

# entra21: Preparing Youth in Latin America and the Caribbean to Enter the Modern Workplace

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Entra 21 is a regional program designed to provide disadvantaged youth, ages 16-29, in Latin America and the Caribbean with employment training and job placement services so they can find decent jobs and increase their employability.

The name "entra 21" comes from the word "entra" in Spanish which corresponds to the "enter" key on a computer keyboard. It was chosen due to the Program's emphasis on providing youth with computer and other skills so they can secure 21st century jobs.

The Program began in 2001, when the International Youth Foundation (IYF), in collaboration with the Multi-lateral Investment Fund of the Inter American Development Bank (MIF/IDB), officially launched it. Six years later, in December 2007, when the first phase of the Program terminated, it had reached 19,649 youth by providing grants and technical assistance to qualified local organizations. During the Program's first six years, 35 grants were awarded; the average size was \$343,020 and lasted 28 months.

The entra 21 model consists of the following elements,

- \* -Clear targeting and selection mechanisms to ensure youth have skills and motivation to succeed -
- \* Training content dictated by the needs of the labor market; -
- \* Integrated and comprehensive training that includes technical and non-technical content such as life skills and job seeking skills; -
- \* Internships as part of the training cycle; -
- \* Job placement services for youth; and -
- \* Involvement by employers in program design, training, internships and job placement.

Description of youth served, -

- \* Majority under 21 years of age -
- \* Most unmarried, no children and based in an urban area -
- \* Most at least a high school education -
- \* Majority were not working when started program

Based on data collected from an independent evaluator six or more months after youth graduated, the Program was a success. Not only did it exceed the target number of youth by 50%, (12,000 versus over 19,000) but employment rates were 14 points higher than expected.

Read the Executive Summary of the Final Report of the Entra 21 Program Phase I: 2001-2007.  
[http://www.iyfnet.org/uploads/ENTRA21\\_ExecSumm\\_Phase1.pdf](http://www.iyfnet.org/uploads/ENTRA21_ExecSumm_Phase1.pdf)

Read the full Final Report of the Entra 21 Program Phase I: 2001-2007.  
[http://www.iyfnet.org/uploads/ENTRA21\\_Phase1.pdf](http://www.iyfnet.org/uploads/ENTRA21_Phase1.pdf)

Renewing entra 21 &ndash; Launching of Phase II

Due to the success of entra 21, a second phase was launched in 2007, with the challenge to,

- \* Reach youth at higher risk and therefore have a more difficult time securing decent work; -
- \* Work at a larger scale so best practices validated in phase I could be offered to more youth in more places; and -
- \* Enhance the evaluation strategy by introducing controlled studies to measure program impact.

Through the creation of a \$30 million fund comprised of \$10 million from the MIF and \$20 million from private and public sources, IYF will award and support an estimated 27 grants over a four-year period.

Program benchmarks include:

- \* 45,000 youth from low-income families trained and at least 50% working in decent jobs by scaling up an estimated 7-10 proven projects.
- \* 5,000 youth at higher risk, due to internal displacement, physical disability, or other special circumstance, trained and at least 40% working in decent jobs through 12-17 projects; and
- \* Robust evaluation system that measures project impact and generates lessons which are disseminated through publications, on-line discussions and events.

As of September 2008, under phase II, entra 21 has supported,

\* 4 projects, working at greater scale, which are projected to reach 20,160 youth from low-income families.

An example of one project is in Chile where IYF's partner, Fundación Chile, is partnering with the government of Chile to provide 5,000 low-income youth with job training and state of the art technology to link up with employers and increase their competencies. Financing is provided by the Chilean government, Nokia and the MIF/IADB.

\* 4 projects targeting 2,140 youth who are at higher risk due to their physical disabilities, rural location, lack of formal education and/or prior involvement in armed groups.

In Paraguay, IYF's Partner, the Center for Development Information and Resources will work with 390 disabled youth and develop their skills in computer applications, telemarketing and other areas so that they can find decent work once they leave the program. Changing employers' perceptions of youth with disabilities also is an important component of this program.

<http://www.iyfnet.org/section.cfm/5/24/968>