

Into Children International Employment

2025 FALL REPORT

INSIDE

Into Employment provides a network of support for young people eager to work their way out of poverty, and their success starts with caring donors like you. This report showcases how your generosity continues to transform lives.



children
international®

Inspiring a path out of poverty

In the countries where Children International works, the poor conditions young people grow up in can be isolating and limiting. For many, the opportunity to envision, let alone carve out, a healthy, economically stable future feels out of reach. **That's where Into Employment® comes in.** Our signature workforce development program not only delivers tangible skills and opportunities to youth and young adults up to age 24, it also offers an achievable path out of poverty.

Because of your remarkable generosity over the past year, we've equipped thousands of Into Employment participants with the competence and confidence to land their first jobs, achieve other life goals and position themselves to become independent, productive citizens in their local communities. Your investment in Into Employment has given participating youth the foundation to thrive in the workforce and beyond by equipping them with:

- **Life skills** that include enhanced problem-solving and critical thinking capacity, and interpersonal communications know-how
- **Career preparation**, including résumé development, mock interviews and networking guidance
- **Job-placement** support, connecting them with employers in their local communities
- **Business fundamentals** that provide knowledge and support for those interested in launching and operating a microbusiness

“What if Children International wasn't there for me? Who would I be now? ... Into Employment played a significant role in my job search and current employment. It's not just about the financial support or training, but also the skills you acquire that are useful when you're looking for a job and eventually working.”

— **Jirah Suyom, age 22,**
Into Employment graduate now
working as a high school teacher
in the Philippines, at right



Into Employment officer Vanessa Domínguez instructs participants during a career planning session in Honduras



In struggling economies where unemployment and underemployment remain core contributors to intergenerational poverty, Into Employment offers hope and help to the Children International participants. Their successes when they graduate from the program spark a ripple effect of economic elevation within their families, and, ultimately, in their local economies.

This impact would not be possible without generous financial support. Investment fuels the training and tools that empower participants to thrive in the workforce. Just as importantly, it sustains a strategic network of support that uplifts them as they strive and grow. This network includes Children International's Into Employment staff, our community-based training partners, local employers — **and donors like you.**

Together, we are helping transform the lives of these youth in ways that will have lasting impact. Together, through these young people's accomplishments, we're ending poverty for good.

In this report, we're proud to share with you how Children International — in partnership with you and others who support **our Into Employment initiative** — **has made a difference in more than 9,000 young people's lives over the past year.** ●

OUR INTO EMPLOYMENT NETWORK INCLUDES YOU



A web of support fueling brighter futures

Building strong partnerships in the communities where Children International is based is a hallmark of how we achieve our mission. This commitment is even more critical when it comes to meeting the diverse needs of youth who are eager to enter the working world.

What does that look like on the ground? It begins with our local staff, who best understand the cultural contexts in which youth live and form meaningful connections with them. Our staff also are key to building relationships with local employers and community leaders who can become our partners in progress.

For youth, it's often difficult to secure their first job because many companies ask for work experience they haven't had opportunities to garner. Into Employment eases local employers' concerns about hiring young people who have little to no experience at the outset, because they know that they

can count on well-rounded employees when they hire from our program. They are confident that we are equipping our graduates with best practices on how to be diligent workers.

FIRST FORMAL JOBS

The initial jobs we connect Into Employment graduates with run the gamut from office assistant or mechanic to restaurant server or hotel steward. In some instances, the initial jobs serve as starter roles for a youth's bigger dreams of being promoted through a particular career track or attending college.

Yet, even in instances when the first job becomes the sustainable source of employment, it can change that youth's trajectory. The local employers we partner with have been pleased to play a role in that process.

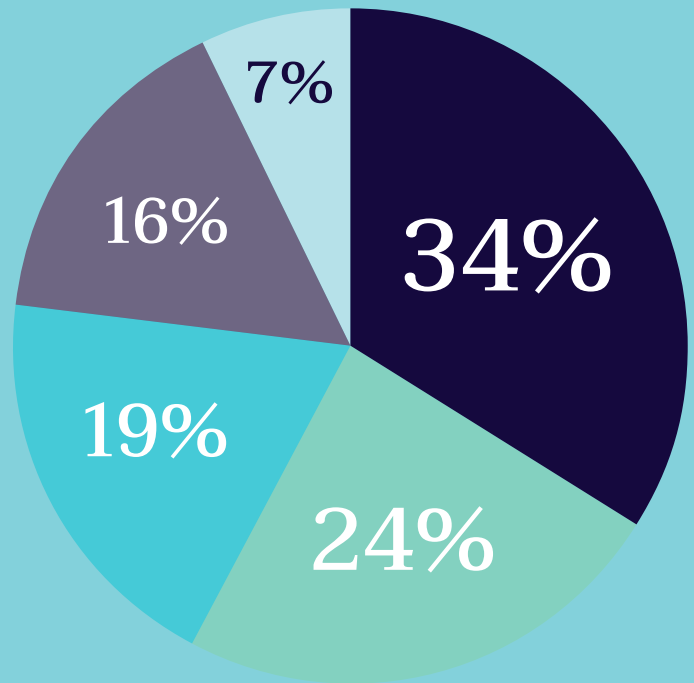
"Children International's Into Employment program does an excellent job of preparing young people, providing training in customer service, how to enter the workforce and, very importantly, how to behave in a company," says **Ariel Flores, cleaning and laundry manager at the Westin Camino Real and Biltmore hotels in Guatemala City.** "These are very important qualities that we look for."



WHERE OUR INTO EMPLOYMENT YOUTH WORK

Your support upskills young people for career placements across a wide array of industries, including the jobs that are most in demand in the countries where Children International is based. Here are the range of jobs in which our Into Employment youth were placed in 2024:

- **34% = administrative roles**, such as bookkeeping, call center operations and office management
- **24% = hospitality roles**, such as restaurant server, hotel service and front desk operations, bartending and support staff
- **19% = skilled trade roles**, such as cosmetologist, retail sales and construction
- **16% = technical roles**, such as electrician, welder and machine operator
- **7% = launch their own microbusiness**



We heard similar praises about Into Employment participants in Ecuador.

INTO EMPLOYMENT IS A GAME-CHANGER

"The difference between Children International youth and those who normally work here is that they are always asking what to do, what are the areas in which they can learn the most. They always want to grow, to evolve, to know a little more about other areas so that they can have a better future," says **Alexandra Saltos (at left), manager at a Burger King in Guayaquil.**



With a goal to connect youth with jobs their local employers are seeking, our Into Employment staff foster partnerships with training programs designed to fill the need. Last year, almost 70 percent of Into Employment youth pursued technical and vocational education and training at workforce institutions like Incatec, one of our partners in Barranquilla, Colombia.

Armed with a technical degree, our youth can often quickly land administrative, healthcare, manufacturing, culinary, customer service and other specialized positions in their communities.

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70%

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Having immediate access to meaningful work not only inspires a sense of purpose and dignity in youth, it also equips them with on-the-job experience that can advance their marketability and it allows them to **earn a steady income, which becomes a game-changer** for them and their families.

"When they arrive here, they see the possibility of finding employment," says **Alexander Estevez (at right), an Incatec representative.** "In fact, many of the students have stayed working at the companies after completing their internship period, and some business owners have referred them to new companies so they can continue their professional development." ●



Estefania stands proudly in the restaurant she now manages in Quito, Ecuador

Shaping a generation of women leaders

In many communities across the globe, it's more challenging for young women, than young men, to pursue an education and find fulfilling work. That's often because gender norms place more value on girls' role in the home — cooking, cleaning and taking care of younger siblings — or because families can't afford to educate all of their children.

Children International is helping shift that reality for many girls and young women by creating opportunities for them to better their lives — and, by extension, their families' lives — through Into Employment. **With more than 60 percent of Into Employment participants being women**, you can be

More than

60%

of Into Employment participants are women

sure your investment is supporting a fairer future and connecting them to educational opportunities and jobs they can grow into.

Additionally, because of the strong foundation of mentorship and job-training support Children International provides (*thanks to investments in our program from partners like you*), the young women who participate in Into Employment can lean into creating dreams and goals that they can achieve because they are not striving or planning alone.

INSPIRING GRADUATES

Estefania Toledo completed our program a decade ago and since then has been working for a well-known Ecuadorian restaurant franchise, Vaco y Vaca. She credits Into Employment with exposing her to opportunities she didn't know existed and teaching her useful skills for both her professional and personal life, such as how to engage with the public.

It was through Into Employment that Estefania realized she had an interest in the culinary arts. "It really caught my attention," says the 34-year-old mother of two. "I learned so many things, like how to put together a dish, how to serve a customer and [it gave me] experiences in the restaurant field."

Vaco y Vaca was Estefania's first job. She began as an entry-level staff member and today manages the franchise's busiest restaurant in Quito. Into Employment was essential to her career growth, teaching her "to be a better person, recognize my weaknesses and bring out my strengths," she says, so she could be successful in the workplace.

Across the globe in Zambia, 22-year-old **Joyce Jere** is enjoying professional success, too.

As a physiotherapy technologist at a local hospital in Zambia, Joyce routinely taps into what she learned about emotional well-being during Into Employment trainings to encourage her patients struggling with their physical limitations. She credits her success to her experience with Into Employment and to Children International staff who guided her.

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A circular inset photograph showing a physiotherapy session. A woman, Joyce Jere, wearing a white medical uniform and gloves, is assisting a male patient. The patient is seated and using a piece of exercise equipment, possibly a leg press or similar machine. Joyce is standing next to him, guiding his movement. The background is a solid teal color.

Joyce, a physiotherapy technologist in Zambia, helping one of her patients



In Mexico, Into Employment participants take part in a technical training called "English and Eyelashes"

Designing local solutions to youth employment challenges

While some participants' Into Employment experience may lead them to university, many more pursue technical and vocational jobs. Regardless of their professional pursuits, our goal is to create a desire in youth to choose a path that will lead to sustainable employment and help them climb out of poverty in the process. This is achieved by our strong local teams in each country that shape programming and support that best fit their local areas and cultural needs.

Indeed, Children International's local teams lead the way not only in connecting youth to jobs, but also in seeking to understand societal barriers to youth unemployment. By working to understand the challenges more deeply, we can work with our partners to jointly devise solutions.

Here are highlights of the collaborative efforts Children International's local Into Employment staff have engaged in over the past year to better position our Into Employment participants for solid futures:

IN ECUADOR



Our leaders partnered with a local civic organization, Colectivo Empleo Joven, to research barriers to youth employment. We then hosted a community event that included local employers and government leaders to release the findings of that research, which detailed how **limited digital skills and a mismatch between applicants' qualifications and job requirements** (among other findings), **reduced youth hiring in the country**. Armed with this insight, our Into Employment teams are now designing strategies to address those challenges for Children International participants in Ecuador and at our other agencies.

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"Children International adequately prepared me for the future," she says. "From the workshops that I attended I learned how to become a public speaker, prepare for job interviews, how to position myself and how to become resilient in the face of challenges."

Joyce's future is bright.

"My next chapter in life is to further my education and become a top physiotherapist in Zambia," Joyce says, "and commit to mentoring young people who are still in the program so that they can have someone to look up to and can be inspired to achieve their dreams." ●

"With this formal job, my parents' and my life have changed ... My dream for the future is to study business administration, which is a professional field, and be an administrator of a large clinic."

— **María Fernanda Guerrero**,
age 19, an Into
Employment graduate
now working as an
administrative
assistant at a
health clinic in
Colombia



IN GUATEMALA



Several Children International leaders participated in the Central America Donors Forum, a premier event where civil society, philanthropy, government and business leaders gathered to discuss priority issues for citizens. **Children International hosted a session on women's economic inclusion and equity in Guatemala**, during which our staff shared Children International's strategic approach to improving gender equity in the workforce.

IN THE PHILIPPINES



As a public employment service office, our Bicol agency has deepened its career readiness offerings for youth. Linked to the country's Department of Labor, **these offices are a hub for job fairs, training, career guidance and more.** It's yet another resource for Children International to connect our youth to available jobs and opportunities in their communities.

Creating connections that drive change

DONOR SPOTLIGHT: **JENINE NILES**

Two decades ago, Jenine Niles decided she wanted her two daughters to learn about the world and be aware that not everyone lives the way they do. This led to her daughters becoming pen pals with and supporters of Children International youth.

After one of her daughters passed away at 12 from sudden cardiac arrest, Jenine continued to write letters and support her daughter's pen pal, a young girl from Ecuador. Yet, even after 20 years of supporting 11 children, it wasn't until a 2024 trip to Guatemala where Jenine met Children International youth and staff and visited programs, that she understood exactly how her support translated into action.

"I had no idea how everything gets done and the impact of [local women volunteers in] the community," says Jenine, who is chief financial officer at Southwest Energy, LLC, an Arizona-based mining contractor. "Children International has navigated all the systems and transformed the organization to work alongside local agencies, instead of trying to replace them."

"Ending global poverty is certainly a mountain, but it's people who are going to solve it. And connection."

— **Jenine Niles**,
Children International Global
Philanthropy Council
member and supporter

Jenine (center) with Children International staff and Into Employment graduates in Guatemala, and pictured above with youth in Ecuador





It is the connections that Children International has built — among youth, families, employers and entire communities — that Jenine says sets us apart and makes our Into Employment program life changing for so many young people.

The Into Employment participants she met in Guatemala, as well as the ones she met during a recent Children International trip to Ecuador, “were a powerful reminder of the motivation of hope, of continuing to have dreams,” says Jenine, who is also a member of Children International’s Global Philanthropy Council.

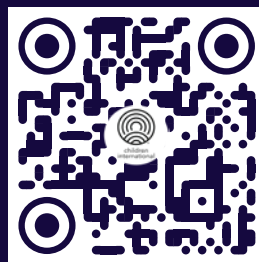
She added that part of the strength of Into Employment is its ability to help youth envision a future, while providing ongoing support as they realize their dreams. “It’s the power of possibility that they’re providing to young people.”

And of creating connections.

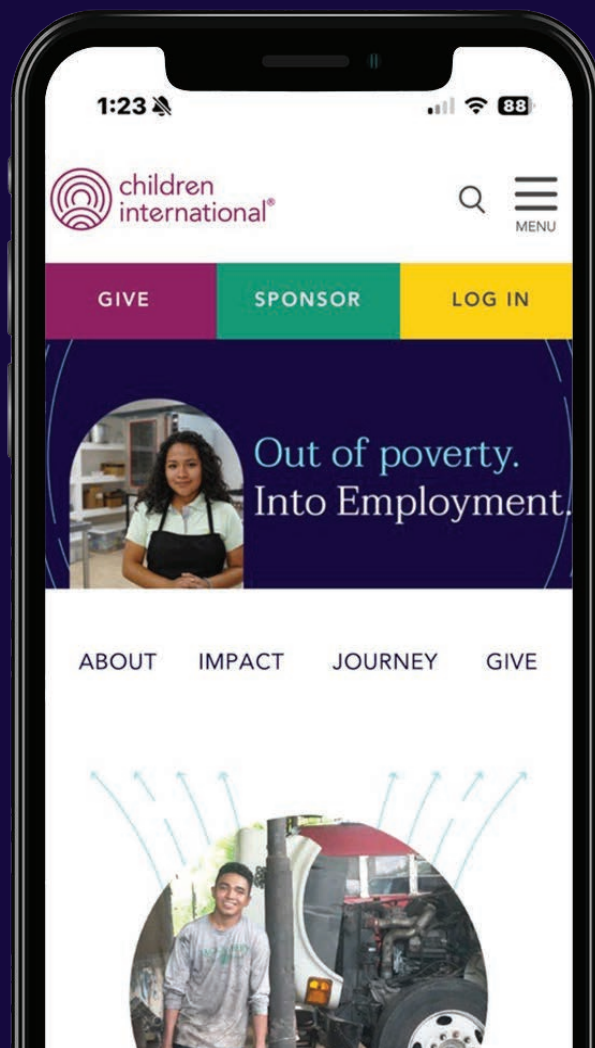
“Ending global poverty is certainly a mountain, but it’s people who are going to solve it. And connection. That’s why Into Employment has been so successful, because there are so many layers of connection that drive the change.” ●

STAY IN THE KNOW

Bookmark our Into Employment webpage and follow us on social media for stories and updates throughout the year.



Scan this QR code to visit our Into Employment page at children.org and learn more about how you can further support youth around the world.



You are essential to young people's success

Youth throughout the world are building bolder futures because of your generous investment. You are part of a global network of support and partnership that is not only propelling Into Employment youth forward, but also is fueling the success and growth of our program. **We are deeply grateful for your support. THANK YOU!**



“Children International has helped me break barriers in my country. As it’s no secret that there is a lot of crime, Children International has supported me in staying away from that world by giving me the opportunity to study and prepare academically.”

— José Manuel Cruz, age 21

Into Employment participant studying aeronautical administration at the Superior Academy of Aeronautical Sciences in the Dominican Republic.

His dream is to work at international airports and specialize in software engineering to drive innovation in aviation.