

Into Children International Employment

2026 GLOBAL UPDATE

INSIDE

Into Employment is building a network of support that helps young people gain the skills, connections and opportunities they need to work their way out of poverty. This update showcases how your generosity is helping transform lives around the world.



children
international®

GLOBAL

reach.
work.
impact.



“Children International taught me how to interact with others and be confident, and through the Into Employment program, it has helped me prepare for the corporate world.”

— Angelica, age 23
Into Employment
graduate in the
Philippines

A shared vision for transforming lives

As Children International celebrates 90 years of walking alongside children and youth, this moment offers an opportunity to reflect on all that has been accomplished and to look ahead to the next generation of young people ready to build their futures.

For decades, you have supported children and youth through each stage of development — helping provide the care, education, confidence and life skills that prepare them for adulthood. Today, **Into Employment®**, our signature workforce development program, brings that vision to life: ensuring that young people are not defined by where they start, but empowered by where they can go.

Since launching in Honduras and the Philippines in 2009, Into Employment has continued to evolve alongside the changing challenges young people face — adapting from a program focused on preparation and training into a more intentional pathway that connects youth to practical experience, employer partnerships and the tools needed to take that life-changing step into their first job. **Today, Into Employment is reaching more young people than at any point in its history through your support.** Participation has doubled over the past five years, surpassing our 2025 enrollment goal. In 2025, 93% of participants completed the program, and up to 89% secured employment within six months — evidence of the program's growing reach and impact.

These are more than statistics. Behind every number is a young person securing a first job, earning an income of their own and beginning to imagine a different future for themselves and their family. ●

INTO EMPLOYMENT BY THE NUMBERS

Participation
DOUBLED **2x**
in the past 5 years,
and we are on track to
reach our goal
of 10,000 in 2026

93% of youth
complete
the program

Up to
89%
secure employment
within six months

65%
of Into Employment
participants **are female**



The problem we must solve

Poverty is often generational. Research shows that without intervention, without access to education, opportunity and economic mobility, poverty can persist for five or more generations¹. For young people, the transition from education to employment is one of the most critical moments in that cycle.

Yet, too often, the jobs available to young adults are informal, unstable or disconnected from their skills. Globally, nearly 60% of workers are employed in the informal economy, rising to nearly 88% in low-income countries². Without access to training, guidance and workforce connections, many young people face underemployment, economic insecurity and limited opportunities to build a different future.

Because of you, young people are not left to navigate this transition alone. **Meaningful work should be within reach for every young person.** Your support helps them access workforce training, coaching and direct pathways to employment — creating opportunities to earn stable incomes, support their families and change the trajectory of their lives.

Around **60%** of workers globally **are in informal employment**, rising to nearly

88%
in low-income countries.

Sources: 1 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), *A Broken Social Elevator? How to Promote Social Mobility*, 2018, (2023). 2 International Labour Organization (ILO), *Women and Men in the Informal Economy: A Statistical Update*, 2023

Into Employment: the pathway your generosity makes possible

Today, your investment is doing more than building skills. It is providing an ecosystem of support and connecting youth directly to employers, practical experience and the guidance they need to enter — and stay in — the workforce.

Across our agencies, your partnership is helping expand employer engagement, work-based learning, job placement assistance and training aligned with local labor market needs. A key evolution this year is the addition of an Employment Partnership Specialist at each agency to open doors with employers and help turn training into real jobs.

The goal is clear: Into Employment brings prepared young people and real opportunity together — so a first job can become the start of income, independence and generational change. Most importantly, this approach reflects a simple belief: it's not enough to prepare young people — we must help them successfully enter the workforce.



FOUR FOCUS AREAS HELP YOUNG PEOPLE MOVE FORWARD

Strengthened Life Skills — Your commitment helps young people build the confidence, communication skills and workplace readiness they need to step into employment prepared to succeed.

Targeted Training & Education — Your investment connects young people to learning pathways aligned with the jobs and skills most needed in their communities.

Career Readiness & Job Placement — Because of your partnership, youth receive the coaching, employer connections and work-based learning experiences that help turn preparation into a first job.

Giving Back — Your generosity creates lasting ripple effects as employed youth provide for their families, strengthen their communities and inspire what is possible for the next generation.

“Because of your support, I was able to complete my studies, gain valuable skills and build a foundation for a brighter future. You gave me hope when it mattered most, and I will carry this gift forward by working hard to support my family and contribute to society.”

— Martin, age 22

Into Employment graduate in Zambia who completed an automotive engineering internship and is preparing to launch his career

MEANINGFUL WORK SHOULD BE WITHIN REACH FOR EVERY YOUNG PERSON



2026: Building on what works

In 2026, your partnership is helping us build on what we know works: preparing more young people to reach the milestone that can change the course of their lives — their first job. By aligning training with local labor-market demand, strengthening partnerships and expanding access to work-based learning and internships, we are turning preparation into opportunity — and opportunity into a pathway out of poverty.

EXPANDING ACCESS TO TVET

Into Employment is strengthening pathways to work by placing greater emphasis on **Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)**. Introduced by UNESCO in 1999, TVET is a proven pathway that equips young people with market-relevant skills that

lead to income, independence and a decisive step out of poverty.

Across agencies, Into Employment is increasing TVET offerings and aligning

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION VS. INTO EMPLOYMENT COMPLETION RATES

In countries where only
4%–27%

of adults complete post-secondary education³, **93% of Into Employment participants** completed their programs — demonstrating the power of targeted training, coaching and support.

Source: 3 World Bank, *Educational Attainment, at Least Completed Post-Secondary, Population 25+, Total (%)*, World Development Indicators.

training with local labor market demand so youth gain the skills employers are seeking.

Today, nearly 70% of Into Employment scholarships support 1- or 2-year TVET degrees — more than double the number awarded for 4-year university programs.

This shift reflects what we are learning about where opportunity can have the greatest impact. From health care and business administration to culinary arts, customer service, manufacturing, telecommunications and technical trades, these pathways are preparing young people for careers in high-demand industries — while helping employers find the talent they need.

“The workforce that comes through this program is well-prepared, with young people who are ready to contribute and add value to the company,” says **Daniel Gomez**, Training & Development Manager at Palladium Hotel Group in the Dominican Republic. “Young people coming from Children International show a great deal of enthusiasm from the very first day. You can see they already have prior experience and practical training in what they’re going to do.”

Despite its proven impact, TVET remains significantly underfunded in many countries, **government spending on TVET ranges from near zero to just 15% of education budgets⁴**, putting these promising pathways out of reach for too many young people. Your partnership is helping change that — opening access to training that leads to real jobs, real income and greater possibility. And together, we have the opportunity to reach even more youth.

Source: 4 World Bank, *Skills4Dev Knowledge Digest, Issue 11*, May 2024.

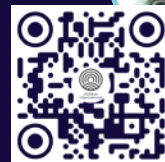
YOUTH SPOTLIGHT: **JOSUE**

Looking beyond the first job

After finishing high school, Josue wasn't sure what path to pursue. Through Into Employment, he discovered an interest in heavy machinery operation and developed the skills, discipline and confidence to succeed in the workplace. The opportunity led to a position with a multinational company, requiring him to move from Barranquilla to Bogotá, Colombia, and adapt to a new city, culture and work environment. Today, stable employment has given Josue greater independence and the ability to support his parents while planning for the future he hopes to build.

“Now that I have a job, I have my own things, I have the discipline to manage them — for example, if I want a pair of shoes, I know that when I get my paycheck, I can buy them,” says Josue. “I no longer depend on my parents; on the contrary, now I give them money so they don't have to carry that burden. With work, everything improved. I really enjoy helping my parents since they fought for me to achieve everything I am today.”

Want to hear Josue talk more about his experience? Scan this QR code to watch a video on our Facebook page.



THE VALUE OF REAL-WORLD EXPERIENCE

Experience changes what young people believe is possible.

Across our global network, work-based learning, internships and apprenticeships are giving youth the practical experience employers expect before they enter the workforce. These opportunities move learning beyond the classroom — helping participants apply their skills in real workplaces, build stronger résumés, expand professional networks and develop the confidence to step into their first jobs ready to contribute.

In Quito, Ecuador, dual training models integrate certification with hands-on experience across hospitality, retail, technical trades, culinary arts and professional services. Through partnerships with organizations such as Trade Alliance, Graiman, KOBE and Aseguradora del Sur, youth gain industry-recognized preparation, prove their skills in real workplace settings and build the employer relationships that turn training into first jobs.

In Zambia, apprenticeships and internships are creating a direct bridge from training to employment. These hands-on opportunities place young people with employers, give them the practical experience they need to compete and help them move into the workforce with confidence. A 2025 career fair further expanded that momentum, bringing youth and employers together to open more pathways to meaningful work.



YOUR INVESTMENT ADVANCES WORK AND COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Through Into Employment, your generosity helps young people gain the confidence, practical skills and sense of purpose to pursue meaningful work and give back to their communities.

In India, Moumita (*pictured at left*) is already putting that purpose into practice as a Children International club leader. By mentoring younger participants and creating spaces for learning and development, she is strengthening her own leadership and inspiring others to recognize and grow into their potential.

This is the broader promise your partnership makes possible: young people prepared for employment, equipped to contribute and ready to extend opportunity to others.



YOUTH SPOTLIGHT: KEYLI

Growing through leadership

Since participating in Children International programs from a young age, Keyli has built the confidence and communication skills needed to thrive in the workplace. The leadership program helped prepare her for the professional world, supporting her growth at KOBE, where she advanced from a part-time service assistant to a shift coordinator in the administration department. Today, she is continuing to build her skills while pursuing her long-term goals.

“I am very grateful to Children International because they were the pioneers in helping us reach our goals.”

— Keyli, age 21
Into Employment
participant in Quito

THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIP

Children International is not waiting for opportunity to reach young people — we are building the relationships that bring opportunity within reach. Through Into Employment, our teams actively engage employers, public workforce agencies, training providers and local business networks to identify where jobs exist, what skills are required and how youth can move into those roles. These partnerships help ensure that training is tied to actual demand, young people gain workplace exposure before graduation and that employers see Children International youth as strong candidates for hire.



RIGHT: *Having built successful careers through Into Employment, alumni in Honduras gathered to explore how they can give back through mentorship, internships, employer partnerships and volunteer service. Their continued involvement reflects both their gratitude for the program and their belief in the power of investing in young people.*

MEANINGFUL WORK SHOULD BE WITHIN REACH FOR EVERY YOUNG PERSON

YOUTH SPOTLIGHT: VÍCTOR

A rising entrepreneur

Víctor's journey with Children International began in childhood and helped shape the confidence, leadership and determination he carries today. Through employability training and technical courses at CECATI, he discovered a passion for baking and dessert-making that quickly grew into something more. Recognizing an opportunity to turn his talent into a livelihood, Víctor launched his own dessert business and continues to expand his skills in entrepreneurship, marketing and online sales. At just 21 years old, he is already building toward an ambitious future that includes owning a bakery, café and restaurant.

“Children [International] has taught me values, the humanity that every person should have, how to show respect and also how to have leadership within a group. [I learned] how to manage a team, and what my skills and strengths are.”

— Víctor, age 21
Into Employment
graduate in Mexico





In Guayaquil, Ecuador, in 2025, Into Employment convened a roundtable with youth and employers to better understand barriers and opportunities on both sides of the workforce equation. These conversations are helping strengthen partnerships and shape more responsive and effective pathways to employment.

In Mexico, through a partnership with CECATI, a government training institution, youth access accredited technical training that leads to nationally recognized certifications trusted by employers. By combining Children International's life skills curriculum with accredited training programs, young people gain practical skills and recognized credentials that strengthen their competitiveness in the job market.



“At CEMACO Group, we feel grateful for the opportunity to collaborate with Children International and the [Into Employment] program, to be able to give youth options to reach their dreams and improve Guatemala one family at a time.”

— Jeannette Reyes
Human Resources Manager
for CEMACO Group (*far right*)

PICTURED FROM LEFT: Employees at CEMACO Caroline, Maria (middle, an Into Employment graduate), Fernanda and Jeannette, as well as Ester Guzmán (second from left), Youth Workforce Development Lead in Guatemala.

MEANINGFUL WORK SHOULD BE WITHIN REACH FOR EVERY YOUNG PERSON

A FOCUS ON JOB PLACEMENT

This is a defining moment for Into Employment — and your partnership is helping make it possible. Children International is introducing dedicated job placement roles through **Employment Partnership Specialists (EPS)**, now active across our countries. These team members are not simply supporting the final step of the journey — they are strengthening the bridge between preparation and employment by building employer relationships, opening doors to internships and first jobs, guiding youth through the hiring process and positioning Children International as a trusted workforce development partner. With EPS staff in place, more young people have the connections, coaching and employer access they need to move from training into paid work — and begin building greater stability for themselves and their families.

In the Philippines, by engaging employers, training providers and workforce partners, the team is strengthening industry connections and creating more direct pathways to employment. The partnerships help ensure young people are not only prepared for the workforce, but also connected to organizations actively seeking talent.



“Together, we remain committed to strengthening youth employment opportunities.”

— Kevin Baras
Employment Partnership
Specialist in the Philippines

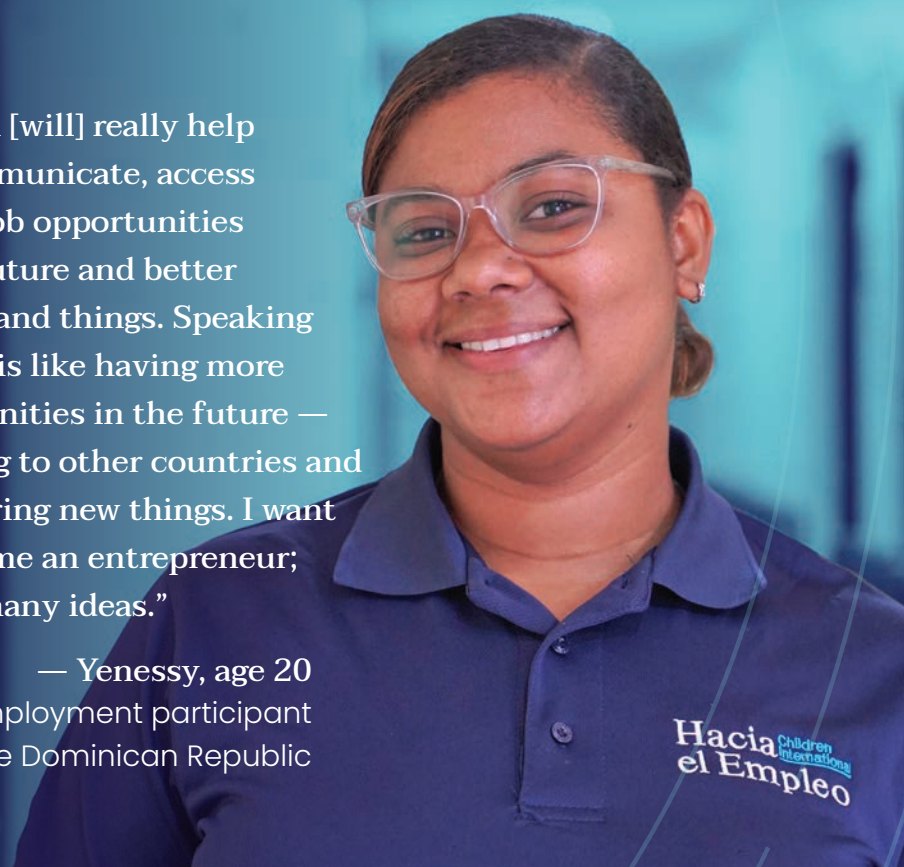
PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT:

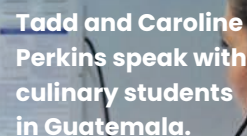
English for Employability

In this program, youth are equipped with job relevant English skills to unlock access to work. This targeted learning model represents an example of how agencies implement specific training courses to align with local labor-market realities.

“English [will] really help me communicate, access better job opportunities in the future and better understand things. Speaking English is like having more opportunities in the future — traveling to other countries and discovering new things. I want to become an entrepreneur; I have many ideas.”

— Yenissy, age 20
Into Employment participant
in the Dominican Republic





Long-time Children International supporters Tadd and Caroline Perkins have spent much of their lives helping others succeed.

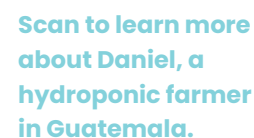
During visits to Guatemala and Colombia to see Children International's work firsthand, they met several Into Employment graduates who were building

What stayed with Tadd and Caroline was not the obstacles these young adults had faced, but what they had achieved. The

“The sky is the limit if you do well with your first job. That first opportunity can set the course for everything that follows.”

The couple sees into Employment as a critical next step for young people entering adulthood. Caroline describes it as “a continuation of the support [Children International] has provided throughout a child's life,” providing “the

Looking back on the young adults they met, the Perkins family measures the impact of Into Employment through the lives being transformed: careers launched, families supported and dreams once out of reach becoming reality.●



FROM AROUND

INTO EMPLOYMENT FACTS FROM EACH COUNTRY

1. Colombia

Most youth in Colombia complete internships, earning about 75% of the legal minimum wage while gaining workplace experience.

2. Dominican Republic

Through partnerships with tourism and hospitality employers, Into Employment prepares youth for opportunities in one of the country's fastest-growing sectors.

3. Ecuador

In Guayaquil, employers help shape training to meet local hiring needs. In Quito, education partners integrate their technical skills and our life skills into workforce preparation.

4. Guatemala

A dedicated Culinary Center connects hands-on culinary and hospitality training to real jobs.

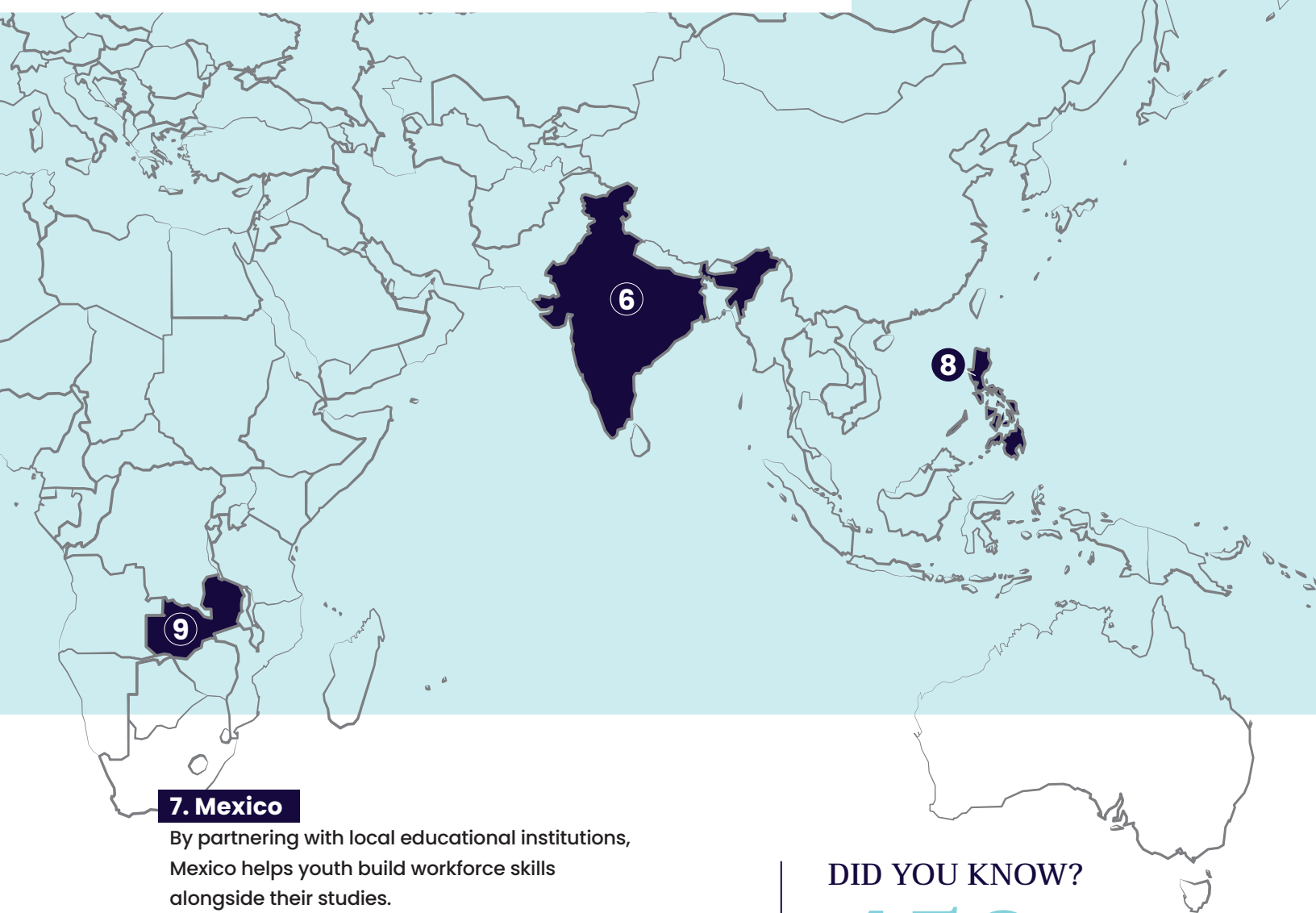
5. Honduras

One of Into Employment's original countries, agricultural remote learning is helping reach more youth and young women in rural communities.

6. India

Many Into Employment participants in India become mentors themselves, helping other youth succeed, while strengthening their communities.

THE GLOBE



7. Mexico

By partnering with local educational institutions, Mexico helps youth build workforce skills alongside their studies.

8. Philippines

Our teams are deepening partnerships with local governments and employers to connect youth to business training, financial literacy and mentoring needed for first job and entrepreneurship opportunities.

9. Zambia

Combines training, apprenticeships and employer partnerships to help youth enter careers in health care and specialized trades.

DID YOU KNOW?

450

million young people

lack the skills needed to succeed in today's labor market.

With your help, more young people are finding a path to meaningful work and a more stable future.

Source: UNESCO, *UNESCO Launches Skills for the Future Platform to Empower Youth Worldwide*, July 11, 2025

MEANINGFUL WORK SHOULD BE WITHIN REACH FOR EVERY YOUNG PERSON

THANK YOU!

The impact of your investment can be seen in the young people earning their first paychecks, launching careers and breaking the cycle of poverty for their families.

"As a young mother, I faced many challenges: balancing morning studies, a part-time job in the late afternoon and evening, and caring for my baby. It wasn't easy," shares Kimberly, Into Employment graduate in the Dominican Republic. "But thanks to the support you give to this program, today I can proudly say that I'm employed, that I'm the main provider for my family and that we're moving forward every day. Your contribution represents

Globally, workforce development initiatives can **generate returns of up to**

**\$15 for every
\$1 invested**

is reflected in stronger incomes, healthier lives, and greater stability for young people like Kimberly.

Thank you for trusting us with this incredibly important work and for continuing to invest in young people and in the power that comes with sustainable employment. **Together, we will end poverty for good. ●**

faith in our potential, confidence in our future and a light of hope in the midst of difficulties."

UNESCO estimates that workforce development can generate as much as \$15 for every \$1 invested. That return

STAY CONNECTED

Follow Children International to see how Into Employment continues to create opportunities for young people across our global network.



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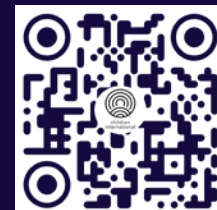


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Scan to watch our
podcast on **YouTube**:



For nine decades and counting, your generosity has helped children and youth build lives defined by resilience, purpose and possibility. Because of you, generations of young people have gained the tools and opportunities needed to shape their own paths — and create lasting change for their families and their communities.

Thank you for believing in their potential and for being part of a legacy that continues to transform lives.

Susana



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