POST PROJECT EVALUATION

FOR THE UNITED NATIONS DEMOCRACY FUND

EVALUATION REPORT

UDF- 15-685-HON "Young People for Dialogue and Democracy in Honduras"

Date: 29 November 2019

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This report was written by Eva Otero.

Project Area
This project covered the entire territory of Honduras and especially the city of Tegucigalpa, it being such a political hub (see figure 1).

Figure 1: Project location

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I. OVERALL ASSESSMENT

The general evaluation of the project is very positive, especially considering the complicated socio-political context in which it has been carried out.

The **adequacy** level of the intervention is very high. The initiative has been able to respond both to the specific needs of the youngest parliamentarians and to the "political" needs of the country's youth. The lack of a clear institutional response coupled with the clear need for political participation by young people in Honduras makes the project even more relevant.

The project was also perfectly aligned with the mandate and history of CIPRODEH, especially with regard to democratic strengthening. Its objectives are also in full conformity with the Honduras UNDAF 2017-2021.

The **design** of the project had some very positive aspects, although deficiencies were also detected that have affected some aspects of the implementation and monitoring. Most relevantly, the project was designed following a logical framework approach better suited for a more stable political environment.

Despite the challenging socio-political context in which the project was developed, it managed to remain faithful to its internal logic and to complete most of the **activities** that it had planned, sometimes greatly exceeding expectations. Furthermore, the project developed activities and products of excellent quality, especially the trainings and the methodological process employed for the development of the Youth Legislative Agenda.

In terms of **achievements**, the project motivated and trained key populations on issues that were highly relevant. These knowledge and skills have led to fruitful results, although the fact that the project did not have an effective impact monitoring system makes it difficult to know how far the ripples went.

An informal national network of some 30 youth leaders (the National Youth Committee) was formed. Several of these leaders were involved in other youth networks that have been formed or strengthened through the project´s activities. Furthermore, the composition of the National Committee was gender balanced and included a representation of the LGBTIQ+ community.

The intervention also enhanced the competencies and skills of young MPs of different political parties which, in turn, contributed to improve their legislative work. Most significantly, the project was able to open spaces for political dialogue between the different parties.

Finally, a Youth Legislative Agenda was developed following an inclusive process that involved a large number of youth networks and organizations in different parts of the country. The project managed to get MPs from different parties to endorse the Youth Legislative Agenda and this contributed to several legislative actions.

The level of project **efficiency** is very high considering: a) the relatively low investment; b) the delivery rate; c) the quality of the outputs; and d) the contributions to significant changes under the three outcomes in a hostile political environment.

The budget allocation for the different items was balanced and in line with the objectives of the project with only one exception, the allocation for the coordination team was insufficient.

The communication and the decision-making flow among the project team was always functional and fluid and the transition between the three coordinators that the project had went smoothly**.**

In terms of **sustainability**, the future involvement and ownership of the key stakeholders in the project´s objectives are not guaranteed. The main guarantor of the sustainability of the process is CIPRODEH itself which has the will and the technical capabilities to continue the work of the project.

<u>**Recommendations**</u>

1. <u>For CIPRODEH</u> - To continue working on the issue of **youth political participation**, inside and outside Congress.

2. <u>For UNDEF and CIPRODEH</u> – In future interventions **use Theory of Change** (ToC) as a complementary approach to the logical framework.

3. <u>For CIPRODEH</u> - Develop a **comprehensive gender policy** that includes both gender mainstreaming in the projects and work/life balance policy.

4. <u>For UNDEF</u> - Consider studying on a **case-by-case basis how much it is possible to allocate to project coordination**, depending on the context, the nature of the project, etc.

5. <u>For CIPRODEH</u> - Consider using more participatory research processes.

6. <u>For UNDEF</u> - Increase the **quality of impact monitoring** making the **reporting template more flexible**.

7. <u>For CIPRODEH</u> - Prioritize accompanying the **National Youth Committee** by offering coaching and **training on organizational** and resource mobilization issues.

8. <u>For CIPRODEH</u> - In the case of the **Parliamentary Network**, it is recommended that CIPRODEH continue to **promote spaces for collaboration** between different political parties within the framework of **practical training**.

9. The **Youth Legislative Agenda** may soon become obsolete if it is not put to immediate use.

10. <u>For UNDEF</u> – Consider **further funding** a second phase of this project.

II. THE PROJECT AND THE EVALUATION

The object of this final evaluation is the UNDEF funded project "*Young People for Dialogue and Democracy in Honduras*" implemented by *Centro de Investigación y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos* (CIPRODEH). A reputable Honduran NGO with over 25 years of experience defending human rights and the rule of law in the country.

The project sought to increase the **participation of youth** in the formulation of public **policies** to diminish the phenomenon of social exclusion. To achieve its objectives the project outlined three outcomes:

- **Outcome 1 - Youth participation in policy making:** Increasing the participation of youth in the formulation of public policies and legislation, and other political processes.
- **Outcome 2 - Establishing/strengthening youth networks:** Specially, consolidating the Youth Parliamentary Network (formed by Members of Parliament (MPs) under 35) to develop legislative actions for the benefit of the Honduran youth.
- **Outcome 3 - Influencing legislation:** Developing a National Youth Legislative Agenda adopted by Congress.

These objectives were set against **an extremely complex socio-political backdrop**.

The socio-political context

On June 28, **2009** the then Honduran president, Manuel Zelaya, appeared from Costa Rica, announcing a **coup d'état**. A section of the Liberal Party, the National Party and the Armed Forces had agreed on the abrupt end of his constitutional mandate, which had begun in 2005.

The 2009 coup d'état meant many things: the breakdown of the constitutional order, the closure of an electoral process, and the **beginning of instability and conflict in the country that still exists today**.

Since the coup d'état in 2009 until the current President of Honduras, Juan Orlando Hernández (JOH), **only presidents of the National Party have governed the country**. The conclusion of the 2009 coup did not only see the departure of the constitutional president, Manuel Zelaya, but, at the same time, the dissolution of the two-party system and the abrupt fall of the party from which Zelaya came, the Liberal Party.

The **resistance to the coup was the birth of several political parties** and leaders: on the one hand, Zelaya himself and his Free Party and, on the other hand, Salvador Nasrrala with his Anti-Corruption Party. That resistance politicized the citizens, including the youth, and the occupation of public space gained ground.

The **national elections of 2017 provoked the political unity of the opposition** fighting the increasing concentration of Hernandez's power after his first term in office. The Alliance of Opposition Against Dictatorship was formed including the Free Party, the Anti-Corruption Party and the Innovation and Unity Party, as well as other social sectors. The movement was led by Salvador Nasrrala. His victory seemed resounding, until the **Supreme Electoral Tribunal engaged in a series of anomalous actions** during and after the elections: a) the polls were closed earlier; b) a series of irregularities were overlooked; c) after publicizing Nasrrala's advantage over Juan Orlando Hernandez

(JOH), the electoral system crashed and, when it got stabilized, JOH had the electoral lead. **JOH was declared president on December 4, 2017 for his second term**, amid protests, violence by the Honduran Armed Forces, and the state of siege declared by the government.

The Alliance of Opposition Against the Dictatorship, social movements and popular organizations came together to denounce the electoral coup. The clashes between the demonstrators and the police increased, causing people to be injured, arrested, killed and exiled. **In January 2018, more than 30 people were killed,** and hundreds were wounded.

Despite calls for new elections by international organizations, the coup and electoral fraud were consummated.[1]

Since the so-called "soft coup d'état" in 2017, the Honduran population has normalized what should be exceptional; the dispossession and the structural violence coming from organized crime and from certain State bodies. In spite of the daily death threats, different popular organizations and social movements gathered in 2018 under the umbrella of "*Fuera JOH*" (JOH out).

The "*Fuera JOH*" movement brought together different social movements and popular organizations who demanded a new electoral process and, more recently, the convocation of a National Constituent Assembly with the objective of restoring the Rule of Law in Honduras.

However, JOH's second mandate continued, strengthening the country's economic model based on privatizations. For its part, **the Honduran National Congress seemingly governed against the best interest of the most vulnerable people**, according to a recent report of the Democracy Without Borders Foundation[2].

This situation of political turbulence has affected the implementation of the project's strategies in several ways.

a) In this political crisis, **CIPRODEH has clearly positioned itself in the opposition**, especially after the 2009 coup d'état. More recently the organization is very much identified with the Free Party. In fact, the Director of the organization at the time when the project was implemented is now a presidential candidate in this party.

b) This clear positioning of CIPRODEH has **required an extra dose of know-how and political diplomacy** in order to have been able to work satisfactorily with all the benches of Congress through the project, especially with the National Party, the governing party.

c) The constant political "urgency" in which the country has lived these years has relegated the **youth agenda to a second level**. The electoral processes and the constant political crises have eclipsed the rest of the themes. This has also affected the culture of work within the Congress, where crises and urgency have prevailed.

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[1] https://www.celag.org/honduras-una-decada-de-golpes-e-inestabilidad/
[2] https://www.celag.org/honduras-un-ano-fraude-electoral/

d) One of these political crises, the **presidential elections of November 2017, coincided with the halfway point of the project**. The elections meant the replacement of a large proportion of MPs with whom the project was working. It also meant an even more polarized Parliament in which the work between different political benches was increasingly challenging.

e) Finally, in recent years there has been a **growing disaffection of Honduran youth (and the general population) with respect to their institutions**. This has undoubtedly made it difficult for a project that precisely vindicates the role of political institutions. Although, the same events that have provoked this disaffection have also made the **youth increasingly politicized**. The project has capitalized on the growing interest of Honduran youth in the political situation.

Evaluation methodology

This evaluation has involved the **collective examination** and assessment of the project by stakeholders and beneficiaries. The evaluation framework was **people-centred** whereby stakeholders and beneficiaries were the key actors of the evaluation process and not the mere objects of the evaluation. In addition, the evaluation was gender responsive. This meant **mainstreaming gender** throughout the course of the evaluation in compliance with the UNEG norms and standards[3].

The evaluation followed a **six-step process**: (1) engaging project management and conducting a preliminary desk review; (2) describing the project and evaluation framework; (3) refining the evaluation framework and designing data collection tools; (4) gathering credible evidence; (5) consolidating data and writing the report; (6) sharing the draft report with the main users for feedback then finalization.

In answering the evaluation questions, the evaluator drew from **the best available evidence across a range of sources**, such as interviews, focus group discussions, a survey sent to a sample of 124 project beneficiaries[4], and an ample body of documents.

During the evaluation, **53 people**, 23 men and 30 women were consulted (see Annex 3). 71 documents were reviewed, including activity reports, progress reports, project documents, administrative reviews, multi-stakeholder strategies and third-party documentation (see Annex 2).

The information collected throughout the evaluation process was systematically processed and analysed by the evaluator. The information was **compiled and codified in tables of evidence and analysed using triangulation techniques** to validate findings. The evaluation used Quality Data Analysis (QDA) software ([Dedoose)](#) to support this process. Furthermore, the evaluator analysed available information and insights during a formal preliminary findings session held with the CIPRODEH team in Tegucigalpa at the end of the field mission.

This final report presents the main findings and gives answers to those questions on the basis of evidence.

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[3] http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/1616
[4] 30% responded to the survey

III. EVALUATION FINDINGS

Relevance – Why was this project needed?

The "Relevance" chapter analyses how appropriately the problems identified by the project and the activities that followed responded to the needs of the targeted beneficiaries and other key stakeholders; and how the project design met these needs.

The chapter is divided into three sections; **a) Adequacy**, i.e. how the project addressed the needs and priorities of targeted beneficiaries. This is specifically young parliamentarians and more broadly Honduran youth; **b) Alignment**, this is how the project was clearly within the stakeholders´ mandate, particularly CIPRODEH (the implementing partner), and the Honduras institutions, including the Parliament and the political parties, and the UN; and **c) Design,** meaning how the planned activities and outputs adequately linked up and how/if they provided the best approach to achieve the project´s outcomes.

Adequacy

The adequacy level of the project is **very high**. The initiative has been able to respond both to the specific needs of the youngest parliamentarians and to the "political" needs of the country's youth.

Among the members of Parliament (MPs)

The project has acted **at the most opportune moment** when all the national and international organizations recognized that it was **an absolute priority to work on the political dialogue in Honduras** (see alignment with UN), which is one of the backbones of this project. In this sense, the creation of spaces such as the Youth Parliamentary Network has been particularly relevant.

However, the strategy **most** highlighted by young MPs in terms of its **relevance** has been **the trainings** organized by the project.

According to leading political figures consulted by the evaluation, the political structure gives priority to the individual capacity of parliamentarians, both in campaigning and in carrying out their functions within Parliament, with **very little institutional support** from either political parties or Congress itself.

This clearly **disadvantages the youngest parliamentarians**, with fewer financial resources, fewer networks of contacts and, above all, with **less knowledge of how to handle themselves within Honduran institutions**. For example, it is common practice among parliamentarians to hire the services of external experts to draft bills. Younger parliamentarians cannot access this type of expertise due to a lack of knowledge or financial resources.

These **needs were amply met by the capacity building strategy** of the project

> "*I have to admit that our party does not give us extensive training to do our job as MPs and this project perfectly addresses that need through its trainings*" Young parliamentarian.

Among young people in Honduras

There was unanimity among those consulted by the evaluation that the project responded to the needs of Honduran youth. For example, more than 71% of the people who responded to the survey fully agreed with the statement "*The activities developed by CIPRODEH under the Youth Legislative Assembly project responded to the real needs of youth in terms of political participation*".

Specifically, the stakeholders consulted highlighted the adequacy of the **spaces facilitated by the project for interaction and political reflection**. As already noted in the introduction, since the 2009 coup d'état the population of Honduras in general, and the youth in particular, have experienced a growing interest in the political situation. However, there has been a lack of spaces and mechanisms to facilitate the democratic participation of young people.

Several stakeholders identified the existence of some youth initiatives around specific themes such as violence prevention and unemployment. Nevertheless, there has been a **clear shortage of projects that would empower young people as political subjects** and would activate new leaderships, especially at the national level.

> "*Spaces where the youth can participate are necessary. There are very few and they tend to be on a very local level*" National expert

Alignment

National institutions

The alignment of the project objectives with different stakeholder strategies and mandates is uneven. The evaluation found that the cornerstones of the project are not strategic priorities of certain key stakeholders, such as the Honduran government, political parties and the Parliament itself.

Within the Government there is a specific body dedicated to youth, the National Youth Institute, whose objectives are perfectly aligned with the objectives of the project:

> "(4) To promote the political participation of young people by developing the principle of equal rights and opportunities, enabling access to leadership positions in political parties.

> (5) Promote the organization of young people as an instrument that makes their political and social participation viable" [5]

However, a large majority of the stakeholders consulted have **questioned** the real power of this government agency, as well as **the extent to which youth political participation is a priority issue for the nation's government**. For example, an analysis of the current National Plan 2010 - 2022[6] indicates that the word "youth" is only present on two occasions and that when the document speaks of "young people" it is always in relation to issues such as violence or employment and never in relation to democratic participation.

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[5] http://www.inj.gob.hn/funciones.php

[6] January 2010 "República de Honduras - Visión de País 2010 – 2038 y Plan de Nación 2010-2022"

In the case of **political parties, the promotion of youth participation is also uneven**. For example, the Liberal Party went 13 years without a formal youth movement that was removed from the party's statutes from 2006 to 2015. The governing party (National Party) has some timid measures to promote the participation of the youngest, for example application of quotas on electoral lists for young candidates. Recently, the party dedicated its last National Congress to youth[7].

The political party that seems to have the most youth presence is the Free Party, since according to those consulted it is a party that emerged from the social movements against the 2009 coup d'état and whose militancy is made up eminently of young people.

However, even in the best of cases the evaluation has found **clear barriers to the access of the youngest to positions of decision and power** in the political parties. These barriers are not being addressed institutionally in a consistent manner by the parties.

The **lack of a clear institutional response** coupled with the **clear need for political participation by young people** makes projects such as "Young People for Dialogue and Democracy in Honduras" even more relevant.

The implementing agency

The project is perfectly **aligned with the mandate and history of CIPRODEH** (the implementing agency), especially with regard to democratic strengthening, which is the raison d'etre of the entity. CIPRODEH is an organization of notable reputation and with a trajectory of more than 25 years working "*to integrally democratize Honduran society and strengthen the rule of law*"[8].

Although the issue of youth has not been one of the core strategies of the organization, it is mentioned under several headings in its Strategic Plan 2015-2018[9]. In addition, this particular project builds on a previous initiative of the organization funded by UNFPA that sought to strengthen the role of youth in State institutions.

UN

The objectives are **in full conformity with the Honduras UNDAF 2017-2021**. Specifically, it is aligned with strategic area 2, which advocates "*a Honduras that develops in democracy. A modern, transparent, accountable, efficient and competitive state*" [10].

It is also aligned with the strategies of other UN agencies such as UNDP, which in its strategic framework 2018-2021 mentions "young people" as one of the priority groups for strengthening effective, inclusive and accountable governance[11].

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[7] http://congresonacional.hn/index.php/2019/08/16/el-futuro-del-pais-esta-seguro-con-la-juventud-beligerante-de-mi-partido-mauricio-oliva/

[8] http://ciprodeh.org.hn/index.php/quienes-somos/historia

[9] CIPRODEH, Plan Estratégico Institucional 2015-2018, December 2014

[10] Sistema de las Naciones Unidas, Marco de Asistencia de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo, Honduras 2017-2021

[11] Solución emblemática 2; Plan Estratégico de PNUD Honduras 2018-2021

Another important indicator of the relevance that the United Nations System in Honduras attaches to the need for national political dialogue is the extensive work carried out in 2018 led by UNDP[12].

Design

The design of the project has some very **positive aspects**, although **deficiencies** have also been detected that have affected some aspects of the implementation and monitoring.

On the positive side, the project **succeeded in capturing the desires and needs** of the populations targeted by the project. The overall structure was clear, supported by three complementary pillars (the outcomes).

Gender mainstreaming also had a place in the original design with some specific indicators mainly referring to the equal participation of women and men. **Although there was no fully cross-cutting approach.**

Finally, one positive aspect highlighted by various stakeholders was the **fluidity with** which the project document was designed in coordination **with the donor**.

Despite these strengths, the project design has been one of the aspects that could have been most improved according to most stakeholders.

Firstly, the project was designed following a **logical framework approach**. This type of approach, based on a strict formulation process with set results, indicators and targets, is **better suited for more stable environments**.

A project of a political nature and in the convulsive environment in which it developed, is by nature opportunistic. That is, it must respond to the constantly changing environment, both to the challenges and opportunities. In this scenario, it would have been more appropriate to have a complementary type of design (for example, a Theory of Change approach) in which the project could have rethought its objectives, strategies and underpinning assumptions in the light of the political situation unfolding.

However, following the templates and approach required by the donor, the project was formulated through the **logical framework but with very broad objectives, activities described generically and impact indicators that were sometimes either too ambitious and/or difficult to measure.**

For example, at the end of the project "*70% of young people (from Honduras) will be familiar with the messages of the National Committee through the Campaigns (from the project)".*

On the other hand, some of the project's **most important contributions**, such as the ability to create spaces for political dialogue between parties, **were not captured in the original outcomes' targets.**

In a more concrete sense, another of the design deficiencies that emerged most during the evaluation was the **insufficient financial provision for human resources**. This had implications that the report analyses under the chapter on efficiency.

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[12] https://news.un.org/es/story/2018/08/1440512

Effectiveness –What was done?

The chapter on effectiveness analyses **what the project has done**, i.e. the extent to which it was able to carry out the activities that had been planned. It also unravels the **factors that hindered and facilitated** progress in project implementation. Finally, the quality of the activities carried out is evaluated. **Quality** means technical quality, **scope** and timeliness.

Progress

It is important to point out that the project, in spite of the challenging socio-political context in which it was developed, managed on the one hand to **remain faithful to its internal logic** and on the other hand to **complete most of the activities** that it had planned, sometimes greatly exceeding the expectations that could be had.

What follows is a summary of the main activities carried out by the project under the different outcomes. The summary is the result of an exhaustive analysis of the project progress reports whose information has been triangulated with the documentation of the activities and the testimonies of the stakeholders.

The report analyses the impact that these activities and products had in the next chapter "*Impact – So what was achieved?"*.

Outcome 1: Increased participation of the youth in the formulation of public policies and legislation aimed at reducing social exclusion in Honduras.

A **specialized course on youth civic participation** was developed and delivered as part of the development of the Youth Legislative Agenda.

The course ended in October 2017 and **30 young leaders from different sectors and different parts of Honduras** participated. The **inclusiveness** with which the participants were chosen was remarkable. The group was gender balanced and represented different ethnic groups from the country as well as the LGBTIQ+ community.

As a result of the course, the participants organized themselves informally in the **National Youth Committee** which consequently took part in numerous activities throughout the project. Of particular note were the national youth consultations that underpinned part of the contents of the Youth Legislative Agenda and the development of the communication campaign that demanded the need for Congress to endorse such an Agenda.

Several spaces for reflection and action were also organized to promote the political participation of youth under this outcome, such as the "*Forum towards the transformation and Development of Youth*" in June 2018; the "*Youth Meeting on Participation, Human Rights and Justice*" or, most relevantly, the "*Forum for the participation and protagonism of youth*" February 2018, whose objective was to establish a space for youth oversight at the national level of the actions of the Youth Parliamentary Network.

Outcome 2: Youth Parliamentary Network is consolidated and developed legislative actions for the benefit of the Honduran Youth.

> **Note on the logic of this outcome:** The Youth Parliamentary Network was conceived as a space for action and reflection within the Congress where parliamentarians under 35 years of age were represented regardless of the political party to which they were attached. The purpose of the Network was (among others) to implement the contents of the Youth Legislative Agenda.

A 50 hours **course on *Political Leadership and Legislative Power** was* organized under four thematic workshops from August to November 2018. The course was attended by 19 young parliamentarians (most of them under 35 years of age) from the four main political parties.

The course sought to contribute to the knowledge of young MPs in areas such as Democracy, Governance and Citizen Participation, Legislative Power, Constitution, State Policies, and Global Human Development Goals.

Most relevantly, the course became **a meeting place among different political groups with common objectives** that were a) to increase the quality of the participation of the youngest MPs in the Congress and b) to promote a Young Legislative Agenda.

It is important to highlight the **enormous work that the project management team and volunteers put into ensuring the adherence of the participants to the workshops of the course**. It should be borne in mind that the activity was called in an atmosphere of deep tension and political polarization after the 2017 elections, compounded by an atmosphere of constant crisis and urgency in Congress that made it difficult to maintain the commitment and attention of the MPs.

The intention of the project was that this course would be the seed for the formalization of a Youth Parliamentary Network. **This Network was not consolidated** (see aspects that hindered the progress of the project), however important steps were taken in this regard as indicated in the impact chapter.

Outcome 3: A national Youth Legislative Agenda is developed and approved.

According to the project's internal documentation, the sum of the people **consulted in the different regions of the country amounted to at least 1,250 young people**, with whom the thematic axes of the Youth Legislative Agenda were determined. Additionally, at least five meetings were held for young people and relevant organizations to enrich the content of the Youth Legislative Agenda.

In August 2018, a team of **high-level specialists was formed to draft**, review and adjust the Youth Legislative Agenda document. Three draft documents were obtained that were finally integrated into a single, more concise document in November 2018.

The process of elaboration of the **Youth Legislative Agenda and the document itself were identified as high-quality outputs**. In the section "quality of the products" this process is described in more detail.

On January 23, 2019, CIPRODEH formally **presented the Youth Legislative Agenda** at the "National Youth Forum in Dialogue for Democracy" with the participation of Youth from all regions of the country, authorities of the National Congress, as well as MPs from the

various benches and the director and deputy director of the National Youth Institute. At the Forum, the document was formally delivered, and commitments were signed for the implementation of the Youth Legislative Agenda.

Cross-cutting activities – Advocacy, networking and communications

The Project carried out a series of activities related to networking, lobbying, advocacy and campaigns. These activities, although formally reported under outcome 2, were mostly cross-cutting and related to the three outcomes of the project.

Advocacy and networking meetings:

- **Meetings with political parties** - For example, in the framework of the Course on *"Political Leadership and Legislative Power"*, nine meetings were held with Youth, Parliamentarians and authorities of the National Youth Institute, with the purpose of agreeing on the work plan of the National Youth Committee.

- CIPRODEH reported at least 18 **formal advocacy meetings** with key actors, such as the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights; the National Youth Institute; the National Party of Honduras; the Liberal Party of Honduras; and the Freedom and Refoundation Party.

- In addition, according to the testimonies of those consulted in the evaluation, project staff had **hundreds of informal contacts** with these and other actors such as youth organizations and networks, and bilateral and multilateral international cooperation (the magnitude of this work was not captured in the original project´s design or in the progress reports).

Information and communication campaign:

- A communication campaign was designed and implemented with a **special focus on civil society organizations working with the youth to publicize project objectives**. Under this strategy, at least 12 workshops were held with youth organizations, a massive sit-in on the ground floor of the National Congress, at least five interventions in radio and television media, three press releases, wide publicity on Facebook, and at least 25 computer graphics were produced.

- In November 2018, a **workshop on Advocacy** was held in San Pedro Sula, with the purpose of analyzing the scope of the various achievements of the project, including evaluating the communication and information campaign. The event was attended by the Executive Director of CIPRODEH, the project coordinator and at least 40 representatives of more than 10 of the organizations that belong to the National Youth Committee at the national level, including two organizations of black and indigenous peoples.

Factors hindering and facilitating the progress

As **Table 1 illustrates**, some factors facilitated, and others hindered the implementation of project activities. It is important to make it visible

Facilitating factors	Hindering factors
The commitment and human and professional calibre of the project coordination team	Difficulty working with parliamentarians (in an atmosphere of polarization and constant crisis)
The direct involvement of CIPRODEH's management	The political climate eclipsed the Project's theme
The personal contacts and political ability of the Project Coordinator	The tension between the political parties
The selection of the first level specialists in the trainings and in the development of the Juvenile Legislative Agenda.	After the 2017 elections, the Project had to work with a new group of MPs, losing previous MPs with more similar interests.
Information flow among the CIPRODEH team	Lack of human resources in the Project that only had one coordinator
The growing politicization of Honduran youth	The perception of CIPRODEH as a political opposition.
	Corruption in Congress and the consequent disaffection of citizens by its institutions.

Quality of the products

Despite all the difficulties under which the Project worked, it was possible to develop activities and **products of excellent quality**. A large majority of the people consulted in the survey (71%) "completely agreed" that the activities organized by CIPRODEH under this project were of high quality. Particularly noteworthy were the trainings and the development of the Youth Legislative Agenda.

In the **trainings**, the professional caliber and the commitment of the teachers was particularly highlighted. They were politicians and other professionals of recognized reputation, who sometimes went beyond their functions by establishing informal advisors' relations with some of the students. This was especially the case during the course on *Political Leadership and Legislative Power* given to young MPs.

> "*They brought very good specialists to the training that gave us very relevant knowledge. 100% Quality*" Young MP.

The methodological process employed for the **development of the Youth Legislative Agenda** has been widely commended by stakeholders emphasizing its inclusiveness and technical rigor. In fact, 85% of the people who responded to the survey thought that the methodological process followed in the elaboration of the document was of high quality or of very high quality.

> The **methodological process for the construction of the Youth Legislative Agenda** was designed from six phases:
>
> 1. Methodological approach - The purpose of this phase was to agree on the methodology and content for formulating the Agenda. To this end, a consultant prepared and presented a methodological proposal, the data collection instruments, as well as a draft table of contents
>
> 2. Regional Consultation Process - Young leaders were identified in 2017 during the training program organized by the project "*Democratic Strengthening of Youth*". These young leaders helped organize five regional consultations. According to the project documentation, each consultation reached about 200 participants. The selection of participants took into account variables such as gender balance and the inclusion of the most disadvantaged sectors. A survey was used as the technique for collecting and analyzing sample data.
>
> 3. Documentary review and interviews with experts - The regional consultations were complemented by a documentary research process and interviews with experts on the different topics identified in the Agenda.
>
> 4. Developing the draft - In this phase, the information gathered in the regional consultations was interpreted and contrasted with the information provided by the experts and the information consulted in the regional consultations. The draft document that conceptualized the Youth Legislative Agenda was drafted. This document, which consisted of more than 300 pages, was called the "Background Study".
>
> 5. Final Agenda - A small group of experts at the highest level worked on the *Background Study* enriching it with examples of international legislation on youth issues and produced a synthesized final document.
>
> 6. Validation and launch - Five public forums were held in five regions of the country for young people to discuss the content of the Youth Legislative Agenda. Each forum was attended by around 80 young people coming from youth organizations and networks, and from government institutions. Subsequently, the Youth Legislative Agenda was presented in a National Forum where 150 people participated, among them: members of the Board of Directors and the Plenary of Deputies of the National Congress, the Presidents of the Political Parties, the authorities of the National Youth Institute and the Commission on the Family, Children, Youth and the Elderly, civil society organizations, youth organizations and networks, representatives of the diplomatic corps accredited in Honduras and representatives of International Development Agencies.

The only caveat regarding the methodology followed by the Youth Legislative Agenda was the recommendation of several of the people involved on the **convenience of using focus groups and not closed surveys during national consultations**. This type of tool would have generated richer and more complete information and would have been a more participatory and less extractive system.

Scope of the activities

With respect to the scope of activities, **only 42% of the people consulted** in the survey "fully agreed" that "*the activities organized by CIPRODEH under this project reached all relevant people who could benefit from them*".

However, there was broad consensus among the testimonies gathered during the field mission that **CIPRODEH's ability to convene MPs in the Congress** in such a hostile political environment was very remarkable. CIPRODEH was also credited with achieving an **impressive press coverage of many of the events** in the project. For example, the launching of the Youth Legislative Agenda was worthy of admiration, with more than 60 appearances and mentions on television and radio throughout the country from October 9 to 24, 2017[13]

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[13] Detailed media analysis produced by CIPRODEH

Impact – So, what was achieved?

The effectiveness chapter of this report has analysed what was done. This impact chapter addresses **what was achieved**. In other words, it analyses how change happened as a result of (or as a contribution of) the project **under its three outcomes**.

As already indicated in the launch note of this evaluation (see annex 1 – evaluation questions), the aim of this chapter was assessing the impact of the project against the original outcome targets. However, as stated in the design chapter, most of these indicators were either far too ambitious (given the socio-political situation and the scope of the project) and/or difficult to measure. Nonetheless, the evaluation has been able to **document several contributions to changes, within and beyond the original target and indicators**, despite the enormous challenges the project met on the way.

In these cases, the report presents concrete evidence (as well as a line of reasoning) from which we can conclude, with some level of confidence, that the project made an important **contribution to these documented changes**[14].

As a general consideration it is important to emphasize that under the three outcomes, **the project has managed to motivate and train key populations** (such as youth from the National Youth Committee or youth parliamentarians) **on issues that were highly relevant**. In fact, 84% of respondents fully agreed that the project had contributed to "the acquisition of new knowledge and skills". These knowledge and skills **have led to fruitful results.**

These results have however been (currently are) like a ripple effect and the fact that the project did not have an effective impact monitoring system makes it **difficult to know how far the ripples went (are going).**

In this regard, it is important to note that the **progress reports** failed to do justice to the results being achieved by the project for a number of reasons:

a) The UNDEF report **templates were too strict and favoured reporting on progress**, i.e. the pace of implementation of activities and the delivery rate, rather than on the contributions to change.

b) **Indicators and targets** at the outcome level, as already indicated under "Design", were either **too ambitious or difficult to measure**. Therefore, the project opted to report using outputs and activities as a reference, which did not allow them to clearly capture either the complexity of the context or how it was being influenced through the project.

c) The **reports were written in English** by native Spanish speakers who were both the senders and receivers of the reports. Although the people who wrote the reports had an acceptable level of English, the fact that they did not write in their mother tongue introduces a bias in the clarity of the contents.

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[14] https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/approach/contribution_analysis

OUTCOME 1 – *Increased participation of the youth in the formulation of public policies and legislation aimed at reducing social exclusion in Honduras.*

Original targets

Target 1 - At the end of the project: at least seven sector networks of youth organizations (students, LGBT, people with disabilities, farmers, women, indigenous peoples, and young entrepreneurs), had the capacity to undertake advocacy and political dialogue.

Target 2 - At the end of the project: 50% of members of the national youth committee are women, who actively participate and lead advocacy processes and monitor the design and implementation of public youth policies for their own benefit.

Target 3 - At the end of the project: public spaces and channels of communication between youth organizations and networks and agencies dealing with youth and women (Youth Parliamentary Network, Commission of Youth and Women at the National Congress, National Institute of Youth) have been established and are operational.

Target 4 - At the end of the project: at least 70% of the young population will become acquainted with the information and communication campaign of the national youth committee and become aware that they must organize themselves and participate in coordinated actions to promote local and national public policies for the youth.

The original design stated that by the end of the project at least seven youth networks with the capacity for advocacy and political dialogue should have been formed. The objective was diffuse and ambitious.

The evaluation found that an **informal national network of some 30 youth leaders** (the **National Youth Committee**) has been formed. It was also found that several of these leaders are involved in other youth networks that have been formed or strengthened through the project´s activities.

Therefore, the **National Youth Committee** has contributed to **strengthening and/or creating youth leadership**. In fact, there is a consensus among those consulted that the project catapulted several of their members as agents of change in the youth and political field, both inside and outside CIPRODEH. 84% of survey respondents agreed that the project had contributed to "*creating agents of change among youth that contributed to democratic processes at the local or national level*".

For example, **the leadership of the Project Coordinator himself** was greatly consolidated through the project itself. This was a fact that has been recognized by a wide sample of stakeholders, including parliamentarians, consultants, and members of youth networks.

Outside CIPRODEH, several of the young people who participated in the project mainly through the National Youth Committee **formed or joined other civil society organizations or joined political platforms** such as the Platform in Defence of Health and Education[15].

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[15] The Platform in Defence of Health and Education was born in 2019 and brings together some 18 organizations and unions from the health sector as well as the education sector to struggle for the rescue of the public sector. When the National Congress wanted to approve the law for the restructuring and transformation of health and public education, the Platform became a national

Several testimonies point out that these young leaders capacitated by the project have also **triggered the interest of other young people** to get involved in political processes. However, it is not possible to glimpse how far this ripple effect has gone.

The **gender equity objective pursued in this outcome was surpassed** (albeit with nuances).

On the one hand, the composition of the Committee had a **balanced number of women and men**. In addition, the representation went beyond the representation of binary sex and also included **members of the LGBTIQ+** community.

On the other hand, beyond purely numerical factors, **strong female leaderships** and even **openly feminist organizations** such as the "Femiñángaras" group emerged from the project activities. Femiñángaras´ founders stated that the group would not have been formed without the inspiration and lessons that emerged from the project.

However, this **gender perspective has not been systematically explicit in the project** activities. For example, the members of the National Youth Committee declared that the specialized courses on youth civic participation delivered in 2017 did not have a clear gender approach.

It is very important to emphasize the **merit of the project with respect to any achievement related to the strengthening of youth leaderships** and networks in these turbulent times where the theme "**Youth" has not been a priority for civil society** organisations. It must be taken into account that the project has been developed in a climate where the deepest political crises have overshadowed any other initiative.

In spite of this backdrop, one of the most outstanding results of the project was the **opening** (albeit timid and incipient) of **communication channels between different sectors**, such as the National Youth Institute, civil society and parliamentarians through forums and workshops, often not so formal, but always encouraged under the auspices of the project.

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instance and an agglutinating space of the historic struggle that even today is being waged by teachers and doctors supported by a good part of Honduran society (source: https://wp.radioprogresohn.net/plataforma-en-defensa-de-salud-y-la-educacion/)

OUTCOME 2 – Youth Parliamentary Network is consolidated and developed legislative actions for the benefit of the Honduran Youth

Target 1 - At the end of the project: 25 representatives in Congress with enhanced competencies and skills for political dialogue, debate, proposal and response capacity to youth related topics; specialized on issues that reinforce their legislative work and which allowed them to be more successful in presenting bills.

Target 2 - At the end of the project: 4 partnerships and collaborations will be established between the Youth Parliamentary Network and state officials, in order to promote projects that benefit the youth (the Board, youth commission, the Commission of Women in the National Congress, and the National Institute of Youth).

Target 3 - At the end of the project: areas and channels of communication have been established, the relationship and collaborative climate between the Youth Parliamentary Network and youth organizations and networks have been improved.

Target 4 - At the end of the project: the Board recognizes the Youth Parliamentary Network as a major participant for the dialogue with the Honduran youth organizations and networks.

According to the project documentation[16], there were **19 participants in the high-level course that was organized for the youngest parliamentarians** through which the first objective of the project was achieved (qualitatively).

As noted in the chapter on effectiveness, the course *Political Leadership and Legislative Power* was of very high quality and according to the testimonies of the participants undoubtedly **contributed to improve their legislative work**.

Beyond the formal knowledge they acquired, there are important nuances that are key to point out and that were not reflected on in the original indicators and targets. For example, several of the parliamentarians consulted pointed out that through the project´s activities they had **met top-level political figures who had inspired them and taught them that politics can be done "differently".**

> "*The course encouraged me to meet people with a clear understanding of the role of the MPs that transcends giving food bags during campaigns. With them we understood the inner workings of the Congress and the importance of the political lobby and the transcendence of our work*" Course participant.

The **Youth Parliamentary Network was not able to establish itself as a formal entity** within Congress as the project had planned. In any case, the climate of tension between the parties and the political polarisation that worsened after the November 2017 elections most probably would not have allowed more progress in this respect. In addition, one of the parliamentarians who championed the idea of the Youth Parliamentary Network during the design of the project (and during the implementation of the preceding project with UNFPA) did not repeat as a parliamentarian after the 2017 elections. This meant the loss of a great asset for the project in this outcome.

However, in relation to establishing formal mechanisms in the Congress related to youth, perhaps more important than the formalization of the Network was the **submission and**

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[16] Progress reports

approval of a Motion for the establishment of a Standing Youth Commission presented by a Congresswoman of the National Party on behalf of a group of young MPs from different parties.

The most important aspect about this result is not the Motion itself. As many of the people consulted agreed, even if the Youth Commission crystallized, it would be very difficult to make it functional without clear support from international entities.

What is **extremely remarkable (and relevant for the country) is that the project has been able to open spaces for political dialogue between the different parties**. The importance of this result lies in the fact that this Motion was a common proposal of several young parliamentarians from different political groups developed under the direct auspices of the project.

This, however, has been another aspect that was not captured in the targets of the original project design, even though, all stakeholders consulted have underlined the importance of this achievement in the prevailing political environment. In fact, a resounding 90% of the people who responded to the survey agreed that the project had contributed to "*the opening of new spaces for political dialogue*".

> "*The project addressed the needs of young parliamentarians together, not with a political colour. We were there as a single force to be taken into account. The (Youth Legislative) Agenda was a framework for further growth*". Young MP.

> "*During 2018, the government and the opposition could not be seen together, because of everything that was happening in the country. However, MPs from different parties went together for CIPRODEH training*". National expert.

The achievement of convening different parties and getting them to work together in a coordinated manner is **all the more remarkable when one considers that CIPRODEH is an organization very much positioned in opposition** to the government, as was already mentioned in the chapter on the context. This difficulty was tackled with a lot of political diplomacy and with fierce determination on the part of the project team.

The project also **opened up channels between MPs and civil society** through some forums, albeit quite incipiently. In fact, the MPs consulted did not have a clear idea of which were the main civil society entities working with the Youth in the country. It was not possible therefore to establish solid links between the Youth Parliamentary Network and the relevant civil society organisations as originally planned.

OUTCOME 3 – A national youth legislative agenda is developed and approved.

> Target 1 - At the end of the project: 50 Youth organizations and networks from different sectors have expressed their identified needs and proposed solutions, which are included in the youth legislative agenda.
>
> Target 2 - At the end of the project: at least five state agencies and five political parties adopt and commit to the implementation of the youth legislative agenda.
>
> Target 3 - At the end of the project: At least 10% of the actions proposed in the youth legislative agenda have been implemented by the National Congress.
>
> Target 4 - At the end of the project: At least six bills that benefit the youth have been submitted and are under discussion in Congress

The first target of this outcome was a process indicator rather than an impact indicator. It refers more to what is going to be done, or how rather than what is going to be achieved. In any case, it is a target that was surpassed by far. As described in the chapter on effectiveness, the process of **developing the Youth Legislative Agenda was an inclusive process that involved a large number of youth networks and organizations in different parts of the country.**

The only criticism levelled during the evaluation regarding the inclusiveness of the process touches a point that was not taken into account in the original logic of this target. According to some, it would have been necessary to involve in a more systematic way the young parliamentarians in each phase of the elaboration of the Agenda in order to increase their ownership over the Agenda.

The rest of the targets of this outcome, in the political circumstances in which the project was developed, were unattainable.

Even at the risk of being redundant, it is very important once again to put into perspective the deep political crisis that the country has experienced during the implementation of the project (see chapter socio-political context), which meant the relegation of the youth agenda to a second level. It also meant that a *normal* functioning of the Congress was at least questionable.

Despite these immense difficulties, the **project managed to get MPs from different parties to endorse the Youth Legislative Agenda**. The final document offers a legitimate legislative framework to all MPs who are interested in the youth. This was recognized by the parliamentarians consulted by the evaluation.

Additionally. it has been possible to document **concrete actions by various parties to which the Youth Legislative Agenda contributed**. For example:

- Young MPs from the Free Party presented three bills on Education and Sport based on the contents of the Agenda.
- A Liberal Party Congresswoman presented a legislative action on gender violence in which it sought alliances outside Congress. The establishment of these alliances was directly influenced by her participation in the Project.

- As mentioned under the relevance chapter, the National Party dedicated its 117th Anniversary Convention to youth. During the Congress, the party proposed a series of legislative measures taking as input the Youth Legislative Agenda.

Unfortunately, none of these actions has come to fruition and it is important to point out that the evaluation has detected a certain discouragement among young parliamentarians in the sense that if there is not a clear support for the Youth Legislative Agenda and the document may fall into disuse (see chapter on sustainability).

Efficiency – The use of financial and human resources

In this chapter the evaluation assesses the extent to which the project made good **use of its financial and human resources**. This includes: a) how the various activities transformed the available resources into the intended or unintended results (**value for money**); and b) how the **management and administrative arrangements** ensure a cost-efficient and accountable implementation of the project

Value for money

The level of project **efficiency can be considered very high** considering a) the relatively low investment (110,000 US$ per year of implementation); b) the execution of the main activities and strategies that were planned; c) the quality of the outputs, and d) the contributions to significant changes under the three outcomes in an absolutely hostile political environment.

It is also important to note that **this financial investment would not have gone so far without**: the overtime and commitment of the **project coordinators**; the expertise and **legitimacy of the specialists**; the enthusiasm and good **work of the volunteers**; and the **reputation** of the **implementing organization**.

The **budget allocation for the different items was balanced** and in line with the objectives of the project with only one exception, the **allocation for the coordination team was insufficient**. The Project provided for a fulltime coordination position and 30% of an Administrative Assistant. Both positions amounted to 17,5% of the budget which is slightly over the 15% limit that UNDEF has for personnel in projects. However, in the real world, the workload for organizing and implementing activities under this project was very time-consuming and one full-time position was not enough (see Coordination and management).

Just to cite an illustrative example, several of the MPs who participated in the training *Political Leadership and Legislative Power* stated that the Project Coordinator would call them up three or four times to ensure that they would attend each module of the training. That was after having made the official call to participants through official channels, the enrollment process and after getting the necessary permits.

Coordination and management: Human resources

As already indicated, the project was managed by a Coordinator who reported directly to the director of CIPRODEH.

In order to successfully carry out all the activities, the Project Coordination mobilized a large group of volunteers belonging to the National Youth Committee and also made use of the time and effort of several CIPRODEH workers who were not paid by the project, for example, the administrators[17], who supported the budget management, the director of CIPRODEH who was significantly involved at the political level, or the monitoring and evaluation officer. **The communication and the decision-making flow between all these departments was always functional and fluid.**

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[17] The Project only paid for a 30% of one Admin Position but CIPRODEH involved two people in these tasks.

It is also important to notice that the workload of the CIPRODEH team was altered because of the organizational commitment as **human rights defender**. Part of this commitment involved key staff carrying out demand-driven tasks that ranged from representing people whose rights have been violated in the Inter-American Court, to accompanying and monitoring demonstrations or marches to ensure that the human rights of participants were guaranteed.

The **Project Coordinator also assumed these types of tasks** during these tumultuous years, which had repercussions on his workload in managing the project.

This last point relates to a lack of work/life balance in CIPRODEH´s organizational culture. This view was endorsed by all the relevant people consulted, outside and inside CIPRODEH.

The workload, and the strong commitment of the workers are factors that **do not allow reconciliation of a personal and professional life in a balanced way**. Many of the people consulted spoke of "self-exploitation", however it would be necessary to reflect on whether it has nothing to do with the organizational culture that somehow rewards these behaviors.

In any case this point is not trivial since it **tends to be detrimental to the female leaderships** if they are not allowed to reconcile work and family burdens. It is illustrative, for example, that when this evaluation was being carried out, only one of the five project coordinators in CIPRODEH was a woman.

This project, however, has been somehow an exception in CIPRODEH, since two of the three coordinators that have been in charge were women, although the coordinator who was in charge for the longest time and who has left a clear imprint was a man.

In fact, it is important to emphasize that the project would not have developed so successfully if it had not been for the **personal and professional caliber of this last coordinator**. The people consulted inside and outside CIPRODEH highlighted his commitment, his professionalism and above all **his extraordinary diplomatic skills which allowed the project to relate fluidly with MPs from all the benches** despite the prevailing political tensions and the clear positioning of CIPRODEH as the opposition to the government.

Furthermore. the **transition between these three coordinators went smoothly** and did not entail any significant setbacks in the implementation of the activities. In fact, the second coordinator was at CIPRODEH until the end of the project and maintained a fluid relationship with the new coordinator.

Finally, the **total absence of conflicts with the donor** is also striking. Administrative relations developed smoothly thanks to two important factors, on the one hand **CIPRODEH's compliance** with all UNDEF requirements and, on the other, **UNDEF's flexibility** when administrative changes had to be made to the project. For example, the budget lines for the experts who gave the courses were expanded and the lines for internal travel were reduced.

Sustainability – Is there life beyond the project?

The sustainability chapter identifies those aspects of the project that are likely to be sustained after its completion. These aspects can be approached from two points of view. The extent to which the **process** is sustainable, i.e. the extent to which key stakeholders will remain committed to the project´s objectives; and the extent to which the **results** of the project (for example, the Parliamentary Youth Network or the Youth Legislative Agenda) are being used and sustained after the funding stopped.

The process

The sustainability of the process, i.e. the involvement and ownership of the key stakeholders in the project´s objectives is **not guaranteed.**

For now, the main **guarantor of the sustainability of the process is CIPRODEH itself**. The organization has the will and the technical capabilities to continue the work of the project. In fact, it has recently obtained a small grant from the National Endowment for Democracy (NED)[18] to ensure continuity in some of the activities.

Another point that makes it possible to be cautiously optimistic in this respect is the receptivity of **certain potential donors such as UNDP**, which has shown interest in supporting political dialogue given the very high relevance it has for the country (see chapter on relevance).

Results

The three most relevant results of the project in relation to the three outcomes can be organized into 1) the National Youth Committee; 2) the Youth Parliamentary Network and 3) the Youth Legislative Agenda.

None of these three areas has their sustainability guaranteed for different reasons.

The National Youth Committee is made up of highly motivated people who (at the individual rather than collective level) **would continue to work for youth** political participation in Honduras. However, as an entity the **Committee has not been formalized**, it does not have a government structure and its **members lack basic organizational notions** that can guarantee its sustainability in the future. For example, how to implement the multiple projects they have in mind, how to mobilize the necessary resources, or how to manage an organization efficiently.

CIPRODEH is aware of these shortcomings and **has already started specific courses for the Committee in this regard** as part of the NED-funded project. However, these efforts would still be insufficient to ensure that the Committee continues to function in the future.

Like the National Youth Committee, the **Youth Parliamentary Network** has not been formally constituted. However, as noted in the impact chapter, its members have worked on joint projects which have established personal and professional links that transcend political colors.

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[18] NED is a private, nonprofit foundation dedicated to the growth and strengthening of democratic institutions around the world (https://www.ned.org/about/)

The people consulted in the evaluation unanimously concluded that the **way to deepen the sustainability of this space for policy dialogue** is to continue offering young parliamentarian opportunities for interaction, such as practical trainings. Insisting on consolidating a "formal" group in the present political circumstances could be detrimental to sustainability as it could lead to internal struggles for the formal power of the Network.

The **Youth Legislative Agenda** document has followed an inclusive and rigorous process that has increased the legitimacy and usability of the document. However, as all political documents, **the Agenda has an expiration date** and several stakeholders have pointed out that it would be necessary to continue propagating its content so that it does not become obsolete before it can be useful.

UNDEF Value Added

UNDEF has contributed with the **legitimacy and credibility** of the UN brand. Stakeholders have also celebrated the involvement of other UN Agencies in the country, namely UNDP, thanks to the suggestion of UNDEF.

The implementing partner have highlighted as an important added value the **flexibility of the Fund** and the technical support throughout the life of the project, including this ex-post evaluation.

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Relevance

The adequacy level of the project is very high. The initiative has been able to respond both to the specific needs of the youngest parliamentarians and to the "political" needs of the country's youth. The project has acted at the most opportune moment when working on the political dialogue in Honduras has become an absolute priority.

The most relevant strategy has been the trainings organized by the project that have tackled the very pressing needs of young MPs in terms of capacitating them to do their job better.

The initiative has addressed the needs and expectations of young people in Honduras as there has been a clear shortage of projects that would empower young people as political subjects and would activate new leaderships, especially at the national level.

The lack of a clear institutional response coupled with the clear need for political participation by young people in Honduras makes the project even more relevant.

The project is perfectly aligned with the mandate and history of CIPRODEH, especially with regard to democratic strengthening. Its objectives are also in full conformity with the Honduras UNDAF 2017-2021.

Design

The project captured the needs of the beneficiaries and had a clear overall structure, supported by three complementary outcomes.

Gender mainstreaming was also taken into consideration in the original design, although there was not a full and systematic cross-cutting approach.

The project was designed following a logical framework approach with a set of predetermined results, indicators and targets, better suited for a more stable political environment than for a project that had to be opportunistic by nature.

The logical framework had very broad objectives, activities described generically and impact indicators that were sometimes either too ambitious and/or difficult to measure. On the other hand, some of the project's most important contributions were not captured in the original outcomes' targets.

Effectiveness

Despite the challenging socio-political context in which the project was developed, it managed to remain faithful to its internal logic and to complete most of the activities that it had planned, sometimes greatly exceeding expectations.

The main factors that hindered the implementation of the project were; a) the difficulties working with MPs, in an atmosphere of polarization and crisis that eclipsed the theme of the project; b) the political consequences of 2017 that happened in the middle of the project; c) the lack of sufficient human resources.

The main facilitating factors were: a) the commitment and professional calibre of the project team; b) the selection of the first level specialists in the trainings and other activities; d) the growing politicization of Honduran youth.

The Project developed activities and products of excellent quality, especially the trainings and the methodological process employed for the development of the Youth Legislative Agenda (albeit with some possible methodological improvements).

Impact

Outcome 1
The project motivated and trained key populations on issues that were highly relevant. These knowledge and skills have led to fruitful results, although the fact that the project did not have an effective impact monitoring system makes it difficult to know how far the ripples went. The UNDEF progress reports and the original design of the project failed to capture the complexity of the context or how it was being influenced through the implementation of the different strategies.

An informal national network of some 30 youth leaders (the National Youth Committee) has been formed. Several of these leaders are involved in other youth networks that have been formed or strengthened through the project´s activities. These young leaders have also triggered the interest of other young people to get involved in political processes.

The gender equity objective pursued in the first outcome of the project was surpassed (albeit with nuances). The composition of the National Committee was gender balanced and included a representation of the LGBTIQ+ community. Beyond purely numerical factors, strong female leaderships and even openly feminist organizations emerged from the project´s activities. However, this gender perspective has not been systematically explicit in all the project strategies.

Outcome 2
The project enhanced the competencies and skills of young MPs of different political parties that contributed to improve their legislative work.

Through the project activities MPs had met top-level political figures who had inspired them and taught them that politics can be done "differently".

Most significantly, the project has been able to open spaces for political dialogue between the different parties.

Outcome 3
A Youth Legislative Agenda was developed following an inclusive process that involved a large number of youth networks and organizations in different parts of the country.

The project managed to get MPs from different parties to endorse the Youth Legislative Agenda and this contributed to several legislative actions.

Efficiency

The level of project efficiency is very high considering: a) the relatively low investment; b) the delivery rate; c) the quality of the outputs; and d) the contributions to significant changes under the three outcomes in a hostile political environment.

This financial investment would not have gone so far without; the overtime and commitment of the project coordinators; the expertise and legitimacy of the specialists; the enthusiasm and good work of the volunteers; and the reputation of the implementing organization.

The budget allocation for the different items was balanced and in line with the objectives of the project with only one exception, the allocation for the coordination team was insufficient.

The communication and the decision-making flow between the Project Coordinators, CIPRODEH Director, volunteers and other staff involved in the project was always functional and fluid.

The transition between the three coordinators that the project had went smoothly and did not entail any significant setbacks in the implementation of the activities.

The workload, and the strong commitment of the workers of CIPRODEH are factors that did not allow the reconciliation of a personal and professional life in a balanced way, which could be detrimental to the promotion of female leaderships.

The relations between the implementing partner and the donor developed smoothly thanks to the compliance of CIPRODEH with all UNDEF requirements and to UNDEF's flexibility when administrative changes had to be made to the project.

Sustainability

The future involvement and ownership of the key stakeholders in the project´s objectives are not guaranteed. The main guarantor of the sustainability of the process is CIPRODEH itself which has the will and the technical capabilities to continue the work of the project.

The National Youth Committee is made up of highly motivated people who would continue to work for youth political participation in Honduras. However, as an entity the Committee has not been formalized and its members lack basic organizational notions that can guarantee its sustainability in the future.

The Youth Parliamentary Network has not been formally constituted. Insisting on consolidating a "formal" group in the present political circumstances could be detrimental to its sustainability as it could lead to internal struggles for the formal power of the Network.

The Youth Legislative Agenda has enough legitimacy to be used, but like any political document it also has an expiration date. It would be necessary to continue propagating its content so that it does not become obsolete before it can be fully useful.

UNDEF Added value

UNDEF has contributed with the legitimacy and credibility of the UN brand.

An important added value is the flexibility of UNDEF and the technical support throughout the life of the Project.

Recommendations

11. <u>For CIPRODEH</u> - To continue working on the issue of **youth political participation**, inside and outside Congress, which has proven to be a topic of maximum relevance in Honduras.

12. <u>For UNDEF and CIPRODEH</u> – In future interventions **use Theory of Change** (ToC) as a complementary approach to the logical framework. The elements that a ToC should contain are a description of the motivational horizon and the pathway to change, an update of the context in which the project operates, a description of the main actors (change agents, partners, opposers, etc.), the preconditions to reach such changes and the assumptions behind the occurrence (or not) of the desired transformations. The ToC should be reviewed at appropriate times, for example right before the implementation starts.

13. <u>For CIPRODEH</u> - Develop a **comprehensive gender policy** that includes both gender mainstreaming in the projects and work/life balance policy to promote female leadership in the organization.

14. <u>For UNDEF</u> - Consider studying on a **case-by-case basis how much it is possible to allocate to project coordination**, depending on the context, the nature of the project, etc.

15. <u>For CIPRODEH</u> - Consider participatory research processes such as the Youth Legislative Agenda to **use information generation methods such as workshops or focus groups**, instead of using closed surveys that are more extractive tools.

16. <u>For UNDEF</u> - Increase the **quality of impact monitoring** it is essential to make the **reporting template more flexible**. Establish project reviews around your ToC and if possible, make the language in which reports can be received more flexible.

17. <u>For CIPRODEH</u> - Prioritize accompanying the **National Youth Committee** by offering coaching and **training on organizational** and resource mobilization issues.

18. <u>For CIPRODEH</u> - In the case of the **Parliamentary Network**, it is recommended that CIPRODEH continue to **promote spaces for collaboration** between different political parties within the framework of **practical training** involving, for example, the drafting and presentation of concrete laws.

19. The **Youth Legislative Agenda** may soon become obsolete if it is not put to immediate use. In this sense it is advised:
    a) To use it in the **practical modules** of the trainings to MPs.
    b) To use it in practical modules in National Youth Committee trainings; by helping them to set up financially **viable projects** around the themes of the Agenda.
    c) To explore how the Agenda can be adapted at the **municipal level** by influencing local budgets and plans.

20. <u>For UNDEF</u> – Consider **further funding** a second phase of this project.

V LESSONS LEARNT AND BEST PRACTICES

Main lessons

From promotion events to political marketing

CIPRODEH has learned that the campaign strategies they used in the three outcomes of the project were limited in scope and to some extent became ends in themselves rather than a real instrument for changing collective ideologies and behaviors.

CIPRODEH has recognized this[19] and has chosen to adopt an advocacy strategy closest to political marketing.

The campaigns available in the project focused on classic communication. The objective of which was often reduced, for example, to the promotion of an event.

In this sense, CIPRODEH has learnt that it is essential to invest in political marketing impact. These are strategies that focus on in-depth research and communication of causal and consequent milestones, so that citizen perception raises the power of the most vulnerable through positioning certain causes in the public and political agenda.

How useful is the logic framework in a policy influencing project and in such a volatile environment?

When political issues are tackled in such a convoluted environment, as is the case in this project, the methodology used to guide the intervention can play a key role in defining pathways of change while encouraging reflection, learning, and allowing adaptation.

A theory of change approach can help to look beyond the logical framework to collectively construct a common and clear understanding of the transformations the project seeks.

The systematic use of a ToC can help: i) to be constantly aware of the need to review and update the assumptions used to initially design the project; ii) reread and try to simplify the complexity of the context and weigh up whether the initially established conditions[20] for change are maintained; iii) (re)define new strategies if needed.

One sizes does not fit all

An important lesson for UNDEF would be the need to flexibilize its administrative requirements regarding budget allocation. In the case of this project, it seems clear that the allocation to human resources was not appropriate. Not all projects require the same level of effort, time and dedication on the part of staff. Furthermore, the salary levels required in each project may not be comparable. They may depend on the very nature of the project, the experience and professional caliber required to be hired, or even the standard of living of the country.

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[19] This idea is included in the proposal to NED

[20] "Conditions" are those circumstances necessary and/or helpful for our desired change to happen

Best practices

The connection with youth from young leaders in CIPRODEH

CIPRODEH has managed to connect with the new Honduran generations (both young activists and parliamentarians) through a young leadership within the organization itself i.e. the Project Coordinators.

This has allowed the project to develop a "generational identity" among key stakeholders that vindicates different ways of making policies with respect to their elders. These new ways are characterized by their infallible attempt to organize and exercise power relations in a more horizontal way, unlike past generations, which often required supreme and unquestionable leadership. A good example of this is how the National Youth Committee has been organized.

They also define themselves as a generation that combines the ways of observing, understanding and exercising power with the advantages that new forms of communication and technological advances offer them. This equation allows them to produce new dynamics of social organization that the project has capitalized on.

VII. ANNEXES
ANNEX 1: EVALUATION QUESTIONS

KEY QUESTIONS TO BE ADDRESSED BY THE EVALUATION
1.   **Relevance:** Understanding how appropriately the identified problems and the interventions that followed responded to the needs of the targeted beneficiaries and other key stakeholders; and how the project design met these needs.
Adequacy: Did the project address the needs and priorities of targeted beneficiaries (Honduran youth) both women and men?
Alignment: Was the project clearly within the stakeholders´ mandate and congruent with their strategic framework?
Design: Were the project activities/outputs adequately linked up and did they provide the best approach to achieve the project´s outcomes? Were risks and mitigation strategies appropriately identified?
2. **Efficiency:** Assessing the extent to which the project made good use of its financial and human resources
Value for money: How well have the various activities transformed the available resources into the intended results in terms of quantity, quality and timeliness? (in comparison to what was planned)
Governance and management (internal coordination): To what extent did the management and administrative arrangements sufficiently ensure a cost-efficient and accountable implementation of the project?
Partnership and alliances (external coordination):   • Extent towards which the project had an inclusive and gender sensitive partnership strategy   • Extent towards which the project promoted ownership, alignment, and mutual accountability among all relevant stakeholders.
3.**Effectiveness:** Assessing the extent to which the project produced its expected activities and outputs (what was done?)
Progress: What was done? Where it failed to meet the outputs identified in the project document, why was this?
Monitoring, evaluating, learning and accountability (MEAL): How appropriately was progress towards results measured and monitored? Was monitoring information sex disaggregated? How did this information feed into the project to promote learning?
4. **Impact:** Building a mature understanding of how change happened as a result of (as a contribution of) the project under its three outcomes (see also impact and complexity).
(Outcome 1) Youth participation: To what extent did the project contribute to an increased participation of youth in the formulation of public policies and legislation aimed at reducing social exclusion in Honduras? Any gender variances or bias?
(Outcome 2) Establishing/Strengthening networks: To what extent has the project contributed to establishing a Youth Parliamentary Network autonomously managed by the participants
(Outcome 3) Influencing policies: To what extent did the project contribute to positive policy changes through the legislative agenda on socio-economic measures related to youth?
5. **Sustainability**: Identifying aspects of the project that are likely to be sustained after its completion, including an analysis of the factors for sustainability.
Process: To what extent did key stakeholders **remain involved in this process** once the project finished?
Results: To what extent are the results of the project (for example, the Parliamentary Youth Network) being sustained after the funding stopped?
6. **UNDEF added value**
Added value What was the value of UNDEF specific support to the project? Could the objectives have been achieved through alternative projects, other donors, or other stakeholders (Government, NGOs, etc.).

ANNEX 2: DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

Documents

1. 31 proposals for the national congress (not dated)
2. Activity report; Accompaniment for the development of the process and analysis of the Young Legislative Agenda for its inclusion in the constituent: Call for experts to prepare the report, April 2018
3. Activity report; Executive meeting between the Centre for Research and Promotion of Human Rights and the National Youth Institute, April 2018
4. Activity report; Meeting to prepare a concept note for the revision of comments to the Youth Legislative Agenda, July 2018.
5. Advocacy plan, July 2018
6. Agenda Module I: Democracy, Governance and Citizen Participation, July 2018
7. Agenda Module II: Legislative Power, Constitution and Conventionality Oversight (not dated)
8. Agenda National Campaign Planning Meeting: Exercising the Right to Youth Participation (not dated)
9. Agenda of the Forum Towards Youth Transformation and Development, June 2018
10. Agenda of the National Advocacy Strategy Exercising the Right to Youth Participation (not dated)
11. Agenda; "Creation of the Municipal Youth Commission in the Central District", March 2018
12. Budget revision request form, July 2017
13. Calendar of project activities, April May 2018
14. CIPRODEH, Institutional Strategic Plan 2015-2018, December 2014
15. Curricular Design; Course for young MPs on "Political Leadership and Legislative Power", May 2018
16. Diaz, Mauricio "A proposal for political and social development, (presentation), (not dated)
17. Divisions of modules of the "Political Leadership and Legislative Power Course" (not dated)
18. Explanations about budget change (email), July 2018
19. Explanations on budget variances (emails), July 2019
20. Explanations on Financial Utilization Report (email), November 2018
21. Final Project Budget, January 2017
22. Final Project Budget, June 2019
23. Final Project Document, January 2017
24. Final report, February 2019
25. Financial Utilization Report, November 2017
26. Financial Utilization Report, September 2018
27. FOSDEH, Development and rescue guidelines for Honduras, (not dated)
28. Launch of National Consultation "Building the Youth Legislative Agenda", October 2017
29. Logistics Note; Course on Political Leadership and Legislative Power, July 2018
30. Meeting for the discussion of the products sent by specialists who review and comment on the Young Legislative Agenda document, July 2018
31. Methodology for Evaluation of the Action Plan of The National Youth Committee, May 2018
32. Mid-term progress report, February 2018
33. Milestones verification form, October 2017
34. Milestones verification report (plus photographs), July 2018
35. Narrative Budget Lines (not dated)
36. News on the Youth Legislative Agenda, (not dated)
37. Newsletter launching consultation process (in English and in Spanish), October 2017
38. Ordoñez, Victor, National Policy for The Youth Of Honduras 2018 – 2022 (not official policy)
39. Press release: Honduran youth call for their right to participate in decision-making, May 2018

40. Press release; CIPRODEH inaugurates regional consultation for the construction of the young legislative agenda (not dated)
41. Profile of the trainers; Course on Political Leadership and Legislative Power (not dated)
42. Programme of the fourth training module for young people, October 2017
43. Publicity on the "Political Leadership and Legislative Power Course" (not dated)
44. Reassessment of Staff and activities, July 2017
45. Regional Consultation "Building the Youth Legislative Agenda" Southern Zone, April 2018
46. Report of the Forum for the participation and protagonism of youth (not dated
47. Republic of Honduras - Country Vision 2010 - 2038 and National Plan 2010- 2022, January 2010
48. Revised budget, July 2017
49. Revised Narrative budget lines (email), November 2017
50. Revised Project Budget, July 2018
51. Speech at the presentation of the Youth Legislative Agenda by Wilfredo Méndez (not dated)
52. Strategy for the advocacy campaign to position the Youth Legislative Agenda (not dated)
53. Template to sign the political will commitment with the Youth Legislative Agenda (not dated)
54. Terms of Reference of the experts for the "Course on Political Leadership and Legislative Power" (not dated)
55. UNDP Strategic Plan Honduras 2018-2021
56. Utilization plan of Exchange Rate Income, July 2017
57. Workshop on Human Rights and the Youth Legislative Agenda, January 2019
58. Workshop on Political Advocacy in San Pedro Sula, November 2019
59. Youth Legislative Agenda; Background Study, (not dated)
60. Youth Legislative Agenda; FAQs, (not dated)
61. Youth Legislative Agenda; leaflets for the consultations, October 2017

Web pages

1. http://ciprodeh.org.hn/index.php/quienes-somos/historia
2. http://congresonacional.hn/index.php/2019/08/16/el-futuro-del-pais-esta-seguro-con-la-juventud-beligerante-de-mi-partido-mauricio-oliva/
3. http://www.inj.gob.hn/funciones.php
4. http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/1616
5. https://news.un.org/es/story/2018/08/1440512
6. https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/approach/contribution_analysis
7. https://wp.radioprogresohn.net/plataforma-en-defensa-de-salud-y-la-educacion/
8. https://www.celag.org/honduras-una-decada-de-golpes-e-inestabilidad/
9. https://www.celag.org/honduras-un-ano-fraude-electoral/
10. https://www.ned.org/about/

ANNEX 3: PEOPLE CONSULTED

1. Alexander Sauceda, CIPRODEH
2. Alison Amaya, Youth Movement
3. Ambar Chavez, La Ceiba Volunteer Club
4. Ana Pineda, Human Rights Commissioner. Founder of Democracia sin Fronteras. Former Minister of Human Rights.
5. Angel Fabricio Quezada Ortiz, Yougn leaders
6. Ariana Banegas, Member of Parliament
7. Ariel Diaz, CIPRODEH
8. Arnold Sanchez, National Youth Committee
9. Belkis Odileth Miranda Alvarez, Youth Rescuing Youth
10. Carlos Maximiliano Leiva, CIPRODEH
11. Carolina Castro, CIPRODEH
12. Cesar Fernando Valentín Dolmo, Wachari International Group
13. Daniela Rachel Cruz Sánchez, Social Leadership Academy
14. Eliana Nohemy Osorto Mata, Municipality of San Pedro Sula
15. Elisabeth Navarro, UNDP
16. Eric Vidal, CIPRODEH
17. Esther Abigail Justiniano, Compassion Internacional
18. Ever Herrera Garcia, Jutiapa Youth Network
19. Fernando García, former Minister of Economy; former Vice President of the Inter-American Bank
20. Hans Paz, MPs Assistant
21. Hasrrael Rivera, Center for Health Promotion and Family Assistance (CEPROSAF)
22. Hector Manuel Alvarenga Romero, PRODEH
23. Henry Posadas, National Government, Health Secretary
24. Isis Lorena Guzmán Carbajal, AHPRA
25. Josue Adolfo Blanco Arzu, Youth and Culture
26. Julio Velasquez, Youth Rescuing Youth
27. Karla Cortés, University
28. Karla Medal, Member of Parliament
29. Katherine Barahona, APREST
30. Kerry Astin Baptis, University Student
31. Kevin Alberto Lagos Rodriguez, Positive Youth
32. Lauren Mendez, National Youth Committee
33. Leivy Karina Milla
34. Lenin Lainez, Member of Parliament
35. Liz Almendares, Youth Movement
36. Luis Andree Tejeda Murillo, Student
37. Luis Antonio Sandoval, Alternative Community and Environmental Vindication in Honduras (ARCAH)
38. Luis Gonzales, Municipality of San Pedro Sula
39. María Griffin, National Youth Committee
40. Marlon Armando Flores Avila, Volunteer of the National Network of Young Artisans of Peace
41. Meicke Bonilla, Friedrich Ebert Foundation
42. Melissa Raudales, CIPRODEH
43. Miguel Ángel Lanza Rodríguez, IPS Honduras international public services SITRAMEDHYS
44. Nicole Garcia, ENMUNEH
45. Nidia Paola Ramos Serrano, ANEGUH
46. Ninoska Chavez, RDG

47. Olman Leonel Lara Bautista, Student Association Local Development
48. Sebastian Mendez, National Youth Committee
49. Soni Chavez, MPs Assistant
50. Walter Banegas, National Youth Committee
51. Wilfredo Méndez, Former Director CIPRODEH
52. Yimi Dubier Castro Romero, the Family Time
53. Yoel Alejandro Aguilar Rivas, Young Leaders Fundacion

ANNEX 5: ACRONYMS

CIPRODEH	Centro de Investigación y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos
JOH	Juan Orlando Hernández
LGBTIQ+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender/transsexual, intersex, queer/questioning Community
MP	Member of Parliament
NED	National Endowment for Democracy
QDA	Quality Data Analysis
ToC	Theory of Change
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDEF	United Nations Democracy Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Fund
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund