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PODER JUDICIAL DE HONDURAS

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Organization: Poder Judicial de Honduras
Sector: Justice
Project Title: Increasing Access to Justice for Vulnerable Groups: an Intervention with Judicial Facilitators in Honduras
Location: Comayagua and Francisco Morazán, Honduras

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Vulnerable groups usually lack information and knowledge of laws and fundamental rights, which creates barriers to access justice. In Honduras, many women and children are victims of domestic and family violence, but lacking access to justice, these events go unpunished, considering that nationally approximately 42% of such cases exceed the statute of limitations. Honduras relies on a National Service of Judicial Facilitators, made up of a community leaders network that assists on legal issues and delivers presentations on rights and local community issues. This network of volunteers has the potential to provide knowledge for legal empowerment among citizens. However, it is necessary to train these facilitators in relevant issues, such as domestic violence and local conflict resolution. This pilot project proposes a training program in the Comayagua and Francisco Morazán departments (where the percentage of cases exceeding the statute of limitations ascends to 73%), with the objective of improving judicial facilitators' knowledge, standardize their work and empower vulnerable communities on issues of access to justice.

3. IMPLEMENTING ENTITY

Poder Judicial de Honduras is the entity in charge of justice promotion and administration. The Unidad de Proyectos Especiales (Special Projects Unit) has created a multidisciplinary team to implement training programs on legal issues. Poder Judicial is responsible for the National Service of Judicial Facilitators (known in Spanish as el Servicio Nacional de Facilitadores Judiciales, SNFJ), a network of community leaders that assist peace judges with legal matters. The SNFJ has developed several trainings for facilitators, and has experience on data and information collection.

4. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A. PUBLIC POLICY PROBLEM

Despite the progress made on legislation for vulnerable groups, barriers to access justice persist in Honduras, particularly for women and children. Acts of domestic and intra-family violence go



unpunished, leaving victims without legal protection. This problem is reflected in the high volume of domestic violence cases that exceed the statute of limitations after entering the system - 42% of 39,220 cases in a given year - because victims withdraw from the legal process. The lack of knowledge among women and children concerning their own rights is one of the factors that contributes to this problem. Empowering these vulnerable groups, through targeted training to exercise their rights, is a possible solution. The judicial facilitator network can help solve this problem by providing trainings and legal assistance in their communities. Despite efforts by Poder Judicial, there are ample opportunities for the systematization, standardization and evaluation of the legal assistance offered by judicial facilitators.

B. PUBLIC POLICY OBJECTIVES

To address the problems pointed out in the previous section, Poder Judicial de Honduras proposes an intervention with the following strategic objectives:

Short-term objectives:

1. Improve the judicial facilitators' knowledge and skills through trainings on self-esteem and motivation, responsible parenting, patriarchal culture, and domestic violence.
2. Develop an information system that enables monitoring and evaluating the work performed by judicial facilitators.

Medium-term objectives:

1. Improve access to justice for vulnerable groups.

C. PROPOSED ACTIVITY

The project will train 59 judicial facilitators in the Comayagua department and 113 in the Francisco Morazán department. To identify the casual effect of the program, a set of facilitators will be randomly assigned to receive the training) and another set will not receive the training.

The training program will consist of modules in the following topics:

1. Self-esteem and motivation
2. Responsible parenthood
3. Patriarchal culture
4. Domestic Violence

The Special Projects Unit, in partnership with the Francisco Salomon Jiménez Castro Judicial School (known in Spanish as Escuela Judicial Francisco Salomón Jiménez Castro) will develop the training modules. The monitoring and evaluation strategy contemplates assessments of and surveys applied to facilitators to measure their knowledge on the subjects studied. Legal indicators, including the rate of new and expired domestic violence cases, will be collected via administrative data collection efforts.

D. EXPECTED RESULTS

Short-term:

1. Improve judicial facilitators' knowledge about legal issues related to domestic violence
2. Educate judicial facilitators on gender issues and patriarchal culture
3. Contribute to the standardization of work performed by judicial facilitators



Medium-term:

1. Improve vulnerable groups' knowledge of their rights and access to justice
2. Improve the conditions of access to justice in a timely, effective and efficient manner for vulnerable groups

E. POTENTIAL IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

Given that the intervention involves direct training for facilitators by their superiors (peace judges), no substantial challenges are foreseen in the implementation of the program, since Poder Judicial already has extensive experience with this type of work. A potential implementation challenge is low attendance at the talks provided by the judicial facilitators in their communities, particularly by members of vulnerable groups. To minimize this risk, engagement with vulnerable groups will be emphasized, starting with the initial call to judicial facilitators.

F. PRELIMINARY TIMELINE

Activity	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Develop training modules									
Bring together facilitators									
Develop measurement instruments									
Implement training to the facilitators									
Implement measurement and evaluation									
2nd session of the Academy for Security Analysis									
Analyze preliminary data									

G. BUDGET

Item	Project costs		Cost sharing		Grand total
	JJ for PJ	PJ	Other		
<i>Personnel</i>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
<i>Fringe Benefits</i>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
<i>Travel</i>	\$ 29,587	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 29,587	
<i>Equipment</i>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
<i>Supplies</i>	\$ 2,122	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,122	
<i>Contractual</i>	\$ 2,561	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,561	
<i>Other</i>	\$ 20,731	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 20,731	
Total Direct Charges	\$ 55,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 55,000	
Indirect Charges	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
TOTAL	\$ 55,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 55,000	

