



USAID | HONDURAS

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Strengthened Rule of Law

USAID is working to ensure the successful implementation of the Criminal Procedures Code, passed by the Honduran National Congress in 2002, judicial independence, ensure access to justice for all citizens, and meaningful enforcement of codes of ethics and judicial conduct. USAID is focusing on resolving residual problems from the former criminal law system, such as the backlog of cases and the disorganization of evidence warehouses.

To strengthen the independence of Honduras' judicial system, USAID's efforts also address the serious lack of vertical independence from the Supreme Court down to the lowest courts. Although progress has been made in selecting Supreme Court justices, the judiciary remains a target for political manipulation and congressional attempts to interfere with judicial functions. To improve accountability and enforceable standards of ethics and judicial conduct, USAID uses selected criminal and civil courts to develop model court administration procedures and practices that can be replicated in other parts of the country.



Over the past ten years, USAID, together with its Honduran partners, has been pivotal in pushing for much needed electoral reforms. In May 2004, a hard fought for Electoral Law was passed in the Honduran National Congress in order to support more democratic elections. The results of this new law were demonstrated in November 2005 when, for the first time, congress members were elected directly (rather than along party lines) and thus, members of congress will be held more accountable by voters. This reform will help transform Honduran political parties into organizations that compete more based on their platforms, their performance, and their responsiveness to citizen issues and concerns, and less on the lure of patronage.