

HONDURAS LGBTI

Landscape Analysis
of Political, Economic
& Social Conditions



Astraea LESBIAN FOUNDATION FOR JUSTICE

**LGBT GLOBAL
DEVELOPMENT
PARTNERSHIP**



Honduras LGBTI: Landscape Analysis of Political, Economic and Social Conditions

Author: Suyapa Portillo Villeda, PhD

Researcher: Suyapa Portillo Villeda, PhD

Proofreaders: Ayana Byrd and Kenrya Rankin Naasel

Contributors: Bridget de Gersigny, Mónica Enríquez-Enríquez, Kellea Miller, Irene Schneeweis

Designer: Design Action Collective

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Cover photo: Feminist march on Honduras Day of Independence, 2009. Image courtesy of Red Lésbica Cattrachas.

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INTRODUCTION

A burgeoning Honduran social movement of lesbian, gay, bisexual, Transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people has come about amidst extraordinarily challenging conditions.¹ According to the World Bank, Honduras has the highest per capita homicide rate in the world.² LGBTI people, particularly human rights advocates, are among those most at risk of violent crime.³ Evidence suggests that threats of violence against LGBTI individuals have increased since Honduras's 2009 coup d'état.⁴

Despite these extreme conditions, LGBTI advocates continue to work for change in Honduras. Their social movement, which is relatively new compared to more established national movements in Latin America, is holding their government and their nation's people accountable for the dignity and human rights of all people.

1 The acronym LGBTI (lesbian, gay, bisexual, Transgender and intersex) broadly reflects the various identities used in Honduras that describe orientation and gender identity.

2 World Bank. (2013). *Intentional homicides per 100,000 people*. Retrieved from <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/VC.IHR.PSRC.P5>

3 Human Rights Watch. (2014). *World report 2014 (Honduras)*. Retrieved from <http://www.hrw.org/world-report/2014/country-chapters/honduras?page=1>

4 Mendoza, I. & Mass, G. (2014, January). *Informe casos judicializados por muertes violentas a personas LGBTI en Honduras 2009-2013*. Red Lésbica Catrachas.

What follows is a landscape analysis of the social, political and economic conditions for LGBTI people in Honduras. This report is developed out of research by Suyapa Portillo Villeda, PhD, and produced by Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice as part of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Global Development Partnership.⁵

This report draws on a unique combination of data and expertise from international organizations, government sources and, most critically, Honduran LGBTI organizations and activists themselves.⁶ In synthesizing diverse material and firsthand insight, it offers an overview of the country's political context and LGBTI social movement; exposes gaps in research about the LGBTI community; provides a window into what life is like for LGBTI Hondurans; and summarizes the opportunities and challenges activists face as they work to advance LGBTI rights' protections and advocate for equitable, meaningful change.

5 For more information on the **LGBT Global Development Partnership**, please refer to page 2.

6 **Methodology:** Data was collected through fieldwork by Dr. Suyapa Portillo Villeda in July and August 2013, including interviews in person, via phone and Internet, and an in-depth review of resources from Honduran LGBTI organizations, government institutions and international organizations. The researcher was also a participant-observer during Gay Pride Week in San Pedro Sula in July 2013 and at other Honduras-based events in 2006 and 2008.

COUNTRY OVERVIEW

Political and Economic Backdrop

Honduras has a political history marked by successive authoritarian governments known for their suppression of civil society.⁷ The first civilian governments came about in the 1980s, but full democratization has been a slow process. Throughout the 1980s, civil society, as well as political parties closely allied with the military, had few inroads to shape the political process.⁸ Honduras, like the rest of the region, was affected by an economic recession, violence and political tensions and uneasy peace tied to the Cold War.⁹

In the 1990s, Honduras reached negotiated peace, which over time gave way to neoliberal economic policies that established free-trade zones and *maquilas*, foreign-owned sweatshops for export processing. Many considered free-trade investment in Honduras a sign of progress, but the economy continued to falter and, while more jobs were now available, they were often poorly paid, ignored minimum wage laws, and most workers lacked—and continue to lack—basic labor protections.

More recently, Honduras has been marked by a controversial coup d'état that deposed democratically-elected President Manuel Zelaya Rosales in 2009. The political-military toppling of President Zelaya, who had been in the midst of pursuing economic and social reforms, like raising the minimum wage, deeply upset social justice activists who protested defiantly in its wake and brought widespread condemnation throughout the region.¹⁰ Interviews reveal that the coup was a significant turning point for the country, galvanizing new forms of social and political activism.

7 Salomon, L. (2012, Spring). *Honduras: A history that repeats itself*. North American Congress on Latin America.

8 Torres Rivas, E. (2010, March–April). *La embajada*. *Revista nueva sociedad* [Num. 226]. Cited in: Asociación Colectivo Violeta, Asociación Kukulcan, Asociación LGTB Arco Iris de Honduras & APUVIMEH. (2012). *Movimiento LGTB en Honduras: Trayectoria histórica y desafíos actuales* (pp. 74). Tegucigalpa, Honduras.

9 Ibid.

10 Thale, G. (2009, July 1). Behind the Honduran Coup. *Foreign Policy in Focus*. Retrieved from http://fpif.org/behind_the_honduran_coup/

COUNTRY TIMELINE

1980	Return to civilian rule for the first time since 1962.
1980s	This is the “Lost Decade,” in which violence and political and economic strife continue.
1990s	Neoliberal economic policies establish free-trade zones and <i>maquilas</i> throughout the country.
2009	Coup d'état removes President Manuel Zelaya Rosales from power. The coup galvanizes new forms of social and political activism.

Formation of the Honduran LGBTI Movement

In the late 1980s, amidst a quickening global HIV epidemic and inspired by LGBTI individuals' participation in student and other movements of the 1970s and 1980s, the first LGBTI organizing in Honduras began to take shape. Activists first focused on challenging the government to properly address the HIV epidemic and related health needs of the LGBTI community. They also worked to raise awareness and conduct their own HIV- and STD-prevention.^{11 12}

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, advocates—mostly gay men—continued to focus on HIV/AIDS. Despite significant opposition from government and religious groups, two organizations, *Comunidad Gay Sampedrana para la Salud Integral* (San Pedro Gay Community for Integral Health) and *Kukulcán*, formalized their activism by successfully filing for and receiving official non-profit status in 2004. In the early 2000s, Transgender women's advocacy became more visible, focusing on HIV prevention as well as issues of police brutality and the right to move freely and safely in the streets. Around the same time, lesbian and bisexual women's groups and collectives formed, mostly starting as organizations within non-profits led by gay men.

11 Anonymous Informant, phone conversation. (2013, July 27).

12 Broadbent, L. (Director). (1991). *Sex and the sandinistas* [Documentary]. England: Women Make Movies.

TIMELINE OF LGBTI ACTIVISM

1970s & 1980s	Political and social movements gain traction in Honduras.
LATE 1980s	LGBTI organizing in Honduras begins, focusing on the HIV/AIDS epidemic.
LATE 1990s & 2000s	Activists—mostly gay men—continue to advocate for the government to address HIV/AIDS epidemic.
2004	Two LGBTI organizations, <i>Comunidad Gay Sampedrana para la Salud Integral</i> (San Pedro Gay Community for Integral Health) and <i>Kukulcán</i> , successfully receive official non-profit status.
EARLY 2000s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transgender women's advocacy becomes more visible. • Lesbian and bisexual women's groups and collectives form.
2009	<p>Following the coup d'état:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violence against LGBTI people spikes. • LGBTI movement forms strategic coalitions to demand concrete political protections and rights. • LGBTI activists join the <i>Frente Nacional de Resistencia Popular</i> (FNRP), National Popular Resistance Front, a new diverse movement formed in response to the coup.
JUNE 2011	FNRP forms a political party, <i>Libertad y Refundación</i> (LIBRE), Liberty and Refoundation, effectively breaking the country's two-party rule.
2012	Two LGBTI political candidates, Erick Vidal Martinez and Claudia Spellman, run for Honduran Congress on the LIBRE ticket. Though not elected, their campaigns are a significant step for the LGBTI movement.

The 2009 coup suddenly—and critically—changed how the LGBTI movement operated. In post-coup Honduras, violence against LGBTI people spiked—in fact, the very first person murdered after the coup was a gay man who worked with Transgender women—and activists worried that their efforts over the previous decade were in danger of being erased.^{13 14} In reaction to the coup, LGBTI activists protested in the streets alongside many other social movements. In response to its increased vulnerability, the LGBTI movement reorganized around broader human rights issues, forming strategic coalitions with one another and working to demand more concrete political protections and rights.

LGBTI activists also joined the *Frente Nacional de Resistencia Popular* (National Popular Resistance Front or FNRP), a new movement formed by diverse sectors in response to the coup. In doing so, for the first time in Honduran history, LGBTI leaders worked in open collaboration with other social and political activists to advocate for change. In June 2011, the FNRP established a new political party known as *Libertad y Refundación* (Liberty and Refoundation or LIBRE), effectively breaking the country's tradition of two-party rule. In 2012, two LGBTI political candidates, Erick Vidal Martinez, a gay man, and Claudia Spellman, a Transgender woman, ran for Honduran Congress in the primary elections on the LIBRE ticket. They did not win, but their campaigns were a significant step forward for the LGBTI movement as a whole.

13 Grandin, G. Democracy There, Democracy Here: Honduras. (2011, February 7). *The Nation*. Retrieved from <http://www.thenation.com/blog/158345/democracy-there-democracy-here-honduras>

14 Portillo Villeda, S. (2012, November 29). 'Outing' Honduras: A Human Rights Catastrophe in the Making. North American Congress on Latin America (NACLA) Report on the Americas. Retrieved from <https://nacla.org/news/2012/11/29/outing-honduras-human-rights-catastrophe-making>

LIFE FOR LGBTI HONDURANS

To date, very little research exists on LGBTI people or activism in Honduras. The lack of data is tied to broader forms of invisibility and marginalization, including pervasive violence, persistent homophobia, HIV- and LGBTI-related stigma that permeates the workplace, families, communities and schools, including universities.

Amidst a dearth of information about LGBTI Hondurans, an intrepid LGBTI organization, *Red Lésbica Cattrachas* (Cattrachas Lesbian Network), has vigilantly catalogued and publicized incidents of violence committed against LGBTI people since 2004.¹⁵ The data they have gathered is cited throughout this study.

Violence Against LGBTI Hondurans

According to the World Bank's most recent data from 2012, Honduras has the world's highest per capita homicide rate at 90 murders per 100,000 people.¹⁶ Much of this violence is reported as gang-related, obscuring the fact that journalists, peasant activists, people who work to defend human rights and LGBTI people are especially vulnerable to attack.^{17 18} Impunity is a significant problem. For example, Human Rights Watch, a leading international research and human rights organization, documents a widespread failure to track, investigate or bring to trial violent crimes in Honduras.¹⁹

LGBTI individuals are particularly vulnerable to violence and death, though no government institution tracks cases of LGBTI homicides.²⁰ Meanwhile, human rights groups that



do track political murders and disappearances in the country, especially since the coup d'état, do not always track those of the LGBTI community.

In the absence of data that records violence against LGBTI people, the activist organization *Cattrachas* has developed a system for monitoring violent deaths of LGBTI individuals—particularly Transgender women who are often disproportionately at risk. The group issues reports every three months and distributes them nationally and internationally in an attempt to hold the government accountable for investigating these crimes.

Red Lésbica Cattrachas has demonstrated its critical expertise in capturing data about LGBTI violent deaths and using its research to hold the state accountable and to lobby for larger reforms. In addition to collecting and publicizing data to raise awareness about LGBTI murders, *Cattrachas* successfully advocated for the creation of a special victims unit in Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula to investigate violent crimes targeting LGBTI people. *Cattrachas* also shares its data to advance legal and policy wins. Their research has been used in two cases submitted to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights in December 2012 and was key to reforming Penal Code 321 in favor of LGBTI rights.²¹

15 An example of one *Cattrachas* report: Mendoza, I. & Mass, G. (2010, January 27). *Asesinatos en el marco del Golpe de Estado de la comunidad LGBTTI*.

16 World Bank. (2013). *Intentional homicides per 100,000 people*. Retrieved from <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/VC.IHR.PSRC.P5>

17 Forde, K. (2014, Spring). *Banana republic blues: Militarization and resources in Honduras*. North American Congress on Latin America. Retrieved from <https://nacla.org/news/2014/4/10/banana-republic-blues-militarization-and-resources-honduras>

18 Human Rights Watch. (2014). *World report 2014 (Honduras)*. Retrieved from <http://www.hrw.org/world-report/2014/country-chapters/honduras?page=1>

19 Ibid.

20 Penal Code 321 will ensure that the intake forms of discrimination and hate crimes claims will document LGBTTI complaints. (2013, August 6). Informant 2, interview conducted by author, San Pedro Sula.

21 Red Lésbica Cattrachas. (2013, August 4). Email communication.

According to *Catrrachas*, violent murders of LGBTI people have steadily risen since they began keeping track in 2004. But in 2009, following the coup d'état, violent murders of LGBTI people sharply increased—from five in 2008 to 26 in 2009. Between 2009 and 2013, *Catrrachas* recorded 120 violent deaths of LGBTI people based on their gender identity and sexual orientation: 56 gay men, 10 lesbians and 54 Transgender women. The assailants were prosecuted and sentenced in only nine of the 120 cases.²²

In 2011, *Catrrachas* and Human Rights Watch joined together to call strongly on the Honduran government to investigate the violent torture and murder of Trans women and bring those responsible to justice. In a span of just 60 days, six Trans women were killed in attacks that included setting victims on fire. In response to the impunity surrounding these murders, Indyra Mendoza, director of *Catrrachas*, declared, “We need legislative change and prevention programs to end discrimination in Honduras, because at the moment we are living our lives in hiding.”²³

LGBTI activists report long-standing threats and harassment, which have also increased since the coup d'état. In June 2013, the lesbian daughter of one of the leaders of the Association for a Better Life for Persons Infected and Affected by HIV/AIDS (APUVIMEH) was kidnapped and threatened while walking home from school.²⁴ On August 9, 2013, Arely Victoria Gómez, a Transgender woman and high-profile person in the LGBTI movement, was assaulted and robbed in public in Tegucigalpa.²⁵ Evidence of such targeted attacks

LAWS AGAINST LGBTI RIGHTS

2011 Law on Police and Social Affairs: Enables police raids and entrapment that have been used against LGBTI people.

2013 Constitutional amendment: Congress refuses to recognize gay marriage or union (even if legal in another country) and limits adoptions by same-sex couples.

LAWS FOR LGBTI RIGHTS

2013 Penal Code 321: Congress adds protection from discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

22 Red Lésbica Catrrachas. (2013, August 4). Email communication.

23 Human Rights Watch. (2011, January 31). *Honduras: Investigate murders of transgender women*. Retrieved from <http://www.hrw.org/en/news/2011/01/31/honduras-investigate-murders-transgender-women>

24 APUVIMEH. (2013, June 20). Email alert.

25 Agresión Física contra la Defensora de Derechos LGBTI Arely Victoria Gómez. (2013, August 15). Email communication.

“We need legislative change and prevention programs to end discrimination in Honduras, because at the moment we are living our lives in hiding.”

— Indyra Mendoza, director of *Catrrachas*

was seen as early as 2000, when one of the organizers of Honduras’s first gay pride march was persecuted until she had to flee Honduras to protect herself and her children.²⁶

This personal, targeted intimidation directly affects LGBTI organizing. In December 2013, APUVIMEH announced it would be closing its doors due to repeated death threats.²⁷

Legal Protections

Article 60 of the Honduran Constitution declares that all men are born free and equal, and that any discrimination on the grounds of sex, race, class and any other affronts to human dignity are punishable. Even so, LGBTI Hondurans are afforded very few legal protections and have only recently seen policy gains.

Two laws explicitly undermine LGBTI human rights. First, the 2001 Law on Police and Social Affairs gives the police permission to raid city streets, entrap sex workers as part of “sanitation control” and arrest anyone who “goes against modesty, proper conduct and public morals.” Honduran and international organizations have documented numerous instances in which police have used the law as a pretext for harassing and detaining Transgender women in particular.²⁸ Second, in 2013, the Honduran Congress approved a constitutional amendment refusing to recognize same-sex marriage, even if it legally occurred in another country, stipulating that the only true form of marriage was that between a man and a woman. It also eliminated the possibility of adoptions by same-sex couples.²⁹

26 Scagliotti, J. (Director). (2003). *Dangerous living: Coming out in the developing world* [Documentary]. United States: First Run Features.

27 Association for Women in Development. (2014, January 7). *Honduras: APUVIMEH closes down following death threats against its members*. Retrieved from <http://www.awid.org/Get-Involved/Urgent-Actions3/Honduras-APUVIMEH-closes-down-following-death-threats-against-its-members>

28 Human Rights Watch. (2009, May). *Not worth a penny: Human rights abuses against transgender people in Honduras*. Retrieved from http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/honduras0509web_0.pdf

29 *El Heraldo*. (2013, March 13). *Matrimonio Gay no es reconocido en Honduras*. Retrieved from <http://www.elheraldo.hn/csp/mediapool/sites/EIHeroldo/Pais/story.csp?cid=575269&sid=299&fid=214>

In 2013, LGBTI activists focused on reforming the laws, starting with Penal Code 321, which criminalized discrimination on the grounds of “sex, race, age, class, religion, political or party militancy, disability or any other that harms human dignity.” Missing was protection from discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Drawing on the data *Catrachas* rigorously collected, the organization submitted a report to the United Nations in 2010 highlighting a pattern of violent discrimination against LGBTI Hondurans.³⁰ In a matter of months, the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of the United Nations Office of the High Commission for Human Rights delivered a series of strong recommendations to the government of Honduras, including the “revision and reform of the national legislation and the adoption of a plan that attends to the promotion and protection of human rights of the [LGBTI] population.”^{31 32}

International support also played a role in getting the word out about local LGBTI struggles. LGBT collectives in the United States, Mexico, Spain, Argentina, Costa Rica, Nicaragua and other Central American countries publicized the murders and reached out to international courts, news media and other networks. In 2011, the United States Embassy in Tegucigalpa established a Special Victims Task Force as a response to several high-profile LGBT murders. To date, no convictions have been made in these cases.

The UN recommendations and openings with a number of key politicians emboldened groups like *Catrachas*, APUVIMEH and the LGBTI activist collective *Movimiento de Diversidad en Resistencia* (Movement of Diversity in Resistance or MDR), to pressure the government to initiate reform. In response, the government created a Ministry of Justice and Human Rights intended to help promote respect for human rights and create new policies and programs on behalf of vulnerable groups.³³ By 2013, Congress had changed Penal Code 321, adding protection from discrimination based on sexual

orientation and gender identity to its list.³⁴ This was a major win for LGBTI legal rights and one advocates hope to build on moving forward. Nonetheless, Penal Code 321 has yet to prove its power in the courts: As of the time of this report, it has not led to any convictions of LGBTI murders.

Organized Religion

The Catholic Church and evangelical ministries have fought against the advancement and formal recognition of Honduras’ LGBTI social movement. In 2004, when the government granted non-profit status to LGBTI organizations, pastors in the cities of San Pedro Sula and Tegucigalpa mobilized 1,500 of their followers and students from evangelical schools to chant religious hymns and protest in the streets.³⁵ Evangelical churches declared the government’s move unconstitutional, filing a lawsuit against LGBTI groups with the new status because “they violate the constitution of the republic... morality, the good traditions and the rights of children.”³⁶ They also mobilized internal government sectors to stand against two LGBTI groups, *Comunidad Gay Sampedrana para la Salud Integral* and *Kukulcán*.³⁷

Religious fundamentalists continue to threaten the few legal advances the LGBTI community has made. In 2012, Pastor Evelio Reyes from the church *Iglesia Vida Abundante* beseeched his congregation to oppose LGBTI political candidates in the primary elections. The candidates sued Pastor Evelio using Penal Code 321, and despite some media attention, the case was thrown out of court. Pastor Evelio continues to promise to do everything possible to roll back the amendments to Penal Code 321.³⁸ “I repeat,” he has said, “sexual orientation is not any human right.”³⁹

30 Red Lésbica Catrachas. (2010, January 27). *Asesinatos en el marco del golpe de estado de la comunidad LGTTBI Honduras*. Retrieved from http://www.upr-info.org/sites/default/files/document/honduras/session_9_-_november_2010/rlcredlesbicacatrachass.pdf

31 United Nations Human Rights Council Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review. (2010, November 15). *Draft report of the working group on the Universal Periodic Review: Honduras*. Retrieved from http://ap.ohchr.org/documents/alldocs.aspx?doc_id=17920

32 Mendoza, I. (n.d.). *Informe CATTRACHAS seguimiento al EPU*. Red Lésbica Catrachas.

33 U.S. Department of State. (2011, April 8). *2010 human rights report: Honduras*. Retrieved from <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/2010/wha/154510.htm>

34 Secretaría de Justicia y Derechos Humanos, Gobierno de Honduras. (2012, December). *Informe sobre la situación de los DDHH 2011-2012: Desafíos y avances 2011-2012*.

35 Asociación Colectivo Violeta, Asociación Kukulcan, Asociación LGTB Arco Iris de Honduras & APUVIMEH. (2012). *Movimiento LGTB en Honduras: Trayectoria histórica y desafíos actuales* (pp. 79-80). Tegucigalpa, Honduras.

36 La Tribuna. (2004, November 10). *Iglesias Impugnan personería jurídica de gays*.

37 Asociación Colectivo Violeta, Asociación Kukulcan, Asociación LGTB Arco Iris de Honduras & APUVIMEH. (2012). *Movimiento LGTB en Honduras: Trayectoria histórica y desafíos actuales* (pp. 81). Tegucigalpa, Honduras.

38 Mendoza, I. (2013, August 4). *Carta llamado a los aliados con Caso 321*. Red Lésbica Catrachas. Open letter via email.

39 El Herald. (2013, August 30). *Sobreseimiento definitivo para Evelio Reyes*. Retrieved from <http://www.elheraldo.hn/csp/mediapool/sites/ElHeraldo/Sucesos/story.csp?cid=623216&sid=293&fid=219>

HONDURAN LGBTI MOVEMENT

The LGBTI movement in Honduras is still in formation and wrestling with different priorities among its members. According to interviews with activists, the movement continues to be dominated by gay male-led, HIV-focused organizations based in the country's two most urban centers, Tegucigalpa, the capital, and San Pedro Sula, a large city on the northern coast of the Caribbean. Funding for LGBTI activism reflects and supports this reality: Between 2009 and 2013, eight HIV/AIDS and human rights foundations invested close to \$900,000 in Honduran LGBTI organizations, while roughly \$150,000 was invested in lesbian-led organizations and other groups that do not focus on HIV/AIDS.⁴⁰ Lesbian, bisexual and Transgender women activists report being excluded from decision-making processes and note that their organizations are not taken seriously by funders unless they are associated with a major LGBTI non-profit group.⁴¹

Even so, Honduran LGBTI activists have begun plotting a new path that links their diverse interests under a more cohesive platform. The 2009 coup brought about new coalitions of LGBTI organizations that have been working to develop and promote shared goals, including the Roundtable for the LGTTBI Community's Access to Justice and the Movement of Diversity in Resistance (MDR).⁴² ⁴³ The Roundtable,

which is made up of leading Honduran LGBTI groups, has pledged to continue working to apply international pressure on the government to investigate violent crimes against LGBTI people and strengthen the country's legal LGBTI framework.⁴⁴ MDR is led by volunteers and has sought to promote an LGBTI agenda within the broader FNRP social movement.⁴⁵

LGBTI activists—whether as individuals or organizations—are building on the opportunity to bridge their struggles with others who advocate for social justice and multiply their collective potential to ignite change.

The movement also has an increasingly visible presence, as evidenced by Honduras's gay pride marches, which launched in 2000 in San Pedro Sula. Despite significant controversy and threats toward organizers, the march continues to this day. Organizations from across Honduras travel to San Pedro Sula to participate in the event, which includes *Noche Trans* (Trans Night), when Transgender women and gay men perform with their organizations.

According to activist participants, the march demands visibility and respect for the LGBTI community and aims to raise awareness among the broader public about LGBTI people and their rights. While the march does not erase divisions within the LGBTI movement, it does facilitate cooperation among organizations and stresses the importance of coming together in solidarity to engage in collective action for change.

40 Philanthropy In/Sight: Human Rights. (Interactive Mapping Tool: Honduras Search). Retrieved from <http://humanrights.insight.foundationcenter.org>

41 Examples of lesbian groups are the *Ixchel* in *Kukulcan* and *Litos* in *Arco Iris* and the former *Mujer sin Limite* in *Comunidad Gay Sampedrana*. *Red Lésbica Cattrachas* is the only lesbian-led collective, but they work on broader LGBTI issues as well. See also a study on lesbians in Guatemala: Berger, S. (2010). *Guatemaltecas: The women's movement 1984–2003*. Austin: UT Press.

42 Resistencia Honduras. (2013, Feb 27). Public Statement by the member organizations of the Mesa de Acceso a la Justicia de la Comunidad LGTTBI. Retrieved from http://www.resistenciahonduras.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=5437:comunicado-de-las-organizaciones-miembras-de-la-mesa-de-acceso-a-la-justicia-de-la-comunidad-lgttbi-&catid=81:comunicados-de-solidaridad&Itemid=279

43 Movimiento de Diversidad en Resistencia Blog [Web log]. Retrieved from <https://www.blogger.com/profile/14221267628393758942>

44 Resistencia Honduras. (2013, Feb 27). Public Statement by the member organizations of the Mesa de Acceso a la Justicia de la Comunidad LGTTBI. Retrieved from http://www.resistenciahonduras.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=5437:comunicado-de-las-organizaciones-miembras-de-la-mesa-de-acceso-a-la-justicia-de-la-comunidad-lgttbi-&catid=81:comunicados-de-solidaridad&Itemid=279

46 Portillo Villeda, S. (2012, November 29). 'Outing' Honduras. *A Human Rights Catastrophe in the Making*. North American Congress on Latin America (NACLA) Report on the Americas. Retrieved from <https://nacla.org/news/2012/11/29/outing-honduras-human-rights-catastrophe-making>

CONCLUSION



Activists' push to reform Penal Code 321 and establish the nation's first-ever legal protections for LGBTI people was a tremendous achievement. Holding the judicial system accountable for enforcing and applying the reformed law remains a major hurdle. Likewise, activists' reports of increasing solidarity among Honduran LGBTI organizations and their partnerships with other social movements indicate promising trends. Together, these strategic advancements

suggest the LGBTI movement is building its power and potential to promote the rights and raise the visibility of LGBTI people as critical actors in Honduran social movements and society overall. Given the extreme violence they face, however, activists know that they must ensure the safety and well-being of the LGBTI community if they are to enjoy the full range of human rights protections they are due.

Recommendations for Advocates, Allies and Funders

The following recommendations are based on analysis presented in this report and reflect the needs and priorities identified by LGBTI movement actors in Honduras.

1. Ensure LGBTI people—particularly Transgender women and others who are most vulnerable to attack—have protection from violence and end impunity for violent crimes against LGBTI Hondurans.
2. Monitor the national police and the courts to ensure they respect and uphold LGBTI rights, particularly as outlined in the 2013 reform to Penal Code 321.
3. Ensure the safety and protection of LGBTI human rights defenders in Honduras.
4. Invest in research and reporting on the Honduran LGBTI movement and the specific conditions LGBTI Hondurans face, including extreme violence, discrimination and other pressing human rights concerns.
5. Raise awareness about the benefits of the reform to Penal Code 321 among the LGBTI community and provide training and support to individuals and organizations seeking to denounce and file claims of hate crimes and discrimination.
6. Fund networks and coalitions of LGBTI organizations working to advance a comprehensive and unified LGBTI human rights framework in Honduras. Invest in relationship building and collaboration among diverse LGBTI organizations in urban and rural areas, as well as with other social justice movements.
7. Promote the positive framing of LGBTI individuals and their rights in the media and support educational campaigns that advance equality and justice for LGBTI Hondurans.
8. Develop and support diverse LGBTI leadership and prioritize the concerns and activism of Trans people, lesbians and others who have been marginalized within the LGBTI movement.

SELECT ASTRAEA LGBTI PARTNER ORGANIZATION IN HONDURAS

Red Lésbica Cattrachas

www.Cattrachas.org

Contact: Cattrachas@hotmail.com

Tegucigalpa, Honduras



The Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice is the only philanthropic organization working exclusively to advance LGBTQI rights around the globe. We support hundreds of brilliant and brave grantee partners in the U.S. and internationally who challenge oppression and seed social change. We work for racial, economic, social and gender justice, because we all deserve to live our lives freely, without fear, and with profound dignity.





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116 East 16th Street, Seventh Floor, New York, NY 10003

P 212.529.8021 | F 212.982.3321

info@astraeafoundation.org

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