

Honduras

Honduras ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in 1983. The Constitution of Honduras (1982) establishes equality between men and women (Art. 60). The Second Gender Equality and Equity Plan of Honduras for 2010-2022 (II PIEGH) identifies seven priority areas to promote gender equality.

1. Discrimination in the family

a) Overarching legal framework for marriage

The Constitution of Honduras grants women the same rights as men to enter into marriage (Art. 113). Furthermore, the Family Code establishes the principle of equality of spouses before the law (Art. 11). Forced marriage has been banned and penalized in Honduras under article 52 of the Law against Human Trafficking (Decree 59-2012). This law defines forced marriage as the practice “whereby a person is promised or given in marriage on payment of a consideration in money, kind or any type of remuneration given to parents, legal guardian, relatives or any other person or group of persons” (Chapter II. Art. 6 (7)). Penalties range from ten to fifteen years of imprisonment.

Honduran law only recognises civil marriage (Family Code, 1984, Art. 4 and 11). The Constitution stipulates that a civil marriage must be performed by competent officials and under the conditions established by the Law (Art. 112). Same-sex marriage and de-facto union are explicitly prohibited under the Honduran law (Family Code, Art. 11). The Family Code also recognises that de-facto unions have the same legal status as civil marriages (Art. 4). Religious ceremonies have no legal status, and may only be held after the civil ceremony has taken place. Religious leader that authorizes a religious marriage, without having celebrated the civil marriage, may incur a criminal liability (Family Code, Art. 13).

b) Child marriage

In Honduras, the legal age of marriage for both women and men is 21 years old (Family Code, Art. 16). Nevertheless, a person over 18 years old is allowed to marry with the consent of their parents/legal guardian/judge/grandparents/adoptive parents (Family Code, Art. 16). Until July 2017, adolescents between 16 years old and 18 years old were allowed to marry with the consent of their parents (Art. 17 (1)), legal guardian (Art. 17 (4)), judge (Art. 17 (5)), grandparents (Art. 17 (2)) and adoptive parents (Art. 17 (3)). In July 2017, Honduran legislators unanimously prohibited child marriage and raised the minimum age of marriage for both women and men from 16 to 18 years in an effort to prevent child marriage and has removed all exceptions for young people under the age of 18 (Plan International, 2017).

Adolescent pregnancy is a concern in Honduras: according to UNFPA, Honduras has the second highest rate of adolescent pregnancy in Latin America. Girls living in rural areas are more likely to become pregnant before the age of 18 (UNFPA, 2016). The CEDAW Committee notes that illiteracy

rates and school dropout rates for girls living in indigenous and African descent communities are disproportionately high compared with the rest of the population, often owing to early marriage and pregnancy (CEDAW, 2016). In 2012, the Ministry of Health implemented the National Strategy for the Prevention of Adolescent Pregnancy (ENAPREAH). The strategy recognises teen pregnancy as a priority that requires a strategic, comprehensive and urgent approach by defining measures at the institutional and community level (Ministry of Health, 2012).

c) Household responsibilities

Article 14 of the Family Code establishes that spouses have equal rights and responsibilities. Concerning household responsibilities, the Family Code guarantees women to be recognised as the head of household (Family Code, Art. 42). Under article 44, women have preferential rights to wages or incomes of the husband for their food and minor children. The same right applies to the husband in cases in which the woman has the obligation to contribute in whole or in part to the expenses of the family (Family Code, Art. 44)

The shared rights and responsibilities guaranteed in the Family Code grant women the right to be the guardian of their children during marriage and de-facto unions (Family Code, Art. 42). The Family Code also grants both the mother and the father equal rights and responsibilities to their children during marriage (Art. 42). In addition, article 15 provides women with the same rights as men to choose where to live.

In practice, patriarchal attitudes and deep-rooted discriminatory stereotypes regarding the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family remain a concern in Honduras (CEDAW, 2016). In Honduras, 33% of Honduran men would prefer that women in their family stay at home (Gallup and ILO, 2017). Women are seen as primarily caregivers within the family and they are more likely than men to be responsible of household chores (ECLAC, 2009).

d) Divorce

The provisions of the Family Code safeguard women's legal right to initiate divorce (Art. 232) and establish that women have the same requirements to finalise a divorce or annulment as men (Art. 251). After divorce, both parents share the right to be the legal guardian of their children (Family Code, Art. 233). The same legal provision provides women with the same rights and responsibilities as men to their children after divorce. There are no customary, religious or traditional practices that restrict women's legal right to exercise parental guardianship of their children.

e) Inheritance

In the matter of inheritance, daughters are free to inherit land and non-land assets in the same way as sons (Civil Code, Art. 960). Furthermore, no qualifications are given regarding the nature of filiation. (Family Code, Art. 99). Female surviving spouses have equal rights to men to inherit land and non-land assets (Civil Code, Art. 960). The Civil Code also stipulates that women have equal rights to make a will (Civil Code, Art. 95). Generally, there are no customary, religious, or traditional practices or laws that discriminate against daughters and female surviving spouses' legal rights to inherit.

2. Restricted Physical integrity

a) Violence against women

Honduras ratified the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women in 2005. Regional and international conventions take precedence over domestic legislation (Constitution, Arts. 15 and 16). The primary legislation addressing violence against women is the Law against Domestic Violence (enacted in 1997, with reforms made in 2006). The Law establishes a legal framework to prevent, punish and eliminate domestic violence (Art. 7). Moreover, the Law stipulates measures to protect assist and support victims and survivors of domestic violence (Art.6). There is no evidence to suggest that so-called honour crimes are practiced in Honduras.

The National Plan to Prevent, Punish and Eradicate Violence against Women (2006-2010) was enacted in 2005. In 2011, the National Institute for Women (INAM) initiated the process of reviewing and analysing the National Plan to combat all forms of violence against women within the framework of the Second National Gender Equity and Equality Plan for 2010–2022 (II PIEGH). As a result, the INAM and the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID) developed the National Plan to Combat Violence against Women 2014-2022 aimed at eradicating violence against women through prevention, detection, comprehensive and specialized attention to victims and survivors of violence, information and research, and adaptation of the national legal framework, as well as - the evaluation and monitoring of policies and programmes that promote gender equality and the advancement of women and girls in Honduras (Objective of the National Plan).

Implementation of the National Plan to Combat Violence against Women is supported and monitored by the National Institute for Women (INAM) in coordination with the Technical Commission for the Implementation of the National Plan. The Technical Commission was created in 2007 and establishes accountability mechanisms for all the institutions involved in order to comply with the actions and activities contained in the National Plan.

The National Plan sets quantitative as well as qualitative indicators to be evaluated in three different periods: 2015, 2018 and 2022. Furthermore, it includes specific targets and benchmarks. In addition, all divisions of the public administration must coordinate efforts and allocate technical and financial resources in order to achieve the objectives of the National Plan to Combat Violence against Women. One of the main action lines of the National Plan is the design, development and implementation of trainings for the Ministries involved with the implementation of legislation addressing violence against women.

b) Domestic Violence

Under the Penal Code (amended in 2017), domestic violence is considered as any type of force, intimidation and persecution to anyone inflicted by one's current or former spouse, partner, and any other person living in the shared household in order to cause physical or emotional injury (Penal Code, Art. 179-A). Domestic violence is criminalized in Honduras (Penal Code, Art. 179-A). According to the Penal Code, someone can be sentenced from one to three years of imprisonment. Under

aggravated circumstances, perpetrators of domestic violence can be sentenced from two to four years of imprisonment (Penal Code, Art. 179-B). The Law against Domestic Violence is aimed at protecting the physical, psychological, economic and sexual integrity of Honduran women against any form of violence inflicted by their current or former spouse, partners and relatives (Art. 1). Furthermore, the Law against Domestic Violence covers but it is not limited to the following: physical (Art. 5 (1) (1)), sexual (Art. 5 (1) (3)), physiological (Art. 5 (1) (2)) and economic (Art. 5 (1) (4)) abuse. Moreover, mediation and conciliation in cases of domestic and sexual violence is prohibited (Criminal Procedure Code, Art. 45). The Law against Domestic Violence also stipulates provisional and security measures for the victims and survivors of domestic violence (Art. 6). Article 7 sets out provisions for investigation and punishment of perpetrators.

The National Plan to Combat Violence against Women 2014-2022 includes specific provisions for the prevention of domestic violence. The National Plan aims to create integrated services for women and girls who have survived domestic violence. The National Plan stipulates the creation of programmes targeted at victims of violence, including shelters (activity 1.3), comprehensive and accessible health services, adequate coverage of medical and forensic examinations to victims and survivors of domestic violence (activity 1.2), counselling services through live emergency line for integrated support, Code 114, and expand its coverage nationwide (activity 1.1). Moreover, the National Plan establishes the creation of guidelines and protocols for the professionals who may deal with domestic violence (action line No. 3). It also mandates the development and implementation of educational material and guidelines on the different forms of violence (sexual harassment, sexual and commercial exploitation, femicide, trafficking in persons, domestic violence, domestic violence, rape, and incest) against women (activity 3.2).

The CEDAW report notes the persistence of domestic violence, particularly against girls (CEDAW, 2016). In 2012, 74% of complaints received by the Statistical Observatory of the Office of the Public Prosecutor were related to domestic violence. According to recent statistics, during the 2012-2014 period, 4,992 complaints were registered, however, only 134 persons were convicted (HRC, 2015). According to the National Violence Observatory (NVO) at the National Autonomous University, 5.4% of cases of femicides occur in the context of domestic violence in Honduras (UNAH, 2015).

c) Rape

In Honduras, rape is a statutory offense under the Penal Code (Art. 140). Rape is defined as any carnal access (vaginal, oral and anal) that is inflicted with violence or intimidation. Rape is criminalised with penalties ranging from 10 to 15 years of imprisonment. Marital rape is also covered under the same article of the Penal Code.

In the case of certain aggravating circumstances, the punishment is increased from 15 to 20 years of imprisonment (Art. 140, Penal Code). Aggravating circumstances are not limited to, but can include: rape of victims under the age of 14, when the victim is deprived of will, when the perpetrator intentionally deprives the victim of will by using by using psychotropic or narcotic substances, including alcohol, the intentional transmission of sexually transmitted diseases, rape of pregnant women and elderly people (Art. 140, Penal Code).

The National Plan to Combat Violence against Women 2014-2022 addresses the question of sexual violence and rape. Sexual violence remains an issue in Honduras (CEDAW, 2016). According to the National Demographic and Health Survey (ENDESA, 2011-2012), the prevalence of rape in women aged between 15 and 49 years is 3%. In 2013, 2 851 complaints were registered, which indicates that a sexual violence complaint was filed every three hours in Honduras (Centre for Women's Rights, 2013; HCR 2015). Furthermore, 7% of femicides are related to sexual violence (HCR, 2015). The CEDAW report notes the lack of specialized care to victims of sexual violence in rural areas, as well as the limited number of shelters that provide physiological and legal aid to victims of sexual violence (CEDAW, 2016).

d) Sexual harassment

Article 147-A of the Penal Code prohibits sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is defined as any order, threat or offer intended to obtain favours of sexual nature by a person in authority towards a subordinate. The definition of sexual harassment covers the workplace, educational establishments and public places, but it does not include legal provisions on sporting establishments (Penal Code, Art. 147-A). Penalties range from three to six years of imprisonment and disqualification from their functions or posts during that period. Cyber harassment is covered under article 147-B of the Penal Code. Anyone who engages in sexual harassment using electronic means, telecommunication or information technology will be sentenced from three to six years of imprisonment. The penalty will be increased by one third when committed to the detriment of children and persons suffering from mental illness.

e) Female genital mutilation

There is no evidence that Honduras is a country of concern with regards to female genital mutilation (UNICEF, 2016).

f) Abortion

The Penal Code criminalises abortion with no exceptions (Penal Code, Art. 126). The legal framework imposes penalties for abortion and medical practitioners can be held criminally liable. Under the Code, a person who intentionally causes an abortion is subjected to three to six years of imprisonment if the woman consented and to six to eight years of imprisonment if the woman did not consent to it, without using violence or intimidation. The maximum penalty (eight to ten years of imprisonment) is applied when violence or intimidation is used. Furthermore, article 128 establishes that self-induced abortion is also illegal and any woman who practices it will face between three to six years of imprisonment. Under article 127 of the Penal Code, doctors who induced an abortion will face the same sanctions indicated in the article 126 and a fine from fifteen thousand to thirty thousand Lempiras. The same sanctions apply to medical practitioners, paramedics, nurses, midwives who induce or participate in an abortion (Penal Code, Art. 127).

The criminalization of abortion may lead women to seek unsafe abortions and an increase in maternal mortality rates in Honduras (CEDAW, 2016). Vulnerable groups such as indigenous, young or rural women may be more likely to turn to unsafe abortions performed clandestinely (Alternative CEDAW report, 2016).

More

Femicide is recognized and criminalized under the Penal Code (Art. 118-A). The femicide is defined as the killing of a woman or a girl by a man or group of men on account of her gender. Penalties range from 30 to 40 years of imprisonment, when one or more of the following aggravated circumstances occur: 1) when the perpetrator maintains or has maintained a relationship with the victim (marriage, de facto union, informal partnership, etc.) 2) when the crime has been preceded by acts of domestic violence 3) when the crime has been preceded by a situation of sexual violence, sexual harassment, harassment and persecution 4) when the offense is committed with cruelty.

Despite this comprehensive legal framework, a recent report highlights that femicides have increased in the last decade. Between January and December 2015, 40 women were murdered per month. On average, one woman was killed every 18 hours in Honduras (UNAH, 2015). According to an analysis of data by the National Violence Observatory (ONV), the majority of femicides (50%) took place in the street or public roads, 25% occurred inside the household or hotel and 13 women were murdered on public transport (UNAH, 2015). The CEDAW report highlights a lack of adequate investigation and prosecution relating to femicides in Honduras (CEDAW, 2016).

The Law against Human Trafficking (Decree No. 59-2012) prohibits all forms of trafficking setting penalties ranging from ten to fifteen years of imprisonment. In addition, the Honduran Government acceded to the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (CEDAW, 2016). Despite progress in legislation, Honduras remains a source and transit country for women and girls subjected to sex trafficking and forced labour. Honduran women and girls are exploited in sex trafficking within the country and in neighbouring countries of Central America, especially in Guatemala, Mexico, Belize and El Salvador (USDS, 2017). Women and girls from indigenous and African descent communities are more vulnerable to become victims of trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation or forced labour (CEDAW, 2016).

3. Restricted Access to productive and financial resources

a) Secure access to land and assets

Honduras ratified the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention (No 169) in 1995.

The Law for Modernization and Development of the Agricultural Sector guarantees equal rights to married and unmarried women over the ownership, use, decision-making and use as collateral over land (Art. 79). Article 69 of the Equal Opportunities for Women Act of 2000 provides unmarried women with the same rights as unmarried men to own, use and make decisions over property and non-land assets (Arts. 1, 69; Civil Code, Art. 613). The Family Code establishes that the default marital regime is the differed community of property (Civil Code, Arts. 169, 172). Moreover, married women have equal rights to married men over the ownership, use, decision-making and use as collateral over property and non-land assets (Family Code, Art. 68; Civil Code, Art. 169, Constitution Art. 61).

Article 79 of the Law for Modernization and Development of the Agricultural Sector allows married couples and informal unions to jointly own property. Furthermore, the Equal Opportunities for

Women Act ensures women's participation in cooperatives, NGOs and syndicates (Art. 80). The Second Gender Equality and Equity Plan of Honduras 2010-2022 (II PIEGH) promotes the approval of land titling/registration policies in favour of women under the conditions established by the legal framework of the Law for Modernization and Development of the Agricultural Sector (OE 3.3). In addition, the II PIEGH stipulates the development and reinforcement of fair trade initiatives to create self-income generating activities for women (OE 3.4).

Despite advancements in the last two decades, women continue to encounter greater barriers to access land. Discrimination against rural women, in particular indigenous women and women of African descent remains a concern in Honduras (CEDAW, 2016). A 2012 study found that women in Honduras are less likely to own land than rural men. An estimated 1.3 million women in rural areas live in poverty in Honduras (OXFAM n.d.). According to OXFAM, the recent agrarian reform benefited only 4% of rural women. In September 2015, the National Congress of Honduras approved the law for the National Solidarity Credit Programme for Rural Women (CrediMujer). This law provides benefits for more than two million rural women through financial services and loans to improve agricultural production and increase the incomes of female farmers (OXFAM, 2016). In 2013, only 11% of rural women benefited from agricultural loans (OXFAM n.d.).

b) Secure access to formal financial resources

The Equal Opportunities for Women Act (2000) establishes that women and men have the same rights to open a bank account at a formal institution and to obtain credit (Art. 61). The Law establishes that the Government and the private sector will promote women's participation in entrepreneurial activities through financial services and loans. Furthermore, the Law aims to eliminate discriminatory legal provisions and administrative obstacles that prevent women from accessing credits (Art. 61).

The Second Gender Equality and Equity Plan of Honduras 2010-2022 (II PIEGH) mandates the implementation of policies and programmes, such as access to credit, microcredit, trainings, information and technology in order to facilitate women's access to productive resources at the national, municipal and local level (OE 3.2). One of five the cross-cutting areas of the Strategy for the Promotion of Entrepreneurship is the support to women's entrepreneurship in Honduras (ENEH, 2012).

c) Workplace rights

Honduras has ratified ILO Conventions 100 and 111, and the Equal Opportunities for Women Act mandates non-discrimination on the basis of sex in employment (Art. 46). The Act covers explicitly selection criteria, recruitment, hiring, promotions, training, assignments and termination (Art. 48). Article 367 of the Labour Code mandates equal remuneration for work of equal value. Moreover, women do not have any restrictions to work in night shifts. Nevertheless, women face legal restrictions to enter certain professions (Labour Code, Art. 127).

The Labour Code mandates paid maternity leave of 10 weeks (four weeks prior to childbirth and six weeks after delivery). During this period, female employees receive 100% of their salary as maternity

benefit (Art. 135 and 136). It also provides for the right to return to the same position after availing maternity leave (Art. 135). In Honduras, there is no statutory paternity leave.

Under the Labour Code, dismissal of pregnant women is prohibited (Labour Code, Art 124), and female workers are granted two breastfeeding breaks at work during the first six months of life of the new-born (Labour Code, Art. 140). Employers are also required to set up a nursing room for female employees (Labour Code, Art. 140). The Equal Opportunities for Women Act states that requirement of pregnancy tests are explicitly forbidden in order to apply for a job (Art. 46). The Family Code guarantees women's rights to freely choose their profession or occupation (Art. 43).

In 2015, the National Human Rights Commission (CONADEH) received 817 about alleged violations of the rights to work. 217 complaints were filed by women. The majority of these complaints were related to an unequal treatment in the workplace, illegal dismissals or violations of labour standards in the public sector, physical, psychological or sexual harassment at work, discrimination in employments, labour persecution, breach of collective employment bargaining agreement, illegal or arbitrary acts, denial of transfers, exchanges and promotions, among others (CONADEH, 2016).

In Honduras, there is a high unemployment rate among women (CEDAW, 2016). In 2016, 10% of women were unemployed compared to 4% men (ILO, 2016). Women are also concentrated in low-paid jobs in the informal labour sector: 75% of women work in the informal sector (World Bank, WDI, 2013).

4. Restricted Civil liberties

a) Citizenship rights

The Constitution of the Republic of Honduras provides women and men with the same rights to acquire (Art. 22), change (Art. 27) retain their nationality (Art. 22), as well as confer their nationality to their children (Art. 23). Married and unmarried women have equal rights as men to register the birth of their children (National Registry of Individuals Act. Art 55). Multiple and intersectional discrimination are not explicitly addressed in the national legal framework. The Constitution of the Republic of Honduras guarantees that all citizens are equal before the law and prohibits discrimination on the grounds of sex, race, class, or any other reason prejudicial to human dignity (Art. 60). There is no evidence to suggest the existence of customary, traditional or religious practices or laws that discriminate against a woman's right to citizenship in Honduras.

The National Registry of Individuals Act accords women and men equal rights to apply for identity cards (Art. 88). Similarly, the Migration and Foreigners' Law guarantees women's legal right to apply for passports (Art. 67). Women and men have the same rights as men to acquire passports and other travel documents for their minor children and both unmarried and married women have the same rights as men to travel outside the country. In order to apply for a national identity card, Hondurans must provide their birth registration act.

Women and men have the same rights to register the birth of their children. Article 53 of the National Registry of Individuals Act stipulates that children must be registered not later than one year after the date of their birth. Nevertheless, the legal framework does not establish penalties or

sanctions for cases of delayed registration for unregistered children and adults. In Honduras, approximately 6% of births are not registered in the National Registry of Persons (UNICEF, 2011a). The Young child survival and development component of the UNICEF Country Programme Document 2012-2016 is aimed at achieving universal civil registration of births in Honduras (UNICEF, 2011a). In 2011, UNICEF and the Honduras government's Secretary of Social Development implemented the National Early Childhood Registration System (RENPI) in order to link the information systems of different government institutions in charge of the provision of integrated child care services (UNICEF, 2015). Furthermore, the RENPI is a project aimed at ensuring birth registration of all children under the age of six in order to offer more efficient policies and programmes for the fulfilment of their fundamental rights (UNICEF, 2011b).

b) Voting

Honduran women were granted the right to vote on January 25, 1955 (Decree No. 29 of 1955). Today, women have the same rights as men to vote in Honduras (Constitution, Art. 44). There is no evidence of customary, religious or traditional practices or laws that discriminate against women's legal right to vote.

c) Political voice

Women and men have to the same rights as men to hold public office in the legislature (Constitution, Art. 198), executive (Constitution, Art. 238) and judiciary (Constitution Art. 309). Honduras has also adopted various measures in order to achieve gender balance in public life. In 2012, the National Congress approved an amendment to article 105 of the Electoral and Political Organizations Law which increased the minimum quota of women candidates from 30% to 40 % for primary elections. The amendment also specified that the quota would increase to 50% for future election processes (CEDAW, 2015).

Under article 105 of the Electoral and Political Organizations Law (Decree 54-2012), the candidate lists of the political parties for the 2013 elections must include at least 40% women candidates. This minimum quota is established for the positions of popular election and applicable to presidential elections, deputies and alternates to the National Congress, the Central-American Parliament, mayors, deputy's mayor and municipal councillors. Moreover, candidate lists in single-member constituencies must include a female principal candidate and a male alternate, or vice versa. Moreover, article 105 (a) stipulates that political parties must include 50% men and 50% women candidates in their electoral lists for the primary elections of 2017. This promotes the principle of gender parity and alternation between women and men.

The Electoral and Political Organizations Law establishes monetary sanctions for failure to implement electoral gender quotas. In Honduras, political parties must submit to the Electoral Commission a report of how they have incorporated gender balance in their internal elections for primaries, 6 months before the primary elections. If a political party violates the gender balance in its internal elections, it will be charged a fine of 5% of the total state funding for the parties (Art. 104).

In 2016, the Supreme Electoral Tribunal issued the Regulation of the application of the principle of parity and the mechanism for alternation in the political participation of women and men in the electoral processes. According to the Honduras Interparty Women's Network, the regulation diminishes the positive impact of the alternation clause by requiring political parties to start alternating between female and male candidates at the third, fourth or fifth position on the ballot (NDI, 2017).

d) Access to justice

Married and unmarried women have the same legal capacity to be sued and to sue. Similarly, a woman's testimony carries the same weight as that of a man in all type of court cases (World Bank, 2015).

A bill aimed at criminalising political violence and harassment against female politicians was presented to the National Congress in 2015. The initiative aims to eliminate individual or collective acts, behaviours and manifestations of harassment and political violence which directly or indirectly affect women in the exercise of their political and public functions. The purpose of the draft law is to develop and implement public policies and strategies for the eradication of all forms of harassment and violence against women in political and public life (Blanco, 2017).

In Honduras, women's participation in the justice system has steadily improved. The proportion of female judges of the Supreme Court has increased from 20% in 2012 to 33% in 2016 (ECLAC, 2017b). Three women were on the bench of the Supreme Court of Justice during the period 2009 to 2016 (CEDAW, 2015)

In 2014, the Honduran Congress approved the Law to Protect Journalists, Human Rights Defenders and Justice System workers - Decree 34-2015 (*Ley de Protección para los Defensores de Derechos Humanos, Periodistas, Comunicadores Sociales y Operadores de Justicia*). The Law recognizes the situation of risk and vulnerability of human right defenders and establishes the creation of a National Council on Protection. It also acknowledges the importance of human right defenders for the advancement of democracy and the rule of law in Honduras (CEJIL et al., n.d.). Nevertheless, Honduras continues to be one of the most dangerous countries in Latin America for human rights defenders, especially for environmental and land activists. According to the NGO Global Witness, Honduras had one the highest rates of homicides per capita of environmental and land activists in 2016, with 127 murders since 2007 (Amnesty International n.d.; Global Witness 2016). Furthermore, According to IM- Defensoras, between 2012 and 2016, there have been 1,128 attacks and 13 assassinations of women human rights defenders in Honduras (IM-Defensoras, 2017).

The National Human Rights Commission (CONADEH) guarantees the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms to all citizens and migrants in Honduras (Constitution, Art. 59). The CONADEH is an independent body tasked with monitoring gender equality at the national level. The Commission is in charge of receiving and investigating complaints on discrimination from women victims of discrimination and violence. The CONADEH has the power to carry out investigations, inspections, verifications, or any other action to clarify them. In 2016, it dealt with 4,533 complaints, of which 1 786 correspond to complaints of domestic, psychological, sexual, and economic violence.

In addition, 598 complaints were related to a lack of access to justice. Between 2014 and 2016, the National Human Rights Commission received, on a national level, a daily average of 12 women. The majority of these women reported being victims of threats to their personal integrity and their lives (CONADEH, 2017).

The Equal Opportunities for Women Act encourages the national government to promote the scientific research on gender equality and must create or improve the production, dissemination and evaluation of national statistics on the status of women and men and their evolution in all spheres of life (Art. 5). In 2016, the National Institute of Statistics of Honduras (INE) published a report on the situation and conditions of women in Honduras “*Caracterización de la Mujer Hondureña 2016*”. It mainly describes the socioeconomic conditions across all stages of girls’ and women’s life (INE, 2016).

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