M: When did you migrate to Australia?

O: I migrated to Australia in April 2018. Great

M: Motivations?

O: So, the most important factor for me, because I migrated from Nigeria then I moved to UK and then from UK I migrated to Australia. So, I realised that here in Australia, doing a PhD – the government finds it. Whereas, in the UK you need to get like, a student loan and I didn’t want to commit to a loan so – that’s actually the most important reason as to why I migrated to Australia. I wanted to get my PhD. That’s the most important thing. I migrated to UK as a student even though my mom is a citizen there but in UK you need to have gotten in.. or moved down before you were 18. After 18 it becomes a lot difficult. So, I had to apply as a student. But after the student visa, I waited further to get my indefinite leave to stay there forever. But, when I realised that coming to Australia, I’m able to do my PhD for free, I decided to move.

M: When did you move to the UK?

O: 2006. So from 2006, my BSc, I think I finished in 2009, and I did my Masters. I finished in 2010. Then, 2011 2012, I worked a little bit with British Telecom in the UK and that’s when I got the world bank job. So, I moved back to Nigeria because the project was focused on in Nigeria and Kenya. So, I moved down there. So, I was working on the project coz it was funded by the world bank and CFI. CFI is the – they provide aids to African countries on behalf of the British government so I was actually moving from Nigeria to UK but I was actually working closely with Nigeria. So yea, from 2012 to 2015, no 16, I was pretty much in Nigeria. Then I moved back to UK. I did some work but before then, prior to then, I think around 2013, that was when I actually got my PR for Australia. So, because my wife, she actually studied here at The university of Queensland. That’s where she finished. But when she finished reading there, she went back to Nigeria. So, she was the one who told me how beautiful Melbourne was, and I decided to give it a try. So, 2013, that is when I actually applied for the PR, the 189 visa, and I got it in 2013 but they give you 5 years basically, to prepare your properties to sell, etc. After I got it, I came to Melbourne just for like, 2 weeks, just to see whether I liked it and I did. So, I went back to Nigeria then continued my World bank job. Then 2018 – that was when the 5 year period that they gave me was going to expire. So, I decided to move. I think I actually entered Australia 2 days before it was going to expire, and the guy looked at me at the border and was like, “did you actually wait 5 years”. I was like well!! Laughs.

M: Ethnic background

O: Well, I grew up in Nigeria but my undergraduate and my, most of my education from my college years, I started in the UK because my mom went to UK and my dad moved after then. But my primary and secondary was in Nigeria.

M: Professional background?

O: The jobs I’ve been working at World Bank, I’ve been a Business Analyst. When I was in BT, I did a little bit of Software Development. But, I did it just for like, a year and then I moved into Business Analyst because I just tired of writing codes. I became a Business Analyst. Then, when I with World Bank in Nigeria I was a BA, but then I moved to be a product owner and product manager, then project manager. So, I was more or less managing the IT intervention. With the WB role, they had different interventions and each of the intervention, they used different IT companies. So, I was like, the IT manager. Even though I do a little bit of Business Analysis – I try to map the processes from A to Z. But I also liked the product owner, the whole signing off any development. I was pretty much the IT manager and also the Business Analyst. That’s always been what I have been doing. So, when I moved down to Australia, the first place where I worked was a government agency in Victoria. It was pretty much similar to what I was doing in Nigeria. What they do in Film Victoria is that they support people from the entertainment industry and the games industry. You submit an idea. You submit online, and if its good enough, the Victorian government will give you money. So, the idea is to bring the movies you wanna shoot, you bring it Victoria. That way, they can create jobs, they give you incentives to bring your productions down to Australia. That way, you give people jobs and train people how to shoot movies, and how you do all these things. So, it was pretty much similar to what I was doing in Africa where the wold bank supports the business plan. If its good enough, they give you the grant to support your business. So, I was able to fit into that job because, yeah, maybe it’s a different sector, its still the same process. The technology is the same.

M: Plan

O: Like I told you, I moved just 2 days before the expiration, so it took me 5 years to plan it. Is it before I applied to it? Umm, before I applied for it, to be honest, we were dating then and so that was my wife – we were dating, and she was the one who told me about it and I was still a young guy in the UK. I was a bit tired of UK because I was writing codes and it was just all getting a bit boring for me you know; at that stage of my life I just wanted to explore and do something different. So, when she told me, I was like okay maybe I should give it a try. I’ll see how it is. I mean, I’ve been hearing about Australia, but I’ve never dreamt about going there. So, it was just out of, it was…just for fun. Yeah, and within 2 months or 3 months I got it. So, it wasn’t… there wasn’t a drive for me to do it. I just did it out of pleasure and I got it. And I know people are trying really hard.

M: How did you learn about the options?

O: Yeah, so most of the researches I did were online. So, when she told me I went online. So, there are these forums, so there’s this forum in Nigeria called Nairaland and it actually for the love of people. So, right now I’m a member and what we do is we just give people advice on how to make their journey. So, I think the forum was very very helpful to a lot of Nigerians trying to migrate to USA, to Canada, to Australia. You know, there are different people there. You just post your questions and they add things. I also used a lot of forums on British expats so another forum. So, most of the research was online. I got most of the things online. I checked online everything they wanted. I ensured I ticked all the boxes they had coz it was the points-based system, so you need to be between a certain age range, you need to have certain level of experience, education etc. So, you get points for all these things. So, I did the research online and when I realised, I met all these criteria, I applied online.

M: Family

O: My parents were cool. They were a bit surprised though, coz my mom, she is a citizen in the UK and my dad as well. So, they were like, why do you need to go to Australia, like, you are cool in the UK. You can start your life here, and my mom then, she actually had a mortgage you know, and my brothers, one is in America, one in Canada. So, it was just my mom and me. So, she desperately needed someone to stay. And I was like, oh I wanna go to Australia. She was like, come on, just stay so you can continue paying the mortgage and take care of me. I was like, I’m tired of UK. I just want to do something different. So, well, but they supported me. I was like if I go to Australia, I can get to do my PhD, and spend as little as possible rather than get a loan in the UK. So, yeah, they supported me and assisted me, and whatever I asked them, they were able to assist me. We are 4 boys, and I am the last one. Yeah, so, one of my brothers stays in the UK now. He migrated back to UK with his family. One stays in America and one is in Canada, and I am here in Australia.

M: Community

O: No. The only person I knew in Australia then was my wife and we just met. We met in Nigeria. When she finished her school she moved back down to Nigeria, and at that time I was working on the project in Nigeria and that’s how we met. So, I didn’t know anyone in Australia. She was the only one. I like, pretty much only knew about Australia through her. But, when I got the PR, the 5 year gap, I started knowing some friends, yeah I knew the medical doctor in Geelong, now has his own practice, So, I started knowing people bit before I made the application, I did not know anyone. It was from friends. So back I the UK, I think when I started telling people that I’ll be going to Australia. So someone would say, oh my brother is in Australia, I can link you guys up. Oh my friends study in Australia, oh my wife is there. So, I think it started happing because I started telling people that I’ll probably be moving to Australia soon. So that’s pretty much how.

M: What about wife?

O: So, the problem is that, like, I’ve learnt that the hard way, I think, information is very important. So, when I applied for it, we were not married. We were just dating. So, I didn’t know that you could actually add, there’s something called the de facto. I didn’t know about that. I just thought that you have to be married. So, I didn’t add her to my application. I actually mentioned that I dated her. I just didn’t add her as an applicant. So, if I had known I would have added her to my application but I didn’t know. So, I applied separately. So, I tried as much as it was possible to try and see if I could add her but I couldn’t. Some people told me that it’s better that I moved down to Australia first, get myself an apartment. It will show that I have something, that I can take care of them. So, at one point, I just thought about maybe I should cancel the one I did and apply a new one and I could include her. But then I was like I don’t wanna go through that whole thing again and spend $6000 again. So I was like, okay I’ll just go first on my own. So now, I started asking questions to people so they can advise me what I should do because, and, honestly that was one of the reasons why I didn’t move. Like, it took me 5 years to move because I was thinking that do I wanna leave all these things that I’m doing, I have a great job at world back, so do I wanna leave that and stay away from my family for more than a year? And for what? And it was not like I am desperate, you know, like, do I wanna go through all this pain? And, I was just like, you know, God wanted me to move to Australia. That’s why I got it very easily. And someone advised that another option for me was to start the whole process again and I was like, no I don’t think so. So, she’s in the UK. She’s just waiting for her visa to come through. She’s on the, coz I’m on the indefinite leave, she’s on that too. It’s like the permanent residence, but it’s not like the PR, like you can stay in the UK for ever, and after a while you can apply for a citizenship. I never got it before I left because I just never cared much about it. As long as it gives you the opportunity to stay forever, so, that was fine by me. And now I don’t care for it too much because I don’t wanna be jumping around.

M: Visa availability

O: Actually, I did. I looked at different options. There was a state nomination coz then I was. You know, it’s all about the points. Even though, I got the points based on my years of experience, my age, my school, I was lucky to also go to a school, like you get additional points if your school is one of the top universities in the world, you get 5 points – then. I don’t know about now but then, if you school was amongst the top 400 you get extra 5 points. So, yeah, it’s all about information. I went to University Essex and it was in the top so I got additional 5 points for that. I did all the calculations. I needed 65 points. So, I got the 65 points but for you to get nominated – it is based on the number of your points – the higher, the better. So, I said to myself, ah, maybe I just should go and do IELTS coz if I do IELTS, and I pass it, I can get up to 20 PR 10 points. So, the thing is, because Nigeria, we are English speaking and maybe because I was in the UK, I didn’t need it. Coz, I remember I actually asked, and they said I didn’t need it. I don’t know. Again, that’s the question – who needs IELTS? I just know I didn’t need it. I just did it coz I could add more points. I actually did it twice, so crazy!. So basically, you can’t score below 7 in each band. The first time I scored 8 in each band and I scored 6.5 in the listening and that invalidates you. And I was like, are you sure you’re just not trying to make me do it for a second time. So, I did it again and I scored better. So, I scored 10 points more from IELTS. I thought about the state sponsorship but I realised for the state sponsorship, the requirements for IELTS was a bit low so I considered that and one of my friends has a brother who is a medical doctor. He actually went through the state route. I think it was based on, I think it was for Canberra. I think he only recently moved down to Melbourne after he finished the 3 years. So, I thought about that. But, the thought of restricting myself somewhere for 2 years, I don’t like it. I like being free, you know. If I’m tired of Melbourne, I can decide to move down to Sydney. If I’m tired of Sydney, I can decide to go to Canberra. So, I didn’t like the thought of staying somewhere for 2 years. What if I can’t find a job where I am that I like? That’s why I said, okay, let me just do the 189 so I’m free, I can go anywhere I choose to go.

M: State?

O: I did, I actually researched on Sydney. I checked also on Tasmania. I also did further research in terms of, which of the states has more IT roles. So, I realised its either Sydney or Melbourne. Most of the other places like Tasmania is more on tourism, hospitality, and that’s not what I do. So, I studied for Sydney and Melbourne. The problem of Sydney is that – when I research between Sydney and Melbourne, which one is better – and everyone was like, ah Sydney is like London. So busy, and everyone is working, and you have to move fast. I didn’t like that vibe. That’s why I got tired of the UK. It was too fast for me. It’s like Nigeria in Lagos, everything is so fast. You need to be street-wise, you need to be so sharp and I don’t like that. I like Melbourne – its relaxed, its laid back. So yeah, I just decided I’ll stay in Melbourne. But its changing. I was telling my friend that when I came in 2014 – it was so calm and I was like “oh I love this place” and when I came in 2018, I’m like, “really! Whats going on here, It’s so busy”.

M: Mapping

O: I left Nigeria in 2006 on a student visa. So, when I finished my Masters - 2011, I moved back to Nigeria. In Nigeria we have this one-year national youth service. It’s called NYSE. So, basically you serve your country for a year. If you graduate before the age of 40, you need to serve the country. So, the whole idea is to find a way to integrate everyone. So they, if you’re like, from the West – I’m from the West – Lagos, they send you to another region of the country. So, that way you try to understand the cultures, and you get to integrate. It is good but I think that because they want to encourage foreign students so when you come, they give you the liberty to choose where you wanna go. When I went, I just decided that I was gonna choose Abuja. Abuja is the central capital. Its mandatory. Like, for example, the world bank job that I did, I wouldn’t be able to do that if I had not done the NYSE. You must have it. As long as you graduated before the age of 40, you must do the NYSE, else, you can’t hold a position in Nigeria. We do military training for 3 weeks out of the 1 year. Sometimes, they post you at a school – you get to teach people, do ICT stuff, they can post you to hospitals, to banks. So, they can post you anywhere for work for rest 11 months. But, for 1 month you do para-military training. I went back to Nigeria for the youth service. So, 2012, I finished it in 2012 and I went back to UK. I was working with British Telecom. I worked there for 2 years till 2014, and I went back to Nigeria. So, 2014, I went back to Nigeria. So, I applied for - so, 2013 – that was when I applied for my PR. So, I think that should come first. So, that’s when I applied for it. So, after I got the PR, I still went back to Nigeria. So, 2014-2018, I was working the world bank job in Nigeria. I was moving to London as well, but mostly based in Nigeria.

M: So, was your wife moving back and forth with you?

O: It was only when I decided to mov back to UK, was when she moved with me as well. So, we got married in 2015. So, then, I think it was 2014 to 2018, I moved to UK back in 2017. 2012-2018 I moved to UK. I just wanted to spend a few months before I would fly down to Australia because my PR would expire. So, 2018 April, arrived in Australia.

M: Wait time, processing time.

O: The first thing is to submit your documents to the body in charge of ICT in Australia – ACS. So, I submitted the documents to ACS. I paid the fees. I think I got the result in about 3 weeks to a month. So, after that, I submitted an EOI to immigration, and after I submitted it – after like 3 weeks after that I got an invite. Then I did IELTS. I got the result after 2 weeks. Then when I submitted the application. I remember I started the journey in 2012 September-ish. I remember it was January 2013 when I got the grant letter.

M: Commercial services

O: I only used agent – I only spoke to lawyer when I wanted to apply for my wife. I wanted to understand how the partner visa works. When I read on the forums that its very complicated, so I wanted to get as much information as possible. So, I spoke to a lawyer about okay what’s the process for bringing my wife over to Australia. Basically, I already knew the process because I did my research, but I wanted to see if there’s any faster approach to get my wife over. I know you can apply, and it takes 14-19 months, but I thought there should be another way to do it. Unfortunately, now I know that that was one of my biggest mistakes. If I had known that I would have just stuck to my online research because the agent – well – she was gonna do the application for me and she was gonna charge like, $3000 or $4000. She’s actually based in Sydney. When I told her, oh actually I’m a graduate, I can read, I did my PR myself, I can do it myself. So, rather than speaking $3000-4000, I can do it myself. So, she wasn’t very happy about it. So, she probably didn’t give me as much information as she should have given me. For example, when I was concerned that now I am waiting for that 14 months to 19 months, is there any way to bring my wife to come join me temporarily?, and everyone I spoke to – were like, the fact that you’ve applied for her, the partner visa, if you now apply for a visitor visa, the immigration will know that you want this woman to just come and meet you cox they’ll see that application and most likely will reject it. So, then like, mostly what agents advise before was that she should apply for the visitor visa first. When she’s in the country, you apply for the partner visa. That way, she goes into the bridging. The agent I spoke to, the lawyer, she didn’t tell me any of this. I applied last year August so it’s going to be one year. I paid the lawyer for the consultation. I paid $200 for one hour. We have to go to the court to certify all my documents. I also paid to the ACS – I think I paid about $400 to validate my degree. I paid for police reports – I needed from both the UK and Nigeria. Let’s just say 100 pounds. Let’s just say $30 for documents certification. IELTS was like $150 each so $300 for IELTS. Medical was roughly about $200. And then my wife and child had to do this – yeah yeah. In fact, that is what is getting me. Currently, we did the medical and the document certification, and the police report, and I read online that sometimes it only lasts for 12 months. That means, we’ll have to do it again. Coz she, she’s a diplomat, and ambassador. So, she actually stayed in Pakistan, in Islamabad. So, she went through a lot to actually get the police report. She just got it, actually, just last month. So, it took her about 5-6 months to get it. So, when I read online about 12 months, to actually go through that process again, I’m worried – I don’t even wanna think about that, to get that Pakistan one. I mean, the Nigerian and UK were were okay. But the Pakistan one, I don’t wanna go through it again. Yes. So, her degree was actually, between Pakistan and Australia. So, she did 2 years in Pakistan and the third year in Australia. So, I think it was a joint collaboration between the university in Pakistan and the university in Australia. She did IELTS as well because I remember she was bragging that she scored better than me. My daughter also had to do the medicals. She’s 4. Probably I spend about $400 for medical for both of them. What about the fees for the spouse visa? That’s the biggest one. It was $7600. I paid like, $9000 something for my daughter and wife – that’s what I paid. I was like what! I was thinking it was better she applied while I was still in Nigeria. But, most of my friends said it would be difficult because they expect you as a sponsor, to be in Australia, to have settled down. So, that was why we did it this way. The five years that were waiting, maybe we should have done it. But it would have been very difficult. Then I travelled back to UK and Nigeria to go see them because I was missing them. And I’m still thinking of visiting them this year in Christmas as well. That’s expenses – that’s part of it. It’s a lot. It’s not easy. I think it’s about $2000 for every return journey. I had to pay for biometrics. But that wasn’t expensive. That was like $150.

M: Technology

O: I used two online blogs – Nairaland – it is very popular in Nigeria. I also used British Expats. So, both of them are like blogs. So, people share ideas on their journeys, their timeline. How they applied for their visa, you know, just the journey they went through to get their visa. Those 2 blogs were the 2 that I used extensively. I’m actually still active on Naira land. Now I tend to give advice to people. So, now I tell people, hey if you’re married, put your wife on your application. Now, I’m actually active. I don’t know much about other visa’s but now I do know about the 189 PR route. Its one forum but there are different threads. So, there’s a thread for Canada, there a thread for America, there’s one for Australia. So, I only post on the Australia one. Even the UK, I don’t know much because when I did the student visa, I was young. The Australia one, I did myself. The UK one, my mom, my dad, they did the application for me. Apart from Nairaland, now there’s a WhatsApp group. So, those of them who moved from Nigeria to Australia, and used Nairaland, so theres a WhatsApp group. We all chat about the experiences and all that. But, it’s strictly for those who have been successful in their journey to discuss experiences of moving, finding work and so on. It was actually from there that I learnt that I should have actually applied for the partner. There are some people on the group who are actually migration agents, but I didn’t know that. So, they were the ones that were telling me, Oh the agent you spoke to didn’t do justice. They help you to get cheap houses once you’re in Australia, how to get cheap cars. I think it’s a closed group. And, its about 150 users. It is invite only. So, once you tell them that you came from Nairaland, they ask you for your name on Naira Land. Everyone has a unique name on Naira Land. So, they’re going to check you out to see that truly you used to comment on the thread, and from there they will add you to the group. I never met anyone from the group physically. The first person I met was just 3 days ago. He is here for like 3 or 4 years, but he’s been finding it difficult to get a job. So, I told him that I’m lucky, I’ve not only been here 3 years and I’ve already changed jobs twice. So, I was telling him maybe you can do you CV differently. It’s more like a data science CV but I think right now, a lot of people are looking for BA, BI. I just tried to help him do his CV to get a job. So he’s the only person I actually met. Mostly, we just communicate online.

M: Getting a job.

O: When I got here in April, I was lucky, maybe because I was in a strategic position where I was working at. So, they actually allowed me to work remotely. So, even when I was in Australia, I was still working for the World bank project. So, I didn’t need to get a job. I told my wife that I’m just gonna finish the project… Its gonna be different because of the time zones and all. When its morning in Australia its night in Nigeria. So, I was like, I’m gonna be working 24 hours. So, for the first 2 months, I don’t even wanna work in Australia. I’m just gonna focus on my project and apply for my DL, get an apartment, you know, just settle in. So, for the first 2 months I didn’t really apply for any jobs. I was just doing the work I had. So, at some point, I started getting a bit bored. Yeah, when I moved here, one of my friends, that someone introduced me to. He was staying in Point cook. So, I stayed in his house for 2-3 months before I got my apartment. So, even though I said I wasn’t gonna apply for a job, but you know in the morning, he was living with his wife, so they both go to their workplace and I’m the only one who’s home. And I was like, uhh, even though I was working on the project, it was just so boring. So, after about 2 months, I started applying. It was too boring for me – this is gonna kill me. So, I started learning some things. I was getting these rejection emails – oh sorry, we found a better candidate bla bla bla. I was like, I’m very qualified, like, whats happening. I realised that a lot of these companies, if you don’t have local experience, it’s difficult to get a job and I don’t like it because IT is a general language. Whether, it is in India, Pakistan, Nigeria – it is the same code. So, I just, I didn’t understand the whole rationale behind local experience. So as I was doing that, I saw this ad for this charity, they work for vulnerable women and children who are exposed to domestic violence. So, they try to teach them how to defend themselves – so self-awareness and self-defence classes. So, you come to them and then they assess you and realise oh you have issues, they out you through to some self-defence classes to boost your self-confidence. And so, I saw the ad online that they were looking for research analyst. So, I sent my CV to her and she liked it. She called me for an interview, and I got it. So that actually kept me engaged for that period while I was home. I advised them how can do things differently, for example they can have a website where people can fill a form, have a social media handle, people can always reach you online rather than come to your physical office. So, I did a lot of research and also helped them define the process. I’m actually still doing it. It’s a pro bono thing so whenever they need my service, I try to help them. I actually got my first job in 3 months and this volunteer work helped coz even when I went for my interview for the government job, I was one the top and it came down to my references. So, I gave them a reference from my World Bank job and mostly Nigeria and UK and they were like, no we need an Australian reference. I’m like, you saw in my CV, I never worked in Australia, how can I give you an Australian reference. So the guy was like, see, he liked me, I was a top applicant, so he said even if it’s a friend. So, I then realised that I can ask the lady from the charity work I am doing. So, she said yes, shes gonna be my reference. So they used her and one of my UK references.

M: Social connections

O: Most of the influence that technology has had was when I got here. So, when I got here, like I told you, I was getting a lot of rejection letters. So, I read online that sometimes you just go on LinkedIn and if you see someone, if you either worked together or went to the same university, you can just send a message to the person, chat with them and maybe have a coffee, try to see if they have an opening in their office and ask them to be a referral. So, I actually did that. The first person I met – I saw an opening in Commonwealth bank. They guy was from Nigeria and worked in Commbank so I was like hey bro, whats up man, can you just be a referral, and he said no he can’t do that. I was like why, and he was like coz he doesn’t know me. I was like, hey it’s not a reference, its just a referral – like you’re the one telling me to apply for this job. He said, yeah, he doesn’t feel comfortable. I was surprised, I was really really disappointed. But anyway, I actually met another guy. He’s a consultant. Hes a Nigerian – hes into ML. I saw him on Social media, and I messaged him and he was like yeah, come meet me for a coffee. So, I sat down with him and he just told me, like oh, the way you did your CV, it’s too – like in Australia, they wanna see your acheivements, like, whatever you have achieved. My CV was just like I worked there, this is what I did. So, I didn’t have a proper CV. So, while we were having this discussion, he realised that I was very good with some of the tools that they currently used in Australia – like CRM, tableau, but on my CV it wasn’t there. So, he was like you need to put all that on your CV, they like to see all that stuff here. So, I had to redo my CV and I ensured that I listed all those things, and yeah I got the job. So, social media mostly helped me after I moved here. You know, I always tell people that, information is the most important thing that anyone can have. You know why? You know when I moved down to Melbourne, I didn’t buy a car. It was only me so I was always jumping on the bus. And at some point I was like, my wife and my daughter will join me so I should just get a car. It took me about 6-7 months to get a car and the only reason was, I didn’t want to go through doing the driving test, and all that. I know I can drive. The guy I stayed with when I moved here told me that I need to do my driving test and all that. So, one day, I was just browsing online, and I realised that if you have a UK license, just take it there they can just swap it. Just that. I didn’t know that because the guy told me I have to go through the whole driving test. And I was like oh, I don’t wanna do that. I just wanna focus on my job, on my life, bring my family down. I don’t wanna go through this driving test. I can always just on the bus or tram and you know the funny thing, that this guy – so initially I thought oh maybe he doesn’t know this because he’s never been to the UK. But, his wife is actually American, so he told her the same thing. So, I took my UK licence and they swapped it, and gave me the Australian license. And I called him and said listen man, don’t tell your wife to go. And he was still arguing with me that No! that’s not possible. I just told him I just did it. He was telling me that he’s been living in Australia for 10 years and he knows. So, then the wife called me, and I told her that just pay the application fee, and they will change it. So, it was then I realised that information is very important. Sometimes, don’t just listen to what other people say, even if the person has been here for 10 years. Just research yourself, go online, ask questions. I can add LinkedIn on the map.

M: Immigration policies

O: I think the partner visa is crap. I mean, if theres, let me tell you something. I think about 2 months ago I sent an email to the MP – the local MP and like, how can you keep a family away for 2 years – a partner? That is breaking the whole family itself. What is the purpose of it. They were like, they look at it to validate if the marriage is genuine because theres a lot of scam. I was like, yeah but like, honestly, I’m talking to here one-on-one. Theres some arguments I am having with my wife and when I was in the UK and Nigeria with her, I didn’t have these arguments in her. But now, because of this visa theres a lot of frustration, like shes the only one taking care of the child, shes so tired coz she needs to work, shes got her own business – she does cupcakes, she takes the child to school, she works, does the housework, sometimes these little, little things, we have started arguing about it. When I was with her, we never argued so much. So, it actually causes a lot of triggers on small things, and I don’t understand why these guys don’t think about that. You are actually breaking a family with all these checks – youre breaking my family. For me, that is the part which is not fair, its not right. If I had known, honestly, that it was gonna be this difficult, I probably wouldn’t have moved to Australia. I would have just stayed in the UK. Why would I not want to stay with my family, my daughter, she’s just 3 years old. Its torture. I understand like yeah, okay maybe there’s a lot of scam going on, or things like arranged marriages, I understand. But, you cant punish genuine people. No matter what you tell me, when you keep families, especially newly married or young couple away fro so long, there is no way you are not breaking, like somehow, you are breaking their relationship. You are breaking the bond. You end up saying things to each other, yeah you’re angry but you still said it. And for me that’s the most, I don’t think it’s fair, and honestly to be frank with you, a lot of people I spoke to, they always think that Australia is more racist than other places, and its one of the reasons they feel that, especially when you’re from Africa, they feel that you’re not genuine. British people who apply for partner visas, some of them, they get it 4-5 or 6 months. So, why would someone from India, Pakistan, Nigeria spend 18 months – for what! Why? Its just nor fair. I know of people who applied from the UK and got it within 4-5 months. So, why should it be different – just because someone applied it from Africa or Asia. I don’t think its right. I got so frustrated; I actually wrote a letter to the MP. I was like listen man, if you don’t want people to come, how can you tell me, I’m an honest person, I came here, I work here, I pay my taxes. And the little thing, for me to bring my family, I can’t even enjoy it. Think about it – I resigned from my job, I decided to make the move thinking that would improve my life and be good for my family, and now I have to wait for 2 years to see them. It’s really not cool.

M: Future plans

O: To be honest with you, its just bringing my family. When my family are here, my daughter starts school, my wife starts – either she continues her business, her cupcake business or she start working in a company, after everyone is settled, I think my future plan is to go for that PhD. That is what brought me to Australia. If I live here, and I don’t achieve it, I think I would have failed. I have to do it. That’s why I came. You know, women, my wife, she is telling me that make sure you don’t buy a house, we need to do it together. I don’t care. She needs to see the place. Yeah so some of the plans ate PhD, getting a house.

M: Would you consider migration elsewhere?

O: No – I don’t wanna go through that again. I would go but not my family. My wife loves Australia, I don’t know why. She was the one pushing me. I would like to work in Qatar. I’m open to that. The good thing about world bank projects is that you can move around. But that would happen when my family is fully stabilised. I can’t do that now. Again, that’s one of the pain I am feeling with this kind of migration – it makes things difficult for me for planning. I love planning maybe because I’m a business analyst. I have to have a process in my head before I do anything. So, the whole migration stuff – because my wife if not here. It’s a bit difficult to make a definite plan. For example, I would have gotten a mortgage by now. My bank already offered me a loan to buy a house, but I don’t wanna do anything until my wife comes. My business, I’m thinking of starting a business in Australia – my wife – since she has this cupcake business, I’m thinking that we can partner together. I’ll do the IT part – IT and delivery, she can focus on the production of the cakes. So, we can work together. For me, it’s about the business. Yeah – this 9-5 job, it pays the bill but satisfaction is coming from ideas. I wanna come up with solutions, innovative things.