



Evaluation Summaries

Evaluation: “Extension of Social Security Coverage to the excluded and the poor in Honduras”

Quick Facts

Country: Honduras

Mid-Term Evaluation: February 2006

Mode of Evaluation: Independent

Technical Area: Social Policy

Evaluation Team: Gilberto Tuñón Scalitti, external evaluator

Project Start: January 2002

Project End: December 2004

Project Code: HON/04/50M/NET

Donor: The Netherlands (375,288 US\$)

Background & Context

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

One of the biggest problems of the social security system in Honduras is its low coverage, which reaches only 12% of the population. In geographical terms, only 15 out of 298 municipalities have got social security coverage, which summarizes decades of deficient finance mechanisms and management; the improvement of the system is crucial to achieving equality and socio-economic development.

One of the major challenges of the present government is to increase the opportunities of the public to access health services. Studies suggest that the Honduran Institute for Social Security (Instituto Hondureño de Seguridad Social, IHSS) could establish itself as an effective instrument in the effort of the Honduran government to increase the

coverage of the health services to the public through the extension of the coverage of social security to groups of people and geographical areas that traditionally have been excluded.

As a result from the International Labour Conference in Geneva, the ILO started a global campaign to extend social security coverage in 2002. The project “Extension of Social Security Coverage to the excluded and the poor in Honduras” has been completed simultaneously, as a pilot experience, in three selected countries: Honduras, Mali and Sri Lanka; in order to establish a more efficient and equitable social security system through the extension of its coverage.

The immediate objectives of the project were:

- A strengthened IHSS, creating technical, legal and infrastructural conditions that facilitate the extension of the social security coverage;
- That the constituents have the capacity to propose the government a new social security law and a reformed code of work, which are more in line with the current economic and political reality, and in harmony with the objectives of social security;
- To have appropriate conditions and mechanisms to provide social protection to groups of working men and women, who have traditionally been excluded from them.

The expected main outcome of the project was a national action plan (Plan de Acción Nacional, PAN) for social security in each country, drafted by a tripartite dialogue

mechanism, the “round table of social dialogue”.

The expected major results were that the round table of social dialogue has elaborated and approved of a national action plan, including a guide with a collection of recommendations, which give orientation and facilitate appropriate adjustments in the social dynamics of the supply and demand of public health services, and which can be used as a tool that defines objectives and priorities of action, the work plan, cost estimates, a time plan for the accomplishment of the agreements and the distribution of responsibilities between the actors. The guide will be constantly revised and updated.

Present situation of project

The round table of social dialogue consists of six high-level government representatives, six employers’ representatives with the competence to make decisions, and six representatives of employees, also with the competence to make decisions. The research that has been undertaken during the project, the “Diagnosis of the Social Security Situation in Honduras” as well as the “Mapping of Health Service Providers”, provide important information for the members of the round table, in order to achieve their task, in particular to elaborate on the national action plan. Additionally, these documents are being used as reference material for uses other than the project.

Main Findings & Conclusions

Taking into consideration the obtained results, the project achieved the project objectives in a satisfactory way.

The fact that the secretary of work and social security is at the same time the president of the board of directors of the IHSS and coordinator of the socio-economic council, and that he clearly has a high interest in the management of the round table on social dialogue, gives it great political support. This capacity, that is important to the perspectives and horizons of activities or the round table for social dialogue, facilitated and permitted the advancement and

consolidation of a good teamwork. On the other hand, its members were capable of lifting the level of knowledge and to receive information from other experiences, relating to the topic of social security, in this way facilitating the development of the sound table.

The diagnosis of the community of Monjarás and the provision to develop the pilot project to extend the social security coverage in Monjarás, offered the opportunity to demonstrate the viability of an extension of the coverage to other regions of the country, as suggested in the national action plan.

The objectives of the project have been achieved in a satisfactory way and according to the work plan.

From the beginning, the project had a national action plan as a result of the former project, which permitted a realistic view on theoretic, technical, managerial, and budget aspects for its accomplishment. Furthermore, a permanent Monitoring and Evaluation process has evolved.

A factor which made an important contribution to the success of the project, was that at the beginning the institutional memory was not lost, because the responsible people at the round table had not changed; this meant that the key actors of the employers’, employees’, and government’s side were very familiar with the previous project and were able to facilitate progress.

The new general elections and the environment that produced the transition process and change of government authorities, hindered the presentation of the draft for the reform of the code of work in the 14 suggested articles to the legislative chamber linked with social security, because of which it remains a pending subject that still needs to be carried out by the round table.

Recommendations & Lessons Learned

Main recommendations and follow-up

The Monjarás pilot project demonstrated the relevance, viability and effectiveness of finding new ways to extend social security

coverage, as suggested by the round table and documented in the national action plan.

The fact that the project has chosen the method of the tripartite social dialogue for the round table, has guaranteed its success to a large extent. Thus it has been demonstrated that the mechanism of tripartite dialogue as a formula to solve social problems is and continues to be effective, all the more in a society as the Honduran with its culture of compromise.

The evaluation team recommends that the ILO's specialist for social security of the regional office in San Jose, Costa Rica, immediately with the termination of the project, monitors and offers support in order to achieve that reforms of the work code in the relevant articles concerning social security are approved of by the legislative chamber.

At the same time, the round table needs to monitor the process in order to guarantee that this mechanism will continue to succeed, and to be an effective means in the search for solutions in terms of social security in the country and to fulfil other planned activities in the short term as laid out in the national action plan.