

I am from Martisant, a neighborhood in Port-au-Prince. When I was six, my mom would leave the house early to sell goods. My two older brothers were responsible for me but often left me by myself, leaving me vulnerable. My neighbors took advantage of me and abused me sexually. At that young age, I didn't understand what had happened to me.

At age 11, my mom sent me to relatives to protect me. However, a male cousin who came to live with us shamelessly took advantage of me and threatened me not to tell anyone what had happened. I was afraid to speak and unable to carry the heavy burden. I was always sad as I had lost a significant part of what made me whole. I struggled with depression.

Eventually, I fled and went back to live with my mother but ended up giving myself away to men to support myself. I would lie about my age, go to parties, drink a lot, and smoke so I could forget my problems. I started to realize that I was lying to myself and that I was destroying my life.

My brother, who had previously attended and graduated from HTC, became aware of my way of life and encouraged me to enter the HTC Women's Program. While at HTC, I found Christ and was baptized. Through Bible study and therapy, I found my identity in Christ. Although it was a time of healing, it was not easy for me. It required a lot of courage to confront my former life and trust in God's plan. However, thanks to the support, love, and understanding of my HTC family, I was able to forgive and let go of my hatred for my abusers and the pain that was eating me up.

While in the HTC program, I served in the kitchen and discovered a passion for the culinary arts. I was encouraged to pursue studies in this area, and today I am a chef. I am currently an intern at the HTC Women's Center and a business owner of CESSE ART. I offer services such as decorating, baking, and catering. **It is a joy for me to serve people!**

I thank God for His plan for me and all who contributed to my transformation.



**Francina
Sylvaince**
2018 Graduate



100%
of students have
mentors



1/2
of graduates now own
and manage a business²



81%
of graduates serve in
their local church and
community

²Occupations include: artisans, caterers, chemical engineers, hair and beauty specialists, manufacturers, and sales and purchasing agents