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Handbook: Diaspora Knowledge Networks

Experience of Honduras Global

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Abbreviations

ANDI	National Association of Industrialists
CIC	Center for Innovation and Creativity
CIM	Centre for International Migration and Development
COHCIT	Honduran Council of Science and Technology
FHG	Fundación Honduras Global
FSM	Fundación Salvador Moncada para el Avance de la Ciencia
GDP	gross domestic product
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GTZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit
HGU	Honduras Global USA
HGE	Honduras Global Europa
IAF	Inter-American Foundation
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
SEPLAN	Secretaría Técnica de Planificación y Relación Externa
USA	United States of America
USD	United States dollar





Executive summary

This handbook tells the story of how and why Honduras Global came to exist and describes its relevance, importance, members, activities, collaborators, and achievements made during its first three calendar years of operation (2011–2013)¹.

The rationale behind Honduras Global is quite clear: societies in fragile countries like Honduras can easily fall in decay if their citizens, both at home and abroad, do not contribute to their sustainment and progress. People going abroad for studies, work or other reasons have long been perceived as a loss to the country of origin, as they can no longer contribute to the country's economic development (often referred to as 'brain drain'). However, over the past 15–20 years, there has been a growing recognition that people abroad (the diaspora) often contribute, at different levels, to the economic development of their homelands and are very motivated to do so. Remittances, skills and knowledge transfer are elements within this context.

The professional diaspora from developing countries is expected to continue growing and expanding for the following reasons:

- Thanks to technological and infrastructure advance, the world continues to become smaller, allowing people to travel faster and farther.
- Young qualified individuals from developing countries will continue to look for better opportunities outside their home countries' borders if there are few or none at home.
- Developed countries with negative population growth will continue to implement job programmes for qualified foreigners.
- The diaspora's next generations, born and raised in developed nations, are likely to remain connected to their parents' homeland and relatives from afar.

Governments and the private sector of countries of origin have recognised this potential and increasingly try to incorporate the diaspora, especially the highly skilled, into national development efforts. However, the task of organising professional diaspora groups in order to transform, in a coordinated and collective manner, their "nostalgic wishes" into effective actions is not easy. These educated and capable individuals have very little time to spare and most of them first come in contact with one another personally or through the internet. Furthermore, the fact that these individuals have proven to be successful professionals does not guarantee that they are effective group leaders or motivators. In fact, those who are may not have the time and/or the willingness to take up any role.

If an organisation is fortunate enough to count on technical and financial support during its kick-start phase, it should make wise use of it and not lose sight of long-term sustainability and financial independence as key success factors.

This document is a testimonial of an initiative in which the Deutsche Gesellschaft für internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and the Centre for International Migration and Development (CIM), a joint operation of GIZ and the German Federal Employment Agency, commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) took part and serves as a good reference for those interested in organising similar diaspora knowledge networks in other countries.

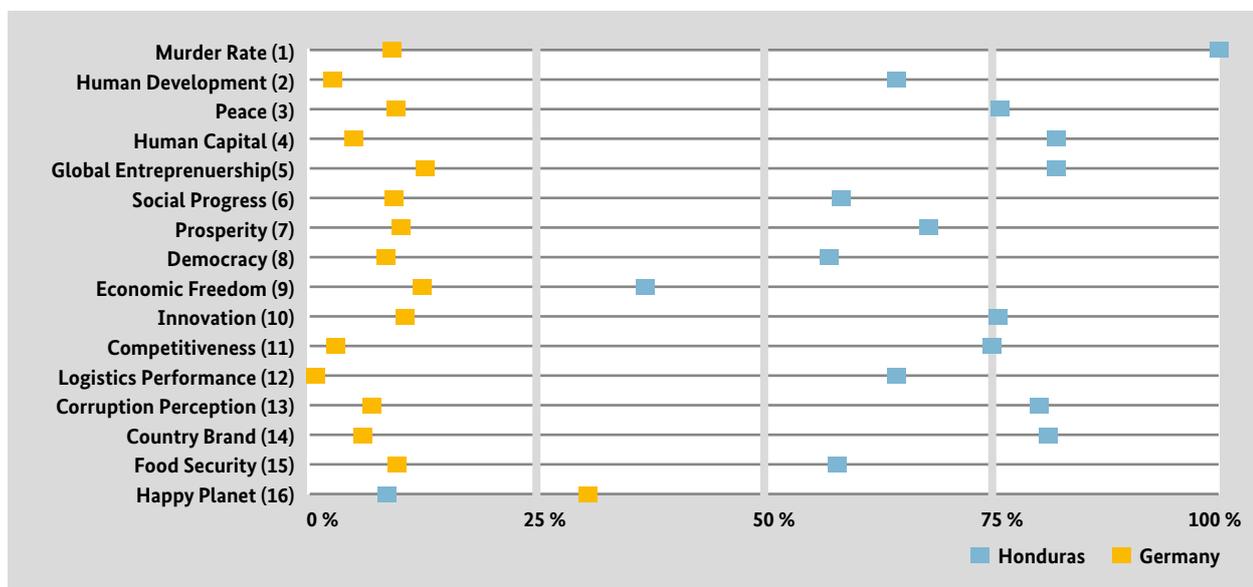
¹ **DISCLAIMER: Responsibility for the information and views provided in this publication lies entirely with the authors.**

Macro environment of Honduras

1

Honduras, 'deep waters' in Spanish², is a country located in Central America of approx. eight million inhabitants with a per capita gross domestic product (GDP) of USD 1,557 (2012). Since its independence in 1821, the country has been plagued by serious social and economic challenges that have become greater and more complex over time. According to the World Bank (2012), more than two thirds of the population live in poverty and five out of ten suffer from extreme poverty.

To gain a more comprehensive perspective of Honduras' current development ranking in comparison to Germany, the below chart reflects the results of 16 global indexes for the two countries developed over the past few years by different institutions.³



Graph 1: Current development ranking data (comparison between Honduras and Germany)

Its economy is based mostly on agriculture (e.g. coffee, bananas), which accounted for about 22% of its 2012 GDP (USD 18 billion) and 80% of all goods and services exports, making it very vulnerable to adverse natural disasters (droughts, hurricanes, etc.) and other external factors such as the decrease in global prices of exported crops.

The country's food security is rated as 'fair'. Unfortunately its strong income inequality does not allow enough food to reach broad segments of its population; over 60% of the population are considered poor and cannot afford to buy proper food.

Due to the Honduran Government's lack of law enforcement, crime impunity is very high in the country. Organised crime (drug traffickers and gangs) and common criminals have taken advantage of this weakness and are basically holding the country

2 Guaymuras and Hibuera were names used for the Honduran territory during the Spanish Conquest.

3 See the External Sources section for further details. Given that each study uses a different number of countries, the results have been amended to fit within a scale from 0 to 100; the closer a country is to zero, the better.

hostage – to the point that it currently has the highest homicide rate in the world (90 per 100,000 inhabitants). The insecurity and dangerous conditions are keeping foreign investment at bay. A large portion of its local population lives under constant stress.

The lack of effective investment in education and the creation of opportunities puts this country in the lower ranks of the world's human development, peace and entrepreneurship. Those who want to live a dignified and productive life face an environment that is raw and difficult. At a general level, the country has become stuck in a negative self-fulfilling cycle (poverty – malnutrition – lack of education – insecurity – corruption – low private sector investments) in which the causes and effects are intertwined and 'feed' one another.

The absence of opportunities in the country is one of the main reasons for the strong emigration of its citizens (skilled and low-skilled) to other countries, especially to the USA.

Hence, those citizens that can afford it go to study and/or work legally abroad. Many stay permanently overseas but keep visiting their homeland regularly. Those who seek a better future but lack the means to travel find a way to enter and reside in foreign countries without legal permission. Due to their legal status, these people are not able to travel back to their country of origin, but support their relatives through remittances.

In 2012 the Central Bank of Honduras registered USD 2.9 billion in cash remittances inflows from its citizens living abroad (about 16% of its GDP).⁴ Most of these funds are used by the in-country recipients for consumption purposes (food, clothing, services and health) and not for productive investments. However, as remittances directly reach migrants' families, they alleviate poverty directly and consumption has positive multiplier effects on the entire economy. Moreover, remittances invested in health and children's education have positive long-term effects as well.

On a more positive note, the country enjoys better relative rankings in terms of social progress, prosperity, democracy and the economic freedom of its citizens. Ever since the country ended decades of military regimes and drafted a new constitution in 1982, it has had democratically elected governments over the 32 years. The political crisis that led to a president's ousting in 2009 was eventually resolved. Civil society organisations have gradually gained in relevance and increased their involvement in government policies, partially thanks to the support and pressure of international institutions.

Although the country has seen positive developments in democracy and human rights and it has enjoyed relative calm and peaceful government transitions, the lack of consistency in public policies (e.g. government vision), the constant rotation of government officials and the widespread corruption have not allowed the country to prosper. Hence, the country's democratic fabric is quite fragile and the lack of effective improvements in the society under past governments causes the country's

4 Central Bank of Honduras' Balance of Payment Report: http://www.bch.hn/sector_externo.php

younger voters to look for new options. Thus, in the 2013 national elections, two new parties, Libre and Partido Anti-Corrupción, jointly accounted for 42% of all votes.⁵

Finally, the only index in which Honduras enjoys a high score (higher than Germany) is the one taking the countries' ecological footprint into account. Thanks to its location in the tropics, its natural resources and its low level of industrial development, Honduras produces very little CO₂ emissions. This is a situation that the country should capitalise upon by protecting its natural resources and investing in sustainable tourism.

However these actions cannot succeed in a country of people with so many unfulfilled basic needs and poor education. Hence, the value of an initiative such as Honduras Global is that it positions education, innovation, entrepreneurship and professionalism as positive and attainable objectives for all individuals and links Hondurans abroad with their country of origin.

5 2013 Election Results as published by the National Election Committee: <http://siede.tse.hn/escrutinio/index.php>

HONDURAS GLOBAL

Red de Conocimiento para el Desarrollo

Beginnings of Honduras Global (2008–2011)

In a globalised world, many successful countries are becoming knowledge economies wherein highly qualified human resources represent an extremely important source of innovation, growth and development.

Developing countries often face high emigration rates of qualified people, which has been traditionally seen as a complete loss for these countries ('brain drain'). Nevertheless, since the 1990s the concept of 'brain circulation' began to emerge, wherein migration is not a final outcome, but a freedom of movement for highly qualified people between their countries of residence and origin. This mobility represents an opportunity for governments and the private sector of countries of origin to stimulate the transfer of knowledge through direct advice for institutions, training events, seminars and other initiatives; this creates an additional contribution from migrants beyond their cash remittances or entrepreneurship.

In the case of Honduras, it is estimated that over a million people have migrated to other countries, especially to the USA, since the late 1990s, including a significant percentage of highly qualified migrants (approx. 21.8% having university degrees). Hence, many countries of origin see the benefits and support the organisation of diaspora or talent networks.⁶

In the wake of these developments, Sir Salvador Moncada, one of the most distinguished Hondurans abroad, had the idea of creating a network of scientists abroad originally from Honduras. In 2007, the Honduran Council of Science and Technology (COHCIT), later to be known as the Ministry of Planning and External Cooperation (SEPLAN)) and the Salvador Moncada Foundation for the Advancement of Science (FSM) joined forces to organise this network. At that time the National Association of Industrialists (ANDI) began to award the prize of 'Successful Honduran Abroad'.



Logos of Honduras Global's institutional founders

The following timeline highlights the major activities implemented during the following four years of this public–private initiative, including its legal incorporation:

2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) (then the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), commissioned by BMZ), SEPLAN, ANDI, and FSM decide to join efforts to create a talent network.
2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The name of the initiative was agreed upon: ‘Honduras Global, Knowledge Network for Development’. The following criteria for searching for new members were developed: (a) recognised achievements in their area of expertise; (b) desire to contribute to the development of Honduras; and (c) self-identification as Honduran. The search for the initial individual members was initiated by ANDI, FSM, SEPLAN and GIZ. The Honduras Global initiative was presented to the Ministry of Foreign Relations, universities and potential sponsors in Honduras. The political crisis that took place on 28 June 2009 (President Zelaya’s ousting) prevented its official release that year – the project went on ‘stand-by’.
2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meetings of institutional members were held for the reactivation of Honduras Global. The official launch was held on 8 June 2010 with the participation of five individual members, the institutional members and special guests at the Presidential House in Tegucigalpa. GIZ secured financing to continue supporting Honduras Global under a specific fund allocation (Study and Experts Fund (SFF), commissioned by BMZ). The first activities with individual members took place during their visits to Honduras (conferences, lectures, etc.). A workshop was organised in Houston, Texas with the support of GIZ, representatives of the institutional members and a few individual members residing abroad (21–23 October 2010). The purpose was to learn about the structure of and lessons learned from the diaspora network in Chile and to discuss the legal structure of the future organisation in Honduras.
2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GIZ began its programme for the Honduras Global initiative with support from the SFF fund, which enabled two full-time experts (consultant and technical assistant) to participate. The first version of the Honduras Global website (www.hondurasglobal.org) was launched in May 2011. Ten individual members plus the representatives of the three institutional organisations met in Houston on 3–4 June 2011 in order to develop, discuss and sign the bylaws of this public-private foundation (official date of incorporation: 4 June 2011). The meeting was also used to discuss operational matters of the newly established organisation (strategies, regulations, committees, etc.). Several one-off activities took place with member involvement (e.g. first internship programme offered by José López in Mexico) (see box 1). The first Executive Director was hired in October 2011 and the first Academic Week took place in December 2011. Newspapers, television and radio programmes start to showcase the organisation’s activities.

BOX 1:

FIRST INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME ABROAD: CEO SHADOW

A founding member, José López, provided the first international internship under the name ‘CEO Shadow’. José López is the Chief Executive Officer of the Mexican company PRINGSA (Promociones e Inversiones de Guerrero, S.A.), which is active in the entertainment industry.

After taking part in a competition at the Universidad José Cecilio del Valle and Universidad Tecnológica Centroamericana, through which candidates with high academic performance and motivation were identified, the student Cinthia Hernández managed to convince the selection committee (formed by teachers of the universities, members of the Executive Committee of Honduras Global and José López) of her high performance and desire to continue learning. Cinthia Hernández travelled to Mexico and for a week she had the opportunity to experience the daily work of José López. PRINGSA employs about 1,000 people. Apart from accompanying José to several business meetings, Cinthia was able to learn about the entertainment industry, making field visits in Mexico City, Cuernavaca and Acapulco. José López shared his experience in managing a large enterprise. Finally, Cinthia – with Mr López as her advisor – wrote her graduation thesis on the topic of CEO leadership, taking into account her experience in Mexico.

José López commented: ‘It is a pleasure to see how leaders in development take the greatest advantage of experiences such as an internship. It is also enriching for me, as a member of Honduras Global, to help develop Honduran talent. It is even more gratifying when all of this experience is reflected in a document that others can read and make use of. I personally feel that repeating this internship programme would be exciting.’

Vision and objectives

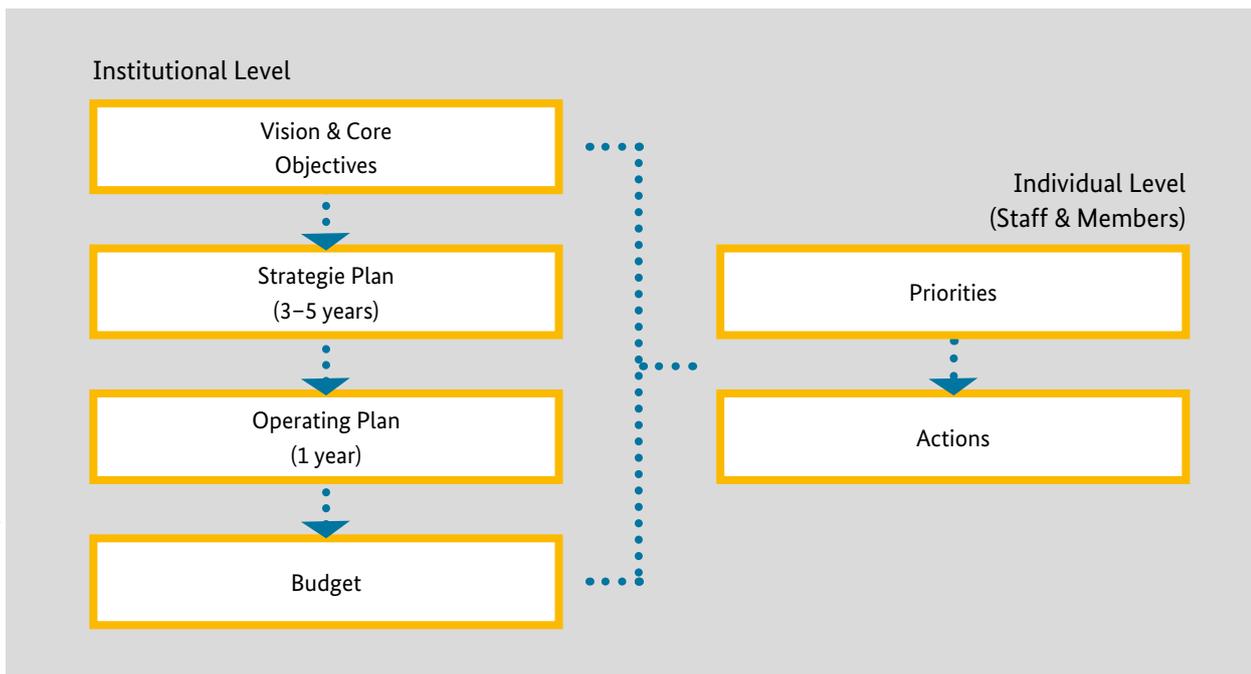
3

Honduras Global's vision is to become a bridge that connects Honduran men and women of excellence in order to help the country achieve much higher productive and academic standards by continuously engaging in individual or institutional activities.

As per its official bylaws, its three specific objectives are:

- To promote **business development and entrepreneurship**, as well as the development of **science, technology and innovation**, with the support of successful Hondurans abroad.
- To strengthen the national capabilities of human resources through the development of programmes and services that promote **knowledge transfer** through internships, tutoring, summer courses, alliances and agreements, among other things.
- To support the preservation of **national identity** and improve the **image of the country** through the promotion and dissemination of results and benefits achieved by Hondurans at international and national levels (through leadership and motivational talks, open forums to share experiences, etc.).

The aforementioned vision and objectives represent the cornerstone of the organisation's identity and values. They have also served as the compass for its strategic and yearly operating planning and budget as well as the team's priorities and actions, as illustrated in Graph 2 below.



Graph 2: The Compass (institutional and individual level)

Standard programmes

4

Recognising that Honduras Global is a network of individuals with different backgrounds and expertise spread across the globe, the organisation identified activities and services that could be offered, either on an individual or collective basis, depending on the members' presence in the country.

The idea is to carry out match-making between what the members can offer/contribute and what the potential beneficiaries (individuals, companies, government agencies) demand or need.

Between 2011 and 2013, about 35 of these 'standard' services took place, benefitting more than 3,000 participants.

Talks (leadership, motivational) are events in which members talk about their careers, experiences and/or selected topics to students and professionals. Up to now, 14 events with approximately 1,750 participants have been implemented. Among the topics covered were (1) the value of innovation; (2) family enterprises; (3) internationalisation of education towards interculturality; and (4) from failure to failure to reach success.

Conferences, workshops and forums are given by members in their specific areas of expertise to a select audience. Until today, Honduras Global has organised 12 events with approximately 1,050 participants. Among the topics covered are (1) keys to good leadership; (2) e-commerce and opportunities in new markets; (3) exporting digital products; (4) lean management; (5) female entrepreneurship; (6) diagnosis and treatment of temporomandibular joint disorder; (7) mathematics in the 21st century; (8) social media and its use by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs); (9) activating the linkage between academia and the private sector; and (10) Montessori teaching methodology for pre-schools.

In 2013, Honduras Global developed and won a grant proposal to carry out three youth camps and two youth forums under the United States Agency for International



Photo 1: Workshop 'Analysis of Social Networks and their Use by Small and Medium Sized Enterprises' given by Dr Ingrid Fromm-Hönemann



Photo 2: Workshop with maths teachers conducted by Dr Alejandra Sorto



Photo 3: Stanley Marrder motivating young professionals to follow their passion

Development (USAID) MeJORando La Educación para Trabajar, Aprender y Superarse (METAS) project. These events were focused on motivating and improving employment and entrepreneurship skills and were attended by more than 900 young participants (17–20 years). The events were evaluated favourably by the sponsor, which enabled the team to implement further projects with METAS.

The **Academic Week** is a five-day programme full of talks and on-site seminars given by Honduras Global members to university students with good to excellent academic grades who are studying at public and private universities (see box 2). By the end of 2013, three academic weeks with a consolidated total of 151 participants were held.

Members offer short-term internships in their companies (ranging from one week to six months) for the students to get a taste of the work environment, and to support them in becoming excellent professionals. Honduras Global helped place ten interns in five companies.

Mentorships: members contribute by identifying business opportunities, advice on running a business and networks abroad. One member has been mentoring the Intelligence Lab team. This programme has not been launched completely as its framework has yet to be developed. In addition, it requires periodic, medium-term guidance from members who have busy agendas.

Finally, members carry out individual ad-hoc activities for the benefit of the country, such as facilitating the donation of medical equipment from the USA or securing a scholarship for one student to participate at a summer math camp in Texas.



Photo 4: Participants of the first Academic Week 2011

BOX 2: ACADEMIC WEEK: A SERVICE AT THE CORE OF HONDURAS GLOBAL'S SPIRIT

One of the standard programmes of the organisation is the Academic Week, an activity that has drawn the most involvement among its members and a high level of acceptance and recognition from the university sector. Over five days, members, friends, allies and special guests of Honduras Global transfer their knowledge in the areas of their respective experience and expertise to college students (most under 25 years old with more than half of their undergraduate studies complete and demonstrated academic excellence). At the end of the Academic Week, the group emerges motivated and encouraged to act as change agents and engines of innovative development in Honduras.

The Academic Week usually achieves participation of 45 to 60 students from various public and private universities. It takes place in a retreat location outside Tegucigalpa, where the youth stay together, engage in intensive interactions and develop a sense of unity.

During the event, different types of activities are conducted, including workshops, teamwork tasks and conferences, all designed for the youth to acquire general and specific knowledge related to entrepreneurship, innovation and science, as well as leadership and teamwork skills.

Below are the key components of the Academic Week:

Section	Objective
Leadership	Strengthening the group spirit, leadership and teamwork skills among participants.
General conferences	Facilitating knowledge transfer on topics linked to the economy, technology and science, taking into consideration the national and international context, as well as strengthening the link between academia and the private sector.
Specific conferences	Facilitating knowledge transfer on specific topics proposed and selected by members or allies of Honduras Global.
Workshop	Generating new innovative service proposals and following up on those selected for implementation in previous events.
Workforce induction	Training participants with respect to the challenges they will face in the work environment and preparing them for future job searches and interviews.

Up to now, Honduras Global has conducted three Academic Weeks (December 2011, December 2012, December 2013), always in December to take advantage of the fact that several members of the organisation come to the country to spend Christmas with their relatives.

Structure and members

5

The previous chapters focused on the ‘mother’ organisation in Honduras, which is called Fundación Honduras Global (FHG). In addition to this central organisation, members living abroad have established the following offspring associations:

- Honduras Global USA, based in Houston, Texas, USA (September 2011);
- Honduras Global Europa, based in Brussels, Belgium (June 2013).

Thus, today Honduras Global is a network of both people and associations. The aforementioned associations abroad are separate legal entities that do not have any formal subordination among them. They act as regional representatives of the initiative and their existence improves the chances of its continuity. Even if one association ceases to exist, the others can continue working on shared objectives.

Graph 3: Legal relationship of the different entities of Honduras Global



In practice, FHG acts as central coordinator and provider of general guidelines made available to the other organisations so that they consider, adapt and implement them in their respective countries or regions.

Graph 4: Operational relationship between the different entities of Honduras Global



The following chapter focuses on the central organisation’s structure.

FHG’s bylaws were drafted by a Honduran lawyer at the request of the institutional members. They were subsequently shared, discussed, modified and finally approved at the Constituent General Assembly that took place in Houston, Texas on 4 June 2011.

The organisation's bylaws define the following directive bodies, of which only the Governance and the Execution Bodies are operational as of today:

■ **Governance:**

- General Assembly: this body is fairly universal in organisations like Honduras Global and has an important organisational, democratic and transparency role. It includes all founding and active members.
- Board of Directors: this body is comprised of seven principal members (President, Vice-president, Secretary, Treasurer, Fiscal Officer and two back-up members) plus two alternate back-up members.
- Executive Committee: this body is to be composed of founding or active members as well as the Executive Director. It is meant to handle operational and executive matters, as delegated by the Board of Directors. At the end of 2011, the Board of Directors decided to let the institutional members (SEPLAN, ANDI, and FSM) run this committee, ensuring operations in Honduras and facilitating all internal processes (e.g. signatures, etc.). A few months later, a representative of Honduras Global USA was also added.

■ **Consulting:** an Advisory Committee provides external advice and support.

■ **Execution:** The Executive Director is the top management position and the sole execution body. Since November 2011, two professionals have rotated in this position.

■ **Controlling:** controlling is ensured by the Controlling Committee.

Member categories

The organisation's bylaws define the following member categories:

■ **Founding Members:** natural individuals of Honduran descent who live abroad or in Honduras, as well as legal persons that promoted, called for and facilitated the creation of FHG and made the first contributions; those who signed the Articles of Incorporation and the Bylaws.

■ **Active Members:** natural individuals of Honduran origin who live abroad or in Honduras, who, after the signing of the Articles of Incorporation and through an assessment by the Board of Directors, are admitted as such as per the respective bylaws and regulations.

■ **Friends of Honduras Global:** natural or legal persons who, through an invitation from the Board of Directors or by their own request, contribute to the development of different activities, projects and programmes of Honduras Global.

■ **Honorary Members:** natural or legal persons that have provided relevant and extraordinary services to Honduras Global; such distinction will be granted based on a proposal by the Board of Directors.

Profiles of members

As of December 2013, Honduras Global has 55 individual members (active and friends). So far all are Hondurans who have succeeded in their professions and wish to contribute positively to Honduras' development. Most members live in North America and Europe (see annex for more information on the members).

They are encouraged and expected to contribute their time, expertise, contacts, skills and/or knowledge on the organisation's activities or support our allies or beneficiaries directly whenever available in order to promote sustainable development in Honduras.

A short bio of each individual is included in the annex to this document.

Membership Committee

This is the first Committee created in response to the need for developing clear and fair regulations for new member applications.

The team worked for several months to ensure that the process, while democratic, would not become bureaucratic. For example, it enhances the category of 'Friends' as the first step at which any interested person (Hondurans or foreign nationals) could apply.

A new friend can apply to become an active member after a year if (s)he feels comfortable in the organisation and the directors believe the person has demonstrated enough proactivity in the past few months.

Anyone can become a friend if (s)he meets these two key requirements: (a) has professional expertise; and (b) is interested in contributing to Honduran development. The person needs to send a completed application together with her/his curriculum vitae. These documents are reviewed by the Membership Committee and an official response is provided within a couple of weeks.



BOX 3: COMMUNICATION PROCESSES AND TOOLS

The level or complexity of the communication processes depends on the number of active staff and/or volunteers in an organisation. During the years 2012 and 2013, Honduras Global had two full-time professional staff.

Most communication between third parties and Honduras Global flowed through its administrative staff (Executive Director or delegate) to ensure it was timely and properly answered, forwarded to the right people in the organisation, and followed-up on within the organisation.

In addition to e-mail, the following communication channels have been used by Honduras Global, sorted from lower to higher complexity, maintenance efforts and costs.

Tool	Description
Social networks	<p>Facebook is used to inform and interact with our target group: young students and entrepreneurs. Through this tool, the organisation shares motivational notes, future events taking place, reports on activities carried out by its members, and miscellaneous opportunities for youth (e.g. scholarships).</p> <p>Visit: https://www.facebook.com/HondurasGlobal</p> <p>A private Facebook group for members of Honduras Global has also been activated to facilitate the exchange of news and ideas.</p>
Website	<p>The website is the virtual business card to the world and is used to post information regarding our objectives, members, activities carried out, projects, etc. (www.hondurasglobal.org).</p>
E-newsletter	<p>Two different kinds of bulletins posts have been produced and distributed: one for internal purposes (members and friends of Honduras Global) and the other for the general public (sponsors, beneficiaries, allies, collaborators and anyone interested).</p> <p>These newsletters contain information about activities implemented by the organisation, status of projects, and past and future events, among other things. You can access them here: http://bit.ly/1fdAxaO</p>
Internal webpage (Intranet)	

Outlook: a long-term perspective: Center for Innovation and Creativity

During 2013, the execution and governance directors agreed that the team should develop a blueprint for a project that, with initial financial backing, could become sustainable after a couple of years.

An idea that had been floating around for some time was a business incubation centre whose implementation was considered a 'natural fit' to Honduras Global's objectives. It would allow our business and entrepreneurial members to transfer their knowledge to younger entrepreneurs and encourage innovation while identifying and meeting local and international customer demands.

This chapter is about this long-term project, which has been named '**Center for Innovation and Creativity (CIC)**'.

Background

An encouraging entrepreneurship ecosystem with opportunities for start-ups, co-working, incubation and acceleration, especially in the creative and technology sectors, is virtually non-existent in Honduras.

There are currently a handful of programmes in Honduras that encourage entrepreneurship, which are mostly driven by private sector institutions such as universities, chambers of commerce, and/or non-governmental organisations, and are focused on the subsistence economy (start-ups by need) and not on higher-growth market opportunities (related to technology, innovation, research and development).

The same is valid for other stages of businesses development where institutional support is found: they are focused on training and financing traditional micro, small and medium-sized traditional enterprises.

Given that a couple of individual members from Honduras Global are involved in the technology sector, they emphasised the value of creating a Center in Honduras as a micro ecosystem that would support young creative entrepreneurs in-country to pursue their ideas and projects. The CIM expert began to attend different technology-related events held in the larger cities (Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula) to identify and get closer to the potential community group to understand their needs and expectations. These interactions backed the impression that there is a growing number of young 'techies' in the country that would like to become entrepreneurs but have not found a support system to do so.

Goal of the Center for Innovation and Creativity

To encourage entrepreneurship and strengthen the competitiveness and innovation of micro, small and medium-sized Honduran businesses and businesspeople working in the creative and technology field; also to promote the exchange of regional knowledge, experiences and services among Central American technology centres and their beneficiaries.

Unique value proposition (from a local market perspective)

- Development of a creative community. The Center shall become a meeting point that promotes collaboration, exchange and the development of value propositions for local and international markets.
- Availability of virtual office space (co-working area) at affordable rates.
- Training and workshops on the web and on the programming of mobile applications, graphic design, 3D animation, e-commerce, the internationalisation of products and services, quality control, etc. (demand-driven).
- Support in the development of crowdfunding campaigns.
- Opportunities for the incubation and acceleration of technology-driven companies.
- Organisation of a research team to conduct trend and market opportunity studies at the local and/or international levels for local Honduran companies willing to pay for this service.
- Creation of a Central American network of technology centres in which members would have the chance to showcase their products or services and explore synergistic or collaboration opportunities.

Some members of CIC would have the opportunity to be coached by Honduras Global members and access foreign market contacts through them. The network abroad would be informed and periodically updated about CIC members' products and services to help them identify potential customers or risks.

Beneficiaries

The target group is young entrepreneurs from the creative sector in areas such as (1) design; (2) entertainment and interactive videos; (3) software and computing services; (4) film and video; and (5) TV and radio.

Target group profiles include:

- existing companies looking to accelerate;
- start-ups;
- large Honduran companies interested in the research services or solutions developed by CIC members;
- foreign companies/purchasers of CIC members' solutions.

Location, staff and organisational structure

The location of CIC will be either the capital city Tegucigalpa or the second largest city San Pedro Sula, depending on the alliances made with the private and/or public sector to secure the office facilities.

The CIC team will consist of three permanent office staff or contractors plus substantive experts, consultants and trainers.

The Community Manager is the person in charge of identifying, recruiting, selecting, organising and motivating the future members of the centre. (S)he will be responsible for coordinating the operational aspects, including managing, leading and tracking the different activities in order to meet the objectives. (S)he is the person who supports and takes care of CIC's positive collaboration culture.

The Network and Business Development Manager is responsible for developing CIC's network inside and outside Honduras, securing financial support from international institutions, promoting the solutions offered by CIC members, developing market strategies and engaging potential customers.

The Administrative Assistant is in charge of assisting the managers in the different activities that take place at the CIC.

Expected results (3 years)

- Physical building where the creative community could meet and work is completed.
- Up to ten co-working desks are rented by entrepreneurs on a monthly basis.
- Up to ten co-working desks are rented on a short-term basis (per hour, per day and/or per week).
- Ten existing businesses have gone through the acceleration programme/up to ten start-ups are incubated.
- At least four companies receive a non-reimbursable sum of USD 5,000 as seed capital.
- At least four companies win new foreign customers.
- At least 36 training events take place at CIC.
- At least ten regional virtual conferences are attended by members of technology centres.
- Fifteen studies are performed by the research team.

Project financing

It is important to mention that the establishment of most technological and incubation centres in Central America required grants from international organisations. The CIC would be no exception; in 2013 its business plan was submitted to the following four institutions: GIZ (Facilidad Programme), the European Union (EU's Non-State Actors Grant), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the Inter-American Foundation (IAF).

From the above, the proposal did not qualify for the EU, GIZ and IAF programmes. The IDB representatives liked the project and offered to help explore country donor programmes (such as those of Finland, Japan or the Republic of Korea) available in that institution, under which a customised proposal could be presented.

At the same time, the responsible staff member contacted a few local companies considered to be leaders in the technology sector. Two of them expressed a very strong interest in joining the project and contributing with equipment or physical facilities. These companies are **Tigo**, the Honduran subsidiary of the telecom multinational Millicom and the top mobile service provider in the country, and **Altia Business Park**, the most modern technology park in Central America based in San Pedro Sula.

CIC's financial projections are not shown because they are not meant to be public and may vary significantly depending on the size of the contributions that the aforementioned local partners make. However, a couple of highlights can be included:

- One key objective is for CIC to become financially sustainable in the medium term, ideally after the second year of operation. This should be possible by generating income from services such as renting out co-working spaces, training and event ticket sales, new customer contract commissions when obtained by Honduras Global members or the CIC, and research study fees, among other things.
- The CIC would set high standards for the responsibility and reliability of its members with respect to fulfilling their customers' needs. The aim is to cultivate a positive image and reputation to assure potential new customers that our members will 'walk their talk'. If deemed appropriate, one of the CIC managers shall participate as arbitrator to resolve a conflict that the parties were not able to resolve on their own.

BOX 4: INTELLIGENCE LAB

The Intelligence Lab is the outcome of the first Academic Week in 2011, where young students made proposals and presented ideas on how to strengthen the climate of innovation in Honduras.

Its main objective is to conduct global market and trends research for local businesspeople and anyone interested. The intention is to improve the commercialisation of services and products by ensuring that great value and high quality are delivered; in other words: help Honduran businesses be more competitive.

The lab consists of university volunteers interested in research and supporting business development in the country. The volunteers are located inside and outside Honduras as distance is no longer a hindering factor in the age of virtual communications.

The volunteers communicate and coordinate their research activity using Skype as well as a wiki to enter updates on the status of their assigned projects and to share the latest versions and results of each study. Another part of this initiative is a virtual library containing research studies on Honduras.

There has been positive brainstorming and collaboration for papers on topics such as exporting music, modernising the Honduran health system, business incubation, and strengthening the technology sector. For more information, contact: info@hondurasglobal.org.

Alliances and collaboration partners

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As a 'Knowledge Network for Development', alliances and collaboration are key strategic components of Honduras Global.

The first alliance was formed with Jovenes Industriales (JOVIN), which is an internal organisation of ANDI consisting of young industrialists and entrepreneurs; its goal is to improve the productive sector environment, introduce modern business management concepts and train future business leaders. One of JOVIN's key projects is the First Tuesday platform, where business experiences and opportunities are exchanged. Honduras Global's contribution is to provide keynote speakers for these events. JOVIN will support its counterpart's youth trainings and events in whichever manner it can.

In addition to its close relationship with its institutional members (ANDI, SEPLAN, FSM) and GIZ, the organisation has been fortunate to be able to count on a group of local individuals and institutions that believe in its goals and have joined the network as honorary members. Between 2011 and 2013 these members made monetary contributions totalling more than USD 40,000 (normally, an individual contributes USD 1,500/year), out of which Banco Atlántida (the oldest Honduran private bank) and a few of its top shareholders donated more than one third.

Honduras Global has enjoyed great visibility in the local media (newspaper, TV, radio) due to the high level of energy shown over the last two and a half years. The following local media companies provide free coverage to Honduras Global's events whenever requested: Telecentro (the largest media company), Canal 10 (second largest TV firm focused on education) and El Heraldo (one of the four national newspapers). Their support has been key for the organisation's image-building and country-wide exposure.

During these past few years, the organisation has interacted with many educational, professional and international institutions, from both the private and public sectors, and reached collaborative frame agreements with the following organisations:



National University of Honduras – founded in 1847 and is the oldest and largest university in Honduras. In January 2014, it registered 79,000 first-year students nationwide (Tegucigalpa plus its eight regional centres). A framework agreement for academic, scientific, business and cultural collaboration was developed in 2013. In addition, a letter of intention was signed with the Economic and Social Research Institute, part of UNAH's Business School, to have roundtables with representatives from academia, professionals, and the public and the private sectors in order to identify and promote collaboration projects.



Technological University of Honduras – second largest private university in Honduras with more than 17,000 students today across eight campuses in different country locations. This framework agreement focuses on collaboration on entrepreneurship, innovation and knowledge transfer.



Central American Technological University – largest private university in Honduras. It was founded in 1987 and currently has more than 20,000 registered students. An agreement was signed by which one of Honduras Global’s members, Carlos Campos, will support UNITEC in organising and launching its first Fashion Design School.



Vital Voices Honduras – local branch of Vital Voices, a programme initially established by then First Lady Hillary Clinton and former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright. Its goal is to advance women’s economic, political and social status around the world. Under this alliance, both organisations agree to mutually strengthen their networks and synergies to achieve their respective objectives.

Honduras Global has jointly implemented programmes or projects with the following international development organisations:



USAID – one of the leading international development agencies in Honduras. In 2013, Honduras Global presented a matching grant proposal for the implementation of two four-day youth training camps and 3 youth forums under its METAS project. The proposal was accepted and during the third quarter of that year, key METAS, Honduras Global and GIZ members worked together and implemented these five events successfully.

Honduras Global reached out to US and European universities that indicated a positive interest in supporting the project, including the University of Texas at Austin (IC²), Houston Community College, University of Leipzig (Small Enterprise Promotion and Training Program) and the Polytechnic University of Catalonia.

The team also contacted a few business incubators and associations in Germany, including: icebauhaus (Weimar, Germany), betahaus (Berlin, Germany) and the European Center for Latin America (Hamburg, Germany).

Finally, positive relationships with several Honduran government institutions have been established, especially with: the Ministry of Foreign Relations and the different embassies in Europe and the USA; the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, and the Ministry of Education.

Results and achievements

8

External

Honduras Global is now part of the network of pro-development and philanthropic organisations that strive to make a difference to one group/individual at a time in Honduras. By December 2013, it had benefited more than 3,000 individuals that have attended one or more of its approx. 35 activities (e.g. Academic Weeks, workshops, summer camps, forums, conferences, etc.).

Some of its individual members have developed and implemented their own activities that are likely to continue in the future, for example: Carlos Campos with the Fashion Design School; Oscar Castañeda with medical congresses between St. Luke's Hospital and Honduras Oncology Association; and Lillian Moncada with the 'Montessori Teaching Methodology for Pre-schools'.

Finally, the international expert, placed by CIM at Honduras Global and its Executive Director have shared documentation and best practices and attended sessions and workshops driven by another team working to create a similar organisation in El Salvador.

Internal

By December 2013, the organisation grew into a network of 55 Honduran professionals residing abroad whose individual effectiveness was able to be enhanced by this network of collaborators and allies within the country. It is the first public-private network of its kind in Honduras.

The network consists not only of individuals but also of related associations (FHG, HGU and HGE) with shared objectives.

Administrative processes were effectively managed; FHG had a positive 2011/2012 Financial Audit. Proper and transparent governance is key for the Honduran organisation to remain active on the local government's list, apply for grants, retain sponsors and establish alliances.

The team worked hard to keep the internal communication flowing by issuing and distributing five electronic bulletins in 2012 and six bulletins in 2013 to members as well as a select audience, containing information about ongoing and future activities. A Facebook page was created to share miscellaneous information in real time with interested parties, reaching slightly over 2,000 'fans' by the end of 2013. Furthermore, the official website was kept up-to-date with respect to activities and member profiles.



Lessons learned

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Honduras Global is the result of (a) a country with a large population abroad (diaspora estimated at one million, about 12% of its overall population); (b) the country's pressing development needs; (c) the existence of a professional diaspora willing to share their knowledge and contribute to their homeland; and (d) the commitment of institutional members (SEPLAN, ANDI, FSM) as well as the technical and financial support of GIZ and CIM (commissioned by BMZ), specifically at its early stage.

Hence, its development could be described as 'in-vitro' or 'top-down' based on what its founding members had envisioned; it now needs to mature through 'organic' or 'bottom-up' growth, focusing on how well the organisation attracts and/or selects new members with similar ideals; how they interact and work together within and for the organisation; and what advantages the organisation can offer to them in delivering common good to the country.

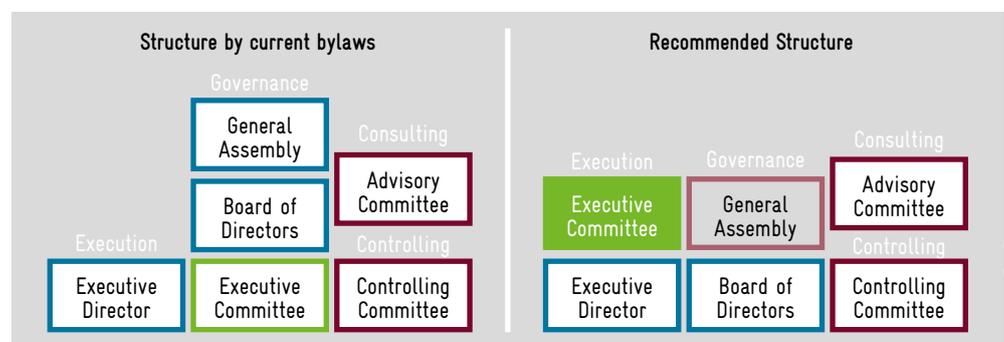
Below are the lessons learned from its two and a half years of existence:

Sustainability/ continuity

- From the outset, every new organisation should make a careful assessment on what it can achieve with the current resources it has and how sustainability and continuity can be attained. It should get expert help with fundraising at both the consulting and implementation levels. It should develop worst and best-case scenarios to ensure continuity for each case. Keeping a lean but effective organisation should remain a permanent objective. Creating different associations in different countries is a decentralisation model that allows (regional) continuity so that if one of the organisations were to close, the others would still be able to pursue the shared ideals – perhaps not as efficiently if the mother organisation ceases to exist.
- A young organisation should try to keep its costs as variable as possible. Even if it has the privilege of financial backing in its early stages, it should avoid fixed costs as long as its sustainability is not assured.

Organisation and involvement of stakeholders

- The higher the level of involvement and presence the organisation wants to have, the more relevant it is to involve members who can take time to support its activities (standard services or long-term projects) as part of the execution teams, and not only at governance levels.
- Considering that the execution team is the engine of an organisation, its bylaws should properly grant the authority that each body (governance and execution) needs to function properly.



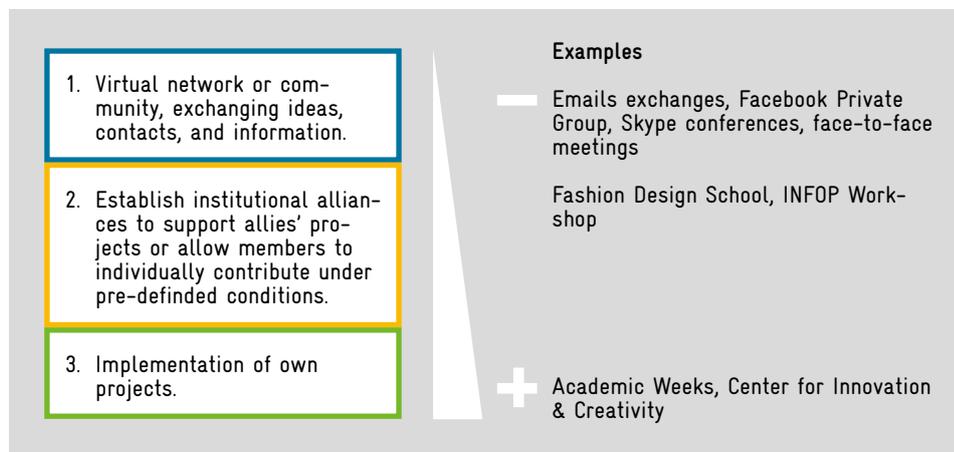
Graph 5: Recommended structure of the organisation

- Given the different backgrounds, interests and personalities of members, most matters are likely to be decided upon per majority decision rather than consensus. Those who end up on the minority side should respect the majority's decision and, more importantly, support the chosen actions (or at least not obstruct them by passive or active opposition).

Strategy and operation

- Membership organisations such as Honduras Global are not able to run large-scale activities and services fully on their own. Activities and services could include a mix that (i) builds on members' individual initiatives and network-related activities; (ii) collaborates with other organisations (allies); and (iii) are fully driven and run by the organisation itself.

The following graph reflects the three activity or engagement levels identified, from lower (level 1) to higher (level 3) commitments that an institution and/or its members could undertake:

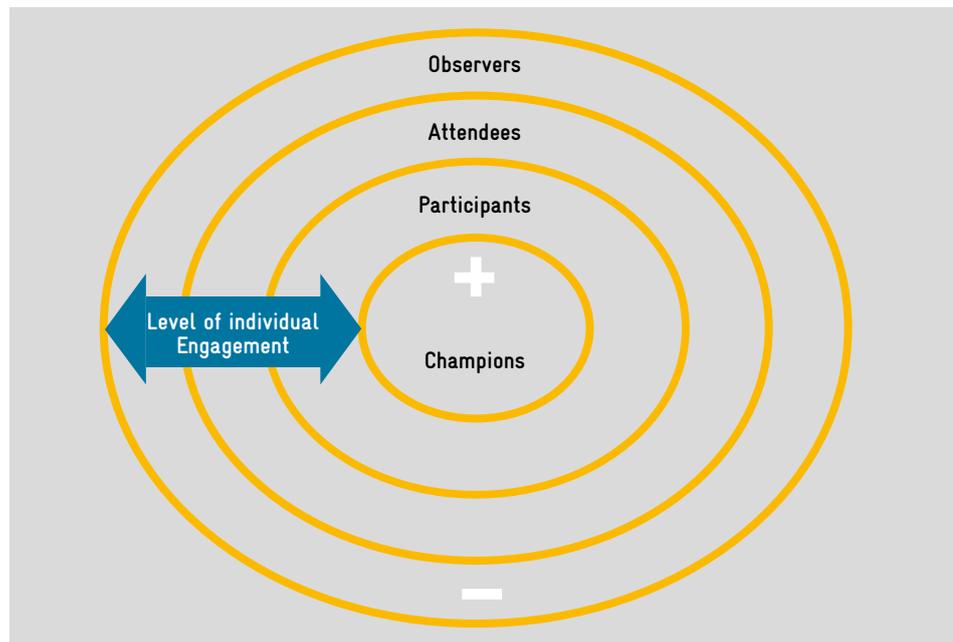


Graph 6: Levels of involvement of institutional and participating individuals

- Because of the initial financial support enjoyed from its institutional members and GIZ (on behalf of BMZ), the team was able to develop strategic and operating plans and drive projects at the above three levels. However, while the directors and managing team should be ambitious in their plans (towards reaching level 3 projects), they must also be ready and able to regroup at lower levels until they have gathered the additional resources needed to achieve greater impact. The group should not only set plans based on the resources available at the time of planning, but also consider the level of resources expected in the subsequent 12–18 months.
- The advantages of a lower level of organisational activity include the fact that the overall coordination and management work would be less demanding, the probability of meeting goals would be higher and there would be less frustration for the active directors or members. When the team gathers new strength and resources to take on level 3 projects, it is important to focus on a small number of projects: those expected to ensure sustainability and a continuous positive impact to society. If the organisation is not able to focus on developing a couple of activities that allow it to generate enough income to implement its own projects, it would have to accept the fact that it is more of a 'wishful thinking' team than it intended. One potential solution is to recruit members that are retired and willing to take over organisational responsibilities on a pro bono or variable basis (the latter based on income generated).
- Any member that submits a new project to the respective authorities (execution or governance) for their approval should be ready to be its champion or find a respective champion while remaining involved as a close collaborator. It is important for the organisation to develop a standard template for the submission of projects.

Membership

- Treat member participation as a spectrum and develop a culture in which it is OK for members to step down or step up their active involvement in the organisation, depending on their personal or professional circumstances. Members can step down without stepping out. The below diagram shows the most important positive participation levels a community member could take (graph is not comprehensive).⁷



Graph 7: Levels of individual involvement

External sources

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Page 6: Graph 1: Current development ranking data (comparison between Honduras and Germany)

1. **2012 Murder Rate.** United Nations Office on Drugs & Crime (UNODC). Countries evaluated: 207. <http://www.unodc.org/gsh/>
2. **2013 Human Development.** United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Countries evaluated: 207. <http://hdr.undp.org/en/2013-report>
3. **2013 Peace.** Institute for Economics & Peace (IEP). Countries evaluated: 162. <http://www.visionofhumanity.org/#/page/indexes/global-peace-index>
4. **2013 Human Capital.** World Economic Forum. Countries evaluated: 122. <http://reports.weforum.org/human-capital-index-2013/#>
5. **2013 Global Entrepreneurship.** George Mason University & Partners. Countries evaluated: 118. <http://www.thegedi.org/>
6. **2014 Social Progress.** The Social Progress Imperative. Countries evaluated: 132. <http://www.socialprogressimperative.org/data/spi>
7. **2013 Prosperity.** Legatum Institute. Countries evaluated: 142. <http://www.prosperity.com/#!/ranking>
8. **2012 Democracy.** The Economist Intelligence Unit. Countries evaluated: 167. http://www.eiu.com/public/topical_report.aspx?campaignid=DemocracyIndex12
9. **2011 Economic Freedom.** Fraser Institute. Countries evaluated: 152. <http://www.freetheworld.com/>
10. **2013 Innovation.** Cornell University, INSEAD and WIPO. Countries evaluated: 142. <http://www.globalinnovationindex.org/content.aspx?page=gii-full-report-2013>
11. **2013-14 Competitiveness.** World Economic Forum. Countries evaluated: 148. <http://www.weforum.org/issues/global-competitiveness>
12. **2014 Logistics Performance.** World Bank. Countries evaluated: 160. <http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2014/03/20/logistics-performance-index-gap-persists>
13. **2013 Corruption Perception.** Transparency International. Countries evaluated: 175. <http://www.transparency.org/cpi2013/results>
14. **2012-13 Country Brand.** FutureBrand. Countries evaluated: 118. <http://www.futurebrand.com/foresight/cbi/cbi-2012>
15. **2013 Food Security.** The Economist Intelligence Unit. Countries evaluated: 107. <http://foodsecurityindex.eiu.com/Index>
16. **2012 Happy Planet.** New Economics Foundation. Countries evaluated: 151. <http://www.happyplanetindex.org/>

Page 7: Statistics

Central Bank of Honduras' Balance of Payment Report: http://www.bch.hn/sector_externo.php

2013 Election Results as published by the National Election Committee: <http://siede.tse.hn/escrutinio/index.php>

Page 26: Graph 7: Levels of individual involvement

Article by Alex Hillman on Coworking Communities at <http://betterwork.co/>

Appendix:

Member profiles (2011–2013)

Institutional founding members

Name	Location	Brief profile
 <p>Secretaría de Planificación y Cooperación Externa</p>	Tegucigalpa, Honduras	The Ministry of Planning and External Cooperation was created in 2010 following the approval of a decree that also laid out the country's vision and the Nation's Plan of Honduras, absorbing the Honduran Council of Science and Technology (COHCIT). Its mission is to develop and implement the national system for development planning and the external cooperation management system to achieve the country's vision for the integral and sustainable benefit of the people of Honduras.
	Tegucigalpa, Honduras	The National Association of Industrialists was founded in 1958. It is a non-profit organisation whose goal is to represent and strengthen the industrial sector at a national level.
 <p>FUNDACION SALVADOR MONCADA PARA EL AVANCE DE LA CIENCIA</p>	Tegucigalpa, Honduras	The Salvador Moncada Foundation was founded in 1998. Its goal is to encourage increased and better scientific research in Honduras.

Individual founding members (abroad)

Name	Location	Brief profile
 <p>Salvador Moncada</p>	London, UK	Current President of Honduras Global (Honduras) and Honduras Global Europa. According to Scientist magazine, he is one of the most frequently quoted thousand researchers of all time. He has received many international awards, prizes and honorary degrees. In January 2010 he was awarded a Knighthood for Services to Science by the British Queen. He is currently a Professor of Translational Medicine and Strategic Advisor at the University of Manchester.
 <p>Oscar Castañeda</p>	Texas, USA	Current Vice-President of Honduras Global (Honduras) and President of Honduras Global USA. Dentist, specialised in dental, oral and maxillofacial surgery and prosthodontics. Graduated from the University of Texas. Works as a professor at the M.D. Anderson at Saint Luke Hospital, USA. He worked in Honduras for some time and became the president of the Honduran Dentists Association and professor at the National University of Honduras.
 <p>Juan Carlos Reina</p>	Texas, USA	First Permanent Board Member of Honduras Global (Honduras) and Secretary of Honduras Global USA. Professor of Physics and Astronomy and Director of Academic Development of Houston Community College. Honduran scientist with degrees in physics and mathematics from Austin College in Texas. Master's degree and Ph.D. in Physics from Boston University.

Name	Location	Brief profile
 José López	Mexico City, Mexico	Second Permanent Board Member of Honduras Global (Honduras). CEO of PRINGSA (Promociones e Inversiones de Guerrero SA de SV) in Mexico. Studied business administration at the University of Tennessee. He worked as a department manager at General Electric and Home Depot.
 Alejandra Sorto	Texas, USA	First Alternate Board Member of Honduras Global (Honduras). Associate Professor at Texas State University. Studied pedagogics at the Pedagogics University of Honduras. Fulbright Alumna in the USA, achieving a Master's degree in mathematics and statistics at the University of Texas in El Paso. Ph.D. in mathematics from Michigan State University in 2004.
 Ingrid Fromm-Hoenemann	Bern, Switzerland	Second Alternate Board Member of Honduras Global (Honduras) and Secretary of Honduras Global Europa. Research Associate at Bern University of Applied Sciences, School of Agricultural, Forest and Food Sciences. Graduated as an agronomist from the Pan-American Agricultural School El Zamorano of Honduras (1999).
 Pedro Marcial Cerrato Sabillón	Alzenau, Germany	Founder and General Manager of Wilinku, providing organisational and controlling consulting services, as well as commercial representation services. Worked in different controlling and commercial roles for 14 years in Nortel Networks. Master in international business studies, University of South Carolina. Bachelor's degree in business administration from the National University of Honduras. Fulbright Scholar.
 Edwin Hernandez	Florida, USA	Entrepreneur. Founder and owner of Rapid Mobile Technologies and Egla Communications. Earned a Ph.D. in computer engineering from the University of Florida in Gainesville. He has been granted several patents in the USA. Worked for Microsoft and Motorola for a few years. Bachelor of Science in electronics engineering from Costa Rica's Institute of Technology. Fulbright Scholar.
 Carlos Campos	New York, USA	Fashion Designer and Entrepreneur. Launched his namesake brand for men: Carlos Campos NYC in 2007. In 2013, he was awarded the Vanidades Icon of Style Award. In 2009, he was awarded the Fashion Group International's Rising Star for Menswear. Studied fashion design at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York.
 Stanley Marrder	Houston, USA	Treasurer of Honduras Global USA. Entrepreneur. Founder and owner of Marrder Omnimedia and Xybera, companies that produce software applications and audiovisual content, respectively. He is often called upon by executives in the oil and gas industry to develop browser based applications. His initiatives have earned him several international awards.

Name	Location	Brief profile
 Marco Cáceres	Virginia, USA	Senior Space Analyst at Teal Group Corporation for the last 24 years. He directs all special studies involving the space market. He has performed major market studies for a variety of industry clients, including Airbus Defense & Space, ATK, Boeing, General Dynamics, Lockheed Martin and NASA. He is the co-founder of Project Honduras and the Conference on Honduras, a network of individuals and NGOs supporting the development of Honduras.
Ángel Guzmán-García	Houston, USA	Retired from Honduras Global in 2013. Has worked for ExxonMobil for more than 20 years in several countries. He is a specialist in nuclear magnetic resonance and petro physics research. He earned a Ph.D. in chemical engineering from Tulane University.
 Ivette Castillo	Tegucigalpa, Honduras	Secretary of Honduras Global (Honduras). Sub-Director of the Department of Competitiveness and Innovation at SEPLAN. She held various positions in the Government for the past 15 years. She was the Coordinator of International Cooperation at the Honduran Council of Science and Technology (COHCIT).
 Eduardo Pavón	Tegucigalpa, Honduras	Former Treasurer of Honduras Global (Honduras). Current Director of the Execution Unit of the express bus system. He has held various positions in the Government over the past 20 years, including: Controlling Board Member of Hondutel, Director of Competitiveness and Innovation in SEPLAN and Transportation Director.
 Fernando García	Tegucigalpa, Honduras	Treasurer of Honduras Global (Honduras). Managing Director of ANDI (National Association of Industrialists). Master in Economic Development for Latin America from Universidad Complutense de Madrid. Bachelor in business administration from the National University of Honduras.
 Marco Tulio Medina	Tegucigalpa, Honduras	Fiscal Officer of Honduras Global (Honduras). Dean of the School of Medical Sciences at the National University of Honduras. Contact person for the Salvador Moncada Foundation. Dr. Medina is a well-known medical neurologist and epilepsy researcher. He has received many awards, has published more than 100 research papers and edited three books.
 Ian Zelaya	Bogotá, Colombia	Product Biology Herbicide Lead for Latin America at Syngenta. Ph.D. in crop production and physiology from Iowa State University. Bachelor's degree in agricultural engineering from the Pan-American Agricultural School El Zamorano. He has published several research papers related to biology and herbicides..

Name	Location	Brief profile
 Sonia Lagos-Witte	Velbert, Germany	She has been a board member of several international botanical associations for many years. She was the executive director of botanical programs in various parts of the world, including Indonesia, Costa Rica and Nicaragua. Ph.D. in agricultural sciences and Master's degree in botanical sciences from University of Bonn. She has published more than 50 scientific papers related to plants and ethnobotany.
 Rafael Galindo	Houston, USA	Professional Chef. Owner of the Red Onion Cafe in the city of Houston Texas. He is a well-known chef offering Latin and Caribbean cuisine. He is considered one of the Latin community leaders in Texas. He also financially sponsors a couple of primary schools in the area of La Ceiba, Honduras.
 Maya Selva	Paris, France	Founder and Managing Director of Flor de Selva. A fully integrated tobacco and premium cigar manufacturer and exporter. She has received several quality awards for her cigars, considered among the best in European competitions.
 Cecilia Chi-Ham	Davis, California, USA	<p>Director of Science and Technology of Public Intellectual Property Resource for Agriculture (PIPRA) at the University of California, Davis. Leader of PIPRA's Biotechnology Resources Program.</p> <p>Ph.D. in Chemistry and Biochemistry at the University of Southern Mississippi, USA. B.Sc. degree in chemistry and environmental sciences at the University of the Ozarks, USA.</p> <p>She also works as consultant for intellectual property, innovation, biotechnology and technology transfer.</p>
 Allan Discua Cruz	Lancaster, United Kingdom	Lecturer and Researcher, Institute for Entrepreneurship and Enterprise Development at Lancaster University Management School. Has published on topics such as engineering education, Christianity, industrial districts, portfolio entrepreneurship, family business groups, opportunity stages and entrepreneurial teams. Ph.D. in management (The University of Lancaster, UK), MBA from The University of New Haven (USA) and a Master's degree in manufacturing management from McGill University.
 Arturo Enamorado	Miami, USA	Operations Director for Latin America and the Caribbean for ISEAD Business School. Master in international commerce from the Instituto de Estudios Bursátiles (Spain). Bachelor's degree in business and industrial management from UNITEC in Honduras.

Name	Location	Brief profile
 Maribel Lieberman	New York, USA	Owner and General Manager of MarieBelle, a chocolate retail boutique in Soho, New York City. Her exquisite chocolates are now sold through distributors or franchises in Europe and Japan. She has an outstanding reputation and has been invited to numerous events as speaker, such as the Women in the World 2013 conference, attended by female celebrities such as Angelina Jolie, Meryl Streep, America Ferrera and Eva Longoria.
 Maria C. de Paredes	Georgia, USA	Currently a Subject Matter Expert Senior Engineer at Jacobs-TEAS, Eglin AFB, FL, providing manufacturing engineering and quality control assessments for DoD contractors. Before that she worked for Sony Electronics Corporation as Vice President of quality management for the Americas Zone and as Director of manufacturing and several other senior levels for twenty nine years. Master in chemical sciences from Emory University and in lean manufacturing from Auburn University.
 Reynaldo Martorell	Atlanta, Georgia, USA	Robert W. Woodruff Professor of International Nutrition and chair of the Hubert Department of Global Health at the Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University. Prior to joining Emory in 1993, he held positions at Cornell and Stanford Universities and the Institute of Nutrition of Central America and Panama in Guatemala. He is the author of more than 170 articles on nutrition and over 20 books. Earned a Ph.D. in biological anthropology from the University of Washington and a Bachelor's degree in anthropology from St. Louis University.
 Leda Hernandez	Tutzing, Germany	Vice-President of Honduras Global Europa. Professionally retired. Worked several years for InWEnt (Capacity Building International, Germany), an agency that became part of today's Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ). She coordinated and advised several programmes for students and professionals from developing countries in Germany. She has been a member of several associations, such as the Society for International Development (SID), Munich Chapter.
 Raul Raudales	Lowell, Massachusetts, USA	Director of Planning and Research at the Mesoamerican Development Institute (MDI). Master of Science in energy engineering from the University of Massachusetts, Lowell. He is currently working on the development and implementation of the Café Solar® Brand, an industrial solar-powered drying and processing system for coffee. Raul spent the last 20 years conducting research and field studies on the environmental and energy issues pertaining to coffee production.
 José Benjamin Falck Zepeda	Washington D.C., USA	Senior Research Fellow and Leader of the Policies Team in the Program for Biosafety Systems as part of the Environment and Production Technology Division of the International Food Policy Research Institute. Ph.D. in agricultural economy from Auburn University, Alabama, USA. He has published 25 working papers, 9 articles on agriculture and biotechnology, and 2 books. He is a Fulbright and Central American Peace Scholar.

Name	Location	Brief profile
 Lillian Moncada-Davidson	New York, USA	<p>Professor at Queens College of Foundations of Education. Ph.D. in sociology with a specialisation in education (Columbia University, New York). Founder and President of the Hilda Rothschild Foundation (HRF). Since 2011, she has been working on the set-up and supervision of pre-school development centres (ages 1–6) for families with limited resources, and trains teachers and mothers in the principles and practices of the Montessori education.</p>
 Letizia Lizardo Accinte	Brussels, Belgium	<p>Legal Counsel at Aperam. Worked earlier as Associate Lawyer for two legal firms in Belgium. Master in international law from Harvard University.</p> <p>Specialised in the areas of international commerce (World Trade Organization), environmental law and regulatory law in the area of food and drugs. Fulbright and Ford Foundation Scholar.</p>
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Name	Location	Brief profile
 Patricia Ynestroza de Cavallo	Rome, Italy	<p>Journalist at Vatican Radio since 1993 and Canal 10 correspondent since 2005 (Telenoticiero Abriendo Brecha and ABC radio, Honduras).</p> <p>Radio announcer at Radio KGLA in New Orleans, USA (1990–1993). TV reporter for Abriendo Brecha (Honduras) from 1988 till 1990. Radio announcer for several local radios in Tegucigalpa from 1984 until 1990. Promoter of emerging Latin artists in Rome.</p>

Individual friends (abroad or in Honduras)

Name	Location	Brief profile
 Carmen Mercedes Martínez Velásquez	Tegucigalpa, Honduras	<p>General Manager of Seijiro Yazawa Iwai Honduras, S.A. Master in business administration with a major in marketing.</p> <p>Procurement specialist applying World Bank, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and United Nations procedures. University professor in the area of economic sciences and international business.</p>
 Eduardo Sabillón	Miami, Florida USA	<p>Founder and Executive Director of Healthy Mind, Healthy Body International; Crisis Counsellor at Kinloch Park Middle School and Public Schools in Miami-Dade County. Psychologist (school psychology, family therapy, mental health and prevention programmes).</p>
 Evy Pineda	Brussum, Netherlands	<p>Naïve painter with a style influenced by cubism with stained-glass-like paintings. Her artwork has been exhibited in several countries and galleries since she began to dedicate her time to painting in 2010. She is a language professor and has a degree in psychology from the National University of Honduras.</p>
 Ariana Isabel Ramos	Leuven, Belgium	<p>Ph.D. student at the Katholieke Universiteit (KU) Leuven. Master's degree in economics and technology at the University of Paris-Sud, École Polytechnique; Master in electrical industry from Pontifical Comillas University of Madrid, Spain.</p> <p>Researcher on the integration of renewable energy in the electricity markets, KU Leuven and the Flemish Institute of Research and Technology.</p>
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Name	Location	Brief profile
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 Mayra Orellana-Powell	Alameda, California, USA	Marketing and Outreach Director at Royal Coffee, Inc. Owner and Founder of Catracha Coffee Co. B.S. in business administration from California State University in Sacramento with a specialisation in international business. Worked as a human resources professional for different companies for about 8 years.
 Mayra Falck Zepeda	Quito, Ecuador	Current Ambassador of Honduras in Ecuador. Former Vice-Director of International Relations of the National University of Honduras. Master's degree in Agricultural Development from Università di Napoli, Portici. Degree in economics earned at UNAH. Worked as a professor at the Pan-American Agricultural School El Zamorano for more than 11 years. She has worked on several research and consulting projects on rural development and project management.
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 José Alberto Quan Gómez	Tegucigalpa, Honduras	Professional resume writer and job seekers' advisor. Professional events and tradeshow organizer. Senior Development Officer at the Canadian Embassy. Worked as consultant for the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) for 4 years. M.S. in economics from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Intl. marketing degree from the Export Academy Baden-Wuerttemberg (Germany).
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Name	Location	Brief profile
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 Guillermo Anderson	La Ceiba, Honduras	One of Central Americas 's best known World Music artists and song writers. He infuses the rythms of the Garifuna culture with contemporary sounds and folklore of the Honduran Caribbean coast. As an artist, he has brought awareness on the protection of the environment, health and literacy. Guillermo is constantly touring Honduras and the American continent and has toured extensively in Europe and Asia (Japan, Korea and Taiwan). He holds a degree in literature with an emphasis in hispanic american literature from the University of California at Santa Cruz, USA.
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Name	Location	Brief profile
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