



Convention on the Rights of the Child

Distr.: General
24 December 2024
English
Original: Spanish
English and Spanish only

Committee on the Rights of the Child

Ninety-eighth session

13–31 January 2025

Item 4 of the provisional agenda

Consideration of reports of States parties

Replies of Honduras to the list of issues in relation to its combined sixth and seventh periodic reports*

[Date received: 16 October 2024]

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



Introduction

1. In November 2020, the State of Honduras submitted its combined sixth and seventh periodic reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child¹ in accordance with article 44 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
2. In March 2024, the Committee sent the State a list of issues² related to the periodic reports submitted. The preparation of this response was coordinated by the Ministry of Human Rights and the Ministry for Children, Adolescents and the Family. For this purpose, the Honduran Human Rights Recommendations Monitoring System established a dedicated children's round table, composed of the focal points of relevant institutions of the three branches of government and of decentralized institutions.³ The draft report was also shared with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) for comment and input.
3. These replies to the list of issues include updated information on the measures adopted, advances made, progress achieved and challenges faced by the Solidarity Government of President Xiomara Castro in implementing the 2022–2026 Government Plan for Rebuilding Honduras⁴ and applying the provisions of the Convention in the period 2022–2024.

Replies to the list of issues (CRC/C/HND/6-7)

Part I

Reply to paragraph 2 (a) of the list of issues

Legislative measures

4. Regarding the harmonization of legislation with international human rights standards, the Ministry of Human Rights carried out legal analyses of bills to amend the Criminal Code, the Code on Children and Adolescents and the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act that had been passed by the National Congress in order to verify their compliance with treaties and conventions.
5. It also conducted analyses of the following draft laws: the Act on the Purple Alerts System for Missing Women and corresponding draft regulations; the Act to Prevent, Punish and Eradicate Violence against Women in Political Life; the Act on Shelters for Women Survivors of Violence; the Regulations of the Council for the Prevention of Violence; the Regulations of the Registry of Persons in Arrears on Child Support or Alimony Payments; and the Ministerial Agreement authorizing the use of the emergency contraceptive pill.
6. The National Congress is working on draft amendments to article 16 of the Family Code, on the age of majority; article 187, on parental authority; and articles 238, 243, 244, 245, 246, on divorce and the dissolution of marriage. It is also working on amendments to articles 445, 653 and 590 of the Code of Civil Procedure, concerning divorce proceedings.

Reply to paragraph 2 (b) of the list of issues

7. The Ministry of Social Development is working on a social protection bill and social protection policy. Both texts are undergoing review prior to their circulation and adoption.
8. The National Congress adopted the Act on Comprehensive Education to Prevent Adolescent Pregnancy by Legislative Decree No. 8-2023. However, the text was vetoed by

¹ [CRC/C/HND/6-7](#).

² [CRC/C/HND/Q/6-7](#).

³ Decree No. PCM-028-2017, Gaceta No. 34,410.

⁴ 2022–2026 Government Plan for Rebuilding Honduras. <https://n9.cl/w1lhy1>.

the Office of the President and returned to Congress on the grounds that it was not fit for purpose.⁵

9. Bills to benefit children that have been presented in Congress include: the “Aulas-Cuna” (mother and baby classrooms) Act, benefiting teenage mothers; the School Medical Clinics Act; the Act on Incentive Payments for Single Mothers, under which benefits will be available to mothers with limited resources who are heads of household; a proposal to declare the prevention and eradication of domestic violence of national interest, which will require the Ministry of Education to incorporate education on domestic violence in the national core curriculum; and a proposal for ensuring that children and adolescents in street situations and at social risk receive support from the Honduran Social Security Institute.

Reply to paragraph 2 (c) of the list of issues

10. The 2024–2033 National Policy for Early Childhood, Childhood and Adolescence, designed to safeguard the rights of children and adolescents, was adopted in September 2024.

11. In addition, the Municipal Corporation of the Central District has adopted a municipal policy for childhood⁶ with six components that envisages coordination with institutions working to improve the overall well-being of children and adolescents.

Reply to paragraph 3 (a) of the list of issues

Institution-building

12. By Executive Decree No. PCM-41-2023, President Xiomara Castro disbanded the former Directorate for Children, Adolescents and Family and created the new Ministry for Children, Adolescents and the Family. The new Ministry began operations in January 2024, becoming the lead institution for public policy, regulations and programmes for the comprehensive protection of the rights of children, adolescents and the family.⁷ The Ministry is composed of:

(a) The Rights Protection Directorate, responsible for overseeing and running the Comprehensive System for the Protection of the Rights of Children and Adolescents in Honduras⁸ and overseeing the application of policies, programmes and services;

(b) The Special Protection Directorate General, in charge of implementing and monitoring the Subsystem for the Protection of the Rights of Children and Adolescents and tasked, *inter alia*, with extending comprehensive protection to children in vulnerable situations, ensuring that they receive support and that effective measures are taken to safeguard their rights; and

(c) The Programme and Regional Management Directorate, which coordinates the Ministry’s six regional offices.

13. The new Ministry was allocated a budget of L 283,688,085.00 for 2024, which represents an increase of L 18,233,408.00 on the budget allocated to the former Directorate in 2022.

14. To implement the 2024–2033 National Policy for Early Childhood, Childhood and Adolescence, the Ministry for Children, Adolescents and the Family, the Association of Municipalities of Honduras and the Global Movement for Children are pursuing a strategy that involves strengthening the Comprehensive System for the Protection of the Rights of Children and Adolescents in Honduras at the local level. As of 2023, 105 municipalities had

⁵ Presidential veto, 17 March 2023). <https://n9.cl/5dxupj>.

⁶ Accessed on 4 September 2024. <https://n9.cl/jblrj2>.

⁷ Decree No. PCM-41-2023, Gaceta No. 36,357.

⁸ Decree No. PCM-020-2019, Gaceta No. 34,983. <https://n9.cl/19db69>.

conducted analyses of the situation of children and adolescents and had incorporated a children's rights perspective in their planning.⁹

Reply to paragraph 3 (b) of the list of issues

15. To strengthen the courts and the Public Prosecution Service and thus ensure the best interests of the child, non-discrimination, comprehensive protection, confidentiality and non-revictimization in all judicial proceedings involving children and adolescents, the actions described below has been taken.

16. In implementation of its 2022–2026 Institutional Strategic Plan, the judicial branch has made the following advances:

(a) Establishment of an expert committee on the protection of the rights of children in conflict with the law,¹⁰ through the United for Justice Programme run in conjunction with the Ministry for Children, Adolescents and the Family and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID);

(b) Creation of new lower courts and trial courts in the cities of Puerto Lempira and Roatán;

(c) Improvements to the infrastructure of judicial buildings and construction of eight new buildings, for an investment of L 27,645,347.51; and

(d) Repair and renovation of premises throughout the country, for an investment of L 11,603,622.00.

17. The Public Prosecution Service, meanwhile, has taken the following measures:

(a) Establishment of 19 Gesell chambers;

(b) Establishment of 23 specialized comprehensive support units;

(c) Adaption of physical space to the support needs of child victims;

(d) Restructure of the Office of the Special Prosecutor for the Protection of Children and Adolescents;

(e) Formulation of a protocol for the work of the Office of the Special Prosecutor for the Protection of Children and Adolescents; and

(f) Strengthening of regional prosecutors' offices through implementation of the local justice systems model, with support from USAID.

Reply to paragraph 3 (d) of the list of issues

18. To reinforce the Office of the Ombudsman for Children and Families and the Office of the Ombudsman for Human Mobility attached to the Office of the National Commissioner for Human Rights, staff of the two offices met with representatives of the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) to work on joint action to strengthen institutional capacity to address cases involving missing children and victims of trafficking in persons.¹¹

Reply to paragraph 3 (e) of the list of issues

19. Regarding expenditure and investment to benefit children and adolescents, the general provisions of the current general income and expenditure budget stipulate that institutions, programmes and projects should incorporate in their strategic and operational plans and annual budgets the guidelines contained in social protection and comprehensive early

⁹ UNICEF.

¹⁰ Accessed on 10 October 2024: <https://n9.cl/3wxao>.

¹¹ Accessed on 12 September 2024: <https://n9.cl/kgg4b>.

childhood development policies. The Ministry of Strategic Planning will assess compliance with these measures and their impact.

20. In addition, budget classifiers based on population segments including children and adolescents are being incorporated into short- and medium-term institutional planning instruments. The aim is to give visibility to the budget benefiting vulnerable groups so that the Ministry of Strategic Planning can monitor and assess compliance with measures and their impact on children and adolescents.

Reply to paragraph 3 (f) of the list of issues

21. To ensure the continuity of the information system, administrative records and national surveys, the National Statistics Institute uses the National Statistical System to direct the Statistical Committee on Children, Adolescents, Young Persons and the Family, which is tasked with collecting, analysing and disseminating statistical information on children, adolescents, young persons and the family, among other population groups, for purposes of planning, implementing and evaluating public policies and programmes.¹²

22. The National Statistics Institute also manages the following surveys:¹³

(a) The continuous multi-purpose household survey, which provides data disaggregated by region, sex, age, working conditions, housing, education and income, among other variables;

(b) The specialized national survey on violence against women and girls aged 15 years and older, conducted in 2022 by the Ministry of Women's Affairs, USAID and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP);

(c) The Honduran national child labour survey 2024, which registered 1,632,142 children in child labour and provides information on the socioeconomic, demographic, educational and occupational situation of children and adolescents in general;

(d) The national population and housing census, which collects data by age, sex, disability status and ethnicity; and

(e) The census of institutions offering alternative care, carried out by the Ministry of the Interior, Justice and Decentralization, the Ministry for Children, Adolescents and the Family and UNICEF, which provides data on children and adolescents residing in institutions offering alternative care.

Reply to paragraph 4 of the list of issues

Anti-discrimination measures

23. In 2022, President Xiomara Castro created the Ministry of Social Development, responsible for the care of vulnerable groups including children and adolescents. Within this Ministry, the following bodies have been established:

(a) The National Coordination Office for Indigenous and Afro-Honduran Peoples, responsible for researching, designing and developing public policies to benefit Indigenous and Afro-Honduran Peoples;¹⁴

(b) The Honduran Centre for the Study of State Policies in the Social Sector, responsible for conducting research and adopting public policies in the social sector with input from civil society organizations;¹⁵

(c) The Development Directorate for Persons with Disabilities;

¹² Available at <https://sen.ine.gob.hn/>.

¹³ Surveys available at <http://www.ine.gob.hn>.

¹⁴ Decree No. PCM-019-2022, Gaceta No. 35,999.

¹⁵ Available at <https://n9.cl/9j71nc>.

- (d) The Directorate General for Older Persons; and
- (e) The Directorate for Public Policies for Development and Social Protection.

24. The Ministry of Social Development is preparing a new comprehensive public policy for Indigenous and Afro-Honduran Peoples that will include action against racism and discrimination. One of the advances envisaged thereunder is the creation of forums for consultation with State institutions, civil society and academia.

25. The Honduran Centre for the Study of State Policies in the Social Sector has begun work to raise awareness of the new policy with 54 strategic stakeholders. Additionally, a document laying out the rationale for the construction of a new comprehensive policy has been published.¹⁶

26. To educate public officials on issues of discrimination and the rights of vulnerable groups, the Honduran Centre for the Study of State Policies in the Social Sector offers a standard course on development and social protection.¹⁷

27. In addition, the Ministry of Human Rights runs training programmes on the prevention of discrimination, the rights of Indigenous and Afro-Honduran Peoples, intersectionality, the elimination of racially discriminatory practices, and international recommendations and commitments.

Reply to paragraph 5 of the list of issues

Professionalization and the best interests of the child

28. To ensure the professionalization and training of personnel working with children and adolescents, the Ministry for Children, Adolescents and the Family has rolled out the TEAM SENAF initiative, designed to strengthen its personnel’s capacity to respond comprehensively to the support needs of children and adolescents. It also has a 17-module training plan to improve staff skills.

29. From January to September 2024, the Ministry provided training for 703 public servants covering children’s issues, early childhood, the prevention of corporal punishment, antenatal care, breastfeeding and support for children with disabilities, among other topics.

30. The National Institute for Juvenile Offenders provides ongoing training to its personnel under agreements with institutions and organizations including the judiciary, the Public Prosecution Service, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, the National Autonomous University of Honduras, the Honduras Fire Service, the NGOs *Progetto Mondo*, *Dokita* and Identity Mission, and UNICEF.

Training programmes run for personnel of the National Institute for Juvenile Offenders

<i>Year</i>	<i>Topics covered</i>	<i>Persons completing training</i>
2021	Juvenile justice, counselling, values, self-esteem, restorative practices, human rights, etc.	320
2022	Reforms of the juvenile criminal justice system, Criminal Code, children’s rights, restorative practices, approaches and counselling, etc.	118
2023	Administrative procedures, school dropout, reinsertion, restorative justice, etc.	413
2024	Children’s rights, restorative methods, juvenile justice and legal proceedings, etc.	41

Source: National Institute for Juvenile Offenders.

¹⁶ Available at <https://n9.cl/judoy>.

¹⁷ Available at: <https://chepes.sedesol.gob.hn/capacitate/>.

31. The Orlan Arturo Chávez School run by the Public Prosecution Service provides ongoing training for prosecutors on the protection and care of children and adolescents so as to ensure that they respect children's rights during judicial proceedings. The School also provides training on the Regulations of the Registry of Persons in Arrears on Child Support or Alimony Payments and using the Registry's database to find information.¹⁸

32. In 2022, the Francisco Salomón Jiménez Judicial Training School attached to the judicial branch ran 343 training courses for 7,369 justice officials and employees and representatives of public and private institutions. Of this total, 2,158 received training on civil law matters, 1,737 received training on criminal law matters, 1,310 received multidisciplinary training, 658 received training on human rights, 546 received training in gender-based and domestic violence, 448 received training on children's issues, 362 received training on environmental and labour issues and 150 completed office automation training.

33. The Ministry of Education provides training for teachers on subjects included in the core national curriculum and its redesign that is adapted to needs at the different educational levels, takes a skills-based approach and incorporates a human rights perspective. The Ministry also runs a virtual training course on citizenship skills and human rights for teachers through the Ibertel website,¹⁹ with support from the Organization of Ibero-American States. In 2024, it developed a module-based teacher training strategy.

Reply to paragraph 6 (a) of the list of issues

Health

34. Under its Expanded Immunization Programme, the Ministry of Health included 23 vaccines in the 2023 national vaccination programme, including the vaccine against monkeypox.²⁰ During the campaign, 5,000 *brigadistas* were deployed for vaccination, vitamin A supplementation and deworming.

35. In 2023, with support from the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and UNICEF, the Expanded Immunization Programme adopted an active search strategy to identify children with incomplete vaccination schedules or zero doses. As a result, it managed to identify and vaccinate more than 11,000 children with incomplete schedules.

36. As of June 2024, a total of 37,174 children under one year of age – equivalent to 78 per cent of the target set – were recorded as having complete vaccination schedules.²¹

37. With support from PAHO, the Expanded Immunization Programme has introduced new vaccines, strengthened the cold chain, provided ongoing training to personnel and, in 2024, rolled out a communication campaign under the slogan *Las vacunas salvan vidas, dan protección* (Vaccines save lives and give protection).²²

38. This campaign was led by the Ministry of Health, together with the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Social Development and the Military Public Order Police and with support from UNICEF and PAHO, the private sector and international cooperation to increase vaccination coverage.²³

Reply to paragraph 6 (b) of the list of issues

39. The nutrition of school students has been improved through the School Vegetable Gardens Programme and the National Network of Agricultural Schools, which in 2023 benefited 54,380 students nationwide. In 2022 and 2023 combined, 2,468 school vegetable

¹⁸ Accessed on 30 August 2024 at: <https://n9.cl/pri4t>.

¹⁹ Ibertel: <https://ibertel.se.gob.hn/>.

²⁰ Accessed on 17 September 2024 at: <https://n9.cl/pri4t>.

²¹ Ministry of Health. Technical implementation and financial performance report. Second quarter 2024.

²² Accessed on 17 September 2024 at: <https://n9.cl/pri4t>.

²³ UNICEF.

gardens and six agricultural schools serving 1,315 students were established across six departments.²⁴

40. In April 2024, the Ministry of Health distributed therapeutic milk to 12 hospitals and 116 municipalities to improve the nutrition of children under 5 years of age. This milk was acquired with the support of the Food and Nutritional Security and Local Development Programme, entailing an investment of L 3,400,000.00.²⁵ In addition, with support from UNICEF, therapeutic food was acquired to address acute malnutrition in primary care facilities.²⁶

Reply to paragraph 6 (c) of the list of issues

41. Regarding the nutritional status of children and adolescents, according to the national population and health census/multiple indicator cluster survey for 2019, 19 per cent of children under 5 years of age have chronic malnutrition, 4 per cent have severe chronic malnutrition, 7 per cent are underweight and 1 per cent are severely underweight.²⁷

42. The departments where stunting is most prevalent are La Paz (37.5 per cent), Lempira (35 per cent), Intibucá (31 per cent) and Copán (26.5 per cent). The departments with the lowest incidence of stunting are Islas de la Bahía (6 per cent), Cortes (13 per cent) and Francisco Morazán (13 per cent).

43. In 2024, the Ministry of Health launched the Nutrition Programme to improve the nutritional status of children and adolescents and update nutritional guidelines.²⁸

Reply to paragraph 6 (d) of the list of issues

44. According to the 2019 national population and health census/multiple indicator cluster survey, 51 per cent of newborns start breastfeeding in the first hour, 30 per cent of infants aged 0–5 months are exclusively breastfed and 66 per cent of children aged 12–15 months are still being breastfed.²⁹

45. To promote breastfeeding, with the help of UNICEF the Ministry of Health certifies State hospitals that have dedicated maternity areas as Baby-Friendly Hospitals.³⁰

Reply to paragraph 6 (e) of the list of issues

46. To prevent bullying, depression, suicide and violent deaths of children and adolescents, the Ministry of Education is implementing a prevention and support protocol in schools to protect children and adolescents and prevent violence.

47. Additionally, the updated core national curriculum will include topics such as the prevention of bullying, suicide, xenophobia and cyberbullying, harmonious coexistence in schools and human rights.

48. To prevent gender-based violence in educational settings, a guide to gender mainstreaming for teachers and departmental authorities has been circulated.

²⁴ Ministry of Education. Outcome Report 2022.

²⁵ Accessed on 17 September 2024 at: <https://n9.cl/pri4t>.

²⁶ UNICEF.

²⁷ National Statistics Institute. Honduras national population and health census/multiple indicator cluster survey 2019. <https://n9.cl/z3e777>.

²⁸ UNICEF.

²⁹ National Institute of Statistics. 2019 Honduras national population and health census/multiple indicator cluster survey. <https://ine.gob.hn/v4/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Alimentacion-Infantil.pdf>.

³⁰ UNICEF.

Reply to paragraph 6 (f) of the list of issues

49. The Honduran Social Investment Fund is involved in health-related interventions for a value of L 66,159,473.55. It also runs projects to improve access to water and sanitation nationwide, with a value of L 507,016,477.14.

Reply to paragraph 7 of the list of issues

Participation

50. To enhance children's participation, the National Congress adopted the National Children's Congress Act,³¹ which will guarantee the continuity of this good practice and provides for the creation of children's committees (*bancadas infantiles*), including a green committee for the preservation and care of the environment and natural resources.

51. In the Children's Congress, children and adolescents discuss projects, adopt opinions on relevant issues and promote democratic values. In 2022, the Children's Congress focused on climate change and environmental education. The XXVII Children's Congress took place in August 2024 and was focused on education and democracy, under the banner *Amando y protegiendo nuestra cultura* (Loving and protecting our culture).

52. To benefit young persons, a bill to establish a parliamentary academy and youth congress was presented in plenary session of the National Congress in August 2024. The National Institute for Youth provided technical advice on the bill.

53. Municipal children's councils encourage children and adolescents to become involved in the prevention of rights violations. At the local level, 84 councils have indicated that children and adolescents are actively involved in the development of municipal policies and programmes.

54. Likewise, the Ministry of Education encourages students to participate in school governance, expressing opinions and taking decisions.

55. To enhance education on environmental issues, the National Congress adopted Legislative Decree No. 117-2022, incorporating content on environmental education, climate change and the protection and preservation of the environment within the core national curriculum.³²

56. To foster sustainability and ensure that students are aware the climate crisis and promote environmental sustainability, the Ministry of Education has included environmental issues in the social educational programme.

57. The Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment raises awareness, sensitizes and educates students at all three levels of education about environmental management and protection, responsible recycling and water conservation, so encouraging them to become agents of change in environmental protection.

Reply to paragraph 8 (a) of the list of issues

Procedural safeguards

58. To prevent children and adolescents who have been forced to participate in organized criminal groups, maras or gangs from facing charges of terrorist association, steps have been taken to ensure that their rights are fully respected.

59. The Anti-Trafficking Unit within the Public Prosecution Service investigates offences involving the recruitment of children and adolescents without any of the children and adolescents involved having to face accusations of terrorist association.

³¹ Legislative Decree No. 16-2024.

³² Gaceta No. 36,082. <https://n9.cl/5rep0>.

60. In judicial proceedings in which children and adolescents do face charges, the courts must consider whether they were coerced by organized criminal groups and have the possibility of acquitting them and instead ordering comprehensive protection measures.

61. To combat the various forms of exploitation and trafficking in persons, including the forced recruitment of children and adolescents, the authorities are aiming to impose harsher penalties on those responsible for such crimes. Additionally, to ensure a comprehensive approach to preventing children and adolescents from becoming involved in criminal activities, inter-institutional cooperation between the judicial system and civil society is being encouraged.

62. To guarantee fair treatment in situations in which it is suspected that children and adolescents have been forced to participate in criminal activities, the National Institute for Juvenile Offenders conducts a thorough, individual assessment of each case, taking into account the age, family, social and economic situation and specific circumstances of the child or adolescent in question.

Reply to paragraph 8 (b) of the list of issues

63. To ensure that the rights of children and adolescents are not violated during curfews in neighbourhoods and districts under state of emergency,³³ since December 2022, the law enforcement agencies have been taking steps to protect human rights, establishing a committee to monitor the state of emergency and encouraging key institutions to become involved in the protection of children's rights.

64. The Military Public Order Police complies with international human rights legislation and standards when conducting operations involving children, which, according to reports, account for 13 per cent of total. It adheres to arrest procedures, which stipulate that any arrestee under 18 years of age must be transferred to the Detainee Reception Unit, where he or she will be taken into custody. The Office of the Special Prosecutor for Ordinary Offences is immediately notified. In the Detainee Reception Unit, the procedural safeguards applicable to minors are respected and the minor, together with the relevant reports, is brought before a prosecution service official. The Prosecution Service will interview the minor before referring him or her to Office of the Special Prosecutor for the Protection of Children and Adolescents in order to determine whether it is necessary for him or her to be placed in a custodial facility reserved exclusively for juveniles.

Reply to paragraph 8 (c) of the list of issues

65. Statistics for extrajudicial killings and executions of children and adolescents provided by the Public Prosecution Service are as follows:

Cases involving extrajudicial killings and executions of children and adolescents

<i>Year</i>	<i>Reports</i>	<i>Investigations</i>	<i>Convictions</i>	<i>Acquittal</i>
2021	38	10	15	5
2022	32	6	10	3
2023	25	5	9	2
2024*	9	3	-	-
Total	104	24	34	10

Source: Public Prosecutor's Office/Office of the Special Prosecutor for Offences against Life.

* As of May.

³³ Decree No. PCM 29-2022.

Reply to paragraph 9 of the list of issues

A life free from violence

66. To protect children and adolescents from the various forms of violence, the Comprehensive System for the Protection of the Rights of Children and Adolescents in Honduras and the Council for the Prevention of Violence established an expert committee for the prevention of violence against children and adolescents. Through this expert committee and in application of national policy, an action plan for preventing and responding to sexual violence against children and adolescents was developed.³⁴

67. Additionally, the following units and institutions carry out coordinated actions to address and reduce violence against children and adolescents:

(a) The Children's Unit of the Special Crimes Department of the Police Investigation Directorate, which works with the Office of the Special Prosecutor for the Protection of Children and Adolescents;

(b) The Women's Unit, which works in coordination with the Cities for Women (Cuidad Mujer) Programme, the Office of the Special Prosecutor Office for the Protection of Women and the specialized comprehensive support units;

(c) The Computer Crimes Investigation Unit of the National Central Office of INTERPOL, which runs campaigns to prevent cybercrime in schools and colleges; and

(d) The School Police Division of the National Police's National Prevention and Community Safety Directorate, which organizes programmes, projects and activities to prevent violence in schools.

68. In coordination with the municipal councils for the protection of children's rights and the municipal children's councils, the Public Prosecution Service runs workshops on the prevention of violence, child abuse and child neglect. It also provides training for public officials, judges, police officers, detectives, military police officers and staff of the National Institute for Juvenile Offenders. In the period 2021–2024, 41,615 teachers, students and members of the public took part in training on issues surrounding violence against children.

69. The Office of the Special Prosecutor for the Protection of Children and Adolescents investigates reports of abuse and degrading treatment of children and adolescents, issuing injunctions and securing convictions.

Cases of violence against children disaggregated by offence and year

Year	Ill-treatment			Degrading treatment		
	Reports	Investigations	Convictions	Reports	Investigations	Convictions
2022	931	402	226	60	25	-
2023	720	281	160	104	22	-
2024	295	126	37	39	-	2
Total	1 946	809	423	203	47	2

Source: Public Prosecution Service/Office of the Special Prosecutor for the Protection of Children and Adolescents.

70. In July 2024, the Ministry of Security launched the National Response Plan for the Prevention of Violence against Children and Young Persons and related national roadmap, developed with support from UNICEF and other strategic partners.³⁵ Currently, four municipal plans against child violence are being formulated, in Choloma, Quimistán, La

³⁴ UNICEF.

³⁵ Accessed on 25 September 2024. <https://acortar.link/ywOLvL>.

Ceiba and San Pedro Sula. These plans should provide evidence of the reduction in child violence.³⁶

71. The 114 telephone hotline providing immediate and confidential support for women and girls who are victims of violence against women is now operational. The care provided includes emergency assistance, psychological counselling, legal advice and crisis support.

72. In 2022, to ensure comprehensive and appropriate care for women and girls who are victims of sexual violence, the Ministry of Health issued a protocol for the comprehensive care of victims of sexual violence. This protocol will enable public and private healthcare facilities to provide timely care to victims. The Ministry of Health, together with Médecins du Monde and Médecins Sans Frontières, has provided training on the protocol's application for healthcare professionals.³⁷

73. Other measures adopted to prevent violence against children and adolescents include:

(a) In January 2023, the reactivation of the Council for the Prevention of Violence; regulations and a 2023 action plan for the Council were adopted, as a matter of priority, to provide an institutional framework for the National Plan for the Prevention of Violence against Children and Young Persons. The Council's 2024–2026 action plan is currently being circulated;

(b) In addition, with support from UNDP and USAID, the National Institute for Youth created the National Observatory of Youth Rights,³⁸ tasked with compiling information on children and young persons.

Reply to paragraph 10 of the list of issues

Family and alternative care

74. To prevent children and adolescents being separated from their families, the Ministry for Children, Adolescents and the Family established the Subdirectorate for the Regulation of Institutions providing Services to Children, responsible for supervising, monitoring and certifying institutions offering alternative care.

75. Additionally, with support from UNICEF the Ministry is implementing a strategy to improve protection for children in institutional care, which involves:

(a) Strengthening records and information systems, to which end the Ministry for Children, Adolescents and the Family, Ministry of the Interior, National Statistics Institute and UNICEF are carrying out a national census and survey of children in alternative residential care;

(b) Implementing a protocol for the immediate protection of children in residential care;

(c) Assessing the situation of children and adolescents with a view to either reintegration within their families or placement in alternative care facilities that conform to comprehensive care and protection standards; and

(d) Developing programmes to strengthen families, communities and service networks so as to prevent unnecessary family separation.

76. The Ministry for Children, Adolescents and the Family has also implemented strategies that prioritize using extended families to provide temporary care for children and adolescents instead of institutions, has strengthened the Temporary Protection Families Model and has created the Early Childhood Subdirectorate to promote positive parenting and strengthen the nuclear family.

³⁶ UNICEF.

³⁷ Accessed on 29 August 2024. <https://n9.cl/pri4t>.

³⁸ Available at <https://www.injuve.gob.hn/juventudesencifras>.

77. As provided by law, the authorities ensure that children are not separated from their parents against their will other for reasons of their best interests.

78. The Public Prosecution Service provides training on alternative care and its use as a temporary or transitional protection measure for judges and Ministry officials.

Reply to paragraph 11 of the list of issues

Children with disabilities

79. The certification procedures handbook issued by the Ministry for Children, Adolescents and the Family sets out criteria for the provision of specialized care for children with disabilities.

80. To raise awareness among teachers, parents, students and society in general about the inclusion of children with disabilities in the education system, the Ministry of Education named 2022 the year of educational inclusion, running a campaign under the banner *Educación para aprender e inclusión para convivir; inclúyeme, es mi derecho* (Education to learn and inclusion to live together; include me, it's my right).³⁹

81. The Government has allocated L 45,689,276.00 to schools that cater for children with disabilities. In addition, 500 teachers have received training on how to provide support to children with disabilities.

82. To ensure quality care for children with disabilities, the Ministry of Social Development has:

(a) Awarded disability allowances consisting of money transfers through the National Bank for Agricultural Development;

(b) Distributed kits for children under 6 years of age who have a disability, are at neurological risk or are falling behind on the developmental curve; and

(c) Funded programmes and projects developed by civil society organizations of and for persons with disabilities through the Solidarity Fund for the Disability Sector.⁴⁰

Reply to paragraph 12 (a) of the list of issues

Sexual health and education

83. To prevent and address adolescent pregnancies, the Ministry of Health has:

(a) Implemented the National Plan for the Reduction of Adolescent Pregnancy in primary and secondary care facilities, which covers distribution of the emergency contraceptive pill;

(b) Established 72 user-friendly clinics to facilitate access to personalized psychological support and legal counselling services for adolescents and young persons; and

(c) Updated the guidelines for the organization and operation of the monitoring and prevention committees overseeing efforts to reduce maternal mortality and the local committees for the prevention of adolescent pregnancy as well as the guidelines for the organization and operation of the National Cross-Sectoral Expert Committee for the Comprehensive Care of Adolescents.

84. To prevent adolescent pregnancy at the local level, 71 municipalities have formulated municipal plans for the prevention of adolescent pregnancy.

³⁹ Accessed on 17 September 2024 at: <https://n9.cl/pri4t>.

⁴⁰ Ministerial Agreement No. 010-SEDESOL-2022. Gaceta No. 36,006.

85. The Ministry of Social Development has also taken steps to prevent adolescent pregnancy, including:

(a) Publication of a report on adolescent pregnancy containing an assessment of the situation and suggestions for the design of a public policy (*Informe embarazo en adolescentes: diagnóstico situacional y bases para el diseño de una política pública*);

(b) Publication of an analytical report on the causes of adolescent pregnancy (*Informe diagnóstico y caracterización del embarazo en la adolescencia*); and

(c) Formulation of institutional recommendations for a coordinated, multisectoral and inter-institutional response that is effective in preventing adolescent pregnancy.

86. Together with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the Ministry of Social Development has launched programmes to prevent adolescent pregnancy and gender-based violence and promote sexual and reproductive health that have included:

(a) The “leave no one behind” programme to reduce adolescent pregnancy in Creole, Garifuna and Miskito communities on the Caribbean coast, with a focus on selected municipalities. This programme targeted young persons and women from Garifuna and English-speaking ethnic groups in seven selected municipalities.

(b) Programmes promoting the sexual and reproductive rights of adolescents and young persons, implemented in priority municipalities.

(c) The Vulnerable Adolescent Mothers Project, which helps girls to overcome the psychological impact of early pregnancy and benefited 1,700 adolescent mothers in 2023, with L 200,000.00 invested in the Project.

Reply to paragraph 12 (b) of the list of issues

87. Regarding abortion care services, the Ministry of Health has updated its Post-abortion Care Protocol to include outpatient support, which prevents and reduces the risks for women.

Reply to paragraph 12 (c) of the list of issues

88. To ensure access to education on sexual and reproductive health for children and adolescents, the Ministry of Education:

(a) Has conducted an assessment of the results of the adolescent pregnancy prevention strategy;

(b) Promotes comprehensive sexual education focused on pregnancy prevention and understanding sexual and reproductive health;

(c) Has updated the educational curriculum to include sex education and the prevention of unwanted pregnancy in the Natural Sciences subject curriculum; and

(d) Has organized talks on the prevention of early pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections for students from the fifth to ninth grade.

89. The Ministry of Health has updated the Family Planning Handbook, which covers care for children and adolescents, including access to services without their parents or guardians from the age of 12 and expands available contraceptive methods.⁴¹ The Government has authorized access to and the use, purchase and sale of the emergency contraceptive pill and approved the health registrations necessary for its commercialization.

Reply to paragraph 12 (d) of the list of issues

90. See reply to paragraph 6 (e) above.

⁴¹ Ministerial Agreement No. 75-2023.

Reply to paragraph 13 (a) of the list of issues

Education

91. To reduce out-of-school rates, in 2023, with support from UNICEF and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the Ministry of Education began the process of drafting general guidelines for the educational supply and demand plan to increase school enrolment and retention rates. Data collected in the survey of out-of-school children were considered in this exercise.⁴²

Reply to paragraph 13 (b) of the list of issues

92. To ensure that children and adolescents, especially Indigenous and Afro-Honduran children and adolescents and pregnant girls, remain in school, the general guidelines for the educational supply and demand plan envisage an expansion and improvement of the education options available for children and adolescents with disabilities and for Indigenous and Afro-Honduran children and adolescents.⁴³

93. In addition, the Ministry of Education:

(a) Runs campaigns to raise awareness and encourage enrolment in the mother tongues of the Indigenous and Afro-Honduran Peoples;

(b) Publishes textbooks and support materials for strengthening linguistic and cultural knowledge in mother tongues;

(c) Identifies schools that cater for Indigenous and Afro-Honduran children and adolescents and registers them in the system so as to guarantee that support is provided under the intercultural bilingual education model;

(d) Promotes inclusive and comprehensive education through curricular content and teaching strategies that address different areas of knowledge; and

(e) Has developed a specific strategy to ensure that children and adolescents remain in the educational system and complete their schooling.

94. To reduce school dropout rates, the National School Meals Programme⁴⁴ operates in 21,000 schools in 281 municipalities in 17 departments. In 2023, thanks to an investment of L 1,022 million, the Programme provided school meals for 1,217,131 children and adolescents, including 94,531 Indigenous and Afro-Honduran children and adolescents who were provided with fortified foods adapted to their gastronomic culture.⁴⁵

95. Additionally, to help children and adolescents in the educational system, the Ministry created the Solidarity Scholarship Programme⁴⁶ and adopted Solidarity Scholarship Regulations⁴⁷ establishing eligibility mechanisms, payment and disbursement requirements and procedures for the Programme's implementation. Priority is given to children and adolescents with disabilities, single mothers, human rights defenders and other vulnerable groups. In 2022, a total of L 82,200,000.00 was allocated to the Programme, benefiting 13,700 students. In 2023, L 72,238,020.00 was allocated, benefiting 16,790 students.

96. The Ministry of Education and the Honduran Social Investment Fund have prioritized investment in schools, allocating L 419,545,524.90, and have also invested L 265,467,762.64 in the restoration of public spaces.

⁴² Accessed on 11 October 2024. <https://n9.cl/3703s>.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ Decree No. 125-2016, Gaceta No. 34,380.

⁴⁵ Instagram account of the Ministry of Social Development. Accessed on 2 June 2024. <https://n9.cl/tszj5>.

⁴⁶ Decree No. PCM-09-2023, Gaceta No. 36,151.

⁴⁷ Agreement No. PRS-03-2023, Gaceta No. 36,385.

Reply to paragraph 13 (c) of the list of issues

97. To promote digital access, the following measures have been adopted:

(a) The Ministerial Committee of Experts on Digital Education is spearheading programmes to facilitate digital access in rural schools, in cooperation with civil society and international organizations. These programmes focus on connectivity, teacher training, equipment, pedagogical innovation, content and platforms and have succeeded in connecting 709 schools;

(b) The Ministry of Education has begun using content with quick response codes as a curricular tool besides launching educational portals such as “Pasaporte de Aprendizaje” (the Learning Passport) and “Educatrachos”, which are run by the National Digital Education Transformation Programme;

(c) The Virtual Baccalaureate in Sciences and Humanities has been introduced for young persons in situations of migration or vulnerability.

Reply to paragraph 14 of the list of issues

Migrant and refugee children

98. The National Institute of Migration is reviewing the new Migration and Aliens Act, its implementing regulations and migration policy from a human rights perspective.

99. Owing to the migration crisis, the National Congress introduced a migration amnesty⁴⁸ to exempt migrants in transit from payment of the fine for irregular border crossing. The amnesty was extended by Decrees No. 79-2022, No. 137-2022, No. 39-2023 and No. 6-2024.

100. To protect child and adolescent migrants in transit through Honduras, the following measures have been adopted:

(a) In 2021, the National Protocol for the Comprehensive Care and Protection of Children in Migration Situations, drawn up by State institutions, civil society and international organizations, was adopted;

(b) In 2023, Honduras and Guatemala adopted the Binational Protocol for the Protection and Care of Unaccompanied Migrant Children and Adolescents, intended to improve case identification, humanitarian assistance and the protection and reintegration of minors from both countries;

(c) In August 2024, the Migration Governance Council,⁴⁹ composed of representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the National Institute of Migration, the Ministry of Security, Ministry for Children, Adolescents and the Family, Ministry of Women’s Affairs, Ministry of Human Rights, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Strategic Planning and the National Registry Office, was created to assume responsibility for the coordination and analysis of and consultation and advice on migration governance;

(d) The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, the Ministry for Children, Adolescents and the Family and the National Institute of Migration, together with the Network of Children’s Rights Institutions, have provided training for staff from the Ministry for Children, Adolescents and the Family and the National Institute of Migration, police patrol and border police officers and officers of the Special Tactical Operations Units who operate at the different border points, in airports and support centres for irregular migrants and returnees. Topics covered included the protection of children in migration situations, procedures and protocols for migrant support centres and the Convention;

(e) The Francisco Paz Migrant Centre, a new support centre for migrants in an irregular situation, has opened in the city of Danlí, El Paraíso. Its remit is to provide

⁴⁸ Decree No. 42-2022, Gaceta No. 35,989.

⁴⁹ Decree PCM-21-2024, Gaceta No. 36,605.

comprehensive support for migrants in transit and migrant children and adolescents in need of international protection.

101. In 2023, municipal offices for the reintegration and support of returnees were established in the cities of Yoro, Catacamas and San Pedro Sula and in the Central District to provide comprehensive assistance for returned Honduran migrants.

102. The Ministry of Social Development, through its “Return with Opportunities” Programme, has aided 500 returned migrant children and adolescents, who have benefited from school kits, scholarships and psychosocial support workshops.

Reply to paragraph 15 (a) of the list of issues

Children in conflict with the law

103. In the area of juvenile justice, the Expert Committee for the Protection of the Rights of Children in Conflict with the Law, led by the judicial branch, is composed of representatives of the Special Justice System and civil society organizations. Its remit is to safeguard and reconstitute the rights of children and adolescents in conflict with the law.⁵⁰

104. The following actions have been taken to safeguard the rights of children and adolescents in the custody of the National Institute for Juvenile Offenders and foster their rehabilitation and reintegration:

(a) Therapeutic and educational intervention models and approaches based on human rights standards have been used to construct their life projects;⁵¹

(b) The National Institute for Juvenile Offenders is promoting an approach that takes the age, maturity and specific circumstances of each child into account;

(c) The programme of non-custodial alternative measures has been expanded following the opening of regional centres with capacity to support 1,450 children and adolescents;

(d) The Comprehensive Education Programme is providing high-quality formal and non-formal education for children and adolescents deprived of liberty and has teachers specialized in Spanish, mathematics, social sciences, natural sciences and business, among other subjects;

(e) The Manuel Castillo Girón Governmental Educational Centre, established in 2022, certifies the educational programmes run for children and adolescents subject to custodial measures and a first cohort of 117 children and adolescents has already graduated;

(f) Access to healthcare in educational internment centres has improved following the appointment of a dentist and a nutritionist and the implementation of a clinical protocols handbook setting out 15 care protocols; and

(g) A central for medicines and supplies unit was created in 2023.

Medical services provided to children and adolescents in educational internment centres by year

<i>Year</i>	<i>Medical and dental care</i>	<i>Clinical examinations</i>
2021	11 800	1 700
2022	15 300	3 992
2023	7 120	3 444
2024	1 138	481

Source: National Institute for Juvenile Offenders.

⁵⁰ Accessed on 10 October 2024. <https://n9.cl/x1siw>.

⁵¹ UNICEF.

Reply to paragraph 15 (b) of the list of issues

105. Regarding the independence of the National Institute for Juvenile Offenders from the National Police and the armed forces, the repeal of Decree No. PCM-068-2019 restored the Institute's autonomy, providing for its return to the duties set out in its founding decree.⁵²

106. The National Institute for Juvenile Offenders is a decentralized State body attached to the Ministry for Children, Adolescents and the Family pursuant to Executive Decree No. PCM-041-2023.

Reply to paragraph 15 (c) of the list of issues

107. The investigation of arbitrary detentions, ill-treatment and torture of children and adolescents is a priority for the authorities and organizations involved in protecting their human rights.

108. The Office of the Special Prosecutor for Human Rights institutes criminal proceedings in cases of torture or inhuman treatment of children in conflict with the law, ensuring that those responsible are brought before the corresponding courts.

109. In 2021 and 2022, it organized round-table discussions with various entities, including the Office of the National Commissioner for Human Rights and the national mechanism for the prevention of torture. The aim of these discussions was to prevent the different forms of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, focusing particularly on vulnerable groups.

110. The Office also implements strategies for raising awareness and publicizing the rights of children and adolescents within the special justice system among justice officials. It has produced leaflets and videos on the rights of children and adolescents in educational internment centres or subject to non-custodial alternative measures and the mechanisms available for filing complaints and grievances.

111. Regarding the information on the transfer of children and adolescents from Nueva Jalteva prison to educational centres requested in paragraph 15 (d), since 2022 the National Institute for Juvenile Offenders has had its own government-run education centre, running courses under the Comprehensive Educational Programme. When children or adolescents graduate from an educational internment centre, an interdisciplinary team works with their family to find an educational institution that meets the requirements of the Ministry of Education so as to ensure that the minor can continue his or her studies.

112. To prevent stigmatization, the official and non-official educational documentation obtained during internment is supplemented and accredited by partner institutions such as the Ministry of Education, the Vocational Training Institute and Orphan Helpers. The documentation does not bear the official stamp of the National Institute for Juvenile Offenders.

Reply to paragraph 16 of the list of issues**Trafficking in persons and sexual exploitation**

113. To prevent and address the sale, sexual and commercial exploitation and trafficking of children, the Transnational Criminal Investigation Unit attached to the Police Investigation Directorate works in collaboration with investigative agencies from other countries in the region to detect and respond to cases of trafficking in persons and people smuggling.

114. Working in coordination with the law enforcement agencies, the Transnational Criminal Investigation Unit has brought charges against transnational organized criminal groups operating in Central America and Mexico and against criminal organizations involved in trafficking in persons for purposes of commercial sexual exploitation. In securing the

⁵² Decree No. PCM-061-2017, Gaceta No. 34,450.

rescue of children, adolescents and young persons who are victims of trafficking and other violations, the Police Investigation Directorate also cooperates with the Office of the Special Prosecutor for the Protection of Children and Adolescents, the National Institute of Migration and the Ministry for Children, Adolescents and the Family.

115. Other measures taken include:

- (a) An increase in the police presence in areas with elevated levels of violence;
- (b) Launch of community risk identification and mitigation programmes involving police officers and local leaders;
- (c) Establishment of a comprehensive protection network, named the Recruitment Prevention Network, which includes the National Police, social services, the judicial system, international cooperation and community organizations;
- (d) Creation of the Inter-Agency Committee for the Prevention of Violence, which has a focus on children and involves 19 relevant institutions;
- (e) Launch by the Ministry of Security of Phase III of the Coexistence (Convivir) Programme, designed to strengthen the labour and social skills of young persons, improve labour insertion opportunities and promote youth entrepreneurship;
- (f) Implementation of Operation Scorpion by the National Directorate of Border Police Services to combat and prevent crime in border areas; and
- (g) Creation of the Anti-Child Abuse, Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation Division to oversee operational approaches to these offences, according to the functions of the National Directorate of Border Police Services.

116. The Transnational Criminal Investigation Unit conducts in flagrante delicto investigations into offences against sexual freedom and offences involving domestic abuse, violence against women and gender-based violence. In cases not involving in flagrante offences, the Comprehensive Emergency Support Unit conducts the investigation at the request of the duty prosecutor.

117. In 2023, the Inter-Agency Committee for the Prevention of Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking of Children and Adolescents had an approved budget of L 30,307,772.00, up from L 6,741,800.00 in 2021.⁵³ For 2024, it was given a budget of L 40,307,772.00.⁵⁴

118. By Decree No. 93-2021,⁵⁵ article 219 of the Criminal Code was amended and the penalties and aggravating circumstances applicable to offences of trafficking in persons were loosened.⁵⁶

119. To improve care and support for victims, the Inter-Agency Committee for the Prevention of Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking of Children and Adolescents has:

- (a) Drawn up action plans in coordination with 17 local committees for the identification, assistance and protection of victims of trafficking in persons, including a plan in the Miskito language for the Miskito community of Puerto Lempira, in Gracias a Dios department;
- (b) Updated the operating protocol of the Immediate Response Team, in line with the standard operating procedure;
- (c) Updated the 2023–2030 Institutional Strategic Plan;
- (d) Launched the 145 telephone hotline for reporting incidents;

⁵³ Decree No. 182-2020, Gaceta No. 35,468. <https://www.tsc.gob.hn/web/leyes/Decreto-182-2020.pdf>.

⁵⁴ Decree No. 62-2023, Gaceta No. 36,437 <https://www.tsc.gob.hn/web/leyes/Decreto-62-2023.pdf>.

⁵⁵ Gaceta No. 35,760.

⁵⁶ Decree No.130-2017, effective as of 2020.

- (e) Strengthened the capacity of the Immediate Response Team by appointing 13 professionals in 2023;
- (f) Opened offices in four tourist departments with a high incidence of such offences in the last three years; and
- (g) Recruited staff for the Prevention Unit, the Communications Unit and the National Information System for Trafficking in Persons.

120. In 2023, the Support Fund for Victims of Trafficking in Persons was established⁵⁷ with a remit to provide direct and indirect support to victims in the areas of education, entrepreneurship, medical care, housing and food.

121. With funding from UNICEF, an operating system was developed in 2023 that has laid the bases for a national information system. The system will compile data on victims, judicial proceedings, follow-up and services provided and will be supported by a telephone hotline.

122. In the period 2020–2023, the Inter-Agency Committee’s Immediate Response Team identified and assisted 120 girls and 90 boys who were direct victims of offences of sexual exploitation and trafficking in persons. The team also provided support for 1,406 girls and 1,005 boys who were indirect victims.

Reply to paragraph 17 (a) of the list of issues

Recruitment of children by criminal organizations

123. To protect children and adolescents from forced recruitment, the Human Mobility Subdirectorates of the Ministry for Children, Adolescents and the Family spearheaded the creation of the Network for the Prevention of Forced Recruitment of Children and Adolescents, composed of 12 strategic bodies. The Network coordinates forums, strategies and action to prevent forced recruitment besides facilitating information, cooperation and the identification of priorities.

124. In conjunction with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and World Vision Honduras, the Ministry is working to develop a dedicated care pathway for children and adolescents who have been victims of forced displacement.

125. Other measures implemented have included:

- (a) The introduction of community policing;
- (b) Awareness-raising and prevention campaigns in communities, organizations and institutions;
- (c) Workshops to increase familiarity with the 911 and 110 emergency hotlines;
- (d) Action to address the situation of children and adolescents in street situations;
- (e) Improved access to education, the promotion of community activities and organization of fairs;
- (f) Training on rights violations and reporting procedures for the personnel of children’s ombudsmans’ offices, teachers, students, parents and members of municipal councils; and
- (g) The creation, in 2022, of the Police Directorate to Combat Maras, Gangs and Organized Crime,⁵⁸ responsible for dismantling organized criminal groups and responding to the needs of the public, including children affected by extortion and displacement.

⁵⁷ Resolution No. 001-CICESCT-2023, Gaceta of 17 November 2023.

⁵⁸ Ministerial Agreement No. 1417-2022, Gaceta No. 35,980.

Reply to paragraph 17 (b) of the list of issues

126. Measures taken to protect children and adolescents from internal displacement caused by violence include:

(a) Adoption of the Act for the Prevention of Internal Displacement and the Protection and Care of Internally Displaced Persons; the corresponding regulations are currently being drafted with support from UNHCR;

(b) Implementation of protection and rehabilitation programmes that include psychosocial assistance, education and legal support by the Comprehensive System for Protection of the Rights of Children and Adolescents in Honduras and the National Internal Forced Displacement Response System;

(c) Provision of training to teach personnel how to identify cases of forced displacement and provide due care and protection, including psychosocial support to ensure a safe family environment and prevent institutionalization; and

(d) Provision of assistance to 176 boys and 181 girls who were victims of displacement by the Ministry of Human Rights' Directorate for the Protection of Persons Internally Displaced by Violence in the period 2021–2023.

Reply to paragraph 17 (c) of the list of issues

127. Compulsory military service was eliminated in 1994.

Part II

Reply to paragraph 18 (a) of the list of issues

Institutional restructure

128. The following laws have been adopted:

(a) Act on the Prevention of Internal Displacement and Protection and Care of Internally Displaced Persons;⁵⁹

(b) Act on the Protection of Women in Situations of Humanitarian Crisis, Natural Disaster and Emergency;⁶⁰

(c) Act on the National DNA Database System;⁶¹

(d) National Children's Congress Act;⁶²

(e) Act on Shelters for Women Survivors of Violence;⁶³

(f) Regulations of the Solidarity Scholarship Programme;⁶⁴

(g) Internal Regulations for the Award of Scholarships by the Ministry of Cultures, Arts and Heritage of the Peoples of Honduras;⁶⁵

(h) Regulations for the application of article 125 of the National Registry Office Act, as amended, regarding the order of use of given names and family names;⁶⁶

⁵⁹ Decree No. 154-2022, Gaceta No. 36,184 <https://www.tsc.gob.hn/web/leyes/Decreto-154-2022.pdf>.

⁶⁰ Decree No. 9-2023, Gaceta No. 36,217.

⁶¹ Decree No. 57-2023, Gaceta No. 36,322.

⁶² Decree No.16-2024, Gaceta No. 36,510. <https://www.tsc.gob.hn/web/leyes/Decreto-16-2024.pdf>.

⁶³ Decree No. 28-2024. Gaceta No. 36,521. <https://www.tsc.gob.hn/web/leyes/Decreto-28-2024.pdf>.

⁶⁴ Ministerial Agreement No. 020-B-SEDESOL-2023, Gaceta No.36,275.

⁶⁵ Ministerial Agreement No. 51-2023, Gaceta No. 36,308.

⁶⁶ Gaceta No. 36,482.

- (i) Regulation of the Registry of Persons in Arrears on Child Support or Alimony Payments;⁶⁷
- (j) Regulations of the Act on AMBER Alerts to Locate and Protect Missing or Abducted Children and Adolescents;⁶⁸ and
- (k) Missing Persons Search Protocol,⁶⁹ which standardizes the actions to be taken by the various actors involved in searches for missing persons in Honduras. This protocol supplements the special search procedure established in the AMBER Alert Regulations.

Reply to paragraph 18 (b) of the list of issues

129. In 2022, institutions with overlapping or obsolete functions were disbanded in order to strengthen the institutional framework and new ones with the technical and strategic capacity to effectively fulfil their mandates were created. These new institutions are:

- (a) Ministry of Social Development, which replaces the former Ministry of Social Development and Inclusion;
- (b) Ministry for Women’s Affairs, which replaces the former National Institute for Women;
- (c) Ministry of Cultures, Arts and Heritage of the Peoples of Honduras;
- (d) Ministry of Transparency and Anti-Corruption Measures;⁷⁰
- (e) Ministry of Strategic Planning;
- (f) Ministry for Children, Adolescents and the Family; and
- (g) National Centre for Historical Memory.⁷¹

Reply to paragraph 18 (c) of the list of issues

130. Regarding public policies, programmes and projects to benefit persons and groups in vulnerable situations, the following are of particular importance:

- (a) Solidarity Network;⁷²
- (b) Solidarity Action Programme,⁷³ which is supported by an operations handbook for the disbursement of cash transfer vouchers to vulnerable sectors;⁷⁴
- (c) “Our Roots” Programme, which introduces Indigenous and Afro-Honduran Peoples to social programmes and projects. As part of this Programme, the Inter-Agency Committee for Indigenous and Afro-Honduran Affairs was established to coordinate comprehensive responses to their problems; and
- (d) 2024–2033 National Policy for Early Childhood, Children and Adolescents,⁷⁵ which addresses the prevention, promotion and protection of the rights of children and adolescents in a comprehensive manner. To facilitate the Policy’s implementation, a national strategy for supporting children in conflict with the law is being developed.

⁶⁷ Agreement No. CSJ-01-2023, Gaceta No.36,530.

⁶⁸ Gaceta No. 36,537.

⁶⁹ Agreement No. FGR-JAZ-015-2024, Gaceta No. 36,604.

⁷⁰ Decree No. PCM 05-2022.

⁷¹ Decree No. PCM 17-2024. Gaceta No. 36,565.

⁷² Decree No. PCM 08-2022. Gaceta No. 35,912.

⁷³ Decree No. PCM-020-2022. Gaceta No. 35,999.

⁷⁴ Ministerial Agreement No. 039-SEDESOL-2022. Gaceta No. 36,062.

⁷⁵ Executive Decree No. PCM-27-2024. Gaceta No. 36,636.

131. To encourage gender mainstreaming in institutions, the Ministry for Women’s Affairs has developed two plans:

- (a) III Honduran Plan for Gender Equality and Justice 2023–2033; and
- (b) 2023–2033 National Plan to Combat Violence against Women and Girls.

132. In the area of nutrition, the following have been launched:

- (a) State Policy for the Agrifood Sector of Honduras 2023–2043;
- (b) Integrated Rural Development and Productivity Programme;
- (c) Project to Enhance Urban Water Supplies; and
- (d) Food Security and Nutrition Programme, with an investment of L 14,200,000.00.

133. In the area of education and culture:

- (a) The Early Childhood Education Programme, aimed at children from 0–3 years of age in three departments and launched by the National Committee for the Development of Alternative Non-Formal Education; and
- (b) The Public Libraries Network Project and the Ministry of Cultures, Arts and Heritage “Casas de la Cultura” Network Project.

134. Regarding child labour, working conditions and the comprehensive care of workers’ children, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security has reported the introduction of the following:

- (a) The Seal of Compliance with Child Labour Regulations;⁷⁶
- (b) The Working Conditions Monitoring and Oversight Programme, with a particular focus on the prevention and eradication of child labour;
- (c) The National Labour Inspection Strategy, which introduces “three-in-one” inspections allowing inspectors to conduct reviews of general working conditions, the minimum wage and child labour in a single visit. In conjunction with the Public Prosecution Service, it monitors the tobacco, melon, transportation, coffee and bakery sectors, among others, on an ongoing basis to identify possible cases; and
- (d) The Comprehensive Care Programme for Workers’ Children, which provides a comprehensive service that includes care for 12 or 13 hours a day. The beneficiary children receive four meals a day with interspersed snacks, early stimulation and regular nutritional and educational development follow-up.

135. The Solidarity Government is currently preparing several public policy instruments, including a policy for the social reintegration of children and adolescents in conflict with the law. As part of this process, a standing committee for strategic coordination and public policies has been created within the National Institute for Juvenile Offenders.

136. Other comprehensive policies being developed include: a harmonious coexistence and citizen security policy that incorporates gender and human rights perspectives;⁷⁷ a policy for the protection of Indigenous and Afro-Honduran Peoples; a policy for the protection of older persons; a policy of education for work and entrepreneurship; a policy on domestic and unpaid labour; and a policy for the promotion and protection of the rights of the people and the reconstruction of the country. A climate empowerment strategy and an open data policy are also in the pipeline.

⁷⁶ Agreement No. STSS-317-2022.

⁷⁷ Accessed on 11 December 2023: <https://www.policianacional.gob.hn/noticias/25317>.

Part III

Data, statistics and other information, if available

Reply to paragraph 19 of the list of issues

137. Public investment in 2024 totalled L 96,461.5 million, of which L 35,107.6 million was earmarked for public investment projects executed under the Public Investment Programme, L 51,740.7 million was allocated to government social programs and L 9,613.1 million to gross capital formation initiatives.⁷⁸

138. Most investments under the Public Investment Programme (76.9 per cent) were funded through external credit, with the remaining finance coming from national funds and donations for the execution of 123 public investment projects.

139. By sector, highways accounted for the largest share of investment (25.4 per cent), followed by the energy sector (16.4 per cent), the health sector (11.1 per cent), modernization of the State sector (9.9 per cent), social protection (9.9 per cent), food security (7.9 per cent), education (7.3 per cent) and other sectors (12.1 per cent combined).

140. By department, investment was concentrated in Francisco Morazán department (28 per cent) and Cortés department (27 per cent), followed by the departments of the Atlantic coastal region (10 per cent), the southeastern region (12 per cent) and the western region (15 per cent). The remaining 8 per cent of investment was allocated to the departments of Comayagua, Intibucá, La Paz, Valle, Gracias a Dios and Islas de la Bahía.

141. Investment in social programmes accounted for 53.6 per cent of total public expenditure in 2024. These programmes provided, inter alia, agricultural loans, scholarships, free tuition, electricity and fuel subsidies, school meals, technology vouchers, municipal cash transfers and transfers to NGOs.

Reply to paragraph 20 (a) of the list of issues

142. Nationwide, 154 municipal offices for children and adolescents have been created, covering 51 per cent of all municipalities in the country. These offices have the human and budget resources needed to support children and adolescents. Children and adolescents in municipalities that do not have a municipal office are catered for by the municipal women's offices operating in 296 municipalities, equivalent to 99 per cent of all municipalities.⁷⁹ In conjunction with UNICEF, the children's offices have carried out analyses of the situation of children and adolescents in 95 municipalities.

Reply to paragraph 20 (b) of the list of issues

143. Nationwide, 184 municipal councils have been established under the Comprehensive System for the Protection of the Rights of Children and Adolescents in Honduras, covering 55 per cent of all municipalities. Of this number, 123 councils are active.

Reply to paragraph 20 (c) of the list of issues

144. The Public Prosecution Service has 55 prosecutors specialized in children's affairs, spread across 20 prosecutor's offices in 20 cities nationwide. Tegucigalpa has 22 specialized prosecutors, San Pedro Sula has 11 and La Ceiba has 5. Additionally, the Public Prosecution Service has 23 specialized comprehensive support units spread across 12 cities plus one specialized comprehensive support unit within the Cities for Women Centre.

⁷⁸ Accessed on 12 September 2024: <https://hondurasinversiones.gob.hn/presupuestoinversionpublica>.

⁷⁹ Association of Honduran Municipalities Directory, 2024.

145. Nationwide, the judicial branch has 35 public defenders specialized in children's affairs. A restorative justice unit for children and adolescents was established within the Public Defender's Office in 2022.⁸⁰

Reply to paragraph 21 (a) of the list of issues

146. In 2022, the regional offices of the former Directorate for Children, Adolescents and Family provided legal, psychosocial and medical services as well as basic provisions for 27,015 children and adolescents (10,053 boys and 13,013 girls). Institutions offering alternative care provided protection for 1,813 children and adolescents (743 boys and 1,070 girls). In 2023, 31,164 children and adolescents received assistance and protection in 1,693 cases involving children and adolescents whose rights had been violated. As of June 2024, the Ministry for Children, Adolescents and the Family had provided assistance to children and adolescents whose rights had been violated on 15,267 occasions.

147. The number of incidents of violence against children and adolescents reported by the Public Prosecution Service nationwide from 2020 to July 2024 is shown in the table below.

Reported cases of violence against children and adolescents disaggregated by year and location of prosecutor's office

<i>Prosecutor's office</i>	<i>2021</i>	<i>2022</i>	<i>2023</i>	<i>2024</i>	<i>Total</i>
Tegucigalpa	1 092	1 057	1 182	648	4 842
Talanga	51	22	31	25	144
Danlí	249	224	276	89	893
Juticalpa	138	122	103	44	504
Catacamas	31	35	14	6	115
Comayagua	78	61	30	21	276
Santa Bárbara	6	6	11	1	45
La Esperanza	48	40	45	17	190
Tela	30	21	11	4	88
La Ceiba	817	619	540	203	2 707
Roatán	43	45	46	16	232
Nacaome	2	2	3	1	9
San Pedro Sula	850	454	559	199	2 590
Bajo Aguan	80	80	80	80	400
Total	3 515	2 788	2 931	1 354	13 035

Source: Public Prosecution Service.

Reply to paragraph 21 (b) of the list of issues

148. From January 2014 to April 2024, 187 persons (116 men and 71 women) were granted refugee status. Of these, 49 are minors and 32 are young persons between 18 and 24 years of age.

⁸⁰ Judicial branch. 2022 Annual Report. <https://n9.cl/t1a4t>.

Children, adolescents and young persons with refugee status by sex, age range and country of origin

Country of origin	Girls/women				Boys/men				Total
	0–11	12–17	18–24	25 and over	0–11	12–17	18–24	25 and over	
Nicaragua	10	7	11	25	8	13	18	52	144
El Salvador	2	2	3	7	5	1	-	6	26
Venezuela	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	7	9
Colombia	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2	3
Cuba	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2	3
Guinea	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
United States	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Total	12	9	14	36	13	15	18	70	187

Source: National Institute of Migration data 2014–2024.

149. 2021 was the year in which the greatest number of refugee applications were granted, with 73 persons being recognized as refugees (compared with 28 in 2022, 8 in 2023 and 3 in 2024).

150. According to National Institute of Migration data, 1,021,496 persons in an irregular situation transited through Honduras in the period 2014–2024, with the highest flow of migrants being recorded in 2023. Most of these persons originated from Venezuela, followed by Cuba, Haiti and Ecuador.

151. In 2023, flows of irregular migrants in transit totalled 545,043 persons (53 per cent of which were men, 26.08 per cent women, 11.64 per cent boys and 9.28 per cent girls). As at 21 April 2024, 161,708 migrants had been registered (49.16 per cent men, 26.16 per cent women, 13.6 per cent boys and 11.08 per cent girls).

Irregular migrant children, adolescents and young persons in transit by age range

Age range	2023	April 2024	Total
0–10	47 853	19 050	66 903
11–20	66 133	20 855	86 988
21–30	208 527	55 862	264 389
31 and over	222 530	65 941	288 471
Total	545 043	161 708	706 751

Source: National Institute of Migration data.

152. The National Institute of Migration provides comprehensive support for migrants in transit through its support centres for migrants in an irregular situation. From 2014 to April 2024, Danlí support centre for irregular migrants assisted 222,051 persons, Choluteca support centre assisted 181,360, Tegucigalpa support centre assisted 43,290 and San Pedro Sula support centre assisted 1,475. The office in Danlí dealt with 332,632 persons and the Trojes office 236,484. Between them, these two offices dealt with 56 per cent of all migrants in transit.

153. Returned children, adolescents and families continue to receive assistance at the Centre for Migrant Returnees in Belén. In the period 2022–2024, a total of 26,892 children and adolescents returned (compared with 14,325 in 2022, 9,893 in 2023 and 2,674 until April 2024). Of this total, 11,996 are girls and 14,896 are boys. The countries from which most children and adolescents are deported are the United States, with 18,284 returned children and adolescents, Mexico, with 8,134, and Guatemala, with 426.

Reply to paragraph 22 of the list of issues

154. Regarding the transfer of children and adolescents interned in Nueva Jalteva person to educational centres, see reply to paragraph 15 (d).

Reply to paragraph 23 of the list of issues

155. According to the records of the Ministry of Education's National Education Information System Unit, 21,847 children with disabilities were enrolled in the national education system in 2022, including both State and non-State schools.

156. The Early Warning and Response System identified 4,604 children at risk of dropping out of school, of whom 378 were children with learning difficulties, 259 were children with psychosocial disabilities, 187 were children with intellectual disabilities, 83 were children with speech disorders, 60 were children with motor disabilities, 44 were children with visual impairments, 42 were children with congenital disabilities, 41 were children with hearing impairments, 30 were children with multiple disabilities, 10 were children with acquired disabilities, 102 were children with other disabilities and 264 were children with other difficulties.⁸¹

Reply to paragraph 24 of the list of issues

157. Data on children and adolescents in conflict with the law are as follows:

Children and adolescents deprived of liberty by educational internment centre

<i>Educational internment centre</i>	2022	2023	To September 2024
Sacred Heart women's centre	15	14	11
El Carmen	9	8	10
El Carmen intermediate centre	17	14	9
Jalteva	33	34	31
Nueva Jalteva	86	49	30
Total	160	119	91

Source: National Institute for Juvenile Offenders.

Adolescents and young persons under alternative measures, disaggregated by sex and region

<i>Region</i>	2022		2023		To August 2024	
	<i>Boys/young men</i>	<i>Girls/young women</i>	<i>Boys/young men</i>	<i>Girls/young women</i>	<i>Boys/young men</i>	<i>Girls/young women</i>
Centre-east	944	117	829	117	889	113
Northeast	363	32	215	22	232	29
Atlantic	71	6	64	2	69	3
South	8	3	65	11	71	21
Subtotal	1 386	158	1 173	152	1 261	166
Total	1 544		1 325		1 427	

Source: National Institute for Juvenile Offenders.

⁸¹ Early Warning and Response Systems /School Administration System-National Education Information System Unit- Ministry of Education.

158. According to the National Institute for Juvenile Offenders, adolescents and young persons deprived of liberty range from 12 to 25 years old in age and the majority are from rural, low-income regions in 1 of 15 of the country's departments. Adolescents and young persons subject to alternative measures range from 12 to 25 years old in age and are usually from low-income regions in one of eight of the country's departments.

Reply to paragraph 25 of the list of issues

159. Efforts to ensure the inclusion and protection of children and adolescents are being made at all stages of implementation of the National 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In conjunction with UNICEF, the authorities have been working to integrate the principles and objectives of the 2030 Agenda into policies and programmes for children.
