GENDER IN HONDURAS:
Effectively Integrating Gender into Civil Society

Gender Assessment Report

Counterpart International
Citizen Participation for Responsive Governance in Honduras (CPRG) Program

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The electronic version of this document is available for downloading from Counterpart’s website at www.counterpart.org/hondurasgenderassessment; alternatively, a copy may be requested by e-mail from Abiosseh Davis at Adavis@counterpart.org.

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# Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ....................................................................................................................... 3

ACRONYMS ........................................................................................................................................ 5

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ................................................................................................................ 6
   CONTEXT ......................................................................................................................................... 6

2. INTRODUCTION ............................................................................................................................ 7
   IMPACTOS ....................................................................................................................................... 9
   IMPACTOS GENDER ASSESSMENT ............................................................................................... 9
   METHODOLOGY .......................................................................................................................... 9
   DEFINITIONS ...............................................................................................................................10

3. GENDER IN HONDURAS .............................................................................................................. 10
   GENDER AND POLITICS ............................................................................................................... 11
   GENDER AND POVERTY ............................................................................................................... 12
   GENDER AND EDUCATION ......................................................................................................... 13
   GENDER LEGAL FRAMEWORK ................................................................................................. 14
   GENDER, TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY .................................................................... 16
   GENDER AND CIVIL SOCIETY ................................................................................................. 17
   GENDER AND HUMAN SECURITY .............................................................................................. 19

4. GENDER INTEGRATION IN IMPACTOS ...................................................................................... 21

5. PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: GENDER, GOVERNANCE AND
   VIOLENCE PREVENTION ............................................................................................................ 22

6. BIBLIOGRAPHY ......................................................................................................................... 26

7. RECOMMENDED MATERIAL ...................................................................................................... 27

ANNEX 1: METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS ...................................................................... 29

ANNEX 2. KEY CONCEPTS .............................................................................................................. 34

ANNEX 3 QUESTIONNAIRE .............................................................................................................. 38
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>ACRONYMS</strong></th>
<th><strong>DESCRIPTION</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADELSAR</td>
<td>Agencia de Desarrollo Estratégico Local de Santa Rosa de Copán</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASJ</td>
<td>Asociación por una sociedad Más Justa</td>
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<td>ASONOG</td>
<td>Asociación de Organismos no Gubernamentales</td>
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<td>CAMS</td>
<td>Comisión de Acción Social Menonita</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAP</td>
<td>Community Action for Prosperity</td>
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<td>CDH</td>
<td>Centro de Desarrollo Humano – Center for Human Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>CEDAW</td>
<td>Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women</td>
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<tr>
<td>CIPRODEH</td>
<td>Center for research and promotion of Human Rights</td>
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<td>CPRG</td>
<td>Citizen Participation for Responsive Governance</td>
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<td>CSOs</td>
<td>Civil Society Organizations</td>
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<td>ECLAC</td>
<td>Economic Council of Latin America and the Caribbean</td>
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<td>EROC</td>
<td>Espacio Regional Occidente</td>
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<tr>
<td>FOPRIDEH</td>
<td>Federación de Organizaciones No Gubernamentales para el desarrollo de Honduras</td>
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<td>FOSDEH</td>
<td>Foro social de Deuda Externa y desarrollo de Honduras</td>
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<td>GEFE</td>
<td>USAID’s Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy</td>
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<td>ICNL</td>
<td>International Center for Not-for-Profit Law</td>
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<td>II PIEGH</td>
<td>II Plan de Igualdad y Equidad de Género de Honduras 2010-2022</td>
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<td>IMPACTOS</td>
<td>Impulsando Participación Ciudadana, Transparencia y oportunidades Sociales - Promoting Citizen Participation, Transparency and Social Opportunities</td>
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<td>INAM</td>
<td>Instituto Nacional de la Mujer - Honduras</td>
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<td>INE</td>
<td>National Statistics Institute- Honduras</td>
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<td>ISOs</td>
<td>Intermediary Support Organizations</td>
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<td>MSI</td>
<td>Management Systems International</td>
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<td>NGOs</td>
<td>Non-governmental organizations</td>
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<td>SETELEC</td>
<td>Servicios Técnicos Legales y Económicos</td>
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<td>TI</td>
<td>Transparency International</td>
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<td>UN WOMEN</td>
<td>United Nation Women</td>
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<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Program</td>
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<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
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1. Executive Summary

In May 2012, based on Impactos Gender Integration Strategy and Action Plan, Counterpart International commissioned a consultant to conduct a gender assessment that would inform the effective integration of gender in the implementation of its program in Honduras. The gender assessment served to identify current gaps and potential opportunities in promoting gender equality in civil society in Honduras as well as to provide guidance and operational input in integrating and mainstreaming gender into overall project implementation. Counterpart International and its institutional partners are implementing the Citizen Participation for Responsive Governance in Honduras Program, known locally in Honduras as “IMPACTOS”, a five-year initiative funded by USAID that combines two different yet very intertwined and complementary components: 1) the Citizen Participation for Responsive Governance (CPRG) component, which aims to increase the transparency and accountability of public institutions through support for civil society-led initiatives, and 2) the Community Action for Prosperity (CAP) component, which aims to improve citizen and community safety by strengthening local communities’ and governments’ ability to prevent threats from gangs and narco-trafficking.

Context

Honduras is characterized by its difficult and tenuous political and security environment. The country has not yet recovered from its most recent political upheaval, a 2009 constitutional crisis, which exacerbated divisions within the Honduran population leading to a coup d’ état. The crisis adds additional complexities to concerns over poverty, human security and gender inequality. Although considered a middle income country, over 66% of the population lives under the poverty line. According to Transparency International, Honduras has one of the highest levels of corruption in the world. Organized crime and violence are at an all-time high with San Pedro Sula ranked as the most dangerous city in the world. Although poverty, corruption and violence have an effect on the majority of the population, women are over-represented among the poor and men are over-represented among those who fall victim to homicide.

Civil society and social movements have played a significant role in bringing these challenges to the forefront in past decades. They play an invaluable role in mobilizing for participative governance in Honduras. However, the constitutional crisis which caused division along political lines has created ruptures among activists and civil society organizations (CSOs) alike. This division is manifest even within the women’s movement. Prior to the coup, the women’s movements had gained visibility and voice and were actively participating in political processes. Nowadays the movement is fragmented among those who are participating in governmental institutions and “feminists in the resistance,” a bigger fraction of the movement that refuses to collaborate with government initiatives.

The National Women’s Policy and the Second Gender Equality and Equity Plan of Honduras (II PIEGH) includes the principle needs and demands of women who are entitled to their rights, to reinforce their achievements in a sustained manner towards full equality between men and women. Namely it identifies seven priority areas to promote gender equality in Honduras. The Policy articulates a wide variety of issues that demonstrate the magnitude of gender inequality and the need for focused interventions to promote equality. This document was prepared through a participatory and consultative process with women’s activists and women's

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1 INAM, Agencia Sueca para el Desarrollo Internacional (ASDI), Agencia Española de Cooperación para el Desarrollo Internacional (AECID), Fondo de Población de las Naciones Unidas (UNFPA); Programa de Las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo (PNUD), 2010, Política Nacional de la Mujer y II Plan de Igualdad y Equidad de Género de Honduras 2010-2022. Tegucigalpa, Honduras.
movement representatives. As the definitive document used to further women’s rights and women’s participation in decision making processes, the II PEIGH serves as a resource for Honduran CSOs and IMPACTOS to increase knowledge on gender issues, to implement activities to address these issues and to advocate for reforms that further gender equality through initiatives focused on transparency and the reduction of violence in communities.

This report highlights gender specific challenges relating to poverty, human security and corruption. It outlines women’s involvement in civil society and the current state of the women’s movement in Honduras. The report presents opportunities for promoting gender equality relating to the three above mentioned areas of intervention for IMPACTOS. It concludes with specific recommendations for Counterpart and its implementing partners for strengthening gender awareness and promoting gender equality within and through the work of IMPACTOS.

Key assessment findings include:

- Women actively participate in the labor market, civic organizations and community development, while taking most of the responsibility over household chores. Traditional gender patterns are greatly incorporated within everyday practices and power dynamics.
- Women’s community leadership is greatly recognized, but there is a gap to transform it into political participation. Honduras has quota laws to promote women’s participation in elections, but there is no legal enforcement to accomplish the minimum standards. This gap creates an opportunity for corrupt political practices.
- A large part of the Honduran population is plagued by poverty, exclusion and unemployment. Women tend to experience harsher conditions and face higher barriers to overcoming such problems because of structural gender inequality. The situation greatly varies between urban and rural areas, as well as within ethnic minorities.
- There is a fragmentation within Honduran civil society, a situation that particularly affects the women’s movement. The greatest challenge is to bring together gender expertise in anticorruption initiatives and the construction of citizenship.
- The country has experienced a reversal in women’s political participation and gender sensitive policies that needs to be addressed.
- There is a gap between women politicians and women advocating for political participation.
- Gender expertise and training is dispersed among governmental institutions, academia and CSOs. Nevertheless, individuals with gender expertise or training are still a minority among local authorities, CSOs personnel and communities.
- There is a general lack of crime prevention strategies at the local level. Actions against crime fail to address root causes of violence and their gender components.
- A lack of up-to-date information and sex disaggregated data greatly reduces follow up capacity; however, general trends can be tracked through in depth-qualitative analysis.
- There is a gap in terms of gender integration in citizenship participation between the different regions in Honduras. Identified good practitioners can lead and train their peers in specific workshops.

2. INTRODUCTION

The Republic of Honduras is located in Central America, sharing borders with Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua and both the Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean Sea. The country was conquered by Spain and gained its independence in 1821 as part of the United Providences of Central America, becoming an independent country between 1838-1839. Since the beginning of its republican history, the country has experienced political instability, civil strife and de facto governments that have impacted its development.

With a population close to 8,200,795 people, Honduras has a masculinity index (number of men/number of women) of 0.49 and a fertility rate of 3.26 children per woman. The country
faces high levels of poverty: according to the National Statistics Institute, in 2010 66.2% of the population lived under the poverty line, with 45.3% living in extreme poverty. The country also reports high inequality within the population with a 0.694 Gini index, the highest in Central America. With a Human Development Index of 0.625, Honduras is classified under the Medium Human Development group, despite ranking 121 among 141 countries in 2011. In general the country faces great challenges in terms of inclusive development. The Transparency International’s 2011 “perception of transparency” indicator places Honduras within the range of countries with the highest levels of perception of corruption. Consistent with this perception, Honduras did not qualify for the Millennium Challenge Account because it did not comply with several indicators including control of corruption. When addressing systematic differences between men and women, Honduras Gender Inequality Index (GII) is 0.5111, ranking 105 among the same 141 countries. Other important indicators show that maternal mortality is high (110/100,000) as well as teenage pregnancy.

Honduras is also characterized by its difficult and tenuous political and security environment. The country has yet to recover from its most recent political upheaval, the 2009 constitutional crisis, which led to a coup d’ état and exacerbated divisions within the Honduran population. Weak institutional capacity in the security sector and high prevalence of organized crime groups create additional challenges for maintaining stability. Currently the country has very high rates of homicide, crime and corruption. For instance, San Pedro Sula was considered the most dangerous city in 2011, with 159 homicides per 100,000 people; in Francisco Morazán, the rate was 83.2 per 100,000 inhabitants; the national average was 86.

Another challenge is the lack of transparency and corruption at the private and public level. Yet there were several actions announced in favor of public administration transparency: the implementation of training workshops conducted by the National Office for Integrated Development of Internal Control (ONADICI), aimed at high-ranking officials of Government agencies with the purpose of training public servants in carrying out day-to-day business with high transparency; and, the announced efforts of the Institute for the Access to Public Information (IAIP), and the Anti-corruption National Council (CNA), to succeed in ensuring that all public institutions comply with the Access to Public Information Law.

Despite the widespread problem of corruption, a motivated civil society sector is gaining momentum to stem corruption however they can. There are important efforts from civil society, with international and institutional cooperation, which are committed to transforming the current situation through a variety of mechanisms and initiatives. The IMPACTOS program and its network of implementing partners are part of such transformation.

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3. Gini index measures income inequality. A Gini coefficient of zero expresses perfect equality (for example, where everyone has an exactly equal income). Therefore the higher coefficient expresses maximal inequality among values (for example where only one person has all the income). In the case of Honduras Gini index has increased over the last 5 years. According to the World Fact book from the CIA, in 2007, Honduras’ Gini index was 57.7%. https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2172rank.html
5. 2011 Honduras Grade of Perception of Corruption (IPC): 2.6
6. The Gender Inequality Index (GII) is a measure that captures the loss in achievements due to gender disparities in the dimensions of reproductive health, empowerment and labor force participation. Values range from 0 (perfect equality) to 1 (total inequality).
7. The country experienced a relatively increase on the gender development index between 2005 (0.687) and 2007 (0.699).
8. However, recent events have resulted in higher gender inequality.
9. 93.1 pregnant teenagers out of 1000 between 15-19 years
IMPACTOS

IMPACTOS is a five-year initiative funded by USAID and implemented by Counterpart International in partnership with the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL) and Management Systems International (MSI). It consists of two independent but complementary components: 1) the Citizen Participation for Responsive Governance (CPRG) component, which aims to increase the transparency and accountability of public institutions through support for civil society-led initiatives, and 2) the Community Action for Prosperity (CAP) component, which aims to improve citizen and community safety by strengthening local communities' and governments’ ability to prevent crime.

The IMPACTOS approach consists of: supporting Honduran civil society in a sustained effort to increase transparency and public accountability of public institutions, employing a non-partisan and non-confrontational approach toward engaging the national government, and understanding and engaging existing transparency institutions. Related to this, IMPACTOS aims to integrate public transparency and accountability activities into sector-specific development programming through designing and disseminating targeted and transparent program grants. It also aspires to build communities’ capacity to work collaboratively with municipal authorities, the private sector, civic organizations, and patronatos (local councils) to plan and implement activities that address the root causes of insecurity at the grassroots level, taking into consideration the unique motivations of youth and other at-risk groups.

IMPACTOS Gender Assessment

The main objective of this consultancy was to provide expert technical leadership and managerial support to the IMPACTOS staff to ensure effective integration of gender considerations and best practice across all IMPACTOS program and partner networks. The objective of this document is to present a desk and in-country gender assessment of the current environment and opportunities for gender integration in governance and civil society in Honduras with a focus on the two main areas of IMPACTOS intervention: transparency and accountability and community security.

The report includes an analysis of statistics on and constraints to male and female participation in political processes and civil society in Honduras, gender considerations in community security with an emphasis on urban youth populations, gendered approaches to advocacy on public policy, and the gendered impacts of national and local government budget planning, etc. The report concludes with practical recommendations for the comprehensive and contextual integration of gender throughout IMPACTOS and its specific actions and activities; indicators for monitoring and evaluating IMPACTOS gender integration efforts; and guidelines and recommendations for the creation of a Gender Working Group among CSOs working in citizen participation, governance transparency, and crime and violence prevention programs.

Methodology

The methodology used to accomplish these objectives includes primary research through interviews and focus groups and secondary data obtained from desk reviews of statistics and

\[9\] Complete description of rationale and methodology can be found Annex 1.

\[10\] Individual and collective interviews with IMPACTOS personnel, and Honduras stakeholders, as well as information gathered through the questionnaire between implementing partners.
reports generated by Honduran and international stakeholders. The assessment focuses heavily on IMPACTOS areas of work, analyzing transparency, accountability, training and capacity building from a gender perspective. Desk research was complemented by observations made during fieldwork and a gap analysis of the ideal gender integration and the current actions and practices among implementing CSOs. The report presents a comprehensive view of the challenges and opportunities of IMPACTOS and proposes a strategy for monitoring and evaluating IMPACTOS progress in gender integration.

The gender assessment was designed under the conceptual guidance of the Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy (GEFE) launched by USAID in March 2012. The framework sets forth three definitions/guiding principles for USAID programs:

- **Gender equality**: concerns women and men to bring about changes in attitudes, behaviors, roles and responsibilities at home, in the workplace, and in the community.
- **Female empowerment**: is achieved when women and girls acquire the power to act freely, exercise their rights, and fulfill their potential as full and equal members of society.
- **Gender integration**: identifying and addressing, gender inequalities during strategy and project design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation.

These guiding principles are complemented by Counterpart’s Gender Integration Operational Guidelines with regards to programmatic guidance and gender integration for local implementing CSOs. In order to provide pragmatic recommendations for effective gender integration, analysis and findings are contextualized within the IMPACTOS’s framework. Thus, gender integration in the context of this assessment places an emphasis on anticorruption and community responses to violence.

### Definitions

Two key terms are used extensively both in this assessment and within the IMPACTOS documents: gender and governance. It is important to define these terms to establish a basis for understanding the analysis and recommendations of this report.12

**Gender** is a socio-cultural hierarchical order that assigns roles, characteristics, activities and attributes to men and women, based on notions of masculinity and femininity, which are socially constructed and continually change. Thus, traditional gender norms create an unequal distribution of power based on sex that tend to reinforce other axes of exclusion, such as economic status, educational level, race, ethnicity, disability and age.

**Governance** widely refers to decision-making by a variety of interested people/stakeholders including those in positions of power (institutions, government) and citizens. Such definition remits to a system of rules for public life. In this definition we go beyond the concept of government; therefore, this definition opens the range of active participants in the political debate, including representatives of civil society and other stakeholders.

### 3. Gender in Honduras

This study assesses how gender is understood and incorporated as well as how it can be implemented by IMPACTOS and its selected CSO partners. The study will begin with a

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11 Project’s documents, international cooperation reports, academic articles and policy papers.
12 Annex 2 contains a conceptual and contextual presentation about IMPACTOS’ key terms
contextual analysis of the current situation in Honduras, including the women’s movement and the legal framework as it pertains to gender. This assessment identifies how to integrate gender into initiatives aimed to promote transparency, accountability and crime and violence prevention in order to ensure more effective implementation of IMPACTOS. The following section presents a brief overview of the relation between gender and politics, poverty, legal framework and policy implementation, corruption, human security and civil society.

Gender and Politics

One can identify three levels of analysis in which gender and politics are interconnected in Honduras: the structural, situation and contemporary levels.

*Structural level:* there are two traditional political parties in Honduras. Commonly, people define their political membership based on the familial tradition. There is a general belief that political participation concerns mainly electoral processes and formal ascription to political parties. Civil society organizations are either politically committed to parties or opposed to them, attempting to back other political alternatives which often lack the necessary support.

Women’s participation in politics is considered to have transformed traditional political practices in Honduras. However, this transformation is countered by two hindrances to women effectively influencing the political agenda: women’s political participation within the parties tends to be a formality because quota mechanisms can be easily manipulated and women in power do not necessarily work towards reducing gender inequality.

*Situational level:* in 2009 Honduras experienced a coup d’etat stemming from a constitutional crisis. Despite the transition to newly elected President Porfirio Lobo, divisions, mistrust and governance challenges resulting from the crisis persist. Social movements\(^\text{13}\) reacted against the coup with mobilizations that were suppressed by military forces. The momentary suspension of civil liberties and the prohibition for political mobilization heavily impacted civil organizations and human rights activism.

This political crisis greatly affected society as a whole, causing a deep discontent among civil society organizations that either sympathized with the former president or just opposed anti-democratic measures. The women’s movement has been significantly impacted during and after the crisis. Many women’s organizations were vocal in their opposition to the coup and demanded restitution of the democratic order. As a result, a number of women became victims of human rights abuses. Later, law changes and conservative measures have reversed some achievements in gender policy and women’s political participation.

Prior to the coup, the women’s movement had gained visibility and voice, and women were actively participating in political processes. Now, the movement is fragmented among those who are participating in governmental institutions and “feminists in the resistance,” a bigger faction of the movement that refuses to collaborate with government initiatives. Among civil society and feminist organizations there is sentiment against initiatives promoted by the US government. One informant suggested that “After the coup, (women’s participation) was reduced to something less structured and more punctual (…) Because women’s movement do

\(^\text{13}\) “Social Movements” are types of collective organization or group action developed towards achieving certain rights. Source: Oxford’s sociology dictionary.
not recognize the government after the coup, then their participation has been reduced to the minimum.\textsuperscript{14}

Current level: Although the effects of the coup are still palpable, the immediate results have smoothly lessened; civil society organizations are currently looking to enhance social cohesion. NGOs are affected by the current economic crisis in developed countries due to the commensurate reduction of development cooperation and funding. This situation especially affects projects and programs funded by the Spanish Cooperation Agency – AECID, which previously financed programs targeting gender equality.

Honduras’ congress recently approved a law to progressively achieve sex-parity in elected seats. However the law has yet to be effectively implemented, and there has been little change in the representation of women in political office. Honduras experiences a low degree of representation of women in all areas of public and political life. While there is an established quota for women candidates for publicly elected positions, there is a lack of measures to enforce compliance with this quota. In addition, electoral practices appoint women in secondary positions or even force them to quit in favor of a man from the same party. Certain economic activities such as maquilas\textsuperscript{15} reduce women’s capacity to react against oppression and abuse, weakening their collective capacity to negotiate. The imposition of conservative political measures has reversed advances in women’s sexual and reproductive rights. Women’s participation in these measures demonstrates that the political participation of women does not always represent advancement in reducing gender inequality. Currently one major political issue is the mobilization against the prohibition to use and distribute the emergency contraceptive pill approved by the Congress after the coup and presented by Congresswomen Marta Lorena Casco and Nelly Jerez Caballero. The feminist movement and women organizations are promoting political mobilization against such changes in law.

Gender and Poverty

The term “feminization of poverty” refers to the sustained effects and the widening gap between men and women living in poverty. Although nearly 62% of the Honduran population lives in poverty, women are least likely to overcome the obstacles of poverty and exclusion. According to the II PIEGH \textsuperscript{16} there are “significantly higher poverty levels amongst women and the indigenous and Afro-descendent population: 26.1% of the indigenous and Afro-descent populations live on less than a dollar a day, compared with 14.7% of the Euro-descent population.” In fact, the proportion of women without income is more than double of men’s (38% women, 14% men) in urban areas, and it is three times higher in rural areas (60% women, 20% men). Additionally, poverty is also concentrated in rural areas where nearly 2/3 of this population lives below the poverty line (II PIEGH 2010, 21).

Employment opportunities are a major issue for the Honduran population in general. According to the Permanent Household Survey\textsuperscript{17} released in May 2011, 79.2% of the population was of

\textsuperscript{14} Original quote in Spanish “Después del golpe se redujo a algo menos estructurado, y más puntual (...) porque hay un desconocimiento del movimiento de mujeres hacia el gobierno después del golpe, entonces la participación ha sido reducida al mínimo.”

\textsuperscript{15} Maquilas are offshore assembly plants that manufacture finished goods with purposes of exportation that take advantage of low cost labor. Maquilas are usually regulated by trade norms rather than employment rules; therefore, the working conditions are below minimum standards (more than 10 hours of daily work, payment based on high quotas, and no salary benefits). Maquila workers have little chance to speak out their discontent. More info: CODEMUH. (2008). Trabajo y Salud. Situación de las Obreras de la Maquila de Honduras, Tegucigalpa, Honduras.

\textsuperscript{16} II Plan de Igualdad y Equidad de Género en Honduras 2010-2022 – II Plan on Gender Equality and Equity for Honduras. Hereafter II PIEGH

\textsuperscript{17} A serious shortcoming for the current gender assessment relies on the lack of updated statistics, specifically sex-disaggregated data. National Statistic Institute produces some information with regards certain areas. Hence, most of the data presented comes from secondary sources that have analyzed primary data, which is not available on line. http://www.ine.gob.hn/drupal/node/214
working age, but only 41.1% of the population were economically active (70.4% men, 34.9% women). Differences in remunerated workforce show persistent gender inequality in terms of employment opportunities both in rural and urban areas. Moreover, as the national gender policy (II PIEGH) points out, “lower female participation can be explained partly because unpaid domestic work is not accounted for as part of the national accounts and the underreporting of women’s participation on household agricultural production.” Female employment is highly concentrated in export-oriented agriculture and shrimp production as well as domestic work, small agro industries and “maquilas.” According to the National Institute of Women (hereafter INAM), women earn on average 67.6% of the salaries received by their male counterparts for similar work done under similar conditions.

Unemployment is higher among men (53.1%), and underemployment especially affects younger men (43.2%) between the ages of 15-30 years old. The latter is significant because “underemployment has a greater effect on young men than on young women, precisely because young men are more pressured to generate income due to economic necessity and the family’s subsistence” (UNDP, 2009: 31).

Domestic work is common for women and girls, both as paid and unpaid labor. The study on paid domestic work in Central America done by UNIFEM reports that in 2007, 4.18% of the Economic Active Population were domestic workers; 94% of these workers were women. According to the study, 76.4% of domestic workers live in poverty and 51.5% in extreme poverty (UNIFEM, 2010: 98). II PIEGH reports that there are no laws that regulate minimum salary or working conditions for this sector, exposing domestic workers to a different set of vulnerabilities. Official information presented by CEDAW shows that 64.4% of girls and female teenagers start working before the age of 14, greatly reducing their educational opportunities.

Thus, statistics suggest that while the majority of men and women in Honduras live in poverty, persistent structural gender discrimination against women in the labor market, including occupational segregation and a persistent wage gap between men and women, hinder women’s ability and options for transcending poverty. Additionally, the concentration of women in the informal sector and in domestic work with no social security or other benefits provided under the Labor Code and the exploitation of the predominantly female workers in the maquiladoras compound the impact of poverty on women.

Gender and Education

The main challenges in education are deficiencies in the access, quality and coverage, particularly in rural areas. Generally speaking the gender gap in terms of access to primary and secondary education shows that girls attend school more than boys both in rural and urban areas. ECLAC’s report shows that there is a little increase in the percentage of illiteracy among urban men between 15 to 24 years, when comparing the data between 2000 (4.5%) and 2005 (6.2%). INAM points out that “although, women have improved their educational levels, it does not translate to improvements in access to employment, neither working conditions nor optimal incomes.” Educational shortcomings strongly affect people from rural areas and ethnic minorities. The insufficient technical and economic resources for covering secondary education demands pose a challenge in terms of female empowerment. The persistence of illiteracy rates among the population, specifically women from rural areas as well as ethnic and racial

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18 Population over 10 years
19 Maquilas are offshore assembly plants that manufacture finished goods with purposes of exportation that take advantage of low-cost labor. Maquilas are usually regulated by trade norms rather than employment rules; therefore the working conditions are below minimum standards (more than 10 hours of daily work, payment based on high quotas, and no salary benefits). More info: CODEMUH. (2006). Trabajo y Salud. Situación de las Obreras de la Maquila de Honduras. Tegucigalpa, Honduras
20 Basic Education in Honduras refers to the first five compulsory years, whereas secondary refers to grade 6 to 11th.
minorities, greatly affects the empowerment of women and their access to information on and ability to use this information to claim their rights to education and beyond.

An emerging concern in terms of gender and education is school drop-out rates. Lack of incentives, inadequate school infrastructure, or the need to work, are elements that either reduce or impede schooling. In 2008-2009, 23.9% of the entire population between 12 and 30 years old neither worked nor studied. These young Hondurans have few possibilities to enter into the formal labor market because of the lack of skills; there are very few vocational training programs. UNDP points out that this population “becomes the most excluded of the excluded.”

From a gender perspective, the unemployed male population that have abandoned formal school is especially vulnerable because of their proclivity of engaging in illicit income generating activities (micro traffic of narcotics, smuggling, petty crime) or becoming part of gangs. The “big man” culture, where virility and masculinity are linked with violence and aggression pushes young men into vulnerable situations to join juvenile gangs. UNDP reports that “young Hondurans between 12-18 years old feel they are more vulnerable to mara or gang members who prefer to recruit young Hondurans in this age group more than in the others” (UNDP, 42).

High rates of teenage pregnancy have important implications for the health and education of girls and the development of the country in general. Efforts to provide sex education in schools have been impeded by conservatives in the government. Other major health and reproductive urgent issues are the criminalization of abortion in all circumstances, including when a pregnancy threatens a woman's life or health and when it is a result of rape or incest. Currently, anyone who performs an abortion in Honduras can be sentenced anywhere from three to 10 years in prison. Most recently, the women's movement has rallied against the government's ban on and criminalization of the use and distribution of the emergency contraceptive pill. Additionally HIV/AIDS programs and policies are not specifically targeted at women, with the exception of prostitutes and pregnant women, and do not address the needs of women of ethnic minorities.

Finally, education is a mechanism to promote equality. Incorporating gender sensitive programs in schools can change stereotypical attitudes towards the roles and responsibilities of women and men. Conservative tendencies reinforce cultural patterns and norms that perpetuate direct and indirect discrimination against women and girls in all areas of their lives. The State has yet to implement educational campaigns targeting women and men and girls and boys on eliminating stereotypes associated with traditional gender roles in the family and in society.

**Gender Legal Framework**

The National Women´s Policy and the II PIEGH, is a comprehensive document that sets forth six axes of rights, which contain priorities identified by women for improving the lives of Honduran women.

The policy seeks to promote, defend and guarantee:
- Women’s social and political participation as well as rights to citizenship and democratic governance;
- The rights of women, children, and adolescents to peace and a life free of violence;
- Women’s health throughout their life cycle, including sexual and reproductive rights;
- Access to educational, cultural and multicultural rights, and the right to have access to information;
- Economic rights, labor, employment, and access to resources; and
- Access to, use of and control of sustainable and biodiverse natural resources.
Personnel from the entity tasked with promoting gender equality, INAM (Instituto Nacional de la Mujer), were interviewed as part of the gender assessment. They agreed that the participative approach used to define the areas of action, strategies, political agenda and specific policies was an asset in terms of inclusion. UNIFEM, UNDP, UNFPA and cooperation agencies from Sweden and Spain supported the regional dissemination activities. Such a process enabled the authors of the policy to achieve national coverage and greater participation.

A major challenge for II PIEGH is the mobilization of resources to support its implementation. Although INAM has the capacity and interest in improving women’s lives in Honduras, they recognize that there is a lack of political will and commitment on transferring the necessary resources for policy implementation. Despite internal division within Honduras’ women’s movement, members of INAM work closely on both sides of the political spectrum. Personal ties at the individual level still connect people that seem institutionally separated, which can eventually help to reconstruct networks of activism.

While the institutional framework commits to supporting all six strategic priorities, INAM’s personnel recognize that due to the overwhelming intensity of violence against women in different forms, gender-based violence (GBV) has attracted the most attention. The high profile of GBV is also because it is one of the few areas where intervention is not considered a direct affront to Honduran patriarchal norms. While violence against women in the worst forms, like feminicide, is an undeniable crime, other concerns such as female empowerment are sidelined when gender-based violence becomes the focus of debate and interventions.

Indicators of violence against women show an increase in instances of violence. However, in the majority of cases, a lack of trust of legal authorities and the fear of retaliation result in either victims not reporting the crime or in crimes being addressed outside of the legal system. The II PIEGH points out that “violence against women in Honduras violates and limits established human rights and fundamental liberties as well as the exercise of full citizenship” (2010; 55). It emphasizes that while GBV affects women of all classes, ages or races, it has a greater impact on women living in poverty, living with HIV, with disabilities, and in distant rural areas. The prevalence of GBV is due to and compounded by the influence of tradition, conservatism and religion at every level of Honduran society, which reproduce and reinforce gender discrimination and inequality.

Although the country has a copious number of laws and international agreements that attempt to reduce violence against women, so far there are no comprehensive policies or programs with enough coverage and budget to address GBV. Honduras is a signatory of CEDAW; however, informants noted that a shortcoming of both CEDAW and II PIEGH is that neither government officials, legal authorities, nor the population are fully aware of the contents of these policies. Thus, both CEDAW and II PIEGH are viewed as mere formalities and not a real commitment by the government of Honduras to support women’s rights and gender equality.

Among people interviewed, both from the INAM and civil society organizations, current actions such as financing shelters aim to protect women that have already been victims of violence, but there are no preventive measures. Lack of political power and financial resources is a great challenge for implementing and sustaining the national policy on gender. In addition, the change of INAM staff with every change in government leadership has an adverse impact on the level of professionalism, expertise and continuity of INAM’s work.

Thus, the need remains to ensure that all forms of violence against women are criminalized; that women and girls who are victims of violence have access to immediate means of redress and protection; and that perpetrators are prosecuted and punished. In order to do this, the State must allocate sufficient resources for the effective functioning of plans and mechanisms to prevent, punish and eradicate violence against women and domestic violence.
Gender, Transparency and Accountability

According to “Transparency International,” transparency is the characteristic of governments, companies, organizations and individuals operating openly and providing clear disclosure of information, rules, plans, processes and actions. As a principle, public officials, civil servants, the managers and directors of companies and organizations, and board trustees have a duty to act visibly, predictably and understandably to promote participation and accountability. Such notions open the possibility to include gender issues within transparency-oriented projects. Incorporating gender analysis into transparency initiatives demands recognizing that one of the causes of the feminization of poverty is the impact of corruption, especially in public goods (education, health, hygienic services, lack of water provision), on women.

The poorest communities in Honduras largely lack public services infrastructure, educational and health facilities. This greatly affects women who are often in charge of collecting water for household chores and in charge of familial well-being. However, the impact of corruption on women in particular is often masked by a top level view of corruption as a national concern. In fact, the discourse around anticorruption and citizen participation in Honduras often revolves around security issues (i.e., the role of police forces) and general distrust of governmental institution.

The 2011 “perception of transparency” report published by Transparency International identifies Honduras as one of the countries with the highest perceived level of corruption. Not surprisingly, Honduras continues to fail to qualify for the Millennium Challenge Account because its failure to meet several requirements, including control of corruption. Transparency International points out that “Gender inequalities are likely to persist and are sometimes even reinforced if gender is not considered during the planning and implementation of anti-corruption initiatives.” That is the case when big investments are focused on poorly developed infrastructure rather than sustainable livelihoods. To date, no data has been collected on the effects of corruption and lack of transparency on women in Honduras.

There are several initiatives to increase public administration transparency. The National Office for Integrated Development of Internal Control (ONADICI) has conducted a series of training workshops for high-ranking officials of government agencies aimed at increasing transparency in the day to day activities of public servants. The Institute for the Access to Public Information (IAIP), and the Anti-corruption National Council (CNA) have recently worked to ensure that all public institutions comply with the Access to Public Information Law.

Irregularities in the legislative process are routine in Honduras, adding complexity to the legal environment for civil society. In this context, where neither the Executive nor Legislative branches are apparently honoring legislative procedural requirements and timelines, monitoring legislative developments and advocating for proper implementation of laws is exceedingly challenging.

Access to information is a core issue in the debate over corruption in Honduras. Knowledge and understanding of legislative processes and decisions are integral in allowing citizens to hold their governments and public institutions accountable. While this information is legally available to Honduran citizens, only a small, predominantly male, elite know how to actually use the legal mechanisms to access relevant information: “The mechanisms that are used to disseminate information must change; not to know how to read, or how to write cannot be conditions of exclusion for anyone as a citizen to get to know how national and municipal resources are spent (…) because those current mechanisms are aimed towards certain social

22 2011 Honduras Grade of Perception of Corruption (IPC): 2.6
level... those are very technical documents to which access is difficult” (Local leader in Focus group). Transparency International maintains that social barriers such as a lack of analytical skills, the use of overly technical terms, and the lack of mechanisms to disseminate information on government makes general access to information difficult and weakens the public’s ability to identify corruption (Transparency International Gender Toolkit).

The prevalence of violence in Honduras makes it particularly risky for CSOs and human rights activists to engage in anticorruption activism in Honduras. Selective killings of activists, journalists or their relatives are an example of the risks involved in conducting transparency and anticorruption advocacy. The tenuous security environment has had a significant impact on efforts to reduce corruption as fear of retaliation hinders willingness to call for anticorruption measures. Populations most vulnerable to violence are usually also the most affected by the prevalence of corruption and violence. However, fear of being targeted often prevents them from publically condemning corruption and violence as well as participating in organizations or processes to identify and address these issues.

IMPACTOS training, events and programmatic documents reviewed as part of the assessment tend to define transparency and accountability as the opposite of corruption. In this sense, the terms usually emphasize the responsibility of the State to citizens. A broader definition of transparency and accountability focused both on the role of the state as well as the role and needs of citizens would facilitate the integration of gender and youth into activities focused on these topics. Understanding and promoting transparency and accountability as processes that enhance active citizenship and democracy provides space for the inclusion of marginalized populations, such as youth and women. It also presents an opportunity for inclusive discourse on the discrete impacts of corruption on various segments of the population.

**Gender and Civil Society**

Social movements in Honduras have gradually incorporated women throughout its history. Women have been active participants of social movements since the 1970s during the national movement for agrarian reform; regrettably the movement resulted in little benefit for women because land was only given to “the head of the household,” meaning men. Nevertheless, some of the women interviewed during the gender assessment who participated in the movement expressed an important lesson learned from the limited gains for women: structural inequality was not limited to governmental intervention or state policies; it is also manifested within social movements themselves. As a result of these limited gains, women began to form their own civil society and grassroots organizations both in urban and rural areas (student organizations, “mother’s clubs,” etc.).

The Honduran women’s movement gained prominence in the mid-1980s with the formation of NGOs, grassroots women’s organizations, and private development organizations. This prominence was spurred by situational events such as the 1982 democratic transition and the economic crisis, as well as a regional consolidation of the women’s movements in Central

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23 Original quote: los macanismos que se utilizan para la difusión de la información deben cambiar, el no saber leer y el no saber escribir no deben ser condiciones excluyentes que paraque como ciudadano yo me de cuenta de cómo se están usando los recursos de mi municipio y de mi país (…) porque lo que tenemos actualmente van dirigidos solo a un nivel social, son documentos muy técnicos y de muy difícil acceso.

24 The word « accountability » has been translated as « rendición de cuentas », which partially expresses the whole meaning of the English word. « Rendición de cuentas » literally translates to « deliver accounts » (from accounting). Therefore, accountability-oriented objectives tend to be reduced to its financial-fiscal dimension.

25 “Mother’s clubs” are grassroots organizations promoted by rural churches and parishes where women reunite to start small rural enterprises, income-generating activities and to bring support. They are widely present in Latin America and the Caribbean, and still are active in small rural communities.
Honduras, as well as other countries in Central America, faced economic, political and social stagnation, providing a space for women’s issues to emerge as part of the development agenda; part of this space was created in response to demand by international organizations.

With the emergence of women as a “strategic” population in development initiatives, in the mid-1980s women in academia and civil society came together to form various feminist organizations. These organizations were successful in integrating issues of importance to women into the public arena; these issues ranged from women’s human rights, sexual and reproductive rights, to the effects of armed conflicts and violence against women. These groups argued that women’s oppression was the result of the combined action of economic, social, political and familial exclusion resulting from patriarchal structure. As a result of the pressure of the feminist movement, the Honduran development agenda has, since 1982, included priorities for addressing women’s issues. Unfortunately, these priorities have never been given the political will and economic resources necessary for their implementation (CEDAW, 2006: 6).

During the 1990’s, political, economic and social instability had a profound effect on the Honduran population. Implementation of neoliberal policies and structural adjustment policies greatly reduced social investment and increased unemployment; consequently it augmented the number of people living under extreme poverty, which then intensified the feminization of poverty and increased violence against women. The feminist movement gained voice and political space through participation both in civil organizations and in academia. Similar to other countries in Latin America, women’s movements and feminist activists in Honduras highlighted the importance of including women’s rights as a relevant element under the larger “umbrella” of Human Rights demands for inclusion in development issues such as health, access to education, sexual and reproductive rights, and economic empowerment.

The Honduran women’s/feminist movement launched several efforts at the national, sub regional and regional levels aimed at building consensus and encouraging dialogue around women’s issues. Their efforts were complimented by the increasing importance of human rights and women’s rights to multilateral donors and partners and a series of international conferences and consultations, which helped to keep women’s rights on the agenda.

Leading up to the 2009 political crisis, the women’s movement had been successful in increasing the political importance of women’s issues and maintain the sustainability of their movement. However, the political crises and coup d’état forced human rights activists and women’s groups to engage in the larger political debate affecting the country. Women’s participation in the opposition group was contested with violence and repression. Those who assumed power after the coup reversed several policies and measures that were in the process of implementation to promote gender equality. A clear example is the 2009 coalition between the conservative party and the Catholic Church that initiated efforts to prohibit the use of the emergency contraceptive pill.

The most detrimental effect of the 2009 crisis on the women’s movement has been the new schisms that have developed among its leaders and organizations. While all women’s organizations rallied together against the coup and the violation of democratic governance, a more moderate faction has allied with the new government and is working toward a redefinition of the II PIEGH. As a political framework for national policy, II PIEGH is a comprehensive document that analyzes the most demanding gender issues and proposes six priorities to address. The position of the more moderate feminists has caused some tension with those who side with the opposition to the current regime. The Feminists in Resistance, as they are called,

26 An in depth review of the gender, social and political effects of 2009 Constitutional crises can be found in CITA RONDEROS:
refuse to participate in any governmental initiative, because of the illegitimacy of those in power. In turn, they refuse to participate in any project funded by USAID, because of the United States’ support of the political position transition in Honduras.

Currently, the most important women’s organizations are: Centro de Estudios de la Mujer-Honduras (CEM-H); Centro de Derechos de las Mujeres (CDM); Movimiento de Mujeres Visitación Padilla (Las Chonas); Colectivo Feminista de Mujeres trabajadoras de la Maquila (COHDEMU); and Coordinadora Nacional de Mujeres de Honduras (CONAMUH).

**Gender and Human Security**

Honduras and many of its neighbors suffer from the convergence of two significant challenges: high structural poverty and high rates of violence and insecurity (UNDP, 2009). “The triangle of the northern Central American countries of El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala has attracted particular international attention because of the high levels of violence and extreme forms of crimes against women which continue to be on the rise” (Ronderos, 2011, 316). According to the National Observatory of Violence in 2011, 72% of cases of unnatural deaths were homicides (13.9% more than in 2010); men constituted 92.8% of the total of victims, with 81.2% of them between the ages of 15 and 44. Cortes (north) and Francisco Morazán (south) were the departments with the highest levels of homicide (See map 1).

Map 1. Honduras Geopolitical Division. Source: www.geology.com

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Women and men experience poverty and insecurity differently. Security vulnerabilities also vary along social and economic sectors. Lack of mechanisms to overcome structural inequality on distribution of wealth, weakness at institutional levels, and scarce availability of viable work opportunities create a complex environment. Moreover, the geographic corridor where the country is located (between the Pacific and the Atlantic Ocean, between South and North America) makes it a strategic point for trafficking protected species, narcotics, people, etc. All these issues have a significant effect on violence against women, domestic violence\(^{28}\), sexual harassment, labor rights violations (such as forced pregnancy testing) and the worst of all – femicide\(^{29}\). All these forms of violence against women, although recognized, generally never result in prosecution or punishment. “Women from poorer and marginalized backgrounds suffer even more as violence in these communities is usually invisible to any form of state intervention” (Ronderos 2010, 321).

Unfortunately, high rates of violent crimes are not new to Honduras. The country has experienced dictatorial regimes that suppressed political discontent through force, discouraging democratic citizen participation. The democratization process, which began in 1982, greatly influenced the incorporation of human rights discourse within political debates in the country. Later, during the 1990’s, important security sector reform aimed to improve rule of law and to reduce corruption and misconduct within the security sector. Changes within the armed forces did not translate into a change in relations between authority and the population at large and remain a source of insecurity. However, the emergence of the regional phenomenon of juvenile gangs and the incoming presence of drug-lords have completely transformed the security situation in the country. In addition, growing poverty and the minimal success of development initiatives have contributed to the deterioration of human security. Transnational crime is a great challenge for human security in Honduras.

Juvenile gangs, also known as “maras,” originated in neighboring El Salvador during the 1980’s. These gangs quickly expanded throughout Central America controlling important parts of the territory. “Youth gangs known as maras are running extortion rackets and are increasingly involved in the micro-trafficking of drugs in Central America’s Northern Triangle and Mexico” (ICG, 2010). Technically, maras are large gangs with multiple affiliates or smaller chapters that pursue territorial control. They accomplish this by controlling networks of drug-commerce, recruiting children (mostly boys) and incorporating women as part of the network of support and active members.

In addition to juvenile gang violence, transnational networks of crime also impact the security situation in Honduras. Narcotics trafficking networks are frequently implicated in massacres and armed violent incidents. Human trafficking and immigrant smuggling are also prevalent in Honduras, attracting a different international criminal network and further complicating the security for the Honduran population.

While analyzing patterns of violence and vulnerability from a gender perspective it is important to identify how the social construction of masculinity and traditional hierarchies that determine value and power based on biological sex and age structure power relations between men and women.

While analyzing patterns of violence and vulnerability from a gender perspective it is important to identify how the social construction of masculinity and traditional hierarchies that determine value and power relations between men and women. Traditional “macho” culture in Latin America and the Caribbean is characterized by rampant expressions of “macho” behavior that include: sexism, homophobia, aggressive sexuality, extreme alcohol and/or drug consumption and showing off bravery, among others. “Not to be afraid” is the common trademark of high-risk masculinities.

\(^{28}\) Violence against women, as the term implies, is exclusively directed to women, whereas domestic violence may include aggression perpetrated either by men or women against the elderly, children and among members of the household.

\(^{29}\) Femicide is the mass murder of women simply because they are women.
In addition to the violence and homicide indicators mentioned above, men also represent 83.2% of fatalities from traffic accidents – highly related to alcohol consumption, aggressive driving, and careless pedestrians – and 88.2% of non-intentional deaths – which include accidental shooting with guns, alcohol intoxication, and falling from buildings (National Observatory of Violence 2011). Such statistics show that macho attitudes are closely linked to risky behavior and must be addressed in any risk management activities.

4. Gender integration in IMPACTOS

IMPACTOS works through a network of stakeholders, which are very heterogeneous in terms of experience and gender sensibility, and include different degrees of gender integration within their own organizations. These stakeholders are recipients of grant awards, selected through a rigorous competition process, and the stakeholders are generally one of two different structures that are part of the implementing network: Intermediate Support Organizations (ISOs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). Grants that tie most of these stakeholders closely to the Impactos program range anywhere from four to twelve months long.

The role of the ISOs as facilitators in training and project implementation is central to transferring institutional capacities, including those related to gender integration beyond assuring women’s participation and sex disaggregated data. In terms of the collaborative work with CSOs, it is noticeable that there are great challenges in terms of professional capacities installed among CSO personnel, especially those working on rural areas, vulnerable places and grassroots level. This assessment aimed to identify how gender was understood among some members of such organizations. Among those interviewed, four prevailing attitudes towards gender integration were identified. These are namely:

1. *Gender limited knowledge*: Gender is often mistaken with biological sex or directly linked with women’s issues. This confusion leads to naturalized gender patterns present in traditional Latin American culture such as the binary opposition of male and female behaviors. Another frequent remark is to link gender with sex-parity between participants and people involved in different stages of a project.

2. *Gender orientation*: Field staff, decision makers, program staff and other development professionals, and CSO leaders reported receiving gender training as part of specific projects; these trainings were mostly provided by international NGOs or through country cooperation. Those who received training are typically able to identify situational and structural constraints to female empowerment and gender equality. Yet, very few integrate gender into project planning, or consider it merely in the realm of participation.

3. *Gender activism*: CSO and community based organization (CBO) leaders who started their activism within a variety of social movements since the 1970’s (i.e., unions, human rights groups, peasant’s movements) got involved in feminist movements that aimed to better integrate women into the political and socio-economic sectors of Honduras. For most of them, activism is ascribed to all social practices, thus transforming gender patterns must start with the basic inclusion of women in all activities and at decision-making levels.

4. *Gender expertise*: Researchers and consultants in development who specialize in gender issues have different levels of commitment with the Honduras women’s movement. All of them have strong theoretical and conceptual knowledge on gender and development, political participation and community strengthening. They have
activism, training and advocacy experience on gender issues at the local level. All of them recognize institutional weakness (both public and private) to the effective integration of gender. They also claim responsibility for initiating debate around masculinities and post-feminist views of gender in Honduras.

These gender views show the diversity and increasing importance of gender within development work. IMPACTOS personnel and implementing ISOs and CSOs have varying capacities, weakness, challenges and opportunities to integrate gender into their activities greatly dependent on personal and professional experiences. Nevertheless, a detailed analysis of the process, activities, associated network presents some key findings and recommendations in terms of gender integration. Both CSOs and IMPACTOS can achieve female empowerment and reduce gender inequality by making slight changes in the activities and promote greater gender training.

5. PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: GENDER, GOVERNANCE AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION

Honduras has a good and comprehensive National Gender Policy which identifies a series of strategic priorities for governmental action. The II PIEGH identifies the structural and conjunctural challenges to achieving gender equality in Honduras. The country in general faces difficulties in fighting poverty, reducing corruption, generating employment, increasing security and generating opportunities for development. These situations affect women differently because of the overlapping effect of structural and de facto inequality.

Gender issues are generally focused on addressing women’s concerns, demands, and needs. Currently some women’s organizations work closely with INAM in the areas of economic development, political participation, health, education, and the prevention of violence against women. Nevertheless, such efforts address only a minimal portion of Honduran women’s demands. There is little integration of gender into mainstream sectorial policies; therefore, INAM’s efforts tend to focus in areas of urgent attention, such as violence against women and domestic violence.

Actions aimed at reducing corruption and increasing transparency are generally viewed as affecting the whole population equally. However, a close look at sex disaggregated data with regards to poverty, exclusion and access to public goods shows that women have to overcome additional difficulties resulting from patriarchal norms in Honduran society. Violence also has different effects on women and men. Young men that have dropped-out school and are jobless are more vulnerable to recruitment by violent gangs.

The IMPACTOS initiative aims to support civil society organizations in demanding transparent and accountable governance and in developing local initiatives to prevent crime and violence. The variety of issues and topics covered through the program has been operationalized through the creation of a group of highly qualified professionals.

GEFE is a policy directive issued by USAID for its implementing partners. In light of USAID’s renewed commitment to addressing gender in all stages of program implementation, it is imperative that IMPACTOS revises its gender integration strategy for all components and program activities, a necessary process for any social development initiative. The implementation of USAID’s policy framework, as well as Counterpart’s gender operational

30 Detailed analysis of ISOs and CSOs strengths, weaknesses, challenges and opportunities of IMPACTOS, please refer to Annex 4.
guidelines can be achieved through the incorporation of this assessment’s findings and recommendations for fully integrating gender into current processes, pending activities, training initiatives and everyday work.

The project structure shows that each component has its own personnel, activities and work plan, regardless of overlap in implementing CSOs for both components (CDH and CIPRODEH). The role of the ISOs as facilitators in training and project implementation is central to transferring institutional capacities, including those related to gender integration beyond assuring women’s participation and sex disaggregated data. Nevertheless, at the time of this assessment, ISOs did not demonstrate a clear plan for integrating gender within their collaborative work with CSO partners and IMPACTOS. While FOPRIDEH has a gender institutional framework that has yet to be implemented (despite the project manager’s knowledge on gender), FOSDEH has a senior gender expert that is able to integrate gender in a variety of topics and activities. The latter is also connected with gender activists and gender networks, which is an asset for program implementation.

Additionally, there are other participant CSOs that have a significant institutional capacity in identifying gender inequalities and addressing them through strategic activities. That is the case of the regional synergy referred to as the “organizational space of Santa Rosa de Copán” whose leaders and citizenship participatory network31 are highly aware and trained on gender inequality and have developed local strategies to cope with it. FOROSIDA and CARITAS are also organizations that have staff with gender integration capacity. The main challenge with regards to gender integration is how to convert individual knowledge and awareness into institutional frameworks that assure gender is not “an element to add” but a pillar of project development. That can be the case for CSOs that, despite having one or two people trained on gender, are unable to integrate gender throughout the organization. Additionally, there is a gray area of organizations that either have no gender integration at all, or were not even interested in answering the questionnaire; the notable lack of response by many organizations is a clear indication of the value these organizations place on gender.

At the time of writing this assessment, IMPACTOS faced significant challenges for incorporating gender into its activities and organizational culture, particularly in program sectors of community and organizational development, youth, training, grants management, and much of the CAP component.

With regards to gender, it’s interesting how people from Santa Rosa de Copán have indicated their interest to expand their experience on citizen participation and local development with a gender perspective. They recommend that findings of transparency and accountability programs have to be transformed into messages understandable to all audiences.

The Community Action for Prosperity (CAP) component addresses citizen and community safety by strengthening local communities’ and governments’ abilities and responses to violence. Information from the community assessment highlights special needs from youth in terms of employment opportunities, training, and overcoming social exclusion. Two important gender issues should be considered: how risky masculinities are linked with violence and how to identify the different forms of GBV in communities. CAPs actions can enhance women and youth participation in local decision-making processes through their participation in Community Revitalization committees.

The following are key recommendations for different stakeholders to ensure effective gender integration in their common transparency, accountability and community responses to violence initiatives:

31 Red de participación ciudadana, it is the formal name for an informal network
CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

- Identify individual and institutional gender-responsive capacities.
- Incorporate gender in strategic plans and actions.
- Promote gender equality in internal processes of hiring and promotion.
- Address sex-parity among participants of activities.
- Establish internal practices that transform “gender blind” approaches into those that promote gender equality.
- Implement /develop internal gender frameworks and gender integration strategies.
- Contribute to gathering and producing up-to-date gender information (i.e. sex-disaggregated data and gender sensitive issues on transparency, accountability and crime prevention).
- Address gender priorities identified in the constituent communities. Communities have identified the urgent need for sexual and reproductive health education, which are difficult topics to address in the Honduran context. There is a major taboo related to the topic sexuality. Risky masculinities play an important role in understanding security issues.
- Promote integration of the women’s movement within the larger civil society sector.

THE HONDURAN GOVERNMENT

- Allocate the necessary resources to fully implement II PIEGH. This will greatly contribute to achieve gender integration, inclusive development and attain international gender commitments, such as those pointed CEDAW commitments.
- Promote the inter-institutional work with national institution and local governments for full implementation of the II PIEGH.
- Allocate municipal funds for creating Women’s Municipal Offices.
- Adopt a legal enforcement framework for the political and electoral participation Law.
- Generate gender-responsive actions to address main gender shortcomings identified in this assessment. Risky masculinities and sexual and reproductive health are important issues to take into account.
- Update and improve sex-disaggregated data in terms of the gender impacts of corruption, poverty, political participation and gender based violence.

THE HONDURAN WOMEN’S MOVEMENT

- Promote an open dialogue with human rights organizations and CSOs to promote women’s active participation in governance initiatives.
- Monitor and advise the gender dimension of watchdog organizations and transparency programs.
- Identify opportunities to integrate gender and women’s participation on crime prevention and human security initiatives.
- Produce information and data for women’s rights “shadow reports.”
- Broaden and promote advocacy efforts to rural areas and groups that remain “gender blind.”
- Promote advocacy on gender sensitive responses to shortages on sexual and reproductive health initiatives and educational constraints.
- Promote strengthening governance and rule of law through a gender perspective.

IMPACTOS

- IMPACTOS should promote actions aimed at increasing knowledge and raising awareness on gender issues among various target audiences. Then, a complete training program needs to be designed for Counterpart’s staff and partners on the program’s approach to gender equality in adherence to USAID’s Policies and Guidelines. Reference II PIEGH as the national, legal and pedagogical framework for specific gender interventions in IMPACTOS’s areas of intervention.
• IMPACTOS should carry out at least two specific trainings on gender: one for IMPACTOS personnel and another for CSOs and ISOs. The second should focus on peer-exchange of capacities and a two way dialogue between CSO and IMPACTOS personnel.
• Develop a Gender manual for users in Honduras, in Spanish, that transforms the main elements of the assessment into practical tools for gender integration in their programs.
• Carry out a deep review of the grants given in CPRG, as well as other project documents to better identify gender elements to be taken into account by IMPACTOS.
• Create a direct bridge between gender experts in HQ and the gender specialist in IMPACTOS, to make communication and implementation more effective.
• Create an IMPACTOS gender working group, which will supervise the achievement of gender outcomes.
• Assess partners and grantees based on their ability to implement gender-sensitive activities and processes.
• Use available resources on violence against women and pilot experiences implemented in Honduras (Safe Cities by UN-WOMEN).
• Promote gender dialogues with the three branches of power (executive, legislative and Judicial) to advance effective gender integration in State Policy.
• Create and mainstream an accountability culture for government, international organizations, CSOs and grass-root organizations. Sustainability can be achieved if all parties involved in the process, implement changes within their own organization.
• Design training strategies for different audiences that fully integrate findings of the gender assessment. Gender analysis skills should be provided to men and boys as well as women and girls.
• Incorporate a comprehensive gender approach that includes analysis of the construction of masculinities. All crime prevention initiatives should include activities that specifically target youth and men.
• Promote profound research on gender and transparency, political participation and civil society.
• Recognize the diverse nature of security threats and promote proactive responses to gender inequality.
• Promote the inclusion of private sector and local entrepreneurs in the creation of gender responsive initiatives at national and local level (i.e. training, job creation, private sector social responsibility, etc.).
• All implementing parties require training on gender sensitive budgeting, non-discriminatory HR practices, educational opportunities and reporting. Such areas should be included in capacity building activities.
• Training on governance and accountability must account for the national legislation on the political participation of women, as a national framework that states the rights of women to positions of power. Experts on gender should participate in such instances showing the gap between laws and their application.
• Including men and boys within any kind of activities to reduce GBV is necessary, not only as a prevention strategy, but to take advantage of their participation for replication and word of mouth campaigns.
• Discourse on violence against women must include domestic violence, the social reproduction of unequal power between men and women and the need to develop preventative mechanisms at household, community, municipal and national levels.
• Promote women’s participation in decision-making processes in the media, judiciary, political parties, finance, security sectors, and business.
• Women’s empowerment and women’s political participation can promote effective changes on violence against women, in male-dominated (e.g. the police, health and legal professions, the judiciary, etc.) organisms.
6. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Counterpart International (2012). Gender Integration Operational Guidelines. Washington, USA


Espinosa, I. (2011). Honduras: una aproximación a la situación de las mujeres a través del análisis de los indicadores de género. CEPAL, Santiago de Chile


7. **RECOMMENDED MATERIAL**

Transparency International:

*Working Paper 02/2010: Corruption And Gender In Service Delivery: The Unequal Impacts*
http://www.transparency.org/whatwedo/pub/working_paper_02_2010_corruption_and_gender_in_service_delivery_the_unequal (referenced August 2012)

*Tackling Corruption Key In Improving Access To Quality, Equitable And Efficient Healthcare*
http://www.transparency.org/news/pressrelease/20110131_quality_healthcare

*Is Corruption Sexist*
http://www.transparency.org/news/feature/is_corruption_sexist

Virtual Knowledge Centre To End Violence Against Women and Girls http://www.endvawnow.org/en/
ANNEXES
ANNEX 1: METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Originally, the proposed methodology was to be based on a participatory action approach, thereby allowing for the continuous capacity development of all parties involved in the process and diminishing the power dichotomy between “researcher-participant” by recognizing a dual pedagogical process. However, once the consultant arrived in Tegucigalpa and gained a better understanding of the project’s rationale, it became evident that the methodology needed to be revised. After meeting the program staff the consultant realized it was important to also include the staff in the overall pool of recipients for the research to get an accurate idea about their understanding of gender integration.

METHODOLOGICAL STRATEGY
To understand the current level of gender integration in the Program and the country, primary and secondary data was collected and reviewed. This data included:

- Contextual information:
  Background research that incorporates the socioeconomic and political situation; gender indicators; violence against women; CEDAW reports; international cooperation and multilateral organization information; the Honduras National Policy on Gender; women’s political participation framework; and the Honduras National Plan for Transparency.

- Institutional information:
  Project documentation such as formal reports to the Donor; Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy (GEFE) launched by USAID; USAID’s gender indicators; Counterpart’s Gender Integration Operational manual draft; organization charts; and program presentations.

- Available resources:
  Human resources (installed capacities and potential capabilities, level of education, formal and informal leadership); budgets; venues; technology; etc., for both CSOs and IMPACTOS staff.

Based on the results of the primary and secondary resources, the next activities were conducted.

A. Conceptual definitions.
Four core concepts were identified as pillars of gender integration of the IMPACTOS program: Gender, Governance, Transparency, and Accountability. The way these concepts are used and exemplified in practice illustrates how gender structures the control and access to resources, opportunities, and structural and cultural constraints of citizenship.

B. Identification of units of analysis.
Two main units of analysis were identified: IMPACTOS and the implementing CSOs. The consultant had initially requested the gender specialist supply a map of actors, greatly emphasizing all types of CSOs, rather than just focusing on women’s organizations. After meeting with IMPACTOS staff, the consultant was informed that appointments would be made in accordance to the CSOs’ schedules and needs.

C. Determining dimensions of analysis and its interactions.
Questions regarding the core concepts were incorporated into the research tools where results were qualitatively analyzed. It was fundamental to have access to project documents to better understand how the program was structured, what stages were already developed, and to what extent the GEFE was integrated.

D. Determining techniques and tools for gathering information.
Results were systematized on a matrix identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges of the CSOs and Impactos, which were to be considered in the forthcoming training (scheduled for late 2012).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOCUS GROUP GUIDE</th>
<th>FURTHER GENDER ANALYSIS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GENDER SENSITIVE DATA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1.3 Population distribution: men – women, children, youth</td>
<td>Data about youth and children also sex disaggregated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4.1 Students demographics</td>
<td>Ratio of boys-girls in schools suggests that drop-out rates may correlate to the sex of the student.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IDENTIFIED GENDER ISSUES

32 Extensive analysis and information on this issue is made in the subchapter methodological tools
33 These numbers correspond to a previous assignation coming from the focus group guide for community assessment.
2. Poverty
2.2.4 Average familial income

Income differences between male/female headed households.

2.3.3 Work – Job opportunities within the community

Sexually segmented labor market. Job and employment opportunities for youth with lower skills. While researching working conditions and job opportunities, it is advisable to underline the issue of reproductive/non-remunerated labor so that ideas about gender-assigned roles would emerge in the focus groups.

3. Risk factors
3.1 How does the population value social relations between inhabitants of the community? Are there cases of familial “disintegration”? Are there any “dysfunctional households”, single mothers, single fathers?

The way questions are formulated implicitly shows values of the person/team that constructed the research tools. Currently, social–familial research does not use the term “family disintegration” to talk about re-composed households, or “dysfunctional family” to talk about single-parent households. The suggestion is to ask participants to describe familial dynamics, how these are linked with the community situation, and what are the main challenges those families face.

3.2 Existence of domestic violence

It is important to be aware of the conceptual difference between: A) Domestic violence: aggression, battering, verbal abuse, marital rape, etc. happening between any members of household, despite gender or age (i.e. between the couple, towards children, elderly, any member of the extended family, or from the children to the parents) B) Violence against women: “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life” (UN A/RES/48/104 1993) And, C) Gender based violence: any form of threat, aggression, or mental harm suffered by women, men, girls, and boys. It also includes forms of violence towards LGBT people. Perpetrators of domestic violence are members of the household, whereas gender based violence and violence against women can be perpetrated by external agents, institutions, state actors, military forces, state actors and humanitarian workers. (UNFPA 2011, 20)

3.3 Existence of sexual education for the youth. Are there any cases of teenage pregnancy? How prevalent is teenage pregnancy?

Analysis of how teenage pregnancy constitutes a risk factor for the community. Customary blame towards pregnant girls vis-a-vis the irresponsible paternity (men of different ages). Existence of sexual and reproductive education for children and adults.

3.4 Existence of equal opportunities to access education centers, for whomever wishes to attend

Analysis in terms of how equality should cover gender, economic, age, ethnic, and race differences, and how these can influence the opportunities framework for people.

3.5 Percentage of employment on working age population, visible unemployment in the community

Gender sensitive information should be gathered, especially in highly feminized employment sectors, such as “maquilas”, domestic work, childcare, etc. Underemployment and informal employment has to be tracked as well, making special efforts to conduct gender/age sensitive analysis. References to non-remunerated domestic work have to be taken into account.

3.7 Use and possession of fire guns and cold steel weapons within the community

3.8 Existence of community based or local projects/laws on violence prevention and the degree of implementation

It is important to track down initiatives against gender-based violence, violence against women, children abuse, prevention of human trafficking and smuggling of migrants, among other initiatives.
3.9 Degree of trust towards judicial system and police

It is important to identify if there have been any kind of gender sensitive trainings among judicial and police agents.

3.10 Incoming migration to the community and existence of familial internal and international migration

Relevant matters on gender and migration have to be taken into account, such as, patterns of migration, reasons for migration, kind of migration (spontaneous, independent, collective, in chain or facilitated through formal networks i.e. churches).

4. Current initiatives of community actions/ projects development oriented; existence of a community development plan

Leaders and stakeholders identification; possible synergies that can emerge and how to integrate offers and demands at aggregated level (community-colonial-municipality)

RATIONALITY: HARMONIZING COUNTERPART WAY AND GEFE USAID POLICY

The gender assessment was designed under the conceptual guidance of the GEFE. In accordance with this framework, there are three key elements that must lead any USAID project.

- **Gender equality**: concerns women and men bringing about changes in attitudes, behaviors, roles, and responsibilities at home, in the workplace, and in the community.
- **Female empowerment**: is achieved when women and girls acquire the power to act freely, exercise their rights, and fulfill their potential as full and equal members of society.
- **Gender integration**: identifying and addressing gender inequalities during strategy and project design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation.

Consequently, this assessment will make recommendations to IMPACTOS on how to achieve the GEFE policy outcomes that:

1. Reduce gender disparities in access to, control over, and benefit from resources, wealth, opportunities, and services - economic, social, political, and cultural.
2. Reduce gender-based violence and mitigate its harmful effects on individuals and communities.
3. Increase capability of women and girls to realize their rights, determine their life outcomes, and influence decision-making in households, communities, and societies.

To integrate the gender equity perspective into IMPACTOS activities, Counterpart should promote actions aimed at increasing knowledge and raising awareness on gender issues among the various target audiences. The results of this assessment will show notions of gender present among CSOs and IMPACTOS for identifying further training strategies. Impactos will design a training program for their staff and partners on the program’s gender equity conceptualization and approaches in adherence to USAID’s Policies and Guidelines and in alignment with the Millennium Development Goal of promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment. Gender integration in the IMPACTOS program will also consider the Government Policy for Women\(^{34}\) and the II PIEGH.\(^{35}\)

With technical support of Impactos’ Gender Specialist Consultant, Counterpart staff and partners/grantees will be responsible for ensuring gender analysis and actions that promote gender equity through program activities of both components. Methodologies will also be developed to allow Counterpart, its partners and communities to monitor, evaluate and document the gender best practices implemented in Program activities.

In addition to employing an approach that promotes gender equity and does not discriminate, Counterpart and its partners will carefully analyze trends and constraints as they relate to gender equity. The Impactos team will build off Counterpart’s Global Civil Society Strengthening Knowledge Management Portal to develop a database that disaggregates data by age, sex, and other relevant

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\(^{34}\) Initially Honduras approved a National Policy for Women for years 2002-2007 that included five priority issues: Health, Education and Communication, Economy and Poverty, Violence and Social Participation, and Women’s Policy. This policy had as primary function to promote the full insertion of women to the country’s sustainable development. The policy is the result of historical struggles of women’s movements in the country, and a response to the different movements in several countries worldwide. It seeks to encourage and make operational the international commitments of the State of Honduras contained in the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (1982), and obligations acquired as per the International Conference on Population and Development (1994) and the IV World Conference on Women (1995). The First National Plan for Equal Opportunities for Women, known as PIOM I, derived from this policy. The National Policy for Women and the II PIEGH are considered as the key legal framework that should guide actions for the rights of women, and for this reason its formulation and adoption as a State policy is considered as a priority.

\(^{35}\) Second Gender Equality and Equity Plan of Honduras II (PIEGH), INAM. 2010.
characteristics. This will allow the generation of data needed for analysis, monitoring and evaluation, and for incorporating qualitative factors on gender integration throughout the program, ensuring that men and women are participating and benefiting from the program. Hence, incorporating gender means emphasizing males and females who are marginalized or excluded due to ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, lack of income, disability, or other factors.

Finally, GEFE highlights two considerations with regards to operational guidelines that, to date, have not been included within project programming and are going to be identified in the next subchapters. First, gender analysis as a tool for examining the differences between the roles that women and men play in communities and societies, the different levels of power they hold, their differing needs, constraints and opportunities, and the impact of these differences on their lives. Therefore, the results of the assessment should be understood as reflections upon practice that will improve project results towards gender responsible development. Second, stressing that everyday institutional practices are a good way to understand attitudes, behavior, thinking, and policies that are discriminatory or gender-blind. This point is especially relevant to the IMPACTOS team, since they are leading the initiative.

**METHODOLOGICAL TOOLS**

**Questionnaire:** Prior to arrival, a draft was submitted to HQ and the Honduras field office. Suggestions were incorporated to restrict the answers to a set of options, although some of the questions remained open. The initial suggestion was that this was to be delivered to respondents identified in the mapping of actors, during the first days of the fieldwork. Nevertheless, the questionnaire was sent the day before the consultant’s departure to a total of 69 people in 17 organizations (plus 18 to IMPACTOS). The feedback from the CSOs was discouragingly low, resulting only in 12 responses (and only 12 from IMPACTOS). The unfavorable response is already indicative of the low institutional and individual commitment to gender.

The approach included:

- **Interviews:** After the initial meeting with the IMPACTOS COP, a list of topics to be addressed during the interviews was agreed upon, which included:
  - Definition and concept of gender
  - National gender policy and its implications
  - Gender framework within the organization: Have they ever performed a Gender Audit?
  - Do they have a gender mainstreaming/integration plan?
  - Types of resources are focused on gender (budget, human capacities, time, training etc)
  - Power relations, institutional arrangements to balance local and institutional agency (interrelation between agency and governance)
  - Women’s role within social movements and civil society organizations
  - Women’s political participation framework, legal aspects, application and tendencies
  - Masculinities; risk, danger and men’s leadership at community level
  - Community access to resources: governance, transparency, and responses
  - Empowerment
  - Agency and vision: how one envisions the project’s results, ideas about sustainable gender inclusion

Seven individual interviews and three group interviews were carried out among CSOs. The consultant also interviewed all IMPACTOS personnel, with the exception of one individual who was unavailable.

- **Focus groups:** Researchers observed the interaction between a group of six to eight participants, listening to their animated debates about issues that do not often emerge in individual interviews. Originally the idea was to conduct at least four focal groups with representatives of CSOs and grassroots organizations participating in the Impactos Program. Again, because of the daily scheduling of the meetings, it was only possible with participants from different regions attending a training session on transparency for CPRG; the other opportunity was a meeting with representatives of Tela coalition, who were not yet notified that they were selected as awardees.

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36 Annex 1 contains the model of used research tools
37 Especially the answers from CARITAS, ASONOG and FOSDEH which show interest and dedication in the questionnaire
### Table 1: Methodology Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analytical categories</th>
<th>Analytical variables</th>
<th>Research tools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual beliefs</strong></td>
<td>- Gender patterns&lt;br&gt;- Distribution of reproductive and productive labor&lt;br&gt;- Effects on women’s position&lt;br&gt;- Control and access to resources and benefits&lt;br&gt;- Gender-based power inequalities&lt;br&gt;- Perception of violence against women&lt;br&gt;- Ideals on institutional transparency and accountability</td>
<td>Questionnaires and interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organizational Dynamics (of CSOs)</strong></td>
<td>- Women’s leadership&lt;br&gt;- Focus of CSO target population&lt;br&gt;- Women’s participation in CSOs&lt;br&gt;- Internal gender division of tasks in CSOs&lt;br&gt;- Differences in terms of budget, staff, political influence, and advocacy capacity</td>
<td>Questionnaires, Qualitative techniques (interviews and focus group discussion)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Capacity development</strong></td>
<td>- Organizational capacities to promote equality&lt;br&gt;- Institutional interaction at different levels (national- local- global)&lt;br&gt;- Individual capacities to become trainers and gender activists</td>
<td>Qualitative techniques (interviews and focus group discussion)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The success of a methodology greatly relies on the flexibility to adapt to unexpected situations. In this case, it was possible to achieve a certain level of information saturation, complemented with ethnographic research techniques such as participative observation. After the first presentation of programs, the consultant was informed that the community assessments were already finished in San Pedro Sula, Chamalecón, and Tegucigalpa. The Monitoring and Evaluation Officer was in the process of gathering data for constructing a base line. The CAP component had already designed a toolkit for rapid community assessment, which included a set of questions for identifying risk factors, among other socio-demographic and contextual information. While reviewing the data from the community assessments, it was noticeable that the lack of a gender approach on designing the CAP research tools was actually gender harmful. On the one hand, the largest part of the report is a standard characterization of the community conditions in terms of public goods and services. Questions regarding employment opportunities could be used to reflect on reproductive/productive labor, but the lack of acknowledgement on non-remunerated work can adversely hide such activities. Among the risk factors, questions about social relations within the community included negative concepts used to identify family dynamics (Are there any cases of familial “disintegration”? Are there “dysfunctional” families, single mothers, single fathers?). Gender integration on M&E and research tools goes beyond producing sex disaggregated data, and should develop an advanced analysis on structural inequality of power. When determining the risk factors, questions tend to identify expressions, events and triggers of violence, instead of addressing root causes.
ANNEX 2. KEY CONCEPTS

Gender

Gender is often mistaken with biological sex or directly linked with women’s issues. This confusion can lead to naturalizing gender patterns present in traditional Latin American culture such as the binary opposition of male and female behaviors. Such disparities are used to justify the perpetuation of sex-oriented limitations to activities that are generally perceived as male oriented (i.e. driving, mechanics, agricultural work, etc.). However, one easily finds a realization that society has different treatment of and expectations for men and women, whose perceived roles are deeply rooted in cultural tradition. The interest in transforming such frameworks is present, but is often considered a very hard and long-term task.

The use of gender as a synonym of sex shows that cultural and social patterns tend to follow a binary structure of opposition, which is naturalized by biological differences. In turn, values like sacrifice, strength, looking after others, organization, etc. are considered “female characteristics”, whereas courage, competitiveness, and being responsible for provisions are “male characteristics”. Obviously, it is recognized that both men and women have individual features beyond gender stereotypes, yet some believe that there is a “natural order” in such distinctions. Another frequent remark is to link gender perspective with sex-parity between participants and people involved through different stages of a project. For example, when reviewing a list of participants for a meeting, one of IMPACTOS team pointed out they have a box for gender, while it was actually to identify the sex of the participant.

Another tendency is to refer to gender exclusively to women’s issues and use gender to actually mention women’s participation in public and private realms. Consequently, when asking about the importance of gender in development projects, the following issues are mentioned:

1. Teenage pregnancy
2. Gender-based violence
3. Single motherhood
4. Women’s economic autonomy
5. Women’s political participation
6. Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health

Three different approaches towards a gender perspective were identified among people interviewed.

1. Gender orientation: Practitioners have received gender training as part of specific projects, mostly provided by international NGOs and cooperation. They are able to identify situational and structural constraints towards female empowerment and gender inequality. However, most of them do not integrate gender in project planning, or merely consider it as a variable to be taken into account in terms of participation. **There is a great potential between people who have received previous gender training in different areas such as political participation, deliberative governance, and institutional change.**

2. Gender activism: Community and organizational leaders who started their activism within a variety of social movements since the 1970’s (i.e. unions, human rights groups, peasant’s movements, etc.) were involved in feminist movements that aimed to better include women within the society. This grew out of their interest in transforming the unequal socio-economic and political relations of the society. For most of them, activism is ascribed to all social practices, thus, transforming gender patterns must start with the basic inclusion of women in all activities and decision-making levels.

3. Gender expertise: Researchers and consultants in development who specialize in gender issues have different levels of commitment with the Honduras women’s movement. All of

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38 This mistake is probably the result of the cumulative inclusion of a variety of feminist approaches on development.
them have strong theoretical and conceptual knowledge on gender and development, political participation, and community strengthening. They have activist, training, and advocacy experience on gender issues at the local level. All of them recognize institutional weakness (both public and private) to effectively integrate gender. They also claim to have opened the gender debate regarding masculinities and post-feminist views of gender.

These three different gender approaches are complementary and show the increasing importance of gender within the development work.

**Key concept: Governance**

Participation, Governance, and Legal Rights are one of the technical sectors included in the Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy (GEFE) launched by USAID in March 2012.

Governance widely refers to decision-making by a variety of interested people and stakeholders including those in positions of power (institution, government) and citizens. Such definition remits to a system of rules for public life. In this definition we go beyond the concept of government. Therefore, this definition opens the range of active participants in the political debate, including representatives of civil society and other stakeholders. This concept differs from “governability” which is the government’s capacity to create agreements and cooperation among political actors. Although both concepts are similar, they are not synonymous. The word “governance” does not exist in Spanish and the Anglicism “gobernanza” has been proposed as a translation. Hence, the use of “gobernabilidad” (governability) as a translation of governance, withdraws the most innovative element of the concept, which is the power of citizenship to actively participate in the process of policy making through different levels.

During the fieldwork and throughout the interviews it was evident the concept of “governance” is still slippery, despite the practices. Moreover, one can trace how the negotiation among political actors, (i.e. stakeholders, international organizations, state representatives and government officials) in Honduras faces challenges at the structural, situational and current levels.

**Structural level:** There are two traditional political parties in Honduras. Commonly, people define their political membership based on the familial tradition. There is a general belief that political participation concerns mainly electoral processes and formal adscription to political parties. Civil society organizations are either politically committed to parties or opposed to them from tendencies that hardly gain representation. Women’s participation in politics is considered one of the main achievements in transforming traditional political practices, although there are two important concerns regarding this issue. On the one hand, women’s political participation tends to be formal and has mechanisms to be easily manipulated; on the other hand, women in power do not necessarily work towards reducing gender inequality.

**Situational level:** In 2009, Honduras faced a constitutional crisis that preceded the coup d’état. Although later that year President Porfirio Lobo was democratically elected, to date the country still faces fragmentation, mistrust, and governability crisis. Social movements reacted against the coup with mobilizations that were suppressed by military forces. Now, in 2012, human right’s activists and social leaders recognize the harm done to social movements and social cohesion in Honduras. Prior to the coup, the women’s movement had gained visibility and voice and was actively participating in the political process. Today the movement is fragmented among those who are participating in governmental institutions and “feminist in the resistance”, a bigger fraction of the movement that refuses to collaborate with government initiatives. Among CSOs there is a sentiment against those initiatives promoted by the US government.

**Current level:** Because the effects of the coup have smoothly healed, CSOs are currently working towards social cohesion. There is an increasing participation in governance spaces and projects. NGOs are currently facing the effects of the economic crisis in developed countries with the reduction of cooperation and funding. This situation especially affects projects and programs funded by the Spanish Cooperation Agency (AECID), which has greatly financed gender issues. Honduras’ Congress recently approved a law to achieve progressive sex-parity in elected chairs, although the common concern is that the law is hardly enforced and practices are not modified yet. Certain economic activities, such as maquilas, operate as a mechanism for silencing women’s capacity to react against oppression and abuse, weakening their collective capacity to negotiate.
Understanding governance in terms of a process of expansion of democracy reinforces the idea that all individuals have rights and are prone to exercise their citizenship through institutions, either public institutions (such as government and state), or private institutions (such as media, NGOs, CSOs, private sector, etc.). It also needs to identify that existing policy, processes, and traditions are signed with inequalities that have to be addressed.

Figure 1. GEFE participation, governance and improving female empowerment.

Key Concepts: Transparency and Accountability
IMPACTOS documents do not provide a standardized definition of concepts like transparency and accountability, which are core concepts of The Citizen Participation for Responsive Governance (CPRG):

“The goal of CPRG is to increase the transparency and accountability of public institutions through support for civil society-led initiatives. The program goal is framed by two programmatic objectives: (1) Improved effectiveness of civil society to advocate for transparency and accountability of public institutions; and (2) Improved capacity of public institutions to address gaps in the enabling environment for transparency and accountability.”  

Conceptual definitions are important for understanding the subjects and objects of intervention. In addition, due to incorporating the English language, the definition is highly needed. In observing training and other programmatic activities as well as in interviews with key informants, the consultant identified a common understanding of anticorruption among program staff and partners. This understanding centered around the role and responsibility of state institutions and the government, with an emphasis on fiscal-financial matters. According to the Impactos Program, “CPRG has been designed to achieve measurable results in increased transparency and accountability by technically and financially supporting civil society organizations (CSOs) in monitoring all three branches of the Honduran national government” and the quantitative approach is implicit throughout project actions. Therefore, all grants and project activities are focused on developing mechanisms to produce, improve, and communicate information regarding public expenditure, budget execution and the role of local advocacy watchdog organization. Understanding transparency and accountability as processes that enhance active citizenship and democracy open the possibility to the inclusion of de-facto sectors excluded from the process, like youth.

According to Transparency International, “transparency is the characteristic of governments, companies, organizations and individuals being open in the clear disclosure of information, rules, plans, processes and actions. As a principle, public officials, civil servants, the managers and directors of companies and organizations, and board trustees have a duty to act visibly, predictably and understandably to promote participation and accountability.” Such wider notions open the possibility to include gender issues within transparency-oriented projects. Incorporating gender analysis into transparency initiatives demands recognizing how the feminization of poverty actually is one of the causes where women are strongly affected by corruption, especially in public goods (education, health, hygienic services, lack of water provision, etc.). In addition, “gender inequalities are likely to persist and are sometimes even reinforced if gender is not considered during the planning and implementation of anti-corruption initiatives” (TI, toolkit). That is the case when an investment is appointed to infrastructure that is poorly developed instead of addressing sustainable livelihoods.

40 The word “accountability” has been translated as “rendición de cuentas”, which partially express the whole meaning of the English word. “Rendición de cuentas” literary translates as “to deliver accounts” (from accounting terminology). Therefore, accountability-oriented objectives tend to be reduced to its financial-fiscal dimension.
41 One of the few exceptions is the grant for Caritas, focused on the National Prosecutors’ Office with regards to Human Rights decisions.
**ANNEX 3 QUESTIONNAIRE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Name of organization:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Email:</td>
<td>Contact phone number:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Questions about local culture and gender

1. What are traditional roles of women and men in your locality?

   1.1 Do men always comply with their traditional roles? Yes ☐ No ☐
      1.1.1 If not, is this a problem? yes ☐ No ☐
      1.1.2 Does it cause tension in the family? Yes ☐ No ☐
      1.1.3 Does it cause tension in the communities? Yes ☐ No ☐

   1.2 Do women always comply with their traditional roles? Yes ☐ No ☐
      1.2.1 If not, is this a problem? Yes ☐ No ☐
      1.2.2 Does it cause tension in the family? Yes ☐ No ☐
      1.2.3 Does it cause tension in the communities? Yes ☐ No ☐

2. What are men expected to do in their families?
   2.1 In their communities?
   2.2 In the society at large?
   2.3 What are they expected not to do?

3. What are women expected to do in their families?
   3.1 In their communities?
   3.2 In the society at large?
   3.3 What are they expected not to do?

### Questions on Gender and governance

4. In which CSOs do women participate? What is their purpose?

5. Are there differences between women-lead organizations and men-leded?
   Yes ☐ No ☐
   If your answer is Yes, please list 3
   1. ______________________________________________________________________
   2. ______________________________________________________________________
   3. ______________________________________________________________________

6. Which are the positive capacities that women-lead organizations have? (Please check all necessary options)
   - Scope ☐
   - Objectives ☐
   - Management ☐
   - Mobilization capacity ☐
   - Training ☐
   - Budget ☐
   - Inclusive participation ☐
   - Advocacy ☐
   - Integrating new members ☐
   - Other ☐
   ____________________________________________________________
7. What is the capacity of CSOs in which women participate to influence democracy and the local development process? (Please check all necessary options)

- More inclusive organizations
- Their objectives cover wider development areas
- Women-Issues focus
- Smaller and more specialized organizations
- They have wider networks
- Permanent training
- Leadership enhancement
- Internal election processes are more transparent
- They have more governmental support
- They have more international and cooperation support
- They have more local support
- They have better premises
- Actions are more visible
- Other: ________________________________

Questions about your Organization

8. Score between 1 and 5 (1 minimum, 5 maximum) your organization’s capacity to include the gender perspective in the next issues:

- Personnel training
- Advocacy
- Networking
- Budget

9. Who are the leaders of your organization?

10. How are they designated?

- Vote
- Nominated by directive's board
- Rotatory system
- There are no changes in organization’s leader
- Other: ________________________________

11. How do the organizations select the issues they will advocate on?

- Workshops
- Virtually
- Open presentation
- Follow up of already traced process
- There is no socialization process of Advocacy focus
- Other: ________________________________

12. Is there specific outreach to women in the communities they serve or represent?

- Yes
- No
- How? ________________________________

13. When does the board meet?

- Weekly
- Monthly
- Every 2 months
- Every 3 months
- Every 6 months
- Annual
- Randomly
- Day and time: ________________________________
14. Who participate in such meetings regardless Board members
- Special guests
- Associates
- Internal committee’s members
- There is no participation of guests in board meetings
- Others:

15. Do you have any time of communal arrangement for children’s care during the meetings
- Yes
- No

16. How are people generally hired?
- Open process
- Invitation to apply
- Direct nomination
- Promotion
- Other:

17. How do people get promoted?

18. What kind of qualities should a leader have? List 3

19. Are there any specific qualities that women have than men don’t?
- Yes
- No
- Which one?

20. Are there any specific qualities that men have than women don’t?
- Yes
- No
- Which one?

21. Do you believe that women have the capacity to represent their communities?
- Yes
- No
- Why?

22. Do you believe that men have special capacities to be good leaders?
- Yes
- No
- Why?