



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
8 December 2021
English
Original: Spanish
English, French and Spanish only

Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Third periodic report submitted by Honduras under articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant, due in 2021*

[Date received: 4 November 2021]

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



Introduction

1. The State of Honduras is pleased to submit its third periodic report to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (hereinafter the Committee), in compliance with its international human rights obligations and in accordance with articles 16 and 17 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (hereinafter the Covenant), the guidelines on the preparation of reports and the concluding observations¹ adopted by the Committee.²
2. This report was prepared by the Ministry of Human Rights as the body responsible for coordinating the preparation of reports to the universal and regional human rights treaty bodies, in coordination with the institutions that make up the Special Response Group on Human Rights and the focal points of the Honduran System for the Monitoring of Recommendations.³
3. The report summarizes the measures taken by the State and the progress made and challenges encountered in the implementation of the rights protected by the Covenant between 2017 and 2021, a period in which economic, social and cultural rights have been a national priority. However, the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and Hurricanes Eta and Iota have exacerbated existing shortcomings in the protection of economic, social and cultural rights.
4. Honduras reiterates its willingness to comply with its international commitments and pledges of accountability and transparency before the treaty bodies.

I. Follow-up to the concluding observations on Honduras

Regulatory framework for the realization of economic, social and cultural rights

International standards

5. The State has ratified the following instruments:
 - (a) Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons;⁴
 - (b) Optional Protocol to the Covenant;⁵
 - (c) Adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
 - (d) 1993 Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in respect of Intercountry Adoption;⁶
 - (e) In September 2021, it joined the Hague Conference on Private International Law.⁷

Domestic standards

6. The following legal instruments were adopted:
 - (a) Tax Code⁸ and its reforms;⁹

¹ E/C.12/HND/CO/2.

² 49th meeting, 24 June 2016.

³ Executive Decree PCM-028-2017, Official Gazette No. 34,410.

⁴ Legislative Decree No. 127-2020, Official Gazette No. 35,404.

⁵ Legislative Decree No. 8-2017, Official Gazette No. 34,408.

⁶ Consulted on 19 May 2021: bit.ly/3qXpAI2.

⁷ Consulted on 18 October 2021: <https://sreci.hn/node/837>.

⁸ Legislative Decree No. 170-2016, Official Gazette No. 34,224.

⁹ Legislative Decrees No. 25-2017, No. 32-2017, No. 98-2018, No. 170-2019 and No. 180-2020, Official Gazettes No. 34,353, No. 34,376, No. 34,759, No. 35,158 and No. 35,471.

- (b) School Meals Act;¹⁰
- (c) Labour Inspection Act¹¹ and its Regulations;¹²
- (d) Organic Act on the Ministry of Security and the National Police of Honduras;¹³
- (e) Police Service Act¹⁴ and its Regulations;¹⁵
- (f) Criminal Code¹⁶ and reforms thereto;¹⁷
- (g) Reform of the Family Code to prohibit child marriage;¹⁸
- (h) Honduras Special Adoption Act¹⁹ and its Regulations;²⁰
- (i) Micro and Small Businesses Support Act;²¹
- (j) Special Act on Economic Stimulus and Social Protection given the impact of COVID-19²² and reforms thereto;²³
- (k) Act on Support for the Productive Sector and Its Workers Given the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic;²⁴
- (l) Act on the Electronic Management of Judicial Proceedings;²⁵
- (m) Federal Electoral Act;²⁶
- (n) Special Regulations on the Organization and Operation of the Directorate General of the Attorney General's Office;²⁷
- (o) Special Regulations on the Act on the Protection of Witnesses Involved in Criminal Proceedings;²⁸
- (p) Regulations on the Design and Approval of Municipal Development Plans;²⁹
- (q) Regulations for the Act on the National Solidarity Loan Programme for Rural Women;³⁰
- (r) Regulations for the Act on Responsible Parenting;³¹
- (s) Regulation on Protected Adolescent Labour in Honduras;³²
- (t) General Regulations implementing the Act on the Protection of Honduran Migrants and Members of Their Families;³³

¹⁰ Legislative Decree No. 125-2016, Official Gazette No. 34,380.

¹¹ Agreement STSS-350-2019, Official Gazette No. 35,183.

¹² Legislative Decree No. 178-2016, Official Gazette No. 34,290.

¹³ Legislative Decree No. 18-2017, Official Gazette No. 34,463.

¹⁴ Legislative Decree No. 69-2017, Official Gazette No. 34,463.

¹⁵ Agreement SEDS-0265-2019, Official Gazette No. 34,867.

¹⁶ Legislative Decree No. 130-2017, Official Gazette No. 34,940.

¹⁷ Legislative Decrees No. 119-2019 and No. 46-2020, Official Gazettes No. 35,247 and No. 35,092.

¹⁸ Decree No. 44-2017, Official Gazette No. 34,471.

¹⁹ Legislative Decree No. 102-2018, Official Gazette No. 34,841.

²⁰ Executive Agreement DINAF-309-2021, Official Gazette No. 35,569.

²¹ Legislative Decree No. 145-2018, Official Gazette No. 34,806, amended by Legislative Decree No. 147-2019, Official Gazette No. 35,129.

²² Legislative Decree No. 31-2020, Official Gazette No. 35,199.

²³ Legislative Decree No. 74-2020, Official Gazette No. 35,300.

²⁴ Legislative Decree No. 33-2020, Official Gazette No. 35,217.

²⁵ Legislative Decree No. 146-2020, Official Gazette No. 35,426.

²⁶ Legislative Decree No. 35-2021, Official Gazette No. 35,610.

²⁷ Agreement FRG-011-2016, Official Gazette No. 34,028.

²⁸ Agreement FGR-012-2017, Official Gazette No. 34,456.

²⁹ Agreement No. 00163, Official Gazette No. 34,632.

³⁰ Executive Agreement No. 014-2018.

³¹ Executive Agreement No. 004-2019, Official Gazette No. 34,888.

³² Executive Agreement STSS-578-2020, Official Gazette No. 35,459.

³³ Executive Agreement No. 01-SG-2020, Official Gazette No. 35,182.

- (u) Regulations on electronic governance;³⁴
 - (v) Regulations on the Organization and Operation of the National Prison Academy of Honduras.³⁵
7. Institutions and coordination mechanisms:
- (a) Establishment of the Ministry of Human Rights;³⁶
 - (b) Ministry of Transparency;³⁷
 - (c) Office of the Special Prosecutor for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, Journalists, Social Communicators and Justice Officials;³⁸
 - (d) Specialized Prosecution Unit to Combat Corruption Networks;³⁹
 - (e) Unit for the Investigations of Violent Deaths of Women and Femicides;⁴⁰
 - (f) Inter-Agency Commission for the Monitoring of Investigations of Violent Deaths of Women and Femicides;⁴¹
 - (g) National Commission on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;⁴²
 - (h) Comprehensive System for Upholding the Rights of Children and Adolescents⁴³ and reforms thereto;⁴⁴
 - (i) National Entrepreneurship and Small Businesses Service;⁴⁵
 - (j) National Electoral Council;⁴⁶
 - (k) Electoral Court;
 - (l) Special Technical Assistance Board established in November 2019 on the occasion of the visit of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights;
 - (m) Coordination mechanism to promote and uphold the socioeconomic rights of vulnerable persons in response to the COVID-19 crisis, comprising the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion, the National Institute for Migration, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and the Ministry of Human Rights, with technical assistance from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The mechanism provides a means to apprise relevant institutions of the needs and concerns of vulnerable persons and to recommend actions to promote access to and enjoyment of human rights in emergency responses.

Policies, plans and programmes

8. The main medium- and long-term development planning instruments are:
- (a) National Vision Act 2010–2038 and National Plan 2010–2022;
 - (b) National 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

³⁴ Executive Agreement PCM-086-2020, Official Gazette No. 35,383.

³⁵ National Inter-Agency Security Force Agreement No. 01-2021, Official Gazette No. 35,608.

³⁶ Executive Decree PCM-055-2017, Official Gazette No. 34,441.

³⁷ Executive Decree PCM-111-2020, Official Gazette No. 35,421, amended by Executive Decree PCM-128-2020, Official Gazette No. 35,482.

³⁸ Agreement FGR-002-2018, Official Gazette No. 34,593.

³⁹ Agreement FGR-001-2020, available at bit.ly/3Fa9mCi.

⁴⁰ Legislative Decree No. 106-2016, Official Gazette No. 34,201.

⁴¹ Agreement No. 001-CISMWMF-2019, Official Gazette No. 35,027.

⁴² Executive Decree PCM-064-2018, Official Gazette No. 34,756.

⁴³ Executive Decree PCM-020-2019, Official Gazette No. 34,983, ratified by Legislative Decree No. 34-2021.

⁴⁴ Executive Decree PCM-038-2019, Official Gazette No. 35,006.

⁴⁵ Executive Decree PCM-034-2019, Official Gazette No. 34,999.

⁴⁶ Legislative Decree No. 200-2018, Official Gazette No. 34,856.

- (c) Strategic Government Plan 2018–2022.⁴⁷
9. The following policies were adopted:
- (a) “Ciudad Mujer” (Cities for Women) National Policy;⁴⁸
- (b) Public Policy against Racism and Racial Discrimination for the Comprehensive Development of Indigenous and Afro-Honduran Peoples;⁴⁹
- (c) Alliance for the Development of La Mosquitia;⁵⁰
- (d) National Employment Policy 2017–2028;⁵¹
- (e) National Health Policy;⁵²
- (f) National Housing Policy;⁵³
- (g) National Population Policy 2026;⁵⁴
- (h) National Policy for Sustainable Development Cooperation;⁵⁵
- (i) National Policy on Long-Term Food and Nutrition Security and National Food Security and Nutrition Strategy 2030;⁵⁶
- (j) Inclusive Education Policy;⁵⁷
- (k) Environmental Agenda for Honduras;⁵⁸
- (l) Regional Agricultural Policy for the Central American Integration System Region 2019–2030;
- (m) Public Debt Policy 2020–2023;⁵⁹
- (n) National Policy on Aging and Older Adults 2021–2050;⁶⁰
- (o) Strategic Framework for Sustainable Consumption and Production in Honduras 2018;⁶¹
- (p) Strategic Education Plan 2018–2030;⁶²
- (q) Fifth Open Government Action Plan 2018–2020;⁶³
- (r) Protocol for Referral of Children Engaged in Child Labour to State Social Programmes;⁶⁴
- (s) Special measures to disseminate information on, prevent and address violence against women and actions to guarantee gender equality during the national emergency declared as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic;⁶⁵

⁴⁷ Consulted on 9 September 2021: bit.ly/2YbSRVn.

⁴⁸ Executive Decree PCM-031-2016, elevated to National Policy by Legislative Decree No. 159-2016 and decentralized by Executive Decree PCM-023-2018.

⁴⁹ Executive Decree PCM-027-2016, Official Gazette No. 34,031.

⁵⁰ Signed on 7 April 2016.

⁵¹ Executive Decree PCM-029-2017, Official Gazette No. 34,333.

⁵² Executive Decree PCM-051-2017, Official Gazette No. 34,438.

⁵³ Executive Decree PCM-004-2018, Official Gazette No. 34,567.

⁵⁴ Executive Decree PCM-007-2018, Official Gazette No. 34,620.

⁵⁵ Executive Decree PCM-080-2018, Official Gazette No. 34,842.

⁵⁶ Executive Decree PCM-086-2018, Official Gazette No. 34,863.

⁵⁷ Executive Decree PCM-054-2019, Official Gazette No. 35,096.

⁵⁸ Consulted on 9 September 2021: bit.ly/3mc4XWK.

⁵⁹ Consulted on 9 September 2021: bit.ly/2WtBcrB and bit.ly/3B9Xy04.

⁶⁰ Executive Decree PCM-005-2021, Official Gazette No. 35,542.

⁶¹ Consulted on 9 September 2021: bit.ly/3uvQ5pY.

⁶² Approved by the National Board of Education. Special Session No. 001-2019 of 9 April 2019.

⁶³ Consulted on 11 October 2021: bit.ly/3BWH3VC.

⁶⁴ Agreement STSS-389-2019, Official Gazette No. 35,113.

⁶⁵ Legislative Decree No. 99-2020, Official Gazette No. 35,353.

- (t) Support Strategy to Prevent and Contain the COVID-19 Pandemic Among Vulnerable Groups;⁶⁶
- (u) Institutional Strategic Plan for the Public Prosecution Service 2021–2025;⁶⁷
- (v) Road Map for the Elimination of All Forms of Child Labour 2021–2025;⁶⁸
- (w) National Response Plan to Combat Violence against Children and Adolescents 2021–2026;⁶⁹
- (x) National Reconstruction and Sustainable Development Plan.

10. The Ministry of General Government Coordination established an online Public Policy Repository that contains 47 documents relating to policies, plans and strategies formulated by 26 institutions since 2010. It is available at bit.ly/2Wqkb1g.

Implementation of Covenant rights

11. With regard to the **recommendation contained in paragraph 6**, in order to promote the implementation of economic, social and cultural rights and the Committee's recommendations, the Francisco Salomón Jiménez Castro Judicial School provides the following training for public and justice officials:

- (a) Workshop on standards for economic, social and cultural rights and forced evictions;
- (b) Diploma on stigma- and discrimination-free access to justice and health;
- (c) Videoconference on economic factors in the exercise of electoral rights;
- (d) On labour matters: seminars on updates in labour matters; seminar-workshop on the protective nature of labour law and its principles; conference on labour outsourcing; and diploma in evidentiary law in labour matters;
- (e) On environmental matters: capacity-building workshop for justice officials on forestry- and wildlife-related offences within the framework of the Network for Compliance with and Application of Wildlife Regulations in Central America and the Dominican Republic; workshops on environmental crimes; course on prosecution of environmental crimes; and train-the-trainer courses on environmental matters;
- (f) On vulnerable groups: seminar-workshop on the human rights of indigenous and Afro-Honduran peoples; best practices in social management, participation, citizenship and prior consultation; workshop on the rights of displaced persons, refugees and asylum seekers in Honduras; experience-sharing on property abandoned during internal displacement caused by violence; seminar-workshop on gender, children and human rights; and workshops on the 100 Brasilia Regulations Regarding Access to Justice for Vulnerable People;
- (g) Videoconferences on women's rights in the areas of food justice and its impact on women's finances; criminalization of poverty among women; jurisprudence on women's equality vis-à-vis age, ethnicity, sexual diversity and migration status;
- (h) On tax and financial matters: seminars on tax and financial investigations; train-the-trainer sessions on tax law; international conference on organized crime; and seminar on human rights and combating corruption.

12. In application of the 100 Brasilia Regulations, the Access to Justice Commission has included an indicator on vulnerable persons as a means of measuring the support such groups receive.⁷⁰

13. Between 2017 and 2021, the Ministry of Human Rights provided the following training to officials and public servants:

⁶⁶ Legislative Decree No. 31-2020, Official Gazette No. 35,199.

⁶⁷ Agreement FGR-001-2021, amended by Agreement FGR-003-2021.

⁶⁸ Consulted on 6 October 2021: bit.ly/3APHGIt.

⁶⁹ Consulted on 12 October 2021: bit.ly/3IP60Nk.

⁷⁰ Consulted on 29 September 2021: bit.ly/2ZFHQfn.

(a) Online capacity-building workshop for public officials on protection mechanisms of the inter-American human rights system, with a focus on inequality, poverty and upholding economic, social and cultural rights in Central America and Mexico in the context of human mobility. The workshop was delivered by the Special Rapporteur on Economic, Social, Cultural and Environmental Rights of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights for 27 officials from the judiciary, the Counsel General's Office, the National Institute for Migration, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, and the Ministry of Human Rights;

(b) Workshop on the doctrine of monitoring compliance with treaties and its relationship with the international human rights protection systems in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and the natural disasters caused by Hurricanes Eta and Iota, delivered by the Special Rapporteur on Economic, Social, Cultural and Environmental Rights for 76 officials;

(c) Since 2018, 259 officials have received training on the doctrine of monitoring the compatibility of legislation with treaties;

(d) With support from the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, a national meeting of institutional human rights trainers was held online for 225 attendees by experts from the Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and Da Vinci University; the meeting covered discrimination, human rights, vulnerable groups and economic, social and cultural rights;⁷¹

(e) Certification of 35 officials through the Specialized Course on Human Rights for State Officials; the course was delivered by experts from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Recommendations Monitoring System in Paraguay and covered international economic, social and cultural rights standards, challenges in their implementation, the 2030 Agenda, the Public Policy and National Plan of Action on Human Rights and linkages to economic, social and cultural rights, follow-up to recommendations and the tool used by the Honduran System for the Monitoring of Recommendations;

(f) Online train-the-trainer course on human rights in 2021 for directors and deputy directors of prisons and juvenile detention centres;⁷² the course covered topics including human dignity, prevention of discrimination in the context of COVID-19, vulnerable groups, culture of peace, controlling emotions, pro-social behaviours, teaching and promoting human rights in the prison system, gender-sensitive approaches and the protocol for dealing with lesbian, gay, transgender, bisexual and intersex persons deprived of their liberty;⁷³

(g) Between 2018 and 2021, the Department for Education and a Culture of Peace delivered training to 23,578 people, including 18,940 members of law enforcement agencies, 3,371 public officials and 500 persons deprived of their liberty.

14. Between 2017 and 2019, the Directorate for Indigenous and Afro-Honduran Peoples delivered 36 training workshops for indigenous and Afro-Honduran peoples on issues relating to culture, education, gender and inclusion, human rights and international instruments for the protection of the rights of indigenous and Afro-Honduran peoples ratified by Honduras.

15. With regard to invoking the Covenant in judicial rulings, the judiciary incorporates international human rights instruments in its judgments, particularly in the constitutional and labour courts, and has issued approximately 40 judgments during the reporting period, notably the ruling declaring the Mining Act to be unconstitutional.⁷⁴

⁷¹ Consulted on 9 September 2021: bit.ly/3z8fvuQ.

⁷² Consulted on 6 October 2021: bit.ly/3vuSX6P.

⁷³ Consulted on 6 October 2021: bit.ly/3phURqi.

⁷⁴ Consulted on 11 October 2021: bit.ly/3pfh1cY.

16. By Legislative Decree No. 8-2017, Congress ratified the Optional Protocol to the Covenant.

Cooperation with civil society

17. With reference to the **recommendation made in paragraph 8** of the concluding observations, the following agreements on cooperation have been concluded with civil society organizations:

(a) In the framework of the Public Policy and National Action Plan on Human Rights, the Ministry of Human Rights concluded agreements with the coordinating body of Honduran rehabilitation organizations and associations, the Martin Luther King Jr. Organization, the Network of Indigenous and Afro-Honduran Women, the Centro para el Desarrollo y la Cooperación LGBTI (“Somos”), the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender association “Arcoíris” and the Asociación Colectivo Violeta;

(b) The Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion has signed agreements:

(i) To provide care to persons with disabilities and ensure treatment during the public health emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic with the Centro de Atención Progreseño a la Discapacidad (El Progreso Centre for Disability Services), the Asociación de Sordos de Honduras (Honduran Association for Deaf Persons), the Fundación de Asistencia a los Discapacitados (Disability Support Foundation), the Fundación Luis Braille de Honduras (Louis Braille Foundation of Honduras), the Asociación de Padres de Familia y Amigos del Centro de Capacidades Especiales (Association of Parents and Friends of the Centre for Special Abilities), the Asociación Amor en Acción (Love in Action Association), and the Asociación Hondureña de Lesionados Medulares (Honduran Association for Victims of Spinal Cord Injuries);

(ii) With the Asociación Ayuda con Amor, Fe y Esperanza (Support with Love, Faith and Hope Association) to provide support to the Nuestra Guadalupe and German Mier de Callejas homes for older persons, which were affected by Hurricanes Eta and Iota, and with the Cristo Resucitado Parish to extend an existing agreement on services for older persons.

18. In an example of best practice, civil society organizations actively participate in various inter-institutional forums, including the Inter-Agency Commission to Combat Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Human Trafficking; the Inter-Agency Commission for the Monitoring of Investigations of Violent Deaths of Women and Femicides; the National Council for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, Journalists, Social Communicators and Justice Officials; child protection councils; the National Council for the Protection of Honduran Migrants; and the Commission for Forcibly Displaced Persons.

Protection of human rights defenders

19. Concerning the **recommendation made in subparagraph 10 (a)** of the concluding observations on investigating complaints lodged by human rights defenders, the Office of the Special Prosecutor for Human Rights has built up its capacity to investigate cases involving human rights defenders, lesbian, gay, transgender, bisexual and intersex persons, persons with disabilities and persons deprived of liberty, as well as cases involving malpractice in the public and private hospital systems. It has also established a unit to investigate offences under the Agrarian Reform Act committed against campesinos and organized campesino groups.

20. In 2017, in the framework of Operation Firestorm II, the Public Prosecution Service and the Honduras Human Rights Support Programme launched the human rights campaign “Your Life, Your Rights” (Tu Vida, Tus Derechos) to encourage the reporting of violations, raise awareness about respect for human rights and familiarize the public with the work of

the Office of the Special Prosecutor for Human Rights by distributing material in Spanish and in the Miskito and Garifuna languages and offering a diploma course in human rights.⁷⁵

21. Regarding the establishment of a special prosecutor's unit to investigate offences against human rights defenders, the Office of the Special Prosecutor for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, Journalists, Social Communicators and Justice Officials was established in 2018 to investigate attacks committed against human rights defenders on account of their activities and prosecute the perpetrators of such attacks. As of 2021, the Office has registered 41 cases of violence against human rights defenders, of which 8 are under investigation; administrative closure notifications have been issued for the other 33 cases.

22. Regarding the case of the environmental activist Berta Cáceres, seven persons were unanimously convicted of her murder in 2018. In 2021, the National Trial Court also convicted David Castillo Mejía, who was the chief executive of Empresa Desarrollos Energéticos S.A. at the time of the crime, of her murder. The Court is in the process of drafting Mr. Mejía's sentence. At the sentencing hearing, the Public Prosecution Service requested a penalty of 25 years' imprisonment.

23. The Public Prosecution Service disseminated information on the outcome of the trial in a series of public statements,⁷⁶ and the judicial authorities broadcast the public hearings on its website⁷⁷ to ensure that the trial was open to the public while taking precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

24. With regard to the murder of René Martínez, the Office of the Special Prosecutor for Offences against Life instructed the Technical Criminal Investigation Agency, the Police Investigation Directorate and the National Directorate of Investigation and Intelligence to conduct investigations, collect evidence, take witness statements and carry out an analysis of the victim's state of mind prior to his death. It concluded that the cause of Mr. Martínez's death was strangulation. The case remains under investigation.

25. With regard to **subparagraph 10 (b)** of the concluding observations, in order to prevent acts of violence against human rights defenders, protect their lives and ensure their personal safety, in 2018 the Directorate General for the Protection System set up the Prevention and Situation Analysis Unit and developed a methodology for analysing risk situations and formulating prevention and early-warning plans to identify potential risk scenarios and patterns relating to their work.

26. In 2020, the Directorate General for the Protection System issued a manual on the application by its staff of gender-sensitive and intersectional approaches, to be referred to when handling cases involving women and lesbian, gay, transgender, bisexual and intersex persons. In 2021, with the assistance of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), a training course on the application of this manual will be organized for operational personnel.

27. As of 2021, 14 prevention plans have been developed in collaboration with civil society organizations, including a prevention plan for the Lenca communities of Río Blanco, Department of Intibucá, which will be carried out by an inter-agency expert commission.⁷⁸

28. As of 30 September 2021, the Directorate General for the Protection System had received 614 requests for protective measures, of which it had admitted 425; 131 of those cases remain open: 72 individual cases (47 men, 24 women and 1 transgender woman) and 59 collective cases.

29. Of the open cases mentioned, 37 involve defenders of the environment and collective property, 24 involve defenders of indigenous peoples, 5 concern defenders of Afro-Honduran peoples, 9 deal with defenders of sexual diversity, 13 have to do with social communicators, 9 concern journalists and a further 9 involve justice officials. In addition, 31 cases are related to precautionary measures ordered by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights,

⁷⁵ Consulted on 9 September 2021: bit.ly/3uuw1UB.

⁷⁶ Consulted on 9 September 2021: bit.ly/3zREMt6.

⁷⁷ Available at: bit.ly/39VgKTm.

⁷⁸ Consulted on 29 September 2021: bit.ly/3zXnbQo.

while 2 are related to collective provisional measures ordered by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. Between 2018 and 2020, the Directorate General for the Protection System conducted 64 follow-up meetings on protection measures to gauge their effectiveness.

30. To inform defenders, civil society organizations and public servants about the work of the national protection mechanism, the Directorate General for the Protection System provides training on the Act on the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, Journalists, Social Communicators and Justice Officials, its implementing regulations⁷⁹ and the mechanism's activities.

31. With regard to **subparagraph 10 (c)** of the concluding observations, in order to facilitate the implementation of the above-mentioned law, the budget of the Directorate General for the Protection System was increased by 355 per cent between 2016 and 2020, rising from 4,979,350 lempiras (L) to L 22,699,725.

32. With technical assistance from the European Union and United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Directorate General for the Protection System strengthened the Case Processing and Rapid Response Unit, the Risk Analysis Unit and the Implementation and Monitoring Unit. Between 2019 and 31 August 2021, the Risk Analysis Unit prepared 348 risk analyses, which lay the groundwork for protection plans subsequently agreed upon with the beneficiaries of the Protection Act.

33. To strengthen the Directorate General for the Protection System itself, in 2018 USAID, through the organization Freedom House, provided technical assistance for the development of rapid protection assessments and technical risk assessment tools.⁸⁰

34. With reference to **subparagraph 10 (d)** of the concluding observations, in order to protect human rights defenders from intimidation and threats and ensure that they can perform their advocacy work, the Directorate General for the Protection System works to raise public awareness of the importance of human rights defenders' activities by issuing statements recognizing their work and denouncing discrimination.

35. With the support of Freedom House and the Honduras Human Rights Support Programme, in 2016–2018 the Directorate General for the Protection System organized 48 information and training sessions on the protection mechanism for a total of 610 persons. Between 2019 and 2021, the Prevention and Situation Analysis Unit organized 86 information and training sessions attended by 1,611 people, including human rights defenders, social communicators and public servants. In August 2021, the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights led a course on the protection of human rights defenders.

36. In 2019, the Public Prosecution Service put 173 persons through a course on protecting defenders of justice and human rights.

Right to self-determination (art. 1)

37. Concerning the **recommendations made in subparagraphs 12 (a) and (b)** of the concluding observations on the consultation process and the participation of indigenous and Afro-Honduran peoples in the preparation of the draft framework law on prior and informed consultation in accordance with international standards, including the International Labour Organization (ILO) Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169), and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, consultations were carried out in 2015 that reflected the need for new legislation on the subject. Work therefore began on a preliminary bill, which was agreed upon after consultations that ran from May 2016 to October 2017. That process included 18 workshops involving 100 organizations and more than 1,300 representatives. In 2017, during a visit to Honduras, the Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples made recommendations regarding the preliminary bill.⁸¹

⁷⁹ Executive Agreement No. 59-2016, Official Gazette No. 34,117.

⁸⁰ Consulted on 6 September 2021: bit.ly/2Yc5L5K.

⁸¹ Consulted on 6 September 2021: bit.ly/3im4YGs.

38. In 2018, the bill was referred by the executive branch to the Special Advisory Committee of the National Congress, where it is currently under consideration.

39. In January 2020, the Special Advisory Committee of the National Congress, which is deliberating on the bill, held a meeting to acquaint representatives of the 10 indigenous and Afro-Honduran peoples with the proposed legislation. The meeting was attended by delegations from the following peoples: the Miskito-Masta, the Lenca, the Garífuna, the Maya Ch'orti', the Tawahka, the Pech, the Nahuas, the Tolupán, the English-speaking black community and the Chorotega.⁸²

40. To ensure that the drafting process is carried out in accordance with the relevant standards, ILO has agreed to provide technical assistance and OHCHR will provide support for the consultations with indigenous and Afro-Honduran peoples.

41. With reference to **subparagraph 12 (c)** of the concluding observations, in order to ensure that indigenous and Afro-Honduran peoples are consulted and their opinions are respected, the Indigenous and Afro-Honduran Peoples Policy promotes culturally appropriate participation and consultation procedures and the establishment of effective mechanisms for obtaining their free, prior and informed consent before the adoption of legislative or administrative measures that may affect their rights. The following examples of best practice in the area of consultation are particularly noteworthy:

(a) Consultations with the DIUNAT Miskito Territorial Council in Brus Laguna regarding a photovoltaic energy project;

(b) Consultations held in accordance with the Biocultural Protocol of the Miskito People with the people and territorial councils of La Mosquitia regarding an oil exploitation project on the area's coast;

(c) Preparation, with the participation of indigenous and Afro-Honduran peoples, of a document on safeguarding indigenous and Afrodescendent cultures⁸³ and development of a consultation protocol based on the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and ILO Convention No. 169 as part of the Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) project;

(d) Development of forest governance protocols for the Nahua peoples in 2019 and for the Lenca and Maya Ch'orti' in 2021 that will serve as inputs for the law on consultation.

42. With regard to **subparagraph 12 (d)** of the concluding observations, in order to safeguard the right of indigenous and Afro-Honduran peoples to their lands, pillar No. 5 of the Indigenous and Afro-Honduran Peoples Policy addresses the right to land, territory and natural resources with a view to the protection of ancestral lands and the comprehensive development of the indigenous and Afro-Honduran peoples.

43. The Alliance for the Development of La Mosquitia launched the Territorial Governance Platform, which takes a cross-cutting approach to the titling, distribution and regulation of land in the interest of indigenous and Afro-Honduran peoples. The Inter-Agency Subcommittee for the Titling, Expansion, Distribution and Protection of the Territories and Natural Resources of La Mosquitia⁸⁴ was established in 2019 and the Land Distribution Plan was introduced in 2021.

44. With respect to security of tenure, the National Agrarian Institute has issued 12 land titles to 12 Miskito territorial councils covering an area of 1,114,976.24 hectares, which represents 95 per cent of the territory of La Mosquitia and benefits 80,000 families. Between 2015 and 2019, the Institute for Forest Conservation granted 10 land titles covering 371,166 hectares that benefited 2,800 families.

45. The National Agrarian Institute provides access to land and technical assistance to campesino families and indigenous and Afro-Honduran communities, thereby ensuring the

⁸² Consulted on 6 September 2021: bit.ly/3omjwJP.

⁸³ Consulted on 7 September 2021: bit.ly/2Y6aYfe.

⁸⁴ Executive Decree No. PCM-038-2019.

legal security of land ownership and helping to increase production, productivity and income generation as a means of reducing poverty and social violence in the countryside. The table below shows the number of definitive land titles granted each year and the property surveys conducted.

<i>Land titles granted to campesino families and indigenous and Afro-Honduran communities, area in hectares and property surveys</i>				
<i>Description</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>	<i>Total</i>
Titles granted	4 066	4 008	32	8 106
Hectares covered	7 404.46	6 380.47	353.01	14 137.94
Campesino families and indigenous and Afro-Honduran communities in receipt of titles	4 333 (2 781 men and 1 552 women)	4 238 (2 714 men and 1 524 women)	35 (18 men and 17 women)	8 606 (5 513 men and 3 093 women)
Titles granted	3 278	3 160	504	6 942
Hectares covered	8 001.01	8 028.96	1 664.87	17 694.84
Campesino families and indigenous and Afro-Honduran communities in receipt of titles	2 969 (1 949 men and 1 020 women)	3 044 (1 863 men and 1 181 women)	474 (277 men and 197 women)	6 487 (4 089 men and 2 398 women)
Property surveys	2 330	2 239	211	4 780
Hectares covered	20 637.43	23 825.13	1 595.13	46 057.69

Source: National Agrarian Institute Performance Reports 2018, 2019 and 2020.⁸⁵

Right to equality and non-discrimination (art. 2)

46. With reference to the **recommendation made in paragraph 14** of the concluding observations, the Office of the National Commissioner for Human Rights was accredited with A status by the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions in 2019. In 2021, it was allocated a budget of L 83,469,126,⁸⁶ which was an increase of 13.94 per cent with respect to the 2016 budget of L 73,255,474.⁸⁷

47. The Office of the National Commissioner for Human Rights has offices for the defence of children and the family, women, persons with disabilities and older persons, sexual diversity and persons with HIV, the environment, indigenous and Afro-Honduran peoples, taxpayers and human mobility; the latter is attached to the Forced Internal Displacement Unit.

48. In 2020, the Office handled 1,468 complaints of alleged violations of economic, social and cultural rights, including 713 related to health, 382 related to labour, 153 related to food and 110 related to education.

49. The Office of the National Commissioner for Human Rights promotes inclusive development at the municipal level based on its “Municipalities of Solidarity and Well-being” human security and sustainable local development strategy.

50. Concerning the **recommendation made in paragraph 16** of the concluding observations, in order to ensure independence and transparency in the selection and appointment of judges and magistrates, the National Congress and the judicial authorities have adopted a series of legislative and administrative measures:

⁸⁵ Consulted on 7 September 2021: bit.ly/3D5Ba8Z.

⁸⁶ Legislative Decree No. 182-2020, Official Gazette No. 35,468.

⁸⁷ Legislative Decree No. 168-2015, Official Gazette No. 33,912.

(a) Protocol for the Selection and Appointment of Judges of the Court of Appeals, Judges of the Courts of First Instance, Trial Court Judges, Sentence Enforcement Judges and Justices of the Peace II;⁸⁸

(b) Rules of Procedure for General Judicial Oversight;⁸⁹

(c) Act on the Special Protection of Officials and Former Officials at Extraordinary Risk⁹⁰ and its amendment, which enlarges the list of officials and former officials protected against risks associated with the performance of their duties;⁹¹

(d) In 2020, the submission by the judicial authorities of a draft bill on the Council of the Judiciary and Judicial Service to the plenary Supreme Court of Justice for discussion and approval.

51. Within the framework of the Open Justice Project and with the support of the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), judicial authorities are promoting the development of an open justice and integrity policy and preparing a judicial integrity plan to prevent corruption, strengthen citizen participation and enhance legal security nationally.

52. To ensure the safety of judges, prosecutors and other persons involved in judicial proceedings, the use of virtual hearings and videoconferencing in criminal proceedings was authorized in 2017 through an amendment to the Code of Criminal Procedure.⁹² In addition, pursuant to the Act on the Electronic Management of Judicial Proceedings, the Electronic Judicial File System⁹³ was launched in order to facilitate the conduct of criminal justice proceedings and make them more transparent.

53. With reference to the **recommendation made in paragraph 18** of the concluding observations, on measures to combat corruption, the Specialized Prosecution Unit to Combat Corruption Networks has been established to investigate corruption in the conduct of public affairs.

54. The Office of the Special Prosecutor for Promoting Transparency and Combating Corruption in Public Affairs handles offences involving the administration of government and public affairs, including offences affecting public health, education and human rights. The Office also has a Social Security Offences Unit.

55. In 2020, the Office secured convictions in two corruption cases involving the Ministry of Health, one against three officials and a private individual and another against a single official. In 2021, it pursued prosecution in three cases involving acts of corruption committed by public officials and one private individual during the pandemic, of which one case was referred to the National Fiscal Support Unit. The defendants have been formally charged.

56. A change in organizational culture has been brought about in the Public Prosecution Service in order to mainstream human rights and anti-corruption policies, particularly in the National Fiscal Support Unit, and to streamline and professionalize the Service's efforts to combat corruption in all its forms and prosecute the persons responsible. The National Fiscal Support Unit also has a Financial Analysis, Forensics and Liaison Unit.

57. In January 2021, the Honduran office of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) was opened to provide technical support to the State and the institutions that make up the National Anti-Corruption System with regard to transparency, the fight against drug trafficking and money-laundering.⁹⁴

58. The Ministry of Transparency was established in 2020 to ensure transparency in the conduct of public affairs, consolidate democracy and fight corruption. It is responsible for implementing the National Policy on Transparency, Probitry, Integrity and Corruption

⁸⁸ Agreement No. PCSJ-13-2017.

⁸⁹ Agreement No. 04-2018, Official Gazette 34,845.

⁹⁰ Legislative Decree No. 223-2013, Official Gazette No. 33,467.

⁹¹ Legislative Decree No. 184-2016, Official Gazette No. 34,292.

⁹² Amendment of articles 127-A and 127-B, Legislative Decree No. 97-2017, Official Gazette No. 34,473.

⁹³ Legislative Decree No. 146-2020, Official Gazette No. 35,426.

⁹⁴ Consulted on 9 September 2021: bit.ly/2YgEFdV; bit.ly/3F4JK9N.

Prevention and the Transparency and Anti-Corruption Strategy. In August 2021, with the technical assistance of UNODC, consultations on the development of the first national transparency and anti-corruption strategy were opened.

59. To streamline and digitalize government procedures, a single portal that consolidates all such procedures was launched: the Integrated System for Facilitating Logistical Interaction and Service Administration.⁹⁵

60. In addition, Honduras is participating in CoSt – the Infrastructure Transparency Initiative.⁹⁶

61. The Honduran Electronic Information System facilitates the processing of requests for public information and thereby ensures the right of access to public information. Between 2017 and 2020, it processed 9,642 requests pursuant to the Act on Transparency and Access to Public Information.

62. To ensure access to information on the measures taken to address the COVID-19 pandemic, the COVID-19 Emergency Transparency Portal⁹⁷ has been launched to promote accountability in respect of all procurement and contracting procedures and donations relating to the pandemic.

63. With regard to the **recommendation made in paragraph 20** of the concluding observations on the incorporation of tax policy into tax legislation, the new Tax Code came into force in 2016. The Code is up to date, is consonant with international practices in tax matters and takes due account of recent technological developments.

64. Tax revenue has increased by 2.3 per cent per year, on average, over the past five years but decreased by 19.8 per cent in 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and Hurricanes Eta and Iota.

65. Regarding social investment, in 2020 the Cabinet Committee for Social Development, which is composed of officials from 17 institutions, including the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion, the Francisco Morazán National Pedagogical University, the National Agricultural University and the National Directorate for the Cities for Women (Ciudad Mujer) Programme, implemented 16 public investment programmes and projects and established the “Vida Mejor” (Better Life) Fund. The Cabinet’s budget of L 8,535,959,556 was allocated as follows: 53 per cent was distributed to the Better Life Fund, 12 per cent to the Ministry of Health, 8 per cent to the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion, and 5 per cent to the Ministry of Education.⁹⁸

66. The Cabinet Committee for Economic Development is composed of officials from 29 institutions, 4 of which are currently implementing public investment projects with a budget of L 2,156,717,442. These projects focus on the execution of business plans, the installation and maintenance of irrigation systems, the modernization of the forestry sector, the conservation of forests and the environment, and improvements in tourism and cultural areas. The budget is distributed as follows: 34 per cent for the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, 14 per cent for the Ministry of Finance, 7 per cent for the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, and 2 per cent for the Institute for Forest Conservation.

67. For fiscal year 2021, the National Congress approved a public investment budget of L 24,023,400,000. This includes L 3,048,800,000 for public-private partnerships and L 4.5 billion for the Solidarity and Social Protection Programme for Poverty Reduction. Of the total budget, L 2,355,500,000 were allocated to the Cabinet Committee for Social Development, which as of July 2021 had spent L 862.6 million, while L 1,514,900,000 were earmarked for the Cabinet Committee for Economic Development, which by the same date had spent L 234.0 million.⁹⁹

⁹⁵ Available at: bit.ly/2Z9hZpT.

⁹⁶ Available at: bit.ly/3AS69DV.

⁹⁷ Consulted on 9 September 2021: bit.ly/3on1dV3.

⁹⁸ Consulted on 7 September 2021: bit.ly/2YfgKLJ.

⁹⁹ Consulted on 7 September 2021: bit.ly/2WtBcrB.

68. To combat tax evasion and tax fraud, in 2020 the International Monetary Fund provided technical assistance on tax compliance risk management to further the development of capacity-building plans for compliance risk management implementation processes in line with the observations made in the evaluation conducted using the 2020 Tax Administration Diagnostic Assessment Tool. The Fund also provided assistance in identifying sources of information for use in expanding the scope of tax compliance risk management activities.

69. A compliance risk management strategy was formally instituted along with the Risk Management Policy,¹⁰⁰ which establishes methodologies for the application of compliance risk management procedures in respect of tax evasion and institutional risks.

70. Strategic objective No. 3 of the Institutional Strategic Plan for the Revenue Administration Service 2017–2022¹⁰¹ focuses on combating tax evasion by monitoring tax liabilities and tax collections. The Revenue Administration Service also works to prevent and combat corruption and the commission of tax offences. To this end, it undertakes investigations with a view securing the corresponding sanctions. Such proceedings are conducted with integrity, objectivity and respect for due process.

71. Concerning the **recommendation made in subparagraph 22 (a)** of the concluding observations on anti-discrimination legislation, the new Criminal Code, which entered into force in 2020, defines the offence of discrimination on grounds of ideology, religion, beliefs, language, ethnicity or race, national origin, indigenous or Afrodescendent identity, sex, sexual orientation or gender identity, gender, marital status, family or economic situation, age, and illness or disability. The definition of that offence is in accordance with article 2 of the Covenant.

72. Regarding **subparagraph 22 (c)** of the concluding observations concerning direct and indirect discrimination, article 213 of the Criminal Code prescribes the punishments for the offences of discrimination that interferes with the exercise of rights, discrimination in the workplace and incitement to discrimination.

73. Within the framework of the Act on Equal Opportunities for Women, the State and civil society organizations coordinate measures aimed at eliminating all forms of discrimination against women and achieving gender equality, with a focus on the areas of family, health, education, culture, media, the environment, labour, social security, credit, land, housing and participation in decision-making within power structures.

74. The Equal Pay Act prohibits gender-based discrimination in relation to the wages paid to women and men.¹⁰²

75. As part of the efforts being made to close the gender gap, a gender perspective has been incorporated into the General Provisions of the State Budget. In 2020, L 14,065,600,000 were earmarked for investments to address gender-related issues.¹⁰³

76. The Act on Equity and Comprehensive Development for Persons with Disabilities prohibits any type of direct or indirect discrimination aimed at treating persons with disabilities differently or less favourably.

77. With reference to **subparagraph 22 (d)** of the concluding observations, the Criminal Code sets out the punishments for a discriminatory refusal to provide a public service and a discriminatory refusal to provide a service in the exercise of professional or business activities in the private sector.¹⁰⁴

78. Concerning **subparagraph 22 (e)** of the concluding observations, on legal and administrative mechanisms to provide protection against discrimination in cases affecting indigenous and Afro-Honduran peoples, the Office of the Special Prosecutor for Ethnic Groups and Cultural Heritage handles offences motivated by racial discrimination. The

¹⁰⁰ POL-PLI-NHP-001.

¹⁰¹ Agreement No. SAR-1220-2017, Official Gazette 34,450.

¹⁰² Legislative Decree No. 27-2015, Official Gazette No. 33,799.

¹⁰³ Consulted on 9 September 2021: bit.ly/3Fa9mCi.

¹⁰⁴ Criminal Code, arts. 484–486.

Office of the Special Prosecutor for Human Rights also handles complaints and investigates cases of discrimination.

79. In some cases of racial discrimination, non-judicial reconciliatory measures have been applied by agreement between the parties. Examples include the case of a university professor whose public apology was televised and that of a lawyer who conducted campaigns against racial discrimination. Both of these reconciliation agreements were approved by a judge.

80. With regard to **subparagraph 22 (f)** of the concluding observations, the Ministry of Human Rights took the following measures to prevent discrimination between 2017 and 2021:

- (a) Launch of the Virtual Human Rights Education Platform, which offers virtual courses on the prevention of discrimination and the right to peace;
- (b) Together with Asociación Colectivo Violeta, training of 116 public officials in human rights and respect for sexual diversity;
- (c) Provision of training to 40 public officials at the National Prison Institute via a virtual conference on constructing a culture of peace, human rights and the prevention of discrimination to promote respect for the rights of persons deprived of liberty;
- (d) Sensitization and training of 600 public officials (419 men and 181 women) of the National Prison Institute on non-discrimination and differential treatment;
- (e) With the European Union, roll-out of a campaign on discrimination and stigmatization in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Gender equality and equity (art. 3)

81. Regarding the **recommendation made in subparagraph 24 (a)** on the adoption of legislative and other measures taken to eliminate inequality between men and women:

- (a) Equal Pay Act;¹⁰⁵
- (b) Cities for Women (Ciudad Mujer) Presidential Programme;
- (c) Minimum quota for women's political participation and parity as of 2016¹⁰⁶ and Regulations for the Implementation of the Parity Principle and the Alternation Mechanism;¹⁰⁷
- (d) Academy of Women Parliamentarians, coordinated by the Congressional Commission on Gender Equity;
- (e) Act on Responsible Parenting and its implementing regulations;¹⁰⁸
- (f) Inclusive Education Policy 2019, which eliminates barriers to vulnerable groups' enjoyment of the right to education, and creation of the Gender in Education Portal;¹⁰⁹
- (g) Guide for a culture of equity in preschool, primary and secondary¹¹⁰ education, and a teachers' guide for gender inclusion in the classroom;¹¹¹
- (h) National Agenda for the Sustainable Development Goals;
- (i) Creation of business development centres at the national level as part of the National Entrepreneurship and Small Businesses Service to implement strategies for addressing gender issues and for the adoption of the Women's Entrepreneurship Programme;
- (j) Honduran Women's Financial Inclusion Plan to promote women's empowerment and development and their access to the financial system, savings and credit;

¹⁰⁵ Legislative Decree No. 27-2015, Official Gazette No. 33,799.

¹⁰⁶ By amendment to Legislative Decree No. 54-2012, Official Gazette No. 32,820.

¹⁰⁷ Decision No. 003-2016, Official Gazette No. 34,134.

¹⁰⁸ Legislative Decree No. 51-2016, Official Gazette No. 34,162.

¹⁰⁹ Consulted on 9 September 2021: bit.ly/3zZ9e4q.

¹¹⁰ Consulted on 9 September 2021: bit.ly/3iijleM; bit.ly/3mbgjKx; and bit.ly/3olMSrO.

¹¹¹ Consulted on 9 September 2021: bit.ly/3kUQz5C.

(k) Line of credit for microenterprises: Working Capital for Women;

(l) Creation of a working group on gender and employment to mainstream gender in the National Employment Policy.

82. With regard to **subparagraph 24 (b)**, measures taken to eliminate discrimination against women in rural areas include:

(a) Act on the National Solidarity Loan Programme for Rural Women;¹¹²

(b) Creation of the Rural Women's School for Equality and Empowerment;

(c) Strengthening of the municipal offices for women now operating in 274 of the country's 298 municipalities. These offices promote women's rights and the Second Plan for Gender Equality and Equity (2010–2022);

(d) The Gender Equality and Equity Policy for the Agrifood Sector and Rural Areas is being developed with a view to mainstreaming gender in that sector.¹¹³

83. Concerning the **recommendation made in subparagraph 26 (a)**, measures to prevent violence against women, domestic violence and femicide include:

(a) Establishment of the Inter-Agency Commission for the Monitoring of Investigations into Violent Deaths among Women and Femicides, comprising the Public Prosecution Service, the Ministry of Security, the Ministry of Human Rights, the National Institute for Women, the Office of the National Commissioner for Human Rights (CONADEH) and three women's civil society organizations;

(b) Creation of the Femicide Unit in the Technical Criminal Investigation Agency;¹¹⁴

(c) The Cities for Women Programme, which applies the Women's Rights Support and Protection Modules;

(d) The Strategic Plan to Combat Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking in Persons (2016–2022);¹¹⁵

(e) Special measures to disseminate information on, prevent and address violence against women and actions to guarantee gender equality during the national emergency declared as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic;

(f) The CONECTA platform, which provides psychosocial and legal support to women victims of violence;

(g) As part of the Global Spotlight Initiative, the National Institute for Women established the Gender School, which offers online courses to reinforce knowledge and action related to substantive gender equality;¹¹⁶

(h) Launch of the Gender Observatory, which will measure gender gaps;

(i) The Shelters bill.

84. With regard to **subparagraph 26 (b)**, in order to provide protection and access to justice for victims of violence, the six Cities for Women Centres and the mobile unit have provided comprehensive support and protection to 581,738 women nationwide since 2016.

85. The Women's Rights Support and Protection Modules of the Cities for Women Centres provide the following services: psychological and social support; development of life plans and security plans; crisis intervention; support and self-help groups; legal advice and representation; a complaints procedure; police support and investigation; and forensic

¹¹² Legislative Decree No. 110-2015, Official Gazette No. 33,984.

¹¹³ Consulted on 9 September 2021: bit.ly/2Y6UcML.

¹¹⁴ New article 44-A of the Act on the Public Prosecution Service, inserted under Legislative Decree No. 106-2016, Official Gazette No. 34,201.

¹¹⁵ Executive decision No. 487-2016, Official Gazette No. 34,204.

¹¹⁶ Consulted on 10 October 2021: bit.ly/2Z4LvmY.

medical evaluations. Between 2017 and July 2021, 42,327 complaints of gender-based violence were received and support was provided in 41,657 cases.

86. Comprehensive protection of children, adolescents and women victims of violence is furnished in seven shelters in the main cities which provide support to victims referred to them by the domestic violence courts. They follow the protocol on service delivery and procedures for shelters, which has been publicized and circulated in coordination with the municipal offices for women.

87. With reference to **subparagraph 26 (c)** of the concluding observations, in connection with its investigations into cases of violence against women, the Public Prosecution Service runs 23 specialized comprehensive support units across the country. These units receive complaints and provide full support to women, children and adolescent victims of violence. The units also implement security measures to ensure victims are fully protected and refer them to shelters. Five of the units have teams of prosecutors, social workers and psychologists.

88. Between 2017 and June 2021, the support units dealt with 51,926 persons at risk and received 23,906 complaints from victims of violence (women and persons at risk), of which 12,886 related to domestic violence against women, 2,029 to sexual assault and 163 to harassment; they also put in place 7,260 security measures.

89. Between 2016 and July 2020, the special domestic violence courts registered 81,928 complaints and handed down 76,895 rulings against perpetrators of the crime of domestic violence. In areas where there are no special courts, magistrates' courts try domestic violence cases.

90. Between 2017 and August 2021, the Office of the Special Prosecutor for Offences against Life has reported the following:

<i>Violent deaths among women and femicides nationwide</i>					
	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>	<i>2021</i>
Conviction	51	50	46	23	24
Acquittal	13	12	10	3	2
Application to prosecute	59	58	54	53	40
Under investigation	305	259	209	108	70

Source: Public Prosecution Service/Office of the Special Prosecutor for Offences against Life.

91. The Office of the Special Prosecutor for Ethnic Groups and Cultural Heritage also brings criminal proceedings and carries out monitoring operations in coordination with State agencies with a view to establishing protection measures for indigenous and Afro-Honduran women.

92. As part of the Justice for Victims of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Project, the Inter-Agency Commission for the Monitoring of Investigations into Violent Deaths among Women and Femicides, aided by the Justice Education Society, conducts training events such as the second and third editions of a seminar on criminal investigation into the crime of femicide and training modules for judges on access to justice for girls, women and persons of sexual diversity who are victims of crimes of sexual and gender-based violence. A centralized system for information on femicides is currently under development.

93. Concerning **subparagraph 26 (d)**, in order to raise awareness of the various forms of violence against women, a number of public information campaigns have been run, such as:

- (a) "Speak Up and Report It: Justice Is on Your Side" (judiciary's information campaign on complaints mechanisms, financed by EuroJusticia);
- (b) "I Am a Woman and A Life Without Violence Is My Right" (prevention of human trafficking, domestic and intra-family violence and femicide);
- (c) "A Life Without Violence Is the Key To a Better Life" (with the support of UN-Women, to address domestic violence, street violence and harassment);
- (d) "Eradicating Violence in the World of Work: A Shared Responsibility";

- (e) “Score a Goal Against Machismo”;
- (f) “Score a Goal Against Trafficking; Report Trafficking – That’s What Matters”; and “Blue Heart” (all run by the Inter-Agency Commission for the Prevention of Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking of Children and Adolescents);
- (g) “Living Together Without Violence” (in response to the increase in domestic violence during the COVID-19 lockdown);
- (h) “The National Institute for Women Is Behind You” (during the COVID-19 pandemic);
- (i) Women: It’s Your Right To Be at Home Without Violence and Without Fear. You’re Not Alone” (a women’s civil society initiative to promote reporting via the national 911 hotline and healthy coexistence in lockdown).

94. Between 2016 and 2019 the Judicial Academy trained justice operators on issues relating to the prevention of violence against women and gender-based violence:

- (a) Regional rules on comprehensive support for women victims of gender-based violence;
- (b) Prevention of violence against women, trafficking in persons and femicide in Central America;
- (c) Latin American model protocol for investigating gender-related killings of women;
- (d) Mainstreaming gender in court decisions;
- (e) Women and men – what a difference (to raise gender awareness);
- (f) Workplace and sexual harassment against security employees;
- (g) Trainer training on access to justice for indigenous and Afro-Honduran communities, with a focus on human rights and gender;
- (h) Human rights and masculinity;
- (i) Videoconference on action to prevent, punish and eradicate violence against girls.

95. In 2019, the National Institute for Women conducted a diploma course on women’s human rights, gender violence and trafficking in persons. The course is designed to build the capacities of justice operators.

96. Between 2016 and 2020, the Ministry of Security organized 170 courses in police training centres on human rights and women’s rights for 37,104 police officers.

97. The Criminal Investigation Academy has launched a pilot project to implement the National Police Institutional Gender Policy and is currently preparing an analysis of the Metropolitan Units.

Right to work (art. 6)

98. Regarding the **recommendation made in subparagraph 28 (a)**, on efforts to reduce the unemployment and underemployment rates, the National Employment Policy of Honduras 2017–2028 has been approved. This policy promotes sustained and inclusive economic growth and the reduction of poverty and inequality through job creation.

99. Under this policy, the Employment and Opportunities Office and the Employment, Opportunities and Income Task Force were created in 2018.¹¹⁷ The latter is responsible for monitoring job creation and income opportunities arising in the public and private sectors. In 2019, the Task Force recorded the creation of 196,323 jobs, of which 128,615 were in the

¹¹⁷ Executive Decree PCM-008-2018, Official Gazette No. 34,600.

public sector and 67,708 in the private sector. Between 2014 and 2019, 1,242,436 jobs and income opportunities were created.¹¹⁸

100. Between 2017 and 2019, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security created 565,493 jobs, as detailed below.

<i>Jobs created, by year and sector</i>				
<i>Sector</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>Total</i>
Public sector initiatives	158 831	76 698	128 615	364 144
Private sector initiatives	75 576	57 055	67 708	200 339
Total	234 407	134 763	196 323	565 493

Source: Ministry of Labour and Social Security.

101. In 2019, 5,175 self-employment opportunities and temporary jobs were created with the help of 84 organizations from five departments in the Dry Corridor¹¹⁹ (male adults: 45 per cent; young men: 12 per cent; female adults: 33 per cent; and young women: 10 per cent) in agriculture, tourism and other sectors.¹²⁰

102. In 2019, the “Life is Better with a Job” Presidential Programme created 5,252 new jobs, and the Community Service Jobs Project created 19,178 jobs. Between 2017 and 2020, the Green Code Programme created 8,169 technical support jobs in the health sector.¹²¹

103. Between 2019 and 2020, the National Entrepreneurship and Small Businesses Service created 10,643 jobs and, with the help of technical assistance, successfully saved another 18,066 jobs.

104. Microenterprises in the social sector of the economy have created 63,925 jobs. In 2020, the National Employment Service of Honduras created 410,836 jobs in the private sector.¹²²

105. In view of the economic impact of COVID-19, and in compliance with the Act on the Social Protection System, the Act on Support for the Productive Sector and Its Workers Given the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic was passed as a solidarity measure. Under this law, the contributions of workers affiliated with the Private Contributions Regime in the maquila and tourism sectors are temporarily being paid for them.¹²³ The Act also guarantees access to health care through the Honduran Social Security Institute, even where contributions have been suspended due to temporary layoffs during the national emergency.

106. As of June 2020, benefits had been provided to 106,636 workers from 597 companies belonging to the Private Contribution Scheme, 101 belonging to the Honduran Maquila Association and 60 in the tourism sector. These benefits represent an investment of L 383,617,500,000,000;¹²⁴ workers and employers are free to agree on larger sums.

107. Regarding initiatives for rural women, in 2018 the implementing regulations for the Act on the National Solidarity Loan Programme for Rural Women were adopted to facilitate access to resources for organizations formed by rural women. In 2019, the Special Women’s Loan Office was set up with initial funding of L. 35 million.

¹¹⁸ Ministry of Labour and Social Security, *Informe de Logros 2019*. Consulted on 19 July 2021: <https://bit.ly/3Fa9mCi>.

¹¹⁹ Francisco Morazán, Choluteca, Valle, La Paz and El Paraíso.

¹²⁰ Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock report 2019, consulted 2 August 2021: bit.ly/3Fa9mCi.

¹²¹ Ministry of Labour and Social Security, *Informe de Logros 2020*. Consulted on 15 July 2021: <https://bit.ly/3Fa9mCi>.

¹²² *Revista Resumen de Logros 2020*. Consulted on 19 July 2021: bit.ly/3FakkYu.

¹²³ Under Legislative Decree No. 40-2020, amending article 27 of Legislative Decree No. 33-2020, tourism workers are also covered by COVID-19 temporary solidarity contributions.

¹²⁴ Consulted on 2 August 2021: bit.ly/3zYFCEz.

108. The results of the labour market surveys carried out by the National Institute of Statistics for 2017–2020.¹²⁵

<i>Labour market trends</i>				
	2017	2018	2019	2020
Working-age population	6 936 385	7 179 176	7 360 067	6 908 644
Men	3 269 481	3 421 950	3 488 015	3 168 455
Women	3 666 904	3 757 227	3 872 052	3 740 189
National participation rate	59.0	60.4	57.3	59.4
Men	76.0	76.3	75.1	73.1
Women	43.8	46.0	41.4	47.7
Gender gap	32.2	30.3	33.7	25.4
National open unemployment rate	6.7	5.7	5.7	10.9
Men	4.0	4.5	4.2	8.7
Women	10.8	7.4	8.1	13.7

Source: National Institute of Statistics. Cuadros mercado laboral (labour market tables), Continuous Multipurpose Household Survey, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020.

109. With regard to **subparagraph 28 (b)**, measures for regularizing the informal sector include the Micro and Small Businesses Support Act, adopted in 2018, which promotes the establishment of micro and small businesses, new start-ups and job creation.

110. In 2019, the National Entrepreneurship and Small Businesses Service was created. The Service set up the My Online Business (Mi Empresa en Línea) portal, which was used to establish 1,601 companies in the first half of 2020.

111. Support for women's employability and financial autonomy has been provided the financial autonomy units that work out of the Cities for Women Centres. These units had assisted 77,458 women by 2020 and provided 165,148 individual services, including business advice, business plan development, legal certification, financial facilitation services, business analyses, loans and training.

112. Between 2019 and 2020, these units registered 1,326 women with employment exchanges, approved loans to 101 women and provided 42 women with microentrepreneurship training.¹²⁶

Services provided by the financial autonomy units

	2019	2020	Total
Women placed in employment exchanges	1 678	1 326	3 004
Women provided with microentrepreneurship training	932	42	974
Loans	284	101	385

Source: Women's Cities Programme.

113. In 2018, the National Financial Inclusion Strategy of the "Your Partner Bank" Solidarity Credit Programme¹²⁷ expanded its coverage¹²⁸ and, by 2019, it had 56 branches nationwide. This programme provides assistance and access to loans of up to L 300,000 at monthly interest rates of 1 per cent to young people, women in vulnerable situations, peasant women, indigenous and Afro-Honduran persons, persons with disabilities, people living in

¹²⁵ National Institute of Statistics, Continuous Multipurpose Household Survey; available at: bit.ly/3jdd6tn.

¹²⁶ Women's Cities Programme, Informe de Evaluación Física y Financiera del Programa Ciudad Mujer, July–31 December 2020; available at: bit.ly/3Fa9mCi.

¹²⁷ Executive Decree PCM-05-2015, Official Gazette No. 33,672.

¹²⁸ Executive Decree PCM-70-2018, Official Gazette No. 34,802.

poverty, returned migrants, older persons and others; it created 44,122 jobs in 2017; 15,724 jobs in 2018; and 27,579 jobs in 2019.¹²⁹

114. From 2015 to February 2021, the Programme provided 181,134 people (74 per cent women and 26 per cent men) with social credits, investing L 1,794,520,410 in the form of 98,498 loans to people in extreme poverty, 19,825 to people in poverty and 38,972 to young people; 13,617 to older persons; 7,216 to women; 222 to the agricultural sector; 175 to indigenous and Afro-Honduran persons; 169 to peasant women; 18 to persons with disabilities; 16 to returned migrants; 2,070 to financially excluded persons; and 336 to companies in the social sector of the economy.¹³⁰

115. Between 2015 and 2020, the National Entrepreneurship and Small Businesses Service's Business Development Centres Network for micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises provided advisory services to 69,312 companies and 5,736 business ventures; 9,742 companies were established and 90,571 people were trained.

116. In 2020, the Fiduciary Commission of the Central Bank of Honduras approved the establishment of the Administration Trust for the Guarantee Fund for the Reactivation of Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises affected by the COVID-19 Pandemic¹³¹ and an investment of L 2.5 billion to provide guarantees for loans granted by international financial institutions to micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises. The Administration Trust for the Guarantee Fund for the Reactivation of Large Companies Affected by the COVID-19 Pandemic was also set up with a capital injection of L 1.9 billion.

117. The Central Bank has been authorized to administer a public trust fund for poverty reduction, which is to be used to grant solidarity credits, provide assistance to returned migrants, strengthen public security and provide support to the informal sector of the economy. The Ministry of Finance is to act as the trustor.¹³²

118. According to the Central Bank, in 2019, 50.7 per cent of the private sector credit balance of L 408,597,600,000 was allocated to households and non-profit organizations serving households, and the other 49.3 per cent went to the business sector; however, during 2020, business sector credit in local currency expanded by L 5,450,800,000 and in foreign currency by L 834,900,000. Meanwhile, the household sector's credit balance increased by L 9,585,400,00 in local currency.

119. In 2020, new loans granted by the financial system to the private sector amounted to a cumulative figure of L 287,168,600,000, up by L 11,886,800,000 over those granted in 2019 (L 275,281,800,000); this year-on-year increase went mainly to services, real estate, commerce and the manufacturing industry. New consumer credit and new farm loans had both decreased by the end of 2020 owing to the contraction of the Honduran economy triggered by the COVID-19 health emergency and the impact of Hurricane ETA and Hurricane IOTA.¹³³

120. In January 2018, in order to promote the formalization of domestic work, the executive branch submitted a bill on domestic work to Congress. In addition, the Francisco Morazán Network of Domestic Workers and the Association of Women Domestic Workers of Honduras have carried out structured campaigns and initiatives.

121. In the area of non-formal education, between 2017 and July 2021 the National Institute for Vocational Training providing technical training to 197,833 young people aged 14–19 (115,538 women and 97,050 men). From 2016 to July 2021, it provided training to 387,699 young people aged 20–29 in subject areas relating to the tourism, agriculture, industry and commerce, and service sectors. Between 2018 and 2019, it certified the occupational skills

¹²⁹ Memoria Institucional Programa Presidencial Crédito Solidario 2015-2019 (institutional report on the Presidential Solidarity Credit Programme 2015–2019); available at: bit.ly/3Fa9mCi.

¹³⁰ Informe de Cartera Global Crédito Solidario (solidarity credit global portfolio report), 2015, 12 February 2021.

¹³¹ Central Bank of Honduras Decision 06/2020, Official Gazette 35,259.

¹³² Regular meetings 02/2020 (20 May 2020) and 03/2020 (8 June 2020), Central Bank of Honduras annual report for 2020. Consulted on 2 August 2021: bit.ly/2WvF8rO.

¹³³ Central Bank of Honduras, annual report for 2020.

of 5,954 workers and, in 2020, before the outbreak of COVID-19, it provided virtual training courses via the Institute's own platform and other virtual platforms to 136,510 young people aged 14–29.

122. The National Employment Training Centre¹³⁴ runs job training and entrepreneurship programmes to help create decent jobs and contribute to the country's economic growth. Between 2017 and July 2021, it provided training to 5,048 people in the following courses: Entrepreneur Trainer, Human Rights Trainer Training, Entrepreneur Training Facilitator, and Ethical Leadership and Coaching, among other entrepreneurship topics.

123. As part of the effort to promote workers' access to social protection, as of April 2021, the Honduran Social Security Institute had registered 2,506 people in its special scheme for progressive enrolment; 54,875 retirees nationwide; and 687,186 contributing members with occupational risk insurance coverage. As of March 2021, it had 605,178 contributing members in the social security (formerly disability, old age and death) scheme, as shown below.

<i>Members of the social security scheme</i>			
<i>Year</i>	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Total</i>
2017	346 616	251 974	598 590
2018	354 979	259 117	614 096
2019	358 239	259 640	617 879
2020	343 938	248 495	592 433
2021*	345 864	259 314	605 178
<i>Members of the occupational risk insurance scheme</i>			
2017			715 202
2018			746 393
2019			753 275
2020			727 231
2021*			741 594

Source: Honduran Social Security Institute.

* March.

Decent working conditions (art. 7)

124. In respect of the **recommendation made in paragraph 30**, under the Minimum Wage Act, minimum wage levels are to be reviewed annually in December, and the revised wage levels are to be applied as from January of the following year. To that end, a Minimum Wage Commission is appointed, made up of representatives of the public sector, labour and management, who determine by tripartite consensus the minimum wage to be applied throughout the country.

125. Under the Tripartite Agreement on the Minimum Wage Review reached by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, the Honduran Private Enterprise Council and labour unions, the average monthly wage for 2020 was set at L 10,022.04, for a rise of 6.1 per cent from 2019 (L 9,443.24).¹³⁵

¹³⁴ Legislative Decree No. 84-2001, Official Gazette No. 29,536.

¹³⁵ Central Bank of Honduras, annual report for 2020.

<i>Annual minimum wage increase 2018–2020</i>			
<i>Year</i>	<i>Minimum wage, lempiras</i>	<i>Percentage change</i>	<i>Decision</i>
2018	8 910.70	5.5%	STSS-003-2018
2019	9 443.24	6.0%	
2020	10 022.04	6.1%	STSS-06-2019

Source: Central Bank of Honduras.

126. The COVID-19 pandemic and Hurricanes ETA and IOTA caused a 9 per cent contraction in real gross domestic product (GDP) in 2020, with an inflation rate of 4.01 per cent. In preparation for the Commission's review of the minimum wage, the Ministry therefore carried out a socioeconomic study as a basis for setting the 2021 minimum wage and an analysis of the country's economic, financial and social situation and its economic recovery strategy.

127. The executive branch set the average minimum wage for 2021 at L 10,601.67 (5.8 per cent higher than in 2020),¹³⁶ effective as of 1 July 2021, based on the following percentages: 4.01 per cent for companies with 1 to 10 or 11 to 50 employees; 5 per cent for companies with 51 to 150 workers; and 8 per cent for companies with 151 or more employees.¹³⁷

128. For workers in the agricultural, forestry, hunting and fishing, and tourism sectors, an adjustment of 4.01 per cent was set for companies of any size regardless of the number of employees.

129. The minimum wage for the Honduran maquiladora textile sector and for free zone companies is subject to the provisions of Decision STSS-006-2019.

130. In relation to the **recommendation made in subparagraph 32 (a)**, with a view to improving women's working conditions, particularly in the maquila and domestic labour sectors, the Labour Inspection Act entered into force in 2017 and its implementing regulations in 2020.

131. The Ministry's Directorate General of Labour Inspections is responsible for verifying the nature of working conditions by inspecting both private and public workplaces and anywhere else that an employer-employee relationship exists; in the case of domestic workers, the employer's consent must be sought if the workplace is the employer's home.

	<i>Labour inspections</i>				
	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>	<i>2021</i>
Inspections carried out	25 614	25 545	21 400	8 267	8 846
Workers concerned	257 097	428 532	259 912	173 183	97 111
Women concerned	111 276	182 344	106 385	75 971	41 298

Source: Ministry of Labour and Social Security.

132. Between 2016 and August 2021, 1,970 inspections were conducted in the maquila sector.

133. Childcare centres for the children of working parents catered for 496 children aged under 6 in 2017; 370 in 2019; 252 in 2020; and 447 up to June 2021. Three centres were remodelled in 2019.¹³⁸

134. In regard to **subparagraph 32 (b)**, in order to strengthen the mandate and oversight capabilities of labour inspectors in the maquila and domestic work sectors, in 2019 the Ministry implemented the National Regional Inspection Strategy. It also developed a new

¹³⁶ Executive Decision No. 001-2021, Official Gazette No. 35,636.

¹³⁷ Consulted on 20 September 2021: bit.ly/2ZNj8de.

¹³⁸ Ministry of Labour and Social Security, *Informe de Logros 2020*.

electronic system to strengthen and harmonize procedures for inspecting working conditions. As of 2021, there were 156 labour inspectors nationwide.

135. Through World Vision's Bright Futures Project, funded by the United States of America, the Ministry has developed inspection protocols regarding child labour, health and safety, and freedom of association.

136. As part of the Strengthening Labour Inspection Project, the Ministry and the Foundation for Peace and Democracy conducted a diploma course on strengthening labour inspection capabilities for 30 inspectors. The course focused on improved practices in the application of the Inspection Act, administrative procedures, and health and social security regulations.

137. In 2019, Ministry officials received training on dealing with trafficking and exploitation of persons, particularly in the case of women and girls. In 2021, training was provided on human rights, the prevention of discrimination and the rights of people with HIV and of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex population with a view to reducing stigmatization and discrimination. A campaign was also run to disseminate information on labour rights which reached 450,000 people.

138. With regard to **subparagraph 32 (c)**, on establishing effective mechanisms to report abuse and exploitation, the Labour Inspection Act provides for inspections in workplaces both during working hours and outside regular hours and on non-workdays. In addition to regular inspections, extraordinary inspections may be conducted when it is known that imminent danger or risk exists. In those cases, inspectors focus on ensuring that the established protocols are being complied with.

139. The Act also provides for penalties and fines for employers in the event of non-compliance with labour laws or rights, actions that adversely affect workers, non-compliance with collective bargaining agreements, or interfering with labour inspections, for example.

140. In April 2020, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry prepared biosafety guidelines for workers in the informal sector in Honduras. The guidelines apply to inspections and evaluations of compliance with biosafety recommendations in workplaces and in respect of working conditions for informal vendors.¹³⁹

141. In 2020, the Office of the National Commissioner for Human Rights registered 382 complaints relating to the right to work. The basis for those complaints included lack of fair and satisfactory working conditions; illegal or indirect dismissals; physical, psychological or sexual harassment at work; discrimination in entry into employment, tenure, treatment or remuneration; changes in work schedules or duties, labour lockouts and failure to pay wages. Of those 382 complaints, 44 were found to concern actions that were not violations, 151 were determined to be based on violations and 187 are still under investigation; 35 per cent of the complaints came from women, 14 per cent from older persons, 11 per cent from children and adolescents, and 2 per cent from persons with disabilities.¹⁴⁰

142. With reference to **subparagraph 32 (d)**, Honduras has not yet ratified International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention No. 189.

143. In respect of the **recommendation made in subparagraph 34 (a)**, in order to ensure equal pay for men and women for work of equal value, the Second Plan for Gender Equality and Equity and the Equal Pay Act prohibit the establishment of different wage levels for the same category of work.¹⁴¹

144. The rate of compliance with legal frameworks for the promotion, achievement and oversight of respect for equality between the sexes and non-discrimination has increased from 75 per cent in 2015 to 80 per cent in 2019, thanks to the efforts made in such areas as wage equality and gender-based violence.

¹³⁹ Consulted on 4 August 2021: bit.ly/3kVQcb2.

¹⁴⁰ Office of the National Commissioner for Human Rights, annual report for 2020. Consulted on 2 August 2021: bit.ly/2SY4mx6.

¹⁴¹ Legislative Decree No. 27-2015, Official Gazette No. 33,799.

145. To eliminate gender-pay gaps, 93 per cent of large companies and 89 per cent of micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises have equitable wage policies based on performance and quality. Similarly, 80 per cent of large companies have an equal employment opportunity policy, as do 67 per cent of micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises.¹⁴²

146. Regarding studies on wage equality, in 2019 the Ministry produced a report on wage equity and pay gaps in the labour market.¹⁴³

Right to form trade unions (art. 8)

147. Regarding workers' right to join trade unions, 11 new workers' organizations were registered in 2019, bringing the number of registered unions to 529 in the private sector and 80 in the public sector. Of these 609 registered unions, 335 are company-based unions, 142 are industry-based unions, 123 are professional associations and 9 cover a range of trades. Of the total number of unions, 21 are federations, 3 are confederations, 3 are employers' associations and 1 is an association.

148. Working conditions have been improved in 43 workplaces under the terms of signed and registered contracts, collective bargaining agreements and contractual regulatory instruments applying to 44,384 workers (30,263 in the private sector and 14,121 in the public sector).

Right to social security (art. 9)

149. In regard to the **recommendation made in paragraph 36 (a)**: to guarantee universal social protection, the Framework Act on the Social Protection System¹⁴⁴ creates a legal framework for public policies on social protection. It provides a basis for progressive and financially sustainable coverage and, through social advancement, the prevention and management of the risks people face in their lives by guaranteeing medical assistance, protection of livelihoods and other social rights in the interests of individual and collective well-being.

150. The Social Protection System applies the principle of universality, which entails the provision of progressive and gradually increasing coverage to Hondurans and foreign residents by means of a multi-component model comprising five schemes:¹⁴⁵

(a) The Social Security Scheme guarantees a basic income in the event of disability, old age or death; as of 2021, the coverage rate is 35.5 per cent (605,178 beneficiaries) and the growth rate is 2.2 per cent;

(b) This scheme provides comprehensive protection for workers in the event of work-related accidents and occupational diseases and compensation for any resulting financial loss to workers and their families; as of 2021, the coverage rate is 43.5 per cent (741,594) and the growth rate is 2 per cent;

(c) The Employment Insurance Scheme provides for the mandatory payment of the unemployment benefits established under the Labour Code, seniority bonuses and other benefits that may accrue to the worker;

(d) The Health Insurance Scheme guarantees equitable access to the health-care benefits and services provided by the Honduran Social Security Institute under its contributory and subsidized plans;

¹⁴² Second Voluntary National Report on the 2030 Agenda.

¹⁴³ Ministry of Labour and Social Security, *Informe de Logros 2020*.

¹⁴⁴ Legislative Decree No. 56-2015, Official Gazette 33,771.

¹⁴⁵ Framework Act on the Social Protection System, art. 5.

(e) The Social Protection Floor Scheme guarantees non-contributory benefits, access to essential services and social transfers to vulnerable persons and persons living in poverty.

151. In respect of **subparagraph 36 (b)**, on access to basic services, the Social Protection Floor Scheme has two components: (1) entitlements and essential social (cash or in-kind) transfers to ensure access to a minimum income, benefits and services; and (2) the supply of social goods and services such as health care, water and sanitation, education, food, social housing, recreation, employment and financial inclusion. The distribution of these benefits is administered by the National Centre for Information on the Social Sector.

152. The following benefits are provided: a basic allowance per child, which includes conditional transfers, comprehensive child development programmes with an emphasis on early childhood, basic school supplies and school meals; a scholarship programme; other educational, child protection and childcare benefits; plans and programmes on comprehensive health care, employment, and food and nutrition security; recreational, assistance and temporary housing plans, cash or in-kind subsidies for rent payments or the purchase, construction or improvement of housing units; and assistance plans for older persons, persons with permanent disabilities and persons living in extreme poverty.

153. The Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion gives priority to vulnerable groups in the following programmes:

(a) The Older Adults Inclusion and Social Well-being Programme provides older persons living in poverty with regular cash pension payments. Persons in adult day-care centres are served by the Comprehensive Care Project for Older Persons and Persons with Disabilities in Situations of Vulnerability or at Social Risk;

(b) The Inclusion and Social Well-being Programme for Persons with Disabilities provides cash transfers and technical aids suited to the type of disability concerned;

(c) The Inclusion and Social Well-being Programme for Indigenous and Afro-Honduran Peoples is run by the Directorate for Indigenous and Afro-Honduran Peoples;

(d) The Health Solidarity Programme provides comprehensive health care to preschoolers, schoolchildren and vulnerable groups. Its activities include making visits to schools, setting up medical brigades and working for a healthier environment;

(e) The Family Allowance Programme provides conditional cash transfers (Better-Life Vouchers) to families in extreme poverty in urban and rural areas, indigenous and Afro-Honduran households and the families of persons with disabilities;

(f) The Productive Social Infrastructure for a Better Life (Healthy Housing) Programme provides complete dwelling units, improved roofing, sound flooring, latrines, filters and eco-cookers.

154. With reference to **subparagraph 36 (c)**, Social Protection System benefits are distributed through public, private or mixed agencies, and services are outsourced to civil society organizations that work with vulnerable groups.

Protection of the family (art. 10)

155. Regarding the **recommendation made in subparagraph 38 (a)**, in order to guarantee, respect and protect the rights of children and adolescents, the Integrated System for the Rights of Children and Adolescents in Honduras was created in 2019. The System comprises the National Council to Guarantee the Rights of Children and Adolescents, 5 departmental councils and 164 municipal councils, other State agencies and around 150 children's civil society organizations.

156. In 2020, the System, represented by the Directorate for Children, Adolescents and Families, conducted 44 training courses on children's rights protection for municipal children's rights councils. It also launched the Children's Rights Observatory, drew up 25 action plans and held 10 workshops to disseminate the draft National Policy on the Rights of Children and Adolescents in Honduras.

157. The Programme for the Protection of Children and Adolescents Whose Rights Have Been Violated provided 24,000 services to 6,770 children and adolescents whose rights had been violated, held hearings to open 4,000 new cases, and prepared 3,000 reports on the application of protection measures.¹⁴⁶

158. The Special Protection Subsystem makes mechanisms available for reporting violations of children's and adolescents' rights and for support, referral and coordination with various agencies to ensure the provision of comprehensive protection to children and adolescents.

159. In 2020, the Directorate ran 481 training courses on rights protection and the Special Protection Subsystem, on life skills and on sexual and reproductive health education for pregnant girls and adolescents. Activities targeted public and private agencies, municipal children's rights councils and teachers at priority schools where the irregular migration of children and adolescents poses a risk.

160. With reference to **subparagraph 38 (b)**, on the preparation of a study of street children and adolescents with a view to developing a comprehensive approach to the problem, in 2020 the Directorate launched the Interagency Strategy on Street Families and Children with the aim of identifying the main needs of such persons and coordinating with the State's social service agencies.

161. Based on this strategy, operations were carried out in the Central District and San Pedro Sula during the pandemic, and the Protocol for Support for Unprotected Children and Especially Street Children was prepared; 179 children and adolescents from 148 families received food rations and masks.

162. Regarding **subparagraph 38 (c)**, on measures to protect children and adolescents from falling victim to gang violence and recruitment, in the framework of the National Policy on Prevention of Violence against Children and Young People, the Gang Resistance Education and Training (GREAT) Programme works to promote peace and healthy coexistence by holding talks on drug prevention, sexual abuse, civil coexistence and values. It also organizes recreational camps and activities; 347,990 children and adolescents aged 7 to 17 took part in this programme between 2017 and 2021.

163. With support from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Safe Learning Spaces Initiative for the Inclusion of Children focuses on gang conflict areas. It covers 302 schools in 11 municipalities in 4 different departments and serves 108,604 children and adolescents in basic education (50.4 per cent boys and 49.6 per cent girls), 1,828 school principals and teachers and 6,500 parents.¹⁴⁷

164. The country's Youth Outreach Centres conduct recreation and violence prevention activities. Children and adolescents go to these facilities to take part in arts activities, sports and various forms of entertainment. There are 70 such centres in 7 departments serving more than 42,000 children and adolescents. Their funding entails an investment of L 100 million.

165. The following strategies for preventing violence in schools are in place:

(a) The "Building Peace, Coexistence and Citizenship" strategy is being implemented in 85 schools;

(b) The "Prevention, Protection and Reducing Violence in Schools" strategy was used to provide training to 19,586 persons in 2017;

(c) The "Live Better Without Drugs" strategy was used in 2018 to reach more than 100,000 children and adolescents aged 13 to 16 in 127 schools across the country.

166. The Strategy to Prevent Violence and Return to Peace, which is part of the Better Life Programme, promotes efforts to reclaim and put to use public spaces, along with sports and cultural activities, healthy coexistence, healthy lifestyles and a balanced diet. As of 2021,

¹⁴⁶ Directorate for Children, Adolescents and Families, annual report for 2020. Consulted on 6 September 2021: bit.ly/3Fa9mCi.

¹⁴⁷ Second Voluntary National Report on the 2030 Agenda.

there are 116 Parks for a Better Life across the country. These are inclusive spaces visited by an average of 375,000 people of all ages every month.¹⁴⁸

167. With reference to **subparagraph 38 (d)**, the following are some of the measures taken to prevent and combat the economic exploitation of children and adolescents:

- (a) Reactivation of the National Commission for the Progressive Elimination of Child Labour in 2017;¹⁴⁹
- (b) Road Map for the Elimination of All Forms of Child Labour 2021–2025;
- (c) Amendments to the list of hazardous forms of work;
- (d) The new Criminal Code defines the crimes of exploitation of child labour and trafficking for the purpose of exploitation in conditions of slavery, servitude or forced service or labour, including begging and forced participation in criminal activities;¹⁵⁰
- (e) Annual country report on child labour;
- (f) Protocol for Referral of Children Engaged in Child Labour to State Social Programmes;
- (g) Protocol for the Organization, Training and Certification of Committees for the Prevention of Child Labour;
- (h) Regulation on Protected Adolescent Labour in Honduras;

168. From 2020 to June 2021, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security assisted 1,902 children and adolescents engaged in child labour.

169. In 2019, the National Commission for the Progressive Elimination of Child Labour, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security and World Vision's Bright Futures Project certified and swore in 87 Child Labour Prevention Committees in six departments. They also developed a new country plan for the prevention of child labour for 2021–2025.

170. The Ministry of Labour and Social Security is a member of the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for a Region Free of Child Labour, which is working to eradicate child labour in line with Sustainable Development Goal target 8.7, to develop a new five-year plan for Latin America and to prepare an application to join the Child Labour Risk Identification Model.

171. The Ministry carried out 135 training sessions on the prevention of child labour, occupational health and safety, and labour rights and obligations.

172. Regarding **subparagraph 38 (e)**, on investigating cases of economic exploitation of children and adolescents, the Criminal Code defines the offence of seriously endangering the life, health and/or physical integrity of workers aged under 18 and provides for increased penalties up to one third longer than for the offence committed in the absence of this aggravating factor. The Code allow the Public Prosecution Service to open investigations into such offences against workers and makes special provision for such investigations when they are committed against children subjected to labour in any form.

Right to the continuous improvement of living conditions (art. 11)

173. Regarding the **recommendation made in subparagraph 40 (a)**, on poverty-reduction efforts, between 2015 and 2019, there were significant decreases in the percentages of households living in poverty and extreme poverty (4.5 and 3.3 percentage points, respectively). This improvement is quite probably linked to the country's rate of GDP growth of approximately 4 per cent per year and to the increase in the number of households covered by the Better Life Strategy.

¹⁴⁸ Consulted on 6 September 2021: bit.ly/39UpMjK.

¹⁴⁹ Executive Decree PCM-025-2017, Official Gazette 34,342.

¹⁵⁰ Criminal Code, arts. 293 and 219.

174. The economy grew at an average rate of 3.8 per cent, and macroeconomic and fiscal stability was maintained. However, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic triggered a 5.7 per cent contraction in the economy and led to high unemployment figures and increased social risks for the most vulnerable groups in the population. This situation was exacerbated by Hurricanes ETA and IOTA.¹⁵¹

175. Honduras has focused its efforts on reducing poverty and inequality, which are the two main pillars of the Government's strategy. In 2018, the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) was brought into use; this index measures multiple types of unmet needs at the household and individual levels in the areas of health, education, the environment and security. This index indicates that the poverty rate dropped from 67.2 per cent to 59.6 per cent between 2013 and 2018.¹⁵²

176. In 2019, 14,000 more households were covered by the conditional cash transfer programmes of the Better Life Platform than in 2015.

<i>Social dimension, Sustainable Development Goal 1 indicators</i>					
<i>Indicator</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>
1.1.2 Percentage of households living in extreme poverty [1]	40.0	38.4	40.7	38.7	36.7
1.1.3 Percentage of households below the poverty line [1]	63.8	60.9	64.3	61.9	59.3
1.3.1 Number of households participating in conditional cash transfer programmes (health and education) via the Better Life Platform [2]	234 860	258 062	254 498	276 556	248 716
1.4.2 Social spending as a percentage of total net central government spending [3]	41.4	40.2	40.3	40.1	Not available

Sources: [1] National Institute of Statistics; [2] Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion; [3] Ministry of Finance.

177. The strategy underpinning the Better Life Platform encompasses the following programmes: Better Life Vouchers (conditional cash transfers), the School Meals Programme, the Solidarity Meals Programme for people in vulnerable situations, the Healthy Schools Programme, the Healthy Housing Programme, the Opportunity Creation Programme, The "Raising Them with Love" Comprehensive Early Childhood Care System, the Food Security and Economic Development Promotion Programme, the Better Families Programme and the Family Guides Programme.

178. According to an evaluation prepared by the Inter-American Development Bank, the successes of the Better Life Voucher Programme include the reduction of extreme poverty among beneficiary families, a 5.2 per cent rise in school enrolment and an 11.3 per cent increase in attendance at height and weight medical checks.¹⁵³

179. The continuation and expansion of social programmes and projects are financed by the Solidarity and Social Protection Fund for the Reduction of Extreme Poverty, which is managed as a trust fund.¹⁵⁴

180. In respect of **subparagraph 40 (b)**, the Better Life Voucher Programme includes components aimed at reducing inequality by providing opportunities for mothers who are heads of household, for young people in extreme poverty who have graduated from ninth grade and for mothers of children with microcephaly, among others.

¹⁵¹ National Reconstruction and Sustainable Development Plan, vol. 1; available at: bit.ly/3FYDpgr.

¹⁵² Multidimensional Poverty Network-Honduras.

¹⁵³ Consulted on 20 September 2021: bit.ly/3md116T.

¹⁵⁴ Legislative Decree No. 278-2013, Official Gazette No. 33,316.

181. With respect to the **recommendation made in subparagraph 42 (a)**, for information on measures designed to provide access to land, see the response to the recommendation made in paragraph 12 (d).

182. With reference to **subparagraph 42 (b)**, on investment in local agricultural production, the following measures have been adopted:

(a) Dry Corridor Alliance Plan: a strategy for reducing poverty and malnutrition in vulnerable communities in the Dry Corridor based on technical assistance projects and training for producers in ways of increasing productivity, construction of water reservoirs, installation of drip irrigation, access to credit and prevention of teenage pregnancy;¹⁵⁵

(b) Rural Competitiveness Project: facilitates access to credit and technical assistance for small and medium-sized agricultural producers benefited 11,301 small producers between 2014 and 2020, with an investment of L 885 million;¹⁵⁶

(c) Agrocredit 8.7 Programme: offers credit at 5 per cent annual interest to producers in the farming, livestock, poultry, fishery, pig farming, forestry, agroindustry, and irrigated modern agricultural sectors, among others. Since the launch of this programme, the Central Bank of Honduras has invested L 4.8 billion; in 2021, an additional L 2.625 billion was allocated at a 5 per cent preferential rate;¹⁵⁷

(d) As an incentive for the agricultural sector, the sales tax on raw materials and tools was removed;

(e) Productive Solidarity Bond: This bond has benefited 342,000 small producers; more than 122,000 producers received training and 4,576 hectares have been irrigated;¹⁵⁸

(f) Trust Funds for the Reactivation of the Agricultural Sector: These Funds represent an investment of L 5.335 billion. More than L 1.3 billion of that sum took the form of social investment in the agricultural sector, while L 492 million was allocated to strategies for building up feed stocks and more than L 3.5 billion went towards low-interest loans to producers;

(g) Construction of 249 water harvesters to store 2.8 million cubic metres of water for use by 2,800 producer families. This measure is helping to shield producers from the effects of climate change and to ensure continued production during prolonged droughts;

(h) Installation of 1,198 water tanks in seven departments in the Dry Corridor;

(i) El Lempirita Savings Fair Programme and the Super Precio Catracho (Christmas bargain) fairs;

(j) The Vegetable Garden Programme (family, school and community gardens) run by the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion is benefiting 115,459 people.

183. In regard to **subparagraph 42 (c)**, on forced evictions, the Office of the Special Prosecutor for Ethnic Groups and Cultural Heritage registers complaints and investigates land and natural resource disputes in indigenous and Afro-Honduran communities.

184. In 2021, the Ministry of Human Rights, with the support of OHCHR, trained 52 justice officials and staff on basic human rights principles and guidelines regarding evictions and their connection with internal forced displacement; the training also covered the human rights impacts of the criminal offence of forced displacement.

¹⁵⁵ Consulted on 20 September 2021: bit.ly/3EZsX7U.

¹⁵⁶ *Revista Resumen de Logros 2020*.

¹⁵⁷ Consulted on 20 September 2021: bit.ly/3DRpU09.

¹⁵⁸ *Revista Resumen de Logros 2020*.

Right to adequate food

185. With regard to the **recommendation made in paragraph 44**, on the right to adequate food, which is regulated by the Framework Act on the Social Protection System¹⁵⁹ and the School Meals Act,¹⁶⁰ the authorities have taken various measures, including:

- (a) Updating the National Policy on Long-Term Food and Nutrition Security and the National Food Security and Nutrition Strategy 2030 with a view to achieving the targets established for Sustainable Development Goal 2 related to eradicating hunger, addressing food insecurity and malnutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture;
- (b) Issuing the National Strategic Plan for the Prevention of Excessive Weight and Obesity in Honduras 2021–2025;
- (c) Publishing a healthy eating guide for health facilitators.

186. The Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion and the National Commodity Supplier (BANASUPRO) have concluded agreements on the delivery of humanitarian aid and basic foodstuffs to families living in extreme poverty under the Better Life Programme and the Project on Strengthening Local Capacities for the Management, Supply and Preparation of School Meals.

187. To ensure sufficient food reserves during the emergencies caused by COVID-19 and Hurricanes Eta and Iota,¹⁶¹ support for the food production and agroindustry sector was declared a priority, and the Food Sovereignty and Security Programme was established under the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock to organize, register and trace national food production units and categorize producers.

188. In view of the restrictions on movement and the social distancing requirement introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion formulated the Support Strategy to Prevent and Contain the COVID-19 Pandemic among Vulnerable Groups, under which solidarity food parcels were delivered to prioritized groups. Between March and September 2020, 288,714 parcels were delivered, representing an investment of L 76,818,351 under the Solidarity and Social Protection Fund for the Reduction of Extreme Poverty.

189. To assist persons affected by Hurricanes Eta and Iota, Operation “You Are Not Alone” was launched, with 60,000 families receiving humanitarian aid in the form of six basic supply kits containing personal hygiene products, pans, plates, household cleaning items, baby care products and emergency essentials. As of December 2020, 456 families in the departments of Cortés and Yoro had received assistance, representing an investment of L 6,566,400. In addition, the Hot Meals for Emergency Shelters Project was carried out in cooperation with Fundación Hondureña de Desarrollo Integral (Honduran Foundation for Comprehensive Development), under which 6,000 food parcels were delivered daily.

190. To address the issues of malnutrition and mortality in children under the age of 2, the Ministry of Health is implementing the Strategy on Comprehensive Care for Children in the Community, under which volunteer monitors and health workers promote health and nutrition in the family and the community by sharing advice on nutritional practices to ensure children’s healthy growth and development.

191. The “Raising with Love” Programme,¹⁶² which forms part of the Public Policy on Comprehensive Early Childhood Development, comprises five subcomponents: (1) health; (2) food and nutritional security; (3) education; (4) rights protections; and (5) recreation and civic education. The programme is intended to provide support for children from before birth until the age of 6. Assistance was provided to children and adolescents in 64 municipalities in Lempira, Intibucá and La Paz in 2017 and in 67 municipalities in Santa Bárbara, Copán and Ocotepeque in 2018. In 2019, 3,250 acutely malnourished children received assistance

¹⁵⁹ Legislative Decree No. 56-2015, Official Gazette No. 33,771.

¹⁶⁰ Legislative Decree No. 125-2016, Official Gazette No. 34,380.

¹⁶¹ Executive Decree No. PCM-030-2020, Official Gazette No. 35,222, as amended by Executive Decrees No. PCM-037-2020 and No. PCM-041-2020.

¹⁶² Executive Decree No. PCM-020-2015.

under the programme, while in 2020 support was provided to 2,100 children and 1,600 pregnant women suffering from malnutrition.

192. The National School Nutrition Programme was established under the School Meals Act to contribute to healthy child development. It is being implemented by the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion and the Ministry of Education, which are providing children and adolescents in public schools with healthy supplementary meals that provide 30 per cent of their recommended caloric intake; the ingredients in these meals include flour, rice, beans and vegetable oil. In priority areas in the Dry Corridor and indigenous and Afro-Honduran communities, this basic meal is supplemented with fresh fruit, vegetables, eggs and dairy products.

193. The National School Nutrition Programme encourages school attendance, promotes student achievement and contributes to the health and nutrition of children and adolescents. To bolster this programme, the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion has concluded agreements with the World Food Programme (WFP), the Association of Honduran Municipalities, local authorities and civil society organizations with a view to promoting a decentralized local procurement model and identifying and training local suppliers. Between 2017 and 2019, 10,100 producers were registered and 4,350 people received appropriate training.

<i>Children and adolescents receiving assistance under the National School Nutrition Programme, per year</i>				
<i>Description</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>
Children receiving basic meals	1 248 153	1 248 152	1 300 915	1 256 227
Children receiving fresh meals (Dry Corridor and indigenous and Afro-Honduran communities)	-	240 531	212 056	76 676

Source: Ministry of Labour and Social Security.

194. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Education, UNICEF and WFP developed a special protocol for the delivery of school meals to students' parents.

195. Under the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion's Better Families Programme,¹⁶³ women between the ages of 13 and 49 are trained as agents of change to help them to enhance their family's skills and capacities, to open up opportunities, to promote individual, family and community well-being and to improve their self-esteem and self-management skills. Under the health and food component, training is provided on such topics as cooking, hygiene and food preservation methods.

196. Eighty-five per cent of the Programme's resources are allocated to rural areas, and 197,311 people receive training every year. In 2020, owing to restrictions introduced during the pandemic, video calls, text messages and phone calls were used and training sessions involved no more than 15 people each in keeping with social distancing rules.

Exploitation of natural resources (art, 11)

197. Concerning the **recommendation made in paragraph 46 (a)**, on regulations for evaluating the social and environmental impact of natural-resource exploitation projects, the Environmental Agenda of Honduras was established to protect the nation's natural resources and environment and ensure their sustainable use with a view to the well-being of the population and the promotion of productivity and competitiveness in production sectors. The Agenda consists of three programmes dealing with: (1) good governance of natural resources, the environment and biological diversity; (2) risk management, control and environmental quality; and (3) promotion of sustainable investment and valuation of natural capital.

¹⁶³ Established through Ministerial Decision No. 022-SEDIS-2016.

198. The Water, Forest and Land Master Plan sets out guidelines for the efficient and sustainable management of water, land and forest resources with the participation of local communities.

199. The Adaptation to Climate Change Strategy 2015–2025 includes guidelines for developing climate change and climate variability adaptation measures to ensure the sustainability of agricultural activities and food security in the pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals.

200. The Regulations on the Design and Approval of Municipal Development Plans¹⁶⁴ set out guidelines for formulating, updating, expanding and certifying comprehensive municipal development plans. The focus is on human beings and their holistic development, harmony with the environment, decentralization, promotion of citizen participation, civil society organizations and international cooperation.

201. With regard to **subparagraph 46 (b)**, on the consultation of local communities and the indigenous and Afro-Honduran peoples, please see the information provided in the present report in response to the recommendation contained in paragraph 12 (c).

Forced internal displacement

202. Concerning the **recommendation made in paragraph 48**, measures taken to prevent and combat insecurity and violence include:

- (a) Development of the Violence Prevention Policy;
- (b) Adoption of the Comprehensive Policy on Harmonious Social Relations and Public Safety 2011–2022;
- (c) Enactment of the Police Service Act 2017;
- (d) Establishment of the Special Commission for the Reform of the National Police and the comprehensive strengthening of the police force. This led to the dismissal of 5,635 police officers and other law enforcement officials;
- (e) Adoption of the Plan for the Strengthening and Professionalization of the National Police, under which 9,823 new police officers have been trained.

203. The Directorate for the Protection of Persons Internally Displaced by Violence of the Ministry of Human Rights, in coordination with the Inter-Agency Commission for the Protection of Persons Displaced by Violence, promotes policies and measures such as the following in order to prevent internal displacement and provide support and protection to internally displaced persons:

- (a) Publication of a second study on forced internal displacement in Honduras 2004–2018;
- (b) Submission of a draft bill on the prevention of forced displacement and the care and protection of forcibly displaced persons to the National Congress in 2019;
- (c) Development of a manual on the emergency humanitarian assistance mechanism;
- (d) Publication of a practical guide on providing differentiated care with a psychosocial focus to persons internally displaced by violence. This guide was presented to 80 health workers over four induction days;
- (e) Development and implementation of municipal internal displacement response plans in three prioritized municipalities and the subsequent establishment of local coordination and response mechanisms;
- (f) Conclusion of five inter-institutional coordination agreements with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the Office of the United Nations

¹⁶⁴ Decision No. 00163, Official Gazette No. 34,632.

High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Médecins du Monde;

(g) Training of 212 public servants and members of the staff of municipal support centres for returning migrants, civil society organizations and international organizations on such topics as lasting solutions, emergency humanitarian assistance and internal displacement;

(h) Organization of a pilot project on humanitarian assistance and lasting solutions for persons internally displaced by violence, in partnership with UNHCR. Under this project, support has been provided in 44 cases (humanitarian assistance in 20 cases and technical, psychosocial and legal assistance in 24 cases) to a total of 74 persons, including women, men, children and lesbian, gay, transgender, bisexual and intersex persons.

Returning migrants

204. With regard to the **recommendation made in paragraph 50**, on the implementation of the Act for the Protection of Honduran Migrants and Their Families, the Office of the Deputy Minister for Consular and Migration Affairs was established in 2015 to coordinate, promote, harmonize and disseminate the policies established under consular and migration laws. Pursuant to the aforementioned Act, the Directorate General for the Protection of Honduran Migrants was established to provide protection and assistance to Honduran migrants abroad and to returnees. The Act's implementing regulations were adopted in 2020.

205. The Directorate General for the Protection of Honduran Migrants, in coordination with the consular network, provides support to Hondurans returning from Mexico and the United States of America to ensure that their human rights are respected, due process is followed and the most vulnerable migrants are protected.

206. In 2017, municipal support centres for returning migrants were established to provide support, follow-up, and labour, social and business reintegration services to returning migrants in communities with the highest migration levels. There are currently 14 such centres throughout the country.

207. Through the National Council for the Protection of Honduran Migrants, the Office of the Deputy Minister for Consular and Migration Affairs has concluded technical and financial cooperation agreements with various State institutions and civil society organizations to facilitate the reintegration and protection of returning migrants. The following projects and strategies are also under way:

- (a) National System for the Reintegration of Returning Migrants;
- (b) "Yo Emprendo En Mi Tierra" (My Local Business) scheme, part of the "Honduras Se Levanta" (Honduras Rises) initiative;
- (c) Humanitarian Assistance and Protection for Returning Migrants in Need Programme;
- (d) An initiative to improve the quality of life of returning migrants with disabilities;
- (e) A strategy for reinforcing and improving people's quality of life through entrepreneurship, with a focus on the family members of missing migrants, single mothers and young returning migrants.

208. The Directorate General for the Protection of Honduran Migrants provides such protection services as counselling, assistance and financial aid to Hondurans abroad, as indicated in the following table. These services are financed by the Solidarity Fund for Honduran Migrants in Vulnerable Situations.

<i>Support services provided to Honduran nationals</i>					
<i>Description</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>
Guidance on diverse matters	76	125	174	87	25
Financial assistance for vulnerable persons	61	87	100	151	57
Assistance for family members of missing Honduran nationals	70	96	67	41	12
Assistance for Honduran nationals deprived of their liberty	217	303	313	698	2 020
Assistance for children and adolescents	89	173	271	242	103
Assistance for victims of trafficking in persons	1	8	-	13	9
Humanitarian flights for Honduran nationals (Madrid, Spain to San Pedro Sula, Honduras)	-	-	-	-	557

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation.

209. In 2017, the Government set up the Consular Protection Centre for Honduran Migrants in Houston, Texas, and the Integrated Protection Centre for Honduran Migrants in Mexico to provide protection to Honduran migrants, especially children and adolescents, facilitate the repatriation of sick or vulnerable persons and the remains of deceased Honduran nationals, assist with voluntary returns and provide consular assistance in immigration detention centres.

210. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation operates the “ALHO VOZ” call centre, which assists Hondurans living abroad and their families. Between 2016 and 31 August 2021, the centre handled 1,999,826 calls.¹⁶⁵

211. To improve the quality of care provided at returning migrant support centres, the Centre for Migrant Children and Families of Belén was opened in 2016 to assist accompanied and unaccompanied migrant children and adolescents in a comfortable and welcoming setting. The returning migrant support centres in San Pedro Sula, which assists Honduran nationals returning by air, and in Omoa, which assists Honduran nationals returning by land, have been renovated.

212. Between 2016 and 2020, returning migrant support centres provided assistance in 1,706,759 cases in the form of food, medical and psychological care, tickets for transport to places of origin, clothing and footwear, hygiene kits, accommodation, telephone calls, biometric registration and data collection services, special support for displaced persons and victim protection measures.

213. A protocol for the care of returning persons in need of protection was developed as a guide for assisting returning migrants displaced by violence. It has been updated with the support of UNHCR, the Norwegian Refugee Council, ICRC and the Ministry of Human Rights.

214. From 2017 to September 2021, returning migrant support centres provided assistance to 308,491 returning migrants.¹⁶⁶

Right to health (art. 12)

215. With regard to the **recommendation made in paragraph 52**, public investment in the health sector as of 31 August 2021 came to L 2,103,500,000 (7 per cent of the State budget).¹⁶⁷

216. The budget allocated to the Ministry of Health for 2021 totalled L 18,218,439,532, representing an increase of 29.6 per cent over the 2017 budget of L 14,382,266,094.

¹⁶⁵ Consulted on 20 September 2021: bit.ly/3dY4Npi.

¹⁶⁶ Consulted on 20 September 2021: bit.ly/3FhjoSb.

¹⁶⁷ Consulted on 20 September 2021: bit.ly/2YfgKLJ.

217. The National Health Policy was adopted in 2017 to improve the accessibility, availability and quality of health care. It provides for the transformation and development of the National Health System, with a focus on risk management, high-quality results, primary health care and gender equality.

218. Other policies and standards include the Policy on Quality of Care in the National Health System¹⁶⁸ and its implementing strategy and the Standard for High-Quality and Humane Care during Outpatient Consultations and Emergencies (Honduran Technical Health Standard No. 01-01-11),¹⁶⁹ the application of which is mandatory in all public and private health-care facilities.

219. The Health Sector Workplan 2019–2022 was adopted to strengthen infrastructure in the health-care system and ensure that health facilities have the necessary medical staff, supplies and medicines. This plan ensures universal health-care access and coverage, incorporates a human rights approach and promotes measures to ensure the supply of medicines and medical and surgical materials, reduce waiting times for operations and deal with epidemics.

220. According to the National Health Policy and the Register of Service Units, as of 2021 there were 87 more health facilities in Honduras than there had been in 2016, with 1,827 first- and second-level facilities, 9 specialized hospitals, 7 general hospitals, 15 basic hospitals, 1 centralized institute, 360 comprehensive health centres, 849 primary health-care units, 81 maternal and child clinics, 350 health promotion and prevention sites, 25 polyclinics, 3 satellite emergency clinics, 13 dental school centres and 114 other centres.

221. In 2020, there were 8,027 hospital beds in public health facilities (7,173 in public hospitals and 854 in Honduran Social Security Institute facilities) and 189 hospital beds in private health facilities. There were 16,083 registered physicians nationwide (12,142 general practitioners and 3,941 specialists) who provided 8,366,636 medical services that year.¹⁷⁰

222. The following first-level facilities were established to strengthen the health-care network in rural areas:¹⁷¹

(a) The “Vida Mejor” (Better Life) Comprehensive Health Centre in the community of La Ceiba, in the region of Montaña de la Flor, provides preclinical, clinical, vaccination, laboratory, data filing, nebulization, maternity, pharmacy and dentistry services to the Tolupán indigenous people;

(b) The Lepaera (Lempira) Polyclinic, a first-level health care centre, was established in 2019 as part of the Project for the Improvement of the Quality of Maternal and Child Care Services in Lempira and El Paraíso with funding from the Japan International Cooperation Agency;

(c) Polyclinics in Siguatepeque and El Paraíso serve the populations of Lepaera, La Másica and Trojes;

(d) Facilities at the Southern Regional Hospital Regional in Choluteca have been renovated;

(e) A neonatal maternal ward at the Dr. Enrique Aguilar Cerrato Hospital in the Department of Intibucá represents a total investment of L 88 million. In 2019, the ward’s capacity was increased from 91 to 111 beds. During the pandemic, a special COVID-19 ward was set up. This ward counted 121 beds as of 2021;

(f) Intibucá Hospital provided 69,432 services in 2019, 15,224 services in 2020 and 9,363 services from January to June 2021. The hospital’s catchment area mainly covers the territories of the Lenca ethnic group and the populations of the departments of La Paz, Lempira and Comayagua.

¹⁶⁸ Consulted on 21 July 2021: bit.ly/3uu1h68.

¹⁶⁹ Consulted on 21 July 2021: bit.ly/39SNVXP.

¹⁷⁰ Central Bank of Honduras, *Honduras en cifras* (Honduras in numbers) 2018–2020.

¹⁷¹ *Revista Resumen de Logros 2020*.

223. Primary health-care units in the communities of San Juan and La Ceiba, in Montaña de la Flor, a region inhabited by the Tolupán people, provided 7,607 services in 2019, 5,720 services in 2020 and 3,085 services from January to June 2021.

224. To assist members of the Miskito community suffering from decompression syndrome resulting from dive fishing, the Decompression Syndrome Clinic was established at the Puerto Lempira Hospital in 2015. As of 2021, the Clinic had handled 320 cases and provided 1,282 sessions in hyperbaric oxygen chambers.

225. Measures taken to strengthen the infrastructure of second-level specialized hospitals include:¹⁷²

(a) Construction, expansion and renovation of five hospitals, including the María Paediatric Hospital and the Honduran Centre for Child Burn Victims;

(b) Construction of the Nuclear Medicine Ward at San Felipe Hospital, which provides treatment to cancer patients;

(c) Expansion and renovation of 23 operating rooms at Escuela Hospital;

(d) Opening of 11 operating rooms and the installation of 3 elevators at Mario Catarino Rivas Hospital.¹⁷³

226. Under the Presidential Health Fair Programme, first-level care, including preclinical care, general medicine, dentistry, paediatric care and gynaecology, is provided in communities across 16 departments.

227. Health brigades have been mobilized in the region of La Mosquitia, in the Department of Gracias a Dios.

228. With a view to ensuring the supply of essential medicines, in 2015 the Ministry of Health developed drug selection guidelines that served as the basis for the current National List of Essential Medicines,¹⁷⁴ which comprises 531 dosage forms and 376 active ingredients.

229. Within the framework of the Expanded Programme on Immunization, the Ministry of Health holds the National Vaccination and Deworming Day every year to immunize the population against preventable diseases and to work to control and eventually eradicate preventable diseases such as diphtheria, poliomyelitis, measles, congenital rubella syndrome and rubella, to provide children between the ages of 6 and 59 months with vitamin A supplements, to facilitate the early detection of childhood cancer and to provide anti-parasitic treatments to preschool children.

230. In 2020, the Expanded Programme on Immunization was allocated a budget of US\$ 35,244,733, of which 97 per cent derived from national funds, ensuring a sufficient supply of all types of vaccines for the following decade.

231. The current national vaccination schedule includes the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine, which is administered to 11-year-old girls, the seasonal influenza vaccine and the COVID-19 vaccine, which was initially given as a priority to health-care and essential workers, adults over 60 years old, persons between 18 and 59 years old at high risk of morbidity and vulnerable groups such as persons with disabilities, pregnant women and persons deprived of their liberty.

232. As of 4 October 2021, 5,876,909 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine had been administered to the eligible population. In total, 3,545,996 people had received their first dose and 2,330,913 people had received their second dose.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷² *Revista Resumen de Logros 2020*.

¹⁷³ Available at: bit.ly/3GIupwh.

¹⁷⁴ Approved by Ministerial Decision No. 4124-2019.

¹⁷⁵ Data provided by the Expanded Programme on Immunization/Ministry of Health/Honduran Social Security Institute. Consulted on 11 October 2021: bit.ly/2YYCtbt.

233. The fifth COVID-19 vaccination campaign targeted persons deprived of their liberty. Of the target group of 20,166 persons, 16,539, or 81 per cent, received their first dose and 13,839, or 69 per cent, received their second dose.¹⁷⁶

234. To facilitate the care of persons diagnosed with COVID-19, the Ministry of Health developed various strategies, guidelines, protocols and guides to harmonize treatment methods and prevent the spread of the virus. These materials have included: an annex to the Institutional Strategic Plan; containment, prevention and response plans applicable to pandemics, natural disasters and epidemiological emergencies; guidelines on epidemiological surveillance, management, control and prevention; guidance on first-level care services; care during pregnancy, labour and puerperium; the provision of temporary shelters; the use and disposal of personal protective equipment; the handling of corpses; outpatient clinical procedures; care of older adult patients according to the stage of the disease in question; treatment in homes for older persons and persons with disabilities; paediatric services in first- and second-level care facilities; the use of rapid tests; a dental biosafety protocol; guidelines on home care; and guidance on the care of patients requiring elective and emergency surgical procedures.

235. In addition, the public hospital network made available 1,517 beds in regular wards and 90 beds in intensive care units.¹⁷⁷

236. Concerning the **recommendation made in subparagraph 54 (a)**, on the ban on abortion and the amendment of the new Criminal Code, the criminal offence of abortion remains unchanged in the new Criminal Code.

237. In June 2021, the Constitutional Division of the Supreme Court of Justice admitted appeals of unconstitutionality against article 67 of the Constitution and article 196 of the Criminal Code which sought the decriminalization of abortion on three grounds and had been filed by a group of civil society organizations.

238. With regard to **subparagraph 54 (b)**, the 2009 ministerial decree prohibiting the use of emergency contraceptives remains in force. However, the Ministry of Health provides priority care to adolescents and provides counselling, education and access to family planning and sexually transmitted disease prevention programmes.

239. To strengthen family planning services, the Guide on Providing Family Planning Services and the Family Planning Protocol were updated based on medical eligibility criteria set by the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO). The updated versions broaden the range of long-term contraceptive methods available to adolescents. There is also a rural family planning strategy.

240. Sexual and reproductive health units at Cities for Women Centres provide comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services to women, children and adolescents and offer care and other services to pregnant teenagers. Between 2016 and 2020, 474,646 services were provided.

241. Over the same period, adolescent care units provided 32,016 services and childcare units provided 36,941 services.¹⁷⁸

242. With regard to **subparagraph 54 (c)**, on reducing the teenage pregnancy rate, especially among girls from low-income families, the National Strategy for the Prevention of Teenage Pregnancy in Honduras is being implemented to improve the quality of life of adolescents and reduce the maternal mortality rate.

243. In 2019, the National Strategy for the Prevention of Teenage Pregnancy in Honduras was evaluated by a multisectoral team of officials from the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion, the Honduran Social Security Institute, the Honduran Paediatric Society, PAHO/WHO, the United Nations Population Fund and civil society organizations. This team consulted with adolescents from

¹⁷⁶ Data provided by the Statistics Department of the Ministry of Health.

¹⁷⁷ General Directorate for Integrated Health Services Networks-Ministry of Health, Newsletter on COVID-19 of 17 August 2021.

¹⁷⁸ *Revista Resumen de Logros 2020*.

indigenous and Afro-Honduran communities and adolescents living in marginal areas in order to incorporate their views. On the basis of this evaluation, the Adolescent Health Plan 2019–2024 was developed, with input from civil society organizations.

<i>Adolescents admitted to hospital to give birth or receive abortion services/administration of the HPV vaccine</i>						
<i>Description</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2020</i>	<i>2021*</i>
Deliveries	31 756	30 468	29 741	27 571	23 181**	-
Abortions***	-	1 754	1 641	1 414	1 118	-
Girls having received the full HPV vaccine schedule	54 038	63 245	53 703	59 446	46 849	27 188

Source: Ministry of Labour and Social Security.

* January–June.

** As of September.

*** Does not include abortions performed in private facilities and/or in community settings.

244. Of the total number of deliveries performed in hospitals in 2019 (137,143), 20.1 per cent (27,571) were adolescent deliveries. In 2020, 18.5 per cent (23,181) of deliveries were adolescent deliveries, down by 4,390 deliveries (or 15.92 per cent) compared to 2019.

245. Between 2018 and 2020, there was an increase in number of adolescents between the ages of 10 and 14 years giving birth in hospital, with the figure rising from 830 deliveries in 2018 to 850 deliveries in 2019, for an increase of 2.89 per cent. Preliminary data as of September 2020 put the number of such deliveries at 801.

246. In order to prevent teenage pregnancies in rural areas, the Teenage Pregnancy Prevention Programme was established under the Multisectoral Plan for the Prevention of Teenage Pregnancy. This is a comprehensive initiative of the Dry Corridor Alliance aimed at improving the living conditions of teenage girls and their families, with a focus on the municipalities in six departments in the Dry Corridor.

247. Also within the framework of the Plan, the Adolescent-Friendly Health Services Initiative has provided services to 302,500 teenagers in 48 adolescent-friendly health centres. Adolescent care centres have been established in 58 municipalities, where they provide counselling, training and access to family planning and sexually transmitted disease prevention services.

248. Health fairs, forums and home visits are organized as part of the teenage pregnancy prevention campaign “Yo Decido Cumplir mis Sueños” (I Decide to Realize my Dreams).

249. The Ministry of Development and Social Inclusion’s Better Families Programme incorporates the “Adolescentes que Sueñan, Familias que Apoyan” (Ambitious Adolescents, Supportive Families) strategy. As of July 2019, around 60,000 young people had received training under this strategy.¹⁷⁹

250. Community education units at Cities for Women Centres provide training to adolescents, both those who are in school and those who are outside the school system, on gender issues and women’s rights through community activities centred around the sexual and reproductive rights of adolescent girls. Parents are also invited to participate.

251. With regard to **subparagraph 54 (d)**, on incorporating comprehensive, age-appropriate content on sexual and reproductive health into primary and secondary education curricula, in accordance with the National Sexual and Reproductive Health Policy, the Ministry of Education developed manuals entitled “Cuidando mi Salud y mi Vida” (Taking Care of My Health and My Life) and “Escuelas para Padres en Educación Integral de la Sexualidad” (School for Parents: a Guide on Comprehensive Sex Education), which are used in training activities for students, teachers and parents at the preschool, primary and secondary school levels covering topics such as sexuality, sexually transmitted infections, teenage pregnancy, responsible parenting and contraceptive methods.

¹⁷⁹ Consulted on 28 June 2021: bit.ly/3ioArHX.

252. In 2019, 22,750 teachers from 1,055 primary schools were certified to teach a comprehensive education course using these guides, and 17,672 students took the course nationwide.

253. Under the “Miles de Manos” (Thousands of Hands) Programme, the Ministry of Education provided instruction to 45,000 young people on reproductive and sexual health and pregnancy prevention, provided training on the use of the comprehensive sex education guides to 14,000 teachers and set up an online teacher training platform.

254. To help keep pregnant girls and young mothers in school, the Multisectoral Plan for the Prevention of Teenage Pregnancy provides for measures to ensure that such girls are able to participate fully in their classes at school.

Right to education (art. 13)

255. With regard to the **recommendation made in subparagraph 56 (a)**, on efforts to increase access to preschool education and achieve universal, free primary education, the Basic Education Act and the Strategic Education Plan 2018–2030 provide for increased schooling, wider availability of education, universal access to education, with an emphasis on population groups that are lagging behind, and free education from the age of 5 up to secondary school. These measures have extended the average length of time spent in education from 9 years to 13 years.

256. The Basic Education Act and the Strategic Education Plan are designed to ensure that the national education system will be equitable and inclusive. The Public Policy on Inclusive Education was adopted in 2019 with a view to establishing a high-quality, equitable, efficient education system that eliminates barriers to inclusion.

257. According to the National Education Information System, 1,922,362 students enrolled in school for the first time in 2020, including 233,916 at preschool level, 1,223,523 at primary level and 464,923 at secondary level. There are 22,722 public schools (9,854 preschools, 11,933 primary schools and 935 secondary schools).¹⁸⁰

258. With respect to **subparagraph 56 (b)**, on reducing the school dropout rate, in particular among disadvantaged and marginalized groups, since 2016 the “Vida Mejor” (Better Life) Voucher Programme has been providing families living in poverty with conditional transfer vouchers worth the equivalent of US\$ 160.

259. The National School Nutrition Programme promotes school attendance by providing meals to students enrolled in the public education system. In 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic, 940,363 students received two food packages each.

260. When schools were closed during the COVID-19 lockdown, the “Te Queremos Estudiando en Casa” (We Want You Studying at Home) strategy was adopted to prevent children from experiencing learning gaps. Emphasis was placed on curricular content and the distribution of workbooks to children and adolescents in rural areas without access to the Internet or other means of communication. In addition, a monitoring strategy was developed to facilitate decision-making concerning education coverage and quality.

261. With regard to **subparagraph 56 (c)**, on allocating sufficient resources and increasing the number of qualified teachers, the budget allocated to the Ministry of Education for 2021 was L 32,234,886,009, which was 25.5 per cent more than in 2017. The funds were used to recruit staff, improve the quality of teaching and meet the educational needs of students.

262. In 2016, L 300 million was disbursed to cover a salary adjustment for teachers. Teachers recently received a further pay rise of L 2,000 and are now also entitled to a homeowner subsidy.

¹⁸⁰ Central Bank of Honduras, *Honduras en cifras* (Honduras in numbers) 2018–2020.

263. There are 61,564 female teachers in Honduras (48,558 in the public sector and 13,006 in the private sector).

264. To improve school infrastructure and the quality of teaching materials, L 804 million have been invested in a project to construct and/or renovate 290 schools by 2020,¹⁸¹ and 400,000 additional students' desks have been made available.

265. To provide more educational opportunities, the Honduras 20/20 Presidential Scholarship Programme was established, under which 950 young people have received assistance with their postgraduate studies abroad; 17,000 students have received youth scholarships; 4,800 students have received solidarity scholarships; 88,400 students have received youth vouchers; and 116 young people have undertaken courses in agricultural education.

266. In 2020, 43,688 primary and secondary school students were awarded scholarships under the Programme. In the last six years, children and adolescents at all levels of education have received more than 200 days of classroom instruction.

267. With regard to **subparagraph 56 (d)**, on ensuring that education and learning activities for children and adolescents are imparted by entities specializing in children's rights and needs, the third strategy established under the Strategic Education Plan 2018–2030 on institutionalization, decentralization and democratization provides for a revamping of the education system, with the participation of various stakeholders, entailing the devolution of functions and resources in line with the capacities of the municipalities and departments and in accordance with the existing policy on decentralization, financial sustainability and transparency.

268. The Intercultural Bilingual Education Model was established to provide access to inclusive education in rural areas for indigenous and Afro-Honduran children and adolescents, with a focus on their mother tongue. The Model comprises a national council, 150 departmental committees and a technical monitoring commission responsible for overseeing implementation and critical pathways. Indigenous and Afro-Honduran peoples and civil society organizations are actively participating in the Intercultural Bilingual Education Model.

269. A total of 107,282 indigenous and Afro-Honduran students were enrolled in the intercultural bilingual education system in 2020 (8,072 at preschool level, 88,597 at primary level and 10,613 at secondary level) and were being taught by 5,342 teachers in 1,118 schools. In 2021, 57 new schools were incorporated into the Intercultural Bilingual Education Model, bringing the total number of schools in the system to 1,175, and 498 more persons were trained in the skills needed to impart bilingual classes.

270. The Intercultural Bilingual Education Model is being implemented in 15 departments. In that connection, the following academic credentials are being awarded: a diploma (*bachillerato*) in sciences and humanities for the Tawahka people; an undergraduate degree (*licenciatura*) in bilingual intercultural basic education; and a diploma in educational quality management for the Intercultural Bilingual Education Model. The third cohort of persons to receive a diploma in trainer training in multicultural techniques and methods for the Intercultural Bilingual Education Model comprised 200 teachers, bringing the total number of graduates to 600.

271. Regarding children and adolescents with disabilities, the third strategic objective of the Public Policy on Inclusive Education is to ensure the universal accessibility of inclusive education through the adaptation and optimization of infrastructure and reasonable accommodations.

272. The Ministry of Education put 699 teachers through a course on the organization and functions of departmental psychopedagogical teams, 162 teachers through a course on information and communication technology and disabilities, and 90 teachers through a course on respect for diversity. It also updated six textbooks.

¹⁸¹ *Revista Resumen de Logros 2020*.

273. The Ministry of Education also carried out an accessibility assessment in 9,285 schools around the country and concluded eight agreements to allocate funds to institutions providing care to children and adolescents with disabilities and to train teachers from 22 schools on how to work with children with disabilities.

274. In 2020, 15,495 students with disabilities were enrolled in the school system (7,864 with learning disabilities, 3,322 with visual impairments, 2,605 with hearing or language impairments and 1,704 with physical disabilities).

275. The National Strategy for Prevention and School Safety promotes the well-being and integral development of students. Teachers, the families and the community are all involved in this strategy for transforming behaviours, habits and customs as a means of preventing violence.

276. There are also various distance learning programmes, such as home schooling, radio-based learning, community education and special programmes for gifted students.

Other recommendations

277. With regard to the **recommendation made in paragraph 57**, on the development and use of indicators on the implementation of economic, social and cultural rights to facilitate the assessment of progress achieved by the State in complying with the Covenant, the National Institute of Statistics uses the National Statistical System to generate data based on the following statistics, social studies and indicators:

(a) Demographic and population indicators: life expectancy, total fertility rate, population density, infant mortality rate and crude death rate;

(b) Education indicators: average years of schooling, illiteracy rate, education coverage rate and repeated-year rate;

(c) Labour and income indicators: employment, underemployment and unemployment rates;

(d) Health indicators: morbidity and mortality, material living conditions;¹⁸²

(e) Economic indicators: economic activity.¹⁸³

278. These indicators feed into the development and formulation of public policies, programmes and projects within the framework of the Vision for the Country and Plan for the Nation, the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics and the National Statistics Plan.¹⁸⁴

279. The National Institute of Statistics conducts the continuous multipurpose household survey every year, the national demographic and health survey every 5 years and the population and housing census every 10 years.

280. In 2019, the National Institute of Statistics and the Ministry of Health, with the support of the European Union and UNICEF, conducted a national demographic and health multiple indicator cluster survey to collect information on health and social factors affecting women between the ages of 15 and 49 years and men between the ages of 15 and 59 years, fertility, general and reproductive health, children under 5 years of age, children and adolescents between 5 and 17 years of age, nutritional status, infant mortality, domestic violence, morbidity, HIV/AIDS, housing, use of services, health expenditure and demographic indicators. In addition, for the first time, the quality of drinking water and salt iodization levels, progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, and indicators related to the Vision for the Country and Plan for the Nation, domestic and family violence and perceived security were also assessed.

¹⁸² “Análisis de Situación de Salud según Condiciones de Vida” (analysis of health status under different living conditions), Epidemiology Department/Ministry of Health.

¹⁸³ National Development Strategy. Consulted on 20 September 2021: bit.ly/2WwICKG.

¹⁸⁴ Consulted on 12 July 2021: bit.ly/3zYa6qe.

281. The System of Social Indicators on Children, Adolescents and Women, which is managed by the Inter-Agency Technical Committee on Children, Adolescents and Women, compiles more than 80 socioeconomic indicators, which are used in the development and implementation of policies in favour of women and children and adolescents.

282. The National Centre for Information on the Social Sector, which was established under the Framework Act on Public Social Policies,¹⁸⁵ is mandated to monitor the objectives, goals, policies, budget and implementation of 294 programmes and projects carried out by 33 public institutions in the social sector. In order to do so, it uses 27 different systems and 46 data-processing modules¹⁸⁶ on the platform of the Register of Institutional Service Providers¹⁸⁷ to provide services to 1,082,986 households in situations of vulnerability and poverty.

283. In 2019, the socioeconomic benefits form for the Consolidated Registry of Beneficiaries was used to register 3,537,071 beneficiaries of social programmes and projects, 55 per cent of whom were women. Of those women, 67.62 per cent were from rural areas, 19.72 per cent were indigenous or Afro-Honduran persons and 4.48 per cent were women with disabilities; 16.42 per cent were young girls, 13.25 per cent were older girls, 13.79 per cent were teenage girls, 19.24 per cent were young women, 29.33 per cent were adult women and 7.95 per cent were older women.

284. In 2018, the Multidimensional Poverty Index¹⁸⁸ was brought into use to supplement the monetary metric utilized in the development and evaluation of public policies related to the Sustainable Development Goals on poverty reduction.

285. Quantitative and qualitative information on the priority indicators for the National Agenda for the Sustainable Development Goals can be found on the website of the National Agenda for the Sustainable Development Goals Monitoring Platform, available at bit.ly/3ihwwwD.

286. In 2020, the Ministry of Human Rights and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) launched the Human Rights in Figures Platform,¹⁸⁹ which provides information on indicators relating to 17 different human rights and land rights and 10 priority population groups. With the support of OHCHR, an interactive guide to human rights and the Sustainable Development Goals was integrated into the Platform's website.

287. A study on racial discrimination is being carried out with the support of USAID and civil society organizations representing persons with disabilities, indigenous and Afro-Honduran peoples, lesbian, gay, transgender, bisexual and intersex persons and women. So far, the survey has been approved and uploaded to a mobile app in preparation for the information-gathering stage.

288. The Human Rights Observatory of the Ministry of Human Rights is working on the implementation of a national system of human rights indicators which will incorporate the indicators set out in the Protocol of San Salvador and recommended by international bodies.

289. Concerning the **recommendation made in paragraph 58**, on the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure, the State of Honduras is continually reviewing and evaluating the possibility of becoming a party to additional instruments. Victims have access to the international remedy of filing complaints with the inter-American human rights system once all domestic remedies have been exhausted.

290. With regard to the **recommendation made in paragraph 59**, on the wide dissemination of the Committee's concluding observations, the Honduran System for the Monitoring of Recommendations facilitates the dissemination of and follow-up to

¹⁸⁵ Legislative Decree No. 38-2011, Official Gazette No. 33,149.

¹⁸⁶ Consulted on 5 August 2021: bit.ly/3l3n025.

¹⁸⁷ Consulted on 5 August 2021; at: bit.ly/39QCjVc.

¹⁸⁸ Executive Decree No. PCM-020-2018, Official Gazette No. 34,771.

¹⁸⁹ Consulted on 25 July 2021: bit.ly/3imxR5h.

international recommendations and promotes the implementation of conventions and covenants.
