

Disclaimer

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Authors

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II. Introduction and development context

(i) The project and evaluation objectives

The Honduran Youth for Democracy project³ was implemented by *ProgettoMondo Mlal* in collaboration with the partner organization *Centro de Desarrollo Humano* (Center for Human Development) (CDH) from April 1, 2011 to July 31, 2013.⁴ UNDEF provided a grant of US\$300,000, of which \$25,000 was retained for monitoring and evaluation purposes.

The project sought to contribute to improved social and political involvement and participation by Honduran youth in the departments of Choluteca and Valle by strengthening youth organizations and focusing more on youth in national and regional policies. This would be done more particularly by supporting the creation and/or strengthening of local youth organizations and enabling them to produce local programs for democratic youth participation; supporting the development of local youth policies through the creation of Municipal Youth Commissions (MYC) in the cities of Nacaome and Choluteca; and promoting local, regional, and national programs for greater youth representation and democratic participation.

The project strategy was built around three levels of expected outcomes (capacity building among youth leaders, institutional strengthening of youth organizations, and consolidation of social networking abilities). Special priority was given to gender equality. The project's beneficiaries were Honduran youth (aged 15–30) and youth organizations from urban, semiurban, and rural areas in the departments of Choluteca and Valle.

The evaluation of this project is part of the larger evaluation of Rounds, 2, 3, and 4 UNDEF-funded projects. Its purpose is to contribute to a better understanding of what constitutes a successful project, which will in turn help UNDEF develop future project strategies. Evaluations are also to assist stakeholders in determining whether projects have been implemented in accordance with the project document and whether anticipated project outputs have been achieved.⁵

(ii) Evaluation methodology

The evaluation was conducted by an international expert and a national expert, hired under the Transtec contract with UNDEF. The evaluation methodology is spelled out in the contract's Operational Manual and is further detailed in the Launch Note. Pursuant to the terms of the contract, the project documents were sent to the evaluators in early October 2013 (see Annex 2). After reading and analyzing them, they prepared the Launch Note (UDF-HON-09-342) describing the analysis methodology and instruments used during the evaluation mission to Honduras (Choluteca and Nacaome) from December 1 to 6, 2013. The evaluators interviewed project staff and members of the *ProgettoMondo Mlal* and CDH coordinating team. They also met with the project's beneficiaries (youth, parents, indigenous minorities, and CSOs). Since a media campaign was part of the project, the experts met with local TV reporters who observed how the campaign unfolded. Annex 3 contains the complete list of persons interviewed.

³ *Jóvenes Hondureños para la Democracia*

⁴ According to the project document (contract signed on March 22, 2011). The project received a 4-month extension, ending on July 31, 2013.

⁵ Operational Manual for the UNDEF-funded Project Evaluations, page 6.

(iii) Development context

According to the 2010 Demographic and Housing Census conducted by the National Statistics Institute of Honduras (INE), the Honduran population numbers 8.1 million, 4,128,652 of it urban and 3,917,338 of it rural. Some 67.3% (4,992,792) of the total population are under the age of 30, and 54% (2,698,463) are youth aged 12|30. Just over half of young people (52%) live in rural areas. Honduras is one of the poorest countries in



Latin America, with a Human Development Index (HDI) of 0.625, putting it in 121st place globally.⁶ The high proportion of youth and the growth of the over-65 population, caused by high birth rates (26 per 1,000 population) and longer life expectancy at birth (73 years), are putting heavy pressure on basic social services, especially health and education.⁷

Although Honduran youth are better-educated than they were 10 years ago, Honduras ranks third in Latin America among the countries with the greatest educational inequality. Illiteracy in urban areas stands at 7.8% and average schooling, at 8.8 years,

the figures for rural areas being 22.3% and 5.7 years, respectively.⁸ According to data from the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), people must have 12 years of schooling to attain a basic standard of living in a country.⁹ Net coverage of the third basic education cycle (grades 7-9) is 39% and of middle school (grades 10-12), 22.7%. Third-cycle coverage in rural areas is just 15.2%. School attendance drops sharply as age increases.

According to data from the Continuing Survey of Households 2008, only 36.7% of youth are employed. Some 30.1% study only and 25.4% neither work nor study. This latter group has little opportunity to enroll in flexible vocational training programs. Young people who both work and study are a minority (7.8%).

It is important to point out that 60% of Hondurans who emigrate are rural dwellers between the ages of 20 and 34. However, more than 20,000 return to the country each year following deportation. An estimated 1,225,270 young people are employed; 57.5% of them are salaried employees, 21.1% are self-employed, and 21.5% perform unremunerated work—that is, they do not receive a salary; these latter are mainly young men in rural areas who work for their family. The 41.33% of young people in the EAP have employment problems: 7.45% are unemployed, 4.75% are visibly underemployed, and 29.1% are invisibly underemployed. A full 70% of the unemployed population, or 67,343 people, are youth.

The political crisis of 2009 is another factor that has impacted the youth population, highlighting the fragility of Honduras' democratic system and the critical challenges to guaranteeing human rights. The crisis resulted in a highly polarized society and eroded citizens' trust in their institutions. In the face of this situation, the national government has committed to developing a national reconciliation agenda and adopting a National Human

⁶http://hdr.undp.org/en/media/HDR_2011_ES_Complete.pdf

⁷ <http://www.unicef.org/spanish/infobycountry/hb/infu>

Rights Plan. It has also begun working on a citizen security policy that for the first time stresses prevention and recognizes the contribution of local governments. Violence has become another problem in Honduras, constituting the leading cause of death in the 15-29 age group. The second leading cause of death is adolescent pregnancy and the third, HIV/AIDS. HIV/AIDS prevention stands at 0.8%. Two out of three HIV/AIDS cases are diagnosed in the 20-

III. Project strategy

(i) Project approach and strategy

The project strategy fits within the priorities of the CDH program



**Project
objective**

IV. Evaluation findings

(i)

The project strategy shows the coherence between the three basic components addressed in the project (strengthening through training; organizing capacity, and political impact) and the relevance of the methodological approach employed to meet the objectives pursued. The initiatives to empower youth leaders and networks were a response to the needs identified in the participatory diagnostic study. Prioritizing volunteerism as an opportunity for participation really motivated the young people involved and they took full advantage of the experience. Involving the media and journalists committed to promoting civil rights helped get the issue on broadcasts with a large audience that had a real influence on the general public. Furthermore, the mechanisms to ensure close monitoring and assistance through the continuing presence of youth facilitators and technical staff in the communities turned out to be key strategic factors in advancing the processes promoted.

Considering that strengthening political advocacy was one of the three basic components of the project, this aspect could have been addressed in greater depth. Youth participation in public affairs will be fostered or determined insofar as political authorities, and especially policymakers, are aware of their obligations as guarantors of rights and as the people responsible for enforcing the existing legal framework, and at the same time, are capable of committing to a coherent policy that offers youth opportunities for dialogue and participation. The project document could have included a more relevant analysis of these risk factors, which would have facilitated the development of a relevant, concrete strategy to raise awareness among the authorities—one that was capable of yielding better outcomes in this component.

Finally, it should be noted that gender equity was one of the project’s cross-cutting components, offering young people opportunities to improve the quality of their democratic participation. The participants commented with satisfaction that *“despite the cultural prejudice in rural areas, where we have long been taught that ‘women’s place is in the home and men’s is in the workplace,’ and the fact that some girls don’t want to participate because they don’t want to take time away from their household chores’... the project managed to achieve equitable participation by young women and men. It enlisted the support of their families and, today, many young women hold positions of responsibility in the youth networks.*

(ii) Effectiveness

The project strengthened several effectiveness factors as a result of its outstanding capacity to implement the activities and achieve the outcomes and objectives initially identified. The



Values training group for young people

first component was geared to strengthening *organizing processes*. Here, the project conducted a participatory diagnostic study of the youth rights situation. The data collected enabled it to identify what rights needed greater attention, providing youth from the Nacaome and Choluteca networks with systematized knowledge and real data that could be presented formally to any public or private organization. This study was published and shared with local authorities in every community involved.

The associative capacities of youth were strengthened through participatory

processes, involving 247 young leaders in the identification and creation of associations. In Choluteca, 22 organizations were identified and 15 new ones created. In Nacaome, which had not significant experience with youth participation, the first 8 organizations were created. By the end of the project, 20 youth groups had been organized; 13 of them were student governments that fight for young people's right to an education; 4 of them, communication networks that defend the right to freedom of expression; and 3 of them, groups of performers that promote and defend the right to recreation, art, and culture.

The second project component supported *training processes*, with the goal of informing and educating young people about their rights, thus strengthening youth leadership and participation. To this end, CDH developed a participatory training methodology that was implemented by youth facilitators, which motivated young people to participate and tackle these issues. The challenge was not only to give them the opportunity to know and understand their rights but for them to exercise them and share that information with other young people. In the interviews and group meetings, the young people stated that the workshops had "awakened them," since many of them had been unaware of their rights and had been unconscious of the violations and undermining of their rights. Parents, teachers, and journalists all mentioned the positive results that the project had achieved with youth empowerment, enabling young people to put the issue of youth rights squarely on the local social and political agenda.

The project trained more than 180 members of youth organizations in the topics of leadership, social and political strengthening, lobbying, and the development of promotional skills and techniques. Although the project sought to reach a target population aged 15–30, 90% of the participants were between the ages of 15 and 20, and some were under 15 (12–15). One of the

challenges in this project was finding people over the age of 20 in rural communities, as people of that age have often emigrated, gotten married, or simply have other priorities. It might be a good idea to determine whether, in the future, the target ages should be 13–25. Another marked success is the percentage of girls involved, which exceeded the expected outcomes. This was accomplished thanks to use of girl facilitators, who went house to house inviting young women in their communities to participate, putting parents at ease so that they would allow their daughters to participate in the training activities. The project also covered the cost of participation for one mother from the community, so that she could chaperone a group of girls when the training was held outside the community.

The third project component centered on the strengthening political advocacy capacity. The project was very successful in empowering youth networks in Nacaome and Choluteca, even though there had been little time for this phase. It improved lobbying and advocacy skills, as well as the networks' interinstitutional liaison and organizing capacity. The MYC are up and running in both municipalities after receiving training and materials to support the drafting of political advocacy plans. Local groups and sector and municipal networks make up the *Movimiento Juvenil del Sur* (MJS), which also mobilizes other municipal networks in the municipalities of Orocuina, Apacilagua, Morolica, Liure, Amapala, Langué, and El Corpus. MJS is comprised of 9 municipal youth networks with a total of 3,909 members (1,722 women, or 44%; and 2,187 men, or 56%). MSJ also organized the Exercising the Power of Youth campaign to raise awareness among the general public and state (h)8(a)40(r.61 Tm 0.1748(e3(u)8

young people's right to participate and the need to provide opportunities to encourage the exercise of that right, especially in matters related to local governance.

In this component, however, the success achieved depended to some extent on the situation in each municipality. The Nacaome network opened channels for dialogue with local authorities, which led to the drafting of a youth policy that was accepted by the municipal government and is awaiting the allocation of a budget. Not so the efforts of the Choluteca network, which, despite repeated attempts, has

during the drafting of political agendas and public policy proposals. Optimal resource use even allowed the project to hire an expert in quality control of these products.

Concerning the programmed implementation schedule, the project requested a four-month extension (until July 2013) with no change in the total budget, which UNDEF approved. Originally planned for 24 months, the intervention was implemented in 28 months. The reasons behind the request for an extension were essentially qualitative, since the aim was to advance the processes launched in remote rural communities that wished to participate to strengthen the MJS and in communities where the networks had encountered more difficulties. This required time for youth organizations formed in the new communities to organize as best they could and support the creation of municipal networks. It was also necessary to offer the same training in those communities. In addition, this process required technical assistance on the ground tailored to the characteristics of each municipality, taking into account the problems encountered by young people in establishing forums for dialogue with the local authorities (which was easier in Nacaome than in the municipality of Choluteca). At the same time, MJS, which was in the organizing process, sought to create other municipal networks that, while operating in the same territory (Southern Region), were new actors not initially identified as beneficiary groups. Specifically, four municipalities joined MJS, boosting its potential for advocacy in the region. In fact, the project managed to create a group of 56 new youth associations, 17 in Orocuina, 22 in Apacilagua, 8 in Morolica, and 908()43.140()

Regional Youth Network. At the same time, these young people have gained representation in *patronatos* (representative government entities), water commissions, local committees, the city council, the Intermunicipal Committee, and the *Mesa Nacional de Diálogo* (National Dialogue Roundtable).

- The MYC's joint development and promotion of public agendas and policies in the two municipalities as a result of the opportunities for organized participation. This resulted in the adoption of a public policy agenda in the two municipalities, although the municipal governments have yet to allocate the respective budget. In Nacaome, this is the first time that a youth policy with a focus on rights has been adopted.
- The involvement of journalists and relevant media, which helped bring the issue of youth rights to the public and publicize events and the youth agendas and policies. A group of well-known journalists is interested in broadcasting a series of radio programs

be summarized as work “by the people, with the people, and for the people.” The organization’s current objective is to promote the organizing and economic, cultural, and political empowerment of local stakeholders, mainly youth and women. CDH has been working in the department of Valle since 2007, employing a multistakeholder approach that has yielded a network of contacts and collaboration with actors with diverse profiles (grassroots organizations, NGOs, networks, movements, rural cooperatives, producers, teachers, religious leaders, etc.) working in different sectors. The organization also has many regional contacts in Latin America, all of which has enhanced its profsrofsrofricam4 aning

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action in the implementation of public policy. In addition, OXFAM Quebec is interested in supporting initiatives in Nacaome. These initiatives are good indicators of the sustainability of the project's initiatives. Many of the CDH projects under way are receiving financial support from the EU, USAID, COUNTERPART International, Trocaire, Act Alliance, Christian Aid, the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), CESAL, and other financial partners. All of this reflects the health and potential for independence achieved by the national organization, which will undoubtedly foster continuity and beneficiary ownership.

(v) UNDEF value added

Statements by PMMLAL and CDH members and program beneficiaries T EMC /P <</MCID 4/Lang (en-U

V. Conclusions

The evaluation team drew its conclusions and lessons learned from interviews and group meetings with the beneficiaries, experts, and other stakeholders involved in the project.

(i) The project put a new rights- and gender-based paradigm of youth on the political and social agenda. The empowerment of youth leaders has awakened a desire in young people to organize and actively participate in local public affairs in order to exercise their civil rights. The project thus contributes specific value added in the country's current context of sociopolitical transition, raising young people's awareness about their rights and promoting gender equity as a basic component of democratic processes. The idea is to promote long-term change that contributes to the development of a new perception of young people's place in society. Direct involvement by beneficiaries in the preparation of the diagnostic study and methodological and operational framework fostered ownership and achievement of the expected outcomes. This conclusion follows from findings on relevance, effectiveness and impact.

(ii) The project boosted capacity and organizing opportunities for and with youth. The support provided for the creation and training of sector and municipal youth networks and the creation of *Movimiento Juvenil del Sur* has yielded organized 0.122 0.2840()-11(J)

(iii) Prioritize the development of a communication strategy that includes journalists and

Annex 2: Documents Reviewed

Project documents:

- PO Note - UNDEF;
- Project Document;
- Mid-term and Final narrative reports;
- Milestone verification report (2);
- Project extension request form;
- Extension report;
- Financial report;
- Website: <http://www.progettomondomlal.org> and www.centrocdh.org

Documents prepared within the framework of the Project:

- Human Development Center CDH & ProgettoMondo Mlal, 2013,(r)12(t)-7(T BT BT/.982. 14(o))12(t)-7(2T

Annex 3: Persons Interviewed

December 1, 2013	
Arrival, international consultant	
Coordination meeting, Luisa Aguilar and Sandra Gómez	International Consultant Local Consultant
Adelina Vásquez	Country Director CDH
December 2, 2013	
María Luisa Milani	Project Manager, PMMLal Project office, Italy
Silvia Ayon	Central American Coordinator – PMMLal, Nicaragua Project Implementing Agency
Adelina Vásquez	Country Director, CDH
Héctor Gerardo Herrera	Coordinator, Empowerment Component, Civil Society
German Reyes	Regional Coordinator – CDH Southern Region
Martha Edis Rodríguez	Administrator, CDH – Southern Region
Dilcia Rosario Izaguirre Aguilar	Technician, CDH Southern Region
Frances Meza	Technician, Organization and advocacy component CDH- Southern region
Cándido Josué Flores Contrera	Former Youth Technician
Anarda Yesenia Moreno	Deputy Director, Escuela Normal Mixta del Sur
Vilma Lila Salinas Motino	Chief of Human Resources, National University of Honduras in Choluteca
Cloris Patricia Ordóñez Gómez	Assistant Carrier Coordinator, National University of Honduras
Lilian Suyapa Moreno Silva	Academic Coordinator, National University of Honduras in Choluteca
Luisa María Aguilar	International Consultant
Sandra Gómez Ventura	Local Consultant
December 3, 2013	

Cé

Silvia Ayon*	Central American Coordinator – PMMLal
Héctor Gerardo Herrera*	Coordinator, Empowerment Component, Civil Society
Dilcia Rosario Izaguirre Aguilar*	Technician, CDH Southern Region
Adelina Vásquez*	Country Director CDH
José Suárez	Father of a beneficiary from Tapatioca-Rio, Choluteca, Community of Choluteca
Yudelis Elizabeth Flores Osotro	Sector Network – Red NAJEPROC- RAJUMCH
Jissel Marbely Ordóñez Núñez	Sector Network – Red NAJEPROC- RAJUMCH
Victor Manuel Flores García	Sector Network – Red NAJEPROC- RAJUMCH
Emiliano Osorto	Water Network
Enrique Álvares	President, local community committee
Christian Josué Flores Ramos	Sector Network – Red NAJEPROC- RAJUMCH
Erick Emmanuel Castillo	Sector Network – Red NAJEPROC- RAJUMCH

