

Equipping Stakeholders to Prevent and Respond to Workplace Violence and Mistreatment in Honduras

The Challenge

In Honduras, more than 60,000 women working in the maquila industry face violence and workplace mistreatment. A legal framework exists to protect their rights, but cases of violence and mistreatment stay invisible due to the normalization of these behaviors, limited awareness of grievance and complaints mechanisms, insufficient knowledge and skills to prevent, identify, and address them.

In response to this challenge, PROFEM adopted a whole-of-system approach, engaging multiple actors across the labor ecosystem and strengthening each to drive change from their unique position and sphere of influence: Women workers, trade union leaders, legal professionals, human resources professionals and academic institutions. The initiative promoted a comprehensive approach centered on prevention, reporting, and response.

What Did PROFEM Do?

Between 2025 and 2026, PROFEM designed differentiated learning pathways based on the needs, knowledge, and roles of each actor.

Women Workers and Trade Union Leaders

The workshop *“Weaving Your Rights” (Hilando tus derechos)* strengthened the knowledge and skills of women maquila workers to:

- Recognize situations of discrimination, violence, and mistreatment.
- Understand their labor rights.
- Identify safe reporting pathways.
- Document evidence of abuse or mistreatment.
- Serve as peer educators, using practical materials and a WhatsApp community to share information, answer questions, and support fellow workers.

Results

93

women participated in the workshop

86%

expressed interest in sharing the information received after the workshop

100%

rated the workshop as “very good”

100%

considered the workshop content useful and necessary

Outcomes

- ✓ Months after completing the training, many participants continued applying what they had learned to recognize mistreatment and make informed workplace decisions.
- ✓ Participants led peer education efforts, supported peer workers to navigate complaints reporting options, assisted others to resolving labor issues.
- ✓ Several transformed into informal peer advocates and resources in their workplaces, sharing information and guiding others.

Lawyers and Human Resources Professionals

The workshop *“Work Environments Free from Discrimination and Mistreatment”*, implemented with support from the Honduras Bar Association (CAH) and the Technological University of Honduras (UTH), strengthened the capacities of professionals who support cases of workplace discrimination to:

- Recognize when situations are cases of discrimination, violence, and mistreatment.
- Understand key aspects of the labor inspection protocol and their implications for workplaces.
- Learn about SETRASS grievance and complaints mechanisms.
- Investigate, gather evidence, and support workers with cases of workplace violence.

Results

116

people completed the training

91%

expressed interest in sharing the information received with others in their network

94%

rated the trainers positively

82%

maintained or improved their knowledge on training topics

Outcomes

- ✓ Most participants applied the learning in their professional practice and environments, improving Case management, Legal analysis, Respectful client support applying practices to avoid re-traumatization.
- ✓ The training’s impact extended beyond those directly trained, trainees Provided labor rights compliance guidance to colleagues and employers, Better supported their discrimination and abuse cases, Replicated training content with others.
- ✓ Follow-up findings showed improvements in professional practices and skills, including demonstrating application of trauma-informed approaches, respectful interaction tactics, and use of project tools.

Workshop Participant Upon Completing the Training:

"I feel that I have stayed silent. I have not reported mistreatment when it happened."

Same Participant Four Months Later:

"We went to report a supervisor because a woman had gone to the medical center and they wanted to deduct her time. So, I went with her to report it, and they did not take what they had planned to deduct from her pay. As I told her, we must speak up because our voice matters."

Another Workshop Participant:

"I have to apply this in my work and share it with those who need it, so there will no longer be violations of rights in our workplace."

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Lawyer Participant:

"When hiring staff, many biases and stereotypes are common in my workplace. I have been able to apply the knowledge acquired in the workshop by helping train the Human Resources area."

Lawyer Participant:

"Beyond the legal outcome, I remember Ximena sending me a message thanking me and telling me that, for the first time as an employee, she felt heard, understood, and supported. She now has the tools she needs to defend herself because she knows there is a complaints reporting pathway."

A Commitment to Sustainability

PROFEM also developed a **Training of Trainers (ToT)** process in partnership with the Honduras Bar Association (CAH) and the Technological University of Honduras (UTH) to replicate the training and learning other professionals.

The methodology combined:

- Knowledge translation.
- Adult education principles.
- Practical tools for action.
- Simultaneous capacity building for workers, professionals, and institutions.
- Development of local capacities to ensure sustainability.

Results



25

people participated in the Training of Trainers program.

- ✓ Participants applied their skills by facilitating and co-facilitating new workshops, observed and coached by AIR experts.
- ✓ During co-facilitation, newly trained trainers achieved an average performance level of nearly **99%**, demonstrating strong mastery of the methodology.
- ✓ More than **90%** of those trained by ToT participants rated their knowledge as adequate or highly adequate.
- ✓ The experience successfully tested a locally driven replication model, creating the conditions for the methodology to continue being used beyond the lifespan of PROFEM.

