, World Economic Forum and cornerstone donors such as Cisco, Mastercard Foundation and IBM. In MENA, since operations began Lebanon has empowered 23,773 community members. Lebanon hosts the largest number of refugees worldwide and DOT's impact is striking in that 31% of its outreach is to refugees, The current reach in Jordan is 8,111 participants, with 28% refugees. DOT's work has also been recognised by the World Economic Forum Edison Alliance where DOT has made a commitment to empowering 1 Million marginalized youth globally by 2025.

DOT UK can replicate our "digital skills at scale" model to specifically empower the growing numbers of refugees in the UK, led by the UK YLAB.



NEXT STEPS: SUPPORT OUR MISSION - Integration of displaced youth

The co-design process finished in December 2022 with many participants interested in remaining on as official board members.

The next steps will be to finalise and action the following:

- **YLAB expansion & Membership:** Finalizing a TOR for members, outreach and growing the YLAB; scoping regional YLABS..
- **Resource Partnerships:** The board will need grant and partnership resources for activities.
- **In-depth Discussion:** YLAB to undertake a deep dive under the three themes of training, careers, social system and perception will take place to pinpoint a YLAB action plan central to DOT UK and partner strategies.
- **Deep-dive to develop DOT's digital upskilling programmes** for displaced youth. Current YLAB cohort to test and pilot learning for their context using DOT's Learning Management System (LMS) and mobile app. Adaptive baseline testing to develop individual learner journeys based on competencies they require will be piloted with Partners.
- **Governance:** The role of YLAB and its relationship with other country based YLABs in the global network and as a convenor within the wider Consortium.
- **Q1/23 Meeting-** Meeting to be held with the wider partnership ecosystem, to respond to this report and YLAB proposals.

Young people learning and facilitating are empowered

Youth gain experiences, creating a launchpad for further opportunities

Youth learn 21st Century and workplace skills to increase integration opportunities

Youth are connected to a community of peers for support

Be part of our mission:

Fund Youth to lead the conversation: Back youth to discover, deliberate and decide the best solutions to the challenges they face. Help us convene their voices to create impact and improve the outcome for displaced people across the UK.

Commission YLAB to adapt training to the needs of your community: If you have access to a community of displaced people who wish to learn digital skills, allow our YLAB to lead the design and delivery of the training, piloting our digital skills at scale model.

Devote expertise to the aims of the YLAB

Become a YLAB partner and mobilise Digital Champions within your youth

Leadership: Refer youth to our community so they can be a part of our impactful journey as learners, digital champions or YLAB Members.

APPENDIX

PARTICIPANT PROFILES

Amani Arab is from Syria, and 29 years old. She works as a chef's assistant in the restaurant and also work as a class assistant in Kent Refugee Actions Network. She runs an online Syrian cooking class with Migrateful.

Angelika Sharygina is a political analyst and researcher with experience in media propaganda, counterinsurgency, and sustainable policy development. She focuses on identifying and analyzing fake news, harmful content, and extremist groups online. Her mission is to help citizens access true information, guided by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. She is currently a visiting researcher at Trinity College Dublin, working on her PhD on the consequences of misinformation in conflict and war. She holds a Master's degree in International Relations from King's College London and was commissioned by Reuters Foundation to produce a report on media consumption and perceptions in Ukraine. She advocates for equal rights for refugees and a participant on the UK Youth Leadership Advisory Board with Digital Opportunity Trust. Angelika is Techfugees lead Ambassador champion collectively advocating tech to mitigate disinformation with the global tech, humanitarian, academic and business community to protect displaced communities.

Shadi Safae is a Code Your Future graduate and currently works as a full-stack developer at British Gas.

Saman Taheri is a refugee, filmmaker, and entrepreneur passionate about helping others and creating a just world. He is a TERN graduate and works with refugees and displaced communities to support them in starting businesses and improving their lives. He believes that everyone deserves the opportunity to build a better future for themselves and he is dedicated to helping provide the support and resources necessary to make that happen.

Paul Mpokwa is a Dare to Change Tanzania 2019 Award Winner with Fundi App. He is an innovative and passionate social entrepreneur with over 5 years of experience helping to build thriving communities in Africa, wholly committed to using distinguished approaches and new operating models to create social impact. He has experience working with mission-driven businesses and technology entrepreneurship to create a more inclusive, fair and sustainable world. As a former Head of Service for Zola Electric, he has led customer experience initiatives that led to solar electrification of 250,000 homes in Tanzania, Rwanda and the DRC. He is passionate about the use of emerging technologies in the fourth industrial revolution to drive improvements in different development sectors in Africa. Paulo is a DOT alumni from DOT Tanzania's Dare to Change initiative

Mihretab Gebru is a masters student at the Institute of Societal Resilience at Vrije University in Amsterdam. Mihretab is a former DOT youth community facilitator from Ethiopia where he facilitated digital and 21st-century skills for youths in his community. Recently, Mihretab did his internship research with DOT on 'accelerating inclusion and access to work for refugees in the digital economy'. He is a firm believer in the power of digital skills to create more resilient communities amid fast-paced technological disruptions. He is interested in digital inclusion, refugee studies, and addressing the digital divide.

PARTICIPANT PROFILES CONT.

Nirmeet Baweja, Nirmeet holds a Master's Degree in Electrical and Electronics Engineering and is currently working as a Full Stack Instructor with edX, teaching two Front End Web Development classes in collaboration with UK Skills for Life Campaign. The campaign helps people access the skills they need to get the job they want, whatever their stage in life. She is also working as Producer Assistant with Code Your Future (CYF) for their Intro to Digital Course. CYF is a UK based non-profit organisation that trains some of the most deprived members of society to become web developers and helps them to find work in the tech industry. Being a refugee herself, she firmly believes that everyone deserves an equal opportunity to realise their life goals and progress in life despite their circumstances. She is passionate about helping people from under-served and under-represented groups to transition into Tech jobs and have a better career as well as a more secure future.

Arash Timor is a Kurdish professional with eight years' kitchen and catering experience in plating and food presentation. Dedicated in customer service, problem-solving and time-management with diverse general labouring skills background as a barber, painter & decorator. A refugee and creative empath praised by peers as a dependable and reliable team-player, ready to learn and grow to achieve company success. His passions include human rights, philosophy and behaviour psychology.

Daleel Hagy has always been busy with gaining technical skills starting from majoring in mechatronics engineering for 5 years, academic English for 2 years, a degree in maths and computer for 3 years and then a master's degree. He is a graduate of Code Your Future and TERN.. However, he is from Syria a place that has severely been affected by climate change and later a long conflict that created millions of refugees. He has lived in Iraq where he had first-hand experience to understand refugees' hardships. Combining this experience, he shifted his career from engineering and tech to set out and found Trees Against Poverty which is a not-for-profit organisation that plant trees for and by refugees to tackle poverty and deforestation.

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