



# **PROGRESS IN A SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR CSO IN HONDURAS**

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# Introduction

The present study aimed at assessing the progress of an environment conducive to development and activities of the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) is performed in a country with many contrasts, complex social relationships and experiencing its worst economic crisis, social and politics.

Honduras is today considered one of the most violent nations in the world, with an index of 84 people died violently per 100,000 inhabitants, even without the existence of a civil war or neighboring countries, there are no tribal disputes or social movement backlash on claims of territories. The country is marked by high inequality, impunity, corruption and the rise of criminal gangs linked to kidnapping, extortion, human trafficking in their emigration to the United States of America and of course, being in the center of the continent, with costs to the two ocean, drug traffic. This is a country where poverty levels are coming to extremes.

This is a republic that just four years ago, on June 28, 2009, the dominant political class, associated with corporate entrepreneurs made use of the National Congress and the armed forces to execute a coup that ended up destroying the fragile institutional democratic. Since then, rates of poverty, insecurity, human rights violations of all kinds, distrust of public and private institutions have increased alarmingly. The external and internal debt has reached scores of millions and millions of dollars and providing key public services, health, education, social investment generally have deteriorated immeasurably.

Although an election was held the same year of the coup, the political context of constitutional breakdown, did not allow a truly transparent and reliable process. This caused the emergence of a government evidently weak, with little financial capacity to meet the enormous social problems since it was created in an environment of not being accepted by the international community, a country expelled from regional organizations such as the Central America Integration System (SICA) and the American States Organization (OEA). That is a weak government at national and international levels.

On top of that panorama, a National Congress under the absolute power of a single party, whose presidency was given to a citizen from the moment showed his ambition to become the President of the Republic, and even if the same political party Executive power has been obvious that trying to legislate for their own interests and economic groups that seek to monopolize natural resources (water, forests, mines, land, energy, telecommunications utilities, ports and airports)

At the height of the years 2012 and 2013, a period of time subject of this study, political and social contradictions have worsened, both are just election years in Honduras ( November 2012 primaries or internal party , and November 24 2013 general election for president, congress and mayors). Are moments full of political accommodation, political passions, of constant complaints and claims between the leaders. Such is the division of ideas and positions, which for the first time participate in the general election 9 parties ( in 2009 , and since 1994 , only took 5 parties), but to tell the truth, sticking to public opinion polls, only four have a genuine chance of winning. According to experts, these elections are probably the less absenteeism, after decades that only 47 % of voters chose their rulers.

This extensive introduction , it seems important to do , for the compression of the difficulty in responding to indicators provided for this study, as civil society organizations, as well as the general public, are discussed in an atmosphere charged with political connotations, internal divisions, little articulation and always walking between trying to influence a government (executive ) weakened economically, and a Congress apparently strong and controlled by a single party, with socialization demagogic actions and decisions contrary laws when approved, which is prefixed to the public consultations before legislating, but always ending regulations enacting pro- business groups that advocate and with little attention to the proposals from CSOs. Examples of this are the new mining laws, amendments to the labor code to allow part-time employment sacrificing the historical workers conquests, the establishment of a framework for special development regions, promoted as " model cities ", which are practically decrees granting territories and natural resources to foreign investors, despite popular rejection and the most of CSOs.

That is, in these circumstances, we find that CSOs fear of being repressed or losing their status, prefer to remain silent for better times incidence, others are provided to legitimize the actions of Congress or the Executive, over some incidence engaged only in the context of municipalities without advancing to a national understanding of the issues on which they want to act, and, of course, many other constantly contradicts the rulers and made efforts coordination and cooperation with social movements.

Therefore, it is understood, that the answers to the questions to find the indicators are sometimes dual, with a yes and a no, depending on the time and circumstance in which they answer the question or the investigation performed.

We seek to place in this study, those answers and conclusions which we found more consensus and closer to this complex reality of CSOs. Surely, with other criteria, we could conclude that there is an enabling environment for CSO development, or else conclude that CSOs are disappearing state repression, because both ends have found in this research effort, which, as noted in the preceding paragraphs, the complex political, social and economic differences generate. We prefer to present what we think, from the experience of ASONOG, as the most suitable and verifiable unbiased conclusions.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **A. background**

The Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (ASONOG) began in the early 80`s as an initiative to coordinate efforts of a group of organizations working with refugee populations in the border areas of western Honduras. In 1988 is organized as network and oriented towards development work and defense of human rights in border areas. In later years, focuses its advocacy work to generate or reform and inclusive public policies. Currently its scope covers almost 15 of 18 departments of the country. Their programs and projects involving:

- Citizen Participation and Democratic Governance
- Food Security and Sovereignty
- Rural Business Development
- Developing skills for health
- Youth Leaders in Action
- Gender equity and women's rights
- Risk management

In the implementation of these lines of work, contributes to strengthening citizen participation and organizational transparency municipal commissions, municipal and regional tables of food security, municipal and regional tables of risk management, municipal health committees, regional advocacy spaces, networks women, youth networks, organizations defending human rights.

Has established and contributed to strengthening national networks of civil society organizations for advocacy in Honduras. So ASONOG is part of the Western Regional Space (EROC), Civil Society Group (GSC), the Alliance for Food Sovereignty and Agrarian Reform (A SARA), National Coalition against Climate Change, organizations and Communities against Mining Coalition and other national and international entities.

Its Mission is: To generate, promote and strengthen participatory processes of organization, coordination, management and advocacy aimed at bringing about change for better conditions and quality of life of the population.

And its Vision: To be the network from the local alternative proposal capable of influencing sustainable human development processes and the strengthening of Democracy working with the poor and excluded from Honduras to build a more just and equitable society.

([www.asonoh.hn](http://www.asonoh.hn))

ASONOG comprises 15 organizations, including the Christian Agency for Integral Development of Honduras (OCDIH) and Mennonite Social Action Commission (CASM), that are active participants in the events and proposals for effective aid. Through the participation of these organizations is that we applied to intervene in the preparation of this evaluation work of the context in which they develop or operate the Honduran civil society organizations.

To make this work we follow the following methodology:

- ~ Research documentary sources
- ~ Interviews with key informants CSO
- ~ The documentation and key informant interviews are representative of the range of CSOs working in the country.
- ~ Institutional meeting of ASONOG affiliated organizations
- ~ Electronic media consultation of civil society organizations
- ~ Accompaniment to meetings with social organizations platforms, especially partners of development cooperation agencies.

## **HONDURAS**

### **A1. Identify the country: Honduras, Central America.**

Its official name is the Republic of Honduras and its capital is the Central District consists of the cities of Tegucigalpa and Comayagüela

Bordered on the north and east by the Caribbean Sea, southeast with the Republic of Nicaragua, to the south by the Gulf of Fonseca and the Republic of El Salvador, and west by the Republic of Guatemala.

Its territory, including its islands, is 112,492 km<sup>2</sup>. And its population now exceeds 8 million. It is a multiethnic, mixed whites are the majority,, indigenous features ( Lenca , Miskito , Tolupanes or Xicaques, Chorti, Pech, Tawahkas ) and Afro: Garifunas and English-speaking Africans descendants.

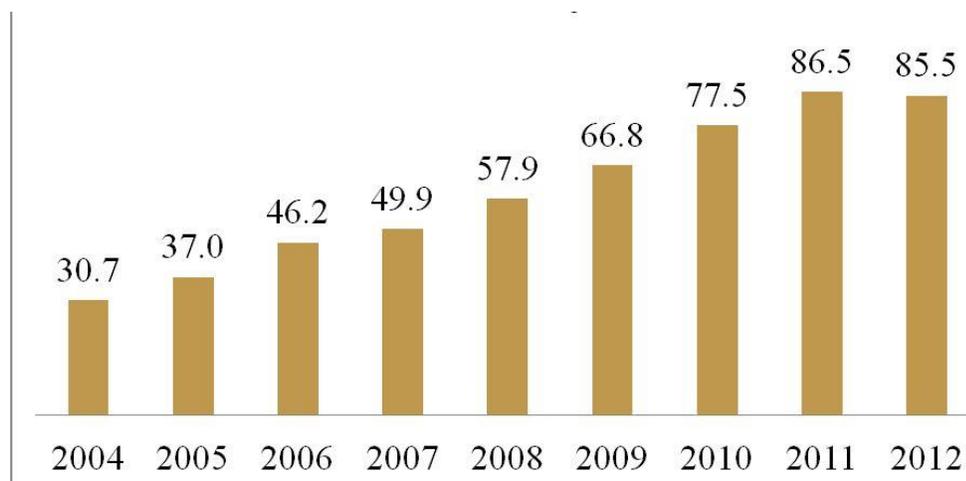
Honduras is divided into 18 departments and 298 municipalities. The form of government is republican, democratic and representative. The power is exercised by three branches: legislative, executive and judicial, complementary and independent, not subordinate, according to their constitution approved in 1982.

The country's main economic activities are agriculture, trade, manufacturing, mining, forestry, finance and utilities. It is the sixth largest coffee exporter in the world market and leading exporter of tropical fruits and tilapia.

## High levels of crime and violence in Honduras

Honduran society is shocked by the levels of violence and crime in the country under discussion. The causes are multiple, ranging from impunity to territorial control of vast areas of the country by organized crime, from poverty and marginalization, to the proven corruption of judicial officers, particularly the national police.

At the end of 2012, statistics of violent deaths amounted to almost 86 people per 100,000 inhabitants. The Centre for Development Studies (CESPAD), presents the following table comparing the percentage growth of violence in recent years:

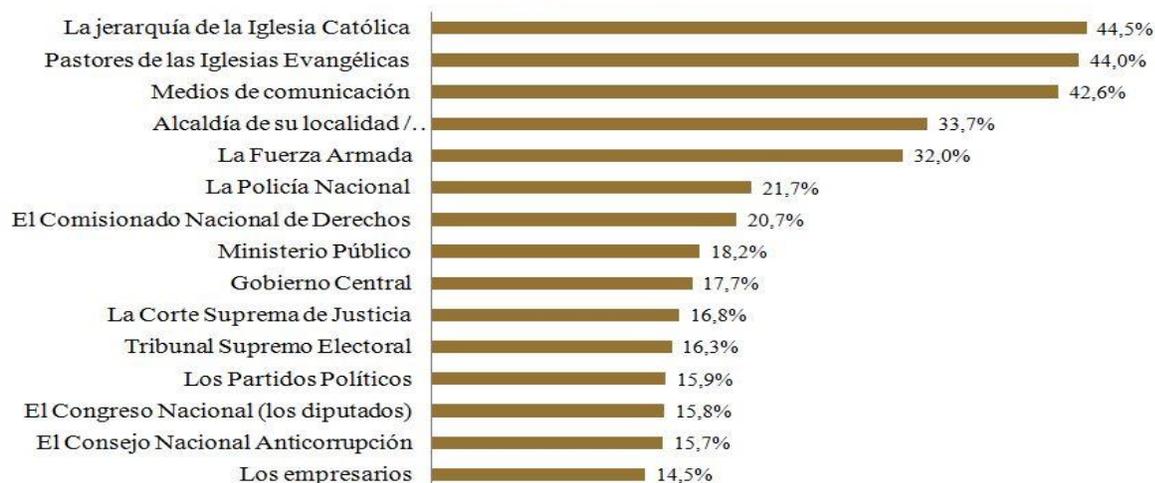


## The profound deterioration of institutional legitimacy

What best reflects the weakness of the state, is the lack of confidence that the general population has on the different institutions. Even social distrust reaches the Supreme Electoral Tribunal and the election process as a whole, gives us the pattern of illegitimate origin. That is, if the democratic system of elections the rulers and the population does not trust the election process and its governing body, then the originating organization of the state is in doubt.

The following charts, made by CESPAD based on opinion surveys, illustrate quite the conclusion expressed above:

**Porcentaje de personas con mucho o algo de confianza en instituciones o sectores sociales en el 2012**



We can easily deduce that state institutions are highly discredited in front of the Honduran people, this includes traditional political parties ( Liberal and National ) or traditional cut (UD , DC , PINU ) which until 2012 owned the electoral scene .

That is, any action from the state levels is viewed with suspicion and distrust by the Honduran people, only a profound change in these structures, a frontal and decisively against corruption, could restore confidence to the population, but not identified that will in the dominant political and economic classes today. On the contrary , the absolute control of Congress, Supreme Court and ultimately the Public Ministry by the National Party (in government ) tends , although official statements to the contrary , to deepen the conditions of impunity and corruption. Apparently, the ruling classes are aware that hardly can stay in absolute power after the next elections (scheduled for November 24, 2013) and, instead of proposing profound changes, intended to ensure privileges for their partial and allies.

## The fiscal crisis

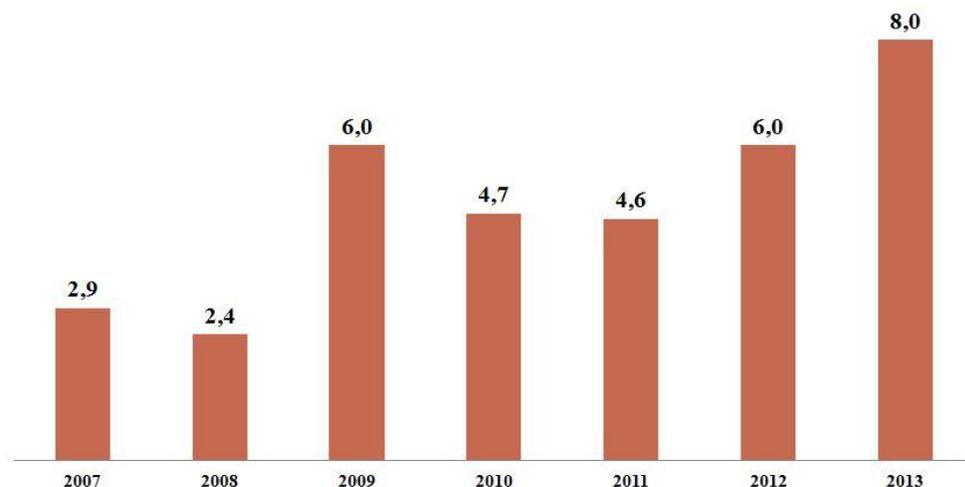
Tax experts agree that it is experiencing the most difficult time for the state's finances. The Nationalist government of Porfirio Lobo Sosa, just do not have the resources for running costs and much less public investment. Receive enough revenue lower than expected to cover the budget of the republic. They try to justify the deficit to bankrupt the government received no international support for resource locking the country suffered because of the coup of June 28, 2009 (Lobo took office on January 27, 2010 after a disputed election in the context of a %6e facto+government)

However, is obvious that can no set economic policy, especially tax collection, able to maintain or exceed the fiscal deficit situation already was dragging from previous governments.

The "Diagnosing the 2008-2012 public finances and prospects for 2013" prepared by the Central American Institute for Fiscal Studies (ICEF) states: "The Honduran public finances are in a very difficult situation that illustrates blunt: of central government deficit of 2.4% of GDP, in 2008, the

country had a deficit of 6.2% in 2009. The deficit was reduced to 4.8 and 4.2% in 2010 and 2011 respectively, before rising to 6% in 2012. Public debt rose from 21.7% of GDP in 2008 to 35.4% in 2012, which is explained by the strong accumulation of domestic debt, in the amount of 13,145.7 million Lempiras in 2008 (695.4 million dollars) , went to 54522.7 million Lempiras in 2012 (2795.7 million). It is expected that in 2013 the amount of domestic debt can finish in about 70,000 million Lempiras (3441.3 million)+

Independent tax analysts say the gap between revenues and expenditures of the Government will 23137.7 million Lempiras, excessive estimate based on current expenditure. In 2012, the central government deficit was L21, 516 600 000, equivalent to 6% of GDP and by 2013 is expected to reach 8% of GDP. Graphically, the relationship per year fiscal deficit is reflected as follows:



The government, in this situation, has chosen to seek income by national and international loans, either by direct application of credits and the sale of bonds attempting to attract investment through concessions of territory (cities model) and logically external borrowing.

There is consensus that domestic debt of Honduras was increase immediately after the coup. The bond issue has been constant in the present administration, the use of resources of the pension funds of public employees (INJUPEN, INPREMA) and direct loans from domestic banks have amounted to 70,000 million Lempiras.

External debt has also increased alarmingly. After receiving the cancellation of its external debt , as a highly indebted country , is gradually turning to new loans, either under international loans conditional or through acquisition of fuels under Petrocaribe during the days immediately preceding June 2009, that even soft loan, swell the debt portfolio .

In May 2013, according to data from the Central Bank of Honduras, the balance of the country's total external debt stood at 5431.4 million, 588.9 million more than reported by the entity to December 2012. If the behavior continues, the total increase in external debt in December 2013, would be about 1,200 million increase over the year 2012.

Adding external and internal, the State owe 7.211 million dollars at the end of the first half of 2013, representing 38% of the gross domestic product (GDP).

## **OTHER ASPECTS OF HONDURAS CRISIS**

In a framework part of a State undercapitalized, indebted, without public and private investment, national or foreign, in a international financial crisis, other aspects make up the poverty level of Honduran people and the deterioration of their living conditions. In general, we can mention the following:

- ~ Growing unemployment and migration (with its social consequences)
- ~ Freezing salaries
- ~ Currency devaluation
- ~ Systematic increase in fuel prices
- ~ Price increase for basic food products
- ~ Little support for agricultural production to competition with food imports

That is, a persistent increase in poverty and inequality

## **CIVIL SOCIETY IN HONDURAS**

We understand as civil society, to the cluster of organizations without the state or the market, act in all areas of society: academics, dissemination, research, promotion of citizen participation and social audit oversight, promotion and advocacy, proposals rural and urban development, initiatives strengthening micro and medium enterprises, in short, a number of activities from residential organizations to professional associations. The concept is so broad that ground confused and / or conjoined as a social movement.

However, a feature which separates what is called civil society of the social movement, is the ability of the former to the lobby and advocacy, since the incorporation or non-governmental organizations that manage resources of international cooperation, official or solidarity, have more opportunity to make public their positions, articulated in federations and networks, be related to specific issues, relations with governments and advocate of reform proposals and approval of legislation, while social movement prefers the diverse expressions of protest as resources to enforce their demands and rights.

Given the diversity of organizations and civil society networks, some act in relationships approval or dissimulation about the actions of the government and others, the majority, are identified with the social movement which is considered strategic allies.

The coup also contributed to bare the political positions of the organizations of civil society, had to be manifested publicly in favor or no of constitutional breakdown. There were organizations that were provided to legitimate the acts of repression, others declare themselves neutral and many who openly join the opposition to the coup and contribute substantially with economic resources and logistics to popular mobilizations.

But of course, in a society as polarized suddenly, the circumstances of the coup affect them. On one hand, many suffered internal divisions, others are discredited to the popular sectors for their

participation in the coup concerning losing its status, others have lost their influence in some instances the state and many more faced the dilemma that recognized or not the government emerged from the coup. For organizations of SC relationships or contacts with the State bodies, incidence and management targets, are indispensable for their existence and reason for being, so to break that relationship dynamics weakens them. Moreover, the SCO faced the difficult situation of losing prestige with the social movement opposition to the coup, or act for influence to a government that gradually reach international recognition.

At present, we can point out that Civil Society has overcome the political divisions and internal polarization, restored relations with the state and is developing advocacy processes, with more or less success, social issues, justice operation, security citizenship and human rights.

## **CONTACTO DE SEGUIMIENTO**

### **A2. Contacto para el seguimiento:**

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**ASONOG**  
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## **On violations of the right to freedom of association and freedom of expression**

### **B. Area One: Actions affecting universally accepted human rights and freedoms the CSO**

#### **B1. In the past two years, has there been government harassment or intimidation?**

**A/ Yes.**

Freedom of association and peaceful assembly has been "relatively" respected in the last two years (2012 and 2013) by the present government. Not so the freedom of expression in its broadest sense and deep to dissent and criticize state policies and actions without receiving

some level of harassment or " negative identification " by government officials, which then closed spaces or employment opportunities or contracts to those who make such criticisms and the worst to follow intimidation, threats, and attacks on the physical integrity of those (as) who criticize them. Specific examples thereof are the harassment and attacks on journalists and human rights activists, in a clear intent to silence his free speech criticism. The most recent case is that of journalist Rodolfo Hernandez, who was abruptly canceled his television program " Do not get " for his constant criticism of government corruption in the purchase without bidding or bid rigging of drugs, complaints that are involving relatives of the president of the republic.

There have also been, in the complex context we talked about in the introduction, murders of journalists. A case by circumstance and violence has been the Anibal Barrow (journalist) kidnapped on June 24, 2013, in the city of San Pedro Sula, Cortes department, north, and found dead, July 9, near the municipality of Villanueva in the same department, twenty kilometers from where he was kidnapped, with clear evidence of gunshots in his body and subsequent attempts to burn.

Barrow maintained a morning television show on Globo TV station, known opposition to the coup and support to Freedom and Refundación Party (LIBRE) main opposition party. Although Barrow was one of its journalists and presenters less confrontational, his program was channel complaints and opinions against the regime.

Anibal Barrow's murder, according to police sources, was due to attempted theft and personal problems, but logically creates fear among his colleagues; he was one of a list of 29 journalists killed in the past three years.

Of course, in a country mired in violence and insecurity, it is hard to distinguish between state enforcement actions and actions of organized crime and common crime

However, according to the online journal "Venas Abiertas" (<http://www.venasabiertas.com>) in an interview to the priest Ismael Moreno (Padre Melo), director of Radio Progreso ([www.radioprogreso.net](http://www.radioprogreso.net)) this argues that there is a common pattern in the killing of journalists in Honduras, although not precisely issues political or ideological.

"It's not ideological or political pattern, because there are dead who were allied to the Popular Resistance against the coup, but also those who were enrolled to the media who supported the coup. There are those who did not connect with any of the political and ideological polarized"

And the " Padre Melo " also adds in that interview that " all those deaths we can put in a context that has a basis a common pattern: an institutional state has lost its nature has been corrupted and is no longer expression the rule of law to represent and channel interests and decisions of those who practice the law of the strongest, and this is where the horror of these deaths . " , " In the current Honduras , just a person , placed in front of a microphone or of a computer or a camera , post or disseminate news affecting who in the community, the municipality or the department has power , big money and big influence on his life is put at risk mortal " , " this risk increases when social communicators touch unresolved contentious issues , such as defense or demand for land, the defense of natural resources , health , education, fiscal policy in which all contribute to the state according to their revenues, income and property fairness in the application of the law or simply that the justice system works or when demand democratization and public access to information and access to the media . "

In these circumstances, the Inter American Press Association (SIP), was expressed on 22 October, deeply concerned about murders and threats against journalists in Honduras and condemned limited access to public information.

In the space below website: <http://www.ifex.org/honduras/es/> can find an exhaustive list of the cases of journalists, media, human rights activists of various vulnerable groups who have suffered harassment and intimidation ..

To hear complaints and discussions about freedom of expression in Honduras, visit [www.clibrehonduras.com](http://www.clibrehonduras.com)

In addition to journalists, in the last two years (2012 and 2013), vulnerable groups, especially human rights defenders (women's groups, youth, LGBTI, ethnic groups), lawyers, peasants dilute (northern region) and opposition members of anti-government political parties, have been followed, threatened, physical assaults and murders, without most of these abuses have been resolved by the authorities.

At present, it is public the prosecuted for indigenous leader and human rights defender of Lenca people of the western region of the country, Berta Caceres, she is being prosecuted for defending, along with the indigenous Lenca, territories and natural resources. (ILO 168 agreement).

<http://www.laprensa.hn/honduras/apertura/328561-98/impunes-los-cr%C3%ADmenes-de-35-periodistas-en-honduras>

<http://www.abogacia.es/2013/05/17/el-asesinato-de-un-abogado-en-honduras-eleva-a-59-la-cifra-de-letrados-muertos-desde-2010/>

[http://www.elpais.cr/frontend/noticia\\_detalle/2/79156](http://www.elpais.cr/frontend/noticia_detalle/2/79156)

<http://www.correodelorinoco.gob.ve/politica/dictan-prision-honduras-contra-lider-indigena/>

For its part, the Broad Movement for Dignity and Justice (MADJ) denounced the persecution and intimidation of its General Coordinator Victor Fernandez Guzman. The MADJ has filed lawsuits against mining companies and has excelled as a defender of indigenous leaders in conflicts with mining company and hydropower production in ancestral territories.

Recently, the National Party candidate Juan Orlando Hernandez in electoral speeches inciting hatred expressed against the attorney Fernandez y Berta Oliva director of the Relatives of the Disappeared Committee in Honduras (COFADEH), in reaction to the involvement of both advocates Human Rights in press conferences and meetings held with U.S. Senators, made under the 149 period of the regular session of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR).

[http://www.madj.org/content/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=329:se-profundiza-persecucion-contra-victor-fernandez-coordinador-del-movimiento-amplio-por-la-dignidad-y-la-justicia&catid=63:pronunciamientos&Itemid=107](http://www.madj.org/content/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=329:se-profundiza-persecucion-contra-victor-fernandez-coordinador-del-movimiento-amplio-por-la-dignidad-y-la-justicia&catid=63:pronunciamientos&Itemid=107)

## **On changes of laws and regulations for the registration of CSOs**

**B2.** In the past two years, have there been changes regarding the laws and regulations for the registration of CSOs or the application of the laws affecting the operations of CSOs?

**A/Yes**

In April 2011 Congress passed the "Law for Control of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) with which it is intended to regulate the activities of entities such development." The adoption of this law was a response to the process of monitoring state legislative organizations like C-Libre and CIPRODEH who reported poor performance of legislators and legislative rule violation interests of political groups. Although it apparent the law reflects the interests of the sources of funding for CSOs and what they do with those resources, it is assumed that interest on tax audit, in practice these laws and regulations have also served to exercise vigilance and political control these organizations, especially those engaged in critical and social audit requirements successive governments.

<http://proceso.hn/2011/03/31/Nacionales/CN.aprueba.ley/35658.html>

This arbitrary state action, motive to different networks of civil society organizations as FOPRIDEH, COIPRODEM, ASONOG and agencies ERP ACI Group, to formulate and proposal of a Special Law for Non-Governmental Development Organizations NGDOs. And after a long process of advocacy is achieved approval and publication in the official Gazette by executive agreement 65-2013, and in October the adoption of its rules, and is an important achievement of the SCO in terms strengthening the legal and operational framework of the organizations.

In late 2011 Congress passed the Special Law for the Involvement of Private Communications, better known as the "Law of listening" as a clear intervention in the privacy and freedom of action of the citizens and CSOs. Although the argument is that it applies to organized crime and under strict regulation, it is known that such laws and regulations once approved by governments in power are used for political purposes against opposition who do.

<http://www.elheraldo.hn/Secciones-Principales/AI-Frente/Aprobada-la-Ley-de-Escuchas-Telefonicas>

A digital version of this law can be downloaded at:

[http://www.honduraslaboral.org/media/uploads/ley\\_escuchas.pdf](http://www.honduraslaboral.org/media/uploads/ley_escuchas.pdf)

## **About changes in policies affecting CSOs**

**B3.** Are there any recent changes in the legal or political barriers that hinder the ability of CSOs to openly express their opinions, especially on matters critical of government policies?

**A/ Yes**

From December 2012 to October 2013, the ruling party from the Congress and with the support of the Executive Branch has been irregularly shaped removing and appointing authorities in the judiciary and the Public Ministry, with a clear political intent and a garment of "legality" that lets control of the opposition and criticize and oppose their actions. Includes CSOs

[.http://www.elheraldo.hn/Secciones-Principales/Al-Frente/Congreso-de-Honduras-asesta-golpe-tecnico-a-la-CSJ](http://www.elheraldo.hn/Secciones-Principales/Al-Frente/Congreso-de-Honduras-asesta-golpe-tecnico-a-la-CSJ)

<http://www.laprensa.hn/inicio/382035-96/controversia-en-honduras-por-elecci%C3%B3n-del-fiscal-general-y-el-adjunto>

In the months of May and June 2013 the current government maintained a strong contest with the media organizations for the purpose of establishing and implementing the Telecommunications Framework Act, better known as "gag law", which was intended to impose stricter regulations on the content and actions of the media, some of which are constituted not only as commercial enterprises, but also as CSOs in the area of communications. Such a measure would not prosper and instead the media managed to impose a "self-regulatory agreement" to provide information to the general public, which was accepted by the government.

<http://www.elheraldo.hn/Secciones-Principales/Pais/Honduras-Asociaciones-se-retiran-de-discusion-de-ley-mordaza>

Another issue related to legal or political obstacles facing the media recently and CSOs, are the prohibitions established by Security Minister Arturo Corrales Alvares, to provide information on safety issues. This in order to keep hidden information that harms the image of the current government at the expense of the right to information of the citizenry to act more informed on this topic

[.http://www.laprensa.hn/csp/mediapool/sites/LaPrensa/Honduras/Tegucigalpa/story.csp?cid=332866&sid=275&fid=98](http://www.laprensa.hn/csp/mediapool/sites/LaPrensa/Honduras/Tegucigalpa/story.csp?cid=332866&sid=275&fid=98)

## **On legal conditions for access to resources**

**B4.** Are there any recent changes in the legal and political conditions of access to resources - that is, seek, obtain and use resources, including foreigners, for CSOs?

**A/ Yes**

Practically it is the same case and arguments with Control Act NGOs (which mostly covers OSC) established in the previous paragraph.

# LEVELS OF INFLUENCE OF CSOs

## C. Area Two: Measures that influence

**C1.** Are there institutionalized processes inclusive and accessible for political engagement with the government? Does this include marginalized groups? Is participation of CSOs account in policy outcomes? Do NGOs / CSOs have access to government information relevant? Have there been changes in systematic political participation with the government in the last two years?

### **A/ Yes**

If there is something that the government of Porfirio Lobo, the current president of Honduras, as an intelligent strategy to remove pressure from civil society made in the last two years, was open institutional spaces through its various ministries to the various sectors of civil society to participate in the discussion and development of various public policies, although most of them have not been brought to its realization by the lack of allocation of resources by the state itself, demonstrating with this little political and utilization luck CSOs media interests.

Example of what has been said is:

“ The Ministry of Justice and Human Rights, in coordination with various public policies built OSC Human Rights and National Human Rights Plan and Public Policy Violence Prevention for children and youth.

“ The Ministry of Social Development, in coordination with various built OSC Public Policy Early Childhood Protection and Care Public Policy Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Marginalized and vulnerable groups such as children, youth, women, seniors, LGBTI, farmers, and ethnic groups, are invited to the conference discussion, asked opinion, until you get to take into account some of their ideas, but when it comes time to allocate resources and define the programs and projects, they do not come to favor these groups, by contrast is observed as state resources are directed to favor power groups and sectors as businessmen and bankers. An example is the constitution THE PUBLIC-PRIVATE ALLIANCE (COALIANZA) where large private companies (domestic and international), that multimillion contracts and concessions are awarded without proper tenders.

Some NGOs, have access to relevant information from state, but are those close friends to party officials in power, most of the NGOs and CSOs involved or working with the bulk of the population know only superficial information that the government they want to provide, and such information is not important for the benefit of people who are served.

Regarding systematic political participation of CSOs with the government, if it relates to a greater political opening-election, would say yes, because we pass from 5 political parties in the electoral arena in 2009, to have 9 political parties (4 new) for 2012. On the other hand, the government of Porfirio Lobo was characterized from its constitution and the end of it, in keeping comprises various political forces of the five existing parties. For reference documentary about the above topics, see:

- <http://conexihon.info/site/noticia/derechos-humanos/derechos-humanos/lobo-sosa-firma-convenio-para-implementar-la-pol%C3%ADtica>
- [http://www.unicef.org/honduras/14352\\_24145.htm](http://www.unicef.org/honduras/14352_24145.htm)
- <http://www.hondudiario.com/?q=node/1313>
- [http://www.gsc.hn/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=159:grupos-vulnerables-de-occidente-conocen-politica-de-proteccion-social&catid=30:incidencia&Itemid=55](http://www.gsc.hn/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=159:grupos-vulnerables-de-occidente-conocen-politica-de-proteccion-social&catid=30:incidencia&Itemid=55)
- <http://www.proceso.hn/2012/05/08/Pol%C3%ADtica/Honduras.tiene.nueve/51644.html>

## **CSO relations - official Donors**

### **D. Area Three: Relationships of CSOs - Official Donors**

**D1.** Are there mechanisms for donor funding to meet the program priorities of CSOs? Are there mechanisms for disbursement transparent and fair funding? Have there been any changes in the funding mechanisms in the past two years that affect the capacity of CSOs to operate and carry out their mandates?

#### **A/ Yes and No**

The state and the government of Porfirio Lobo held in the last two years, limited resources of international cooperation, to push some programs and social assistance projects as the "Bonus 10 000", the glass of milk, school meals, computers for schools, and others financed by loans

from the World Bank, BID and donations, loans from friendly countries. His image of little government capable and serious corruption problems prevented it from recovering the funds from the account of the millennium (U.S. funding).

The financial resources of the above sources, the government decided to use or place via secretaries of State and Office of the First Lady. Not always used the most appropriate and transparent mechanisms, as they are used to enhance the image of government policy, especially because it is concluding his term. The government has not transferred the funds to finance projects through CSOs, and if you do use to NGOs linked to government officials or to Congress.

Part of international cooperation if it provides direct funding to CSOs establishes requirements complicated, especially for those CSOs with few installed capacity or basic organization, which does not meet all the conditions required for cooperation. CSOs if they have installed capacity to receive and execute financing under optimal conditions of cooperation are forced to align their agendas with the program priorities for cooperation, which is not bad, but not always ideal or desired by CSOs.

International cooperation has varied and diversified in its supply of funds for CSOs in the country, but not always their mechanisms and demands are in compliance ability of CSOs, for example has established the financing consortiums 3 or four CSOs to implement a project, but not always the members are at the same levels and playability thereby flaring or backward opportunities or access to funds more efficient execution.

Some modalities in demand for putting the cooperators as partners in the cooperation or reduce funding for administrative overhead, also limit access to these funds for CSOs who are serious limitations to having to run such projects restrictions.

The current state and Lobo government decided not to run or move cooperation resources to populations or CSOs, bilateral and multilateral cooperation chose mostly to coordinate with the government at risk of losing some of this funding in the payment of a bureaucracy , corruption and inefficiency, but is forced to do so by the implementation of bilateral agreements. Meanwhile freest cooperation agreements chooses CSO financing medium and small projects ensuring that resources reach directly to target populations, although the impact is not as large as the governments say.

On the issue of transparency in the use of resources, it is more efficient in dealing with CSOs with the government, this has major bureaucratic mazes to divert the use and impact of resources. With the agreements or free trade agreements signed by Honduras with different countries, funding mechanisms become more bilateral cooperation and the government and a little less between cooperation and CSOs. Besides that privilege projects to strengthen trade and import capabilities and / or export under the free trade agreement..

<http://www.slideshare.net/Fosdeh/desafos-de-honduras-en-su-relacincon-la-cooperacin-internacional>

## **About inclusive processes of political participation of CSOs**

**D2.** Are donors creating inclusive processes of political participation of CSOs in donor strategies at all levels? Have there been changes in these processes of consultation in the last two years?

### **A/ Yes**

In the past two years we have observed that several cooperating agencies from Europe , North America ( USA and Canada ) and Asia (Japan and Taiwan) , made calls to CSOs to apply for funds , this mechanism gradually becomes more participatory and inclusive , and that CSOs have the opportunity to learn the issues , mechanisms and requirements for accessing funds such calls . CSOs shall always risks pandering to the ideological interests promoted by donors, but over the years we have seen how CSOs have learned to negotiate this relationship of partner organizations in implementing projects. Creating more inclusive processes by the cooperation has to do with the maturity that they have achieved and the strategic vision of generating capacity in CSOs and empowerments toward self- sustainability. An example of good practice and cooperation between CSOs is the case cooperating consortium ICA -ERP Fund

<http://www.aci-erp.hn/main/idx/seccion/que-es-fondoaci/>