

## 2. A Life with Dignity

Honduran women raising voices to improve labour standards



*Maquila workers in San Pedro Sula (northern Honduras) demand respect and the protection of their labour rights*

This paper shows how CODEMUH (Colectiva de Mujeres Hondureñas), a grassroots women's collective in Honduras, mobilised a popular movement around labour rights in the country's textile factories, or *maquilas*. Focusing on occupational health, CODEMUH ran a campaign which included research, training, and advocacy workshops for the women themselves, building alliances locally, nationally, and internationally, and involving key journalists and the media. The paper explains the challenges and the strategies used to overcome them. It also outlines the lessons learned when women have greater capacity to advocate for changes in policy and practice at corporate and national levels.

## Introduction

Honduras is one of the poorest countries in Latin America, with a per capita income of \$1,260.<sup>1</sup> The country ranks 117th out of 177 countries in the United Nations Human Development Index. According to the World Bank, in 2006, over 50 per cent of the population lived in poverty, and around 21 per cent in extreme poverty, defined as less than \$1 per day.<sup>2</sup>

For all these reasons, the government desperately needs investment. And the country's *maquilas* have seemed an easy route for foreign funds. The term *maquila* describes the textile factories throughout Central America that operate as part of tariff-free export-processing zones.<sup>3</sup>

In 2006, Honduras' 156 *maquilas* represented 36 per cent of the total manufacturing industry and 6.5 per cent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP).<sup>4</sup> Although they are concentrated in a relatively small number of industrial areas, the *maquilas* of Honduras have ensured that the country has reached number five as the world supplier of clothing products, and number one in the Central America and Caribbean region. The factories employ around 130,000 people.<sup>5</sup>

The growth of the *maquila* sector has been nurtured by public policies and special regimes that allow foreign and national investors to create and operate tax-free industrial zones on advantageous terms of trade. In efforts to attract foreign investment over the past three decades,<sup>6</sup> a number of laws have been approved to reduce costs, flexibilise labour, and maximise profits for investors.

## The vulnerability of *maquila* workers

The positive government story of profits and competitiveness is a long way from the experience of most of the *maquila* workers.<sup>7</sup> The factories may have created jobs, but labour conditions are poor, workers are generally underpaid, and their rights are frequently violated. The average salary is \$83 a month.<sup>8</sup> Many *maquilas* pay by task. This means that although a certain quota may be set in terms of how much should be achieved in eight hours, it could in fact take ten hours to meet this quota, so workers end up receiving eight hours' pay for ten hours' work. A typical quota is to iron 1,200 shirts, standing, in a nine-hour day.<sup>9</sup>

More than half the *maquila* employees are rural women and 70 per cent are between the ages of 18 and 25.<sup>10</sup> Applicants for employment are screened carefully. They are normally aged between 18 and 34. The younger the better, as they are less likely to complain. Even 14-year-olds are accepted if they say they are 16. Proof that the woman is not pregnant is demanded, and pregnancy is often a reason for firing

women. As one writer notes: 'Some *maquilas* in Honduras, according to Charles Kernaghan, director of the New York-based National Labor Committee, periodically give shots of the contraceptive Depro Provera, saying it is for tetanus.'<sup>11</sup>

A significant proportion of the women working in *maquilas* are single mothers and the sole breadwinner in the family. They are generally forced to leave before they turn 35.<sup>12</sup> Because they are likely to have had less formal education than men, there are few opportunities, when they are 'retired', to move into management or other areas in the factory. Instead, they have to look for domestic work or enrol in the informal economy to survive. As a consequence, thousands of workers end up living in extreme poverty in industrial areas with no services and without enough income to find a way out.<sup>13</sup>

To compound these problems of vulnerability, Honduras is also a very violent country – there are more than 3,000 violent deaths a year.<sup>14</sup> Since 2002, more than 900 women have been killed, targeted specifically because they are women – these killings are sometimes known as 'femicides'.<sup>15</sup> According to ASEPROLA,<sup>16</sup> a non-government organisation (NGO) that works for labour rights in Central America, there seems to be a link between the increasing rates of femicides and the concentration of *maquila* factories in large urban cities. This connection is due to a combination of factors such as weak state protection of citizens, impunity, lack of arms control and regulation, inequality, poverty, and precarious living conditions that characterise the areas where large populations of vulnerable young women live.

#### **Impact on women's health<sup>17</sup>**

A recent study conducted by a medical specialist team, including doctors from Honduras and Mexico, provides evidence of health implications for women working in the *maquilas*. Based on a sample of 450 cases, including 270 women and 180 men, up to 75 per cent of women working in *maquilas* show symptoms of fatigue caused mainly by extensive working hours – up to 12 hours or more on a daily basis. Sixty-seven per cent of women need medical attention on a regular basis to deal with respiratory diseases, allergic reactions, and musculoskeletal disease. In the survey:

92.4 per cent showed musculoskeletal disease

67.9 per cent had evidence of increased body mass index (BMI) leading to obesity and overweight

49 per cent had respiratory diseases (sinusitis, asthma, etc.)

24.5 per cent had problems of poor circulation including risk of deep-vein thrombosis

Many showed signs of stress, fatigue, and insomnia

The current Honduran Labour Code acknowledges only 44 work-related illnesses. Labour rights defence organisations are proposing to reform the Labour Code to improve its standards and to include another 241 illnesses that have been recognised as work-related.<sup>18</sup>

To compete for contracts, factories try to offer high productivity and low production costs. To achieve this, working hours are extended, quotas are subcontracted to smaller factories or individuals, health and safety conditions are reduced, and labour benefits such as health care, overtime payment, meal and resting time, etc. are dramatically reduced or simply disappear through unfair contracting terms and conditions. Mostly, unions are not allowed. Only 7 per cent of the economically active population is affiliated with trade unions, down from an estimated 15 per cent in the 1960s.<sup>19</sup>

Those who dare to defend workers' rights are quickly fired or forced to quit. It is widely known they will end up on a blacklist shared with other factories to keep them from getting contracted within the sector again.<sup>20</sup> 'The employers don't want unions. When they realised we had created a union, they fired us. Our names are now written on blacklists', says Rita, a former *maquila* worker.<sup>21</sup>

All this despite the fact that Honduras has ratified key conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO), committing itself to uphold three core labour standards – the prohibition of child and forced labour, the right to free association and collective bargaining, and freedom from discrimination. But ratifying an ILO convention and fully enforcing it in a proactive manner are worlds apart: violations of core labour standards can be seen in nearly every country in the world, including the most developed nations.

In 2004, Labour Minister German Leitzelar admitted that in Honduras there was a gap between legislation and reality: 'We find that the legislation is not sufficient to be able to talk about the application of these labour standards', and 'decisions in the economic arena are almost exclusively taken totally divorced from national social policy'.<sup>22</sup>

Because the government promotes employment policies based on cheap labour, labour-rights legal frameworks have been reformed in alignment with private-sector interests to reduce production costs and increase productivity. This means that much less public attention is paid to working conditions and little support is given to internationally recognised labour rights such as freedom of association and health and safety protocols. Public institutions usually responsible for the protection of workers' rights have been weakened because their resources have been cut and their functions and responsibilities restructured. Honduras not only lacks proper national frameworks to ensure fair and decent labour practices, but also fails to promote the effective eradication of gender discrimination in the workplace.

In addition, the government is pushing through reforms that would allow factories to hire up to 30 per cent of their workers on temporary contracts. If passed, *maquila* employers could save \$90m over three

years – but for the workers, it would mean no job security, paid leave, or social security.<sup>23</sup>

There are few sanctions when things go wrong: the 2007 report of the Inter-American Human Rights Commission on the state of labour rights in the *maquila* sector in Central America noted that there are few resources and possibilities for monitoring the sector. For example, if workers denounce violations and demand inspections there is no legally binding period of time in which action must be taken. This means either that inspections never take place, or the company is given time to fix the issue – and possibly fire those who demanded the inspection in the first place. In addition, when they do arrive, public inspectors don't interview workers. Conclusions and recommendations tend to be based on information provided by the employers and factory reports and files. Even if they were to find fault, the highest fine that a factory in Honduras would have to pay is \$260. In the end, paying a fine is cheaper for the company than changing their practice.

**'I was fired because I was injured'**

'My task was to lift boxes filled with harnesses, to pack and seal them. I would pick them up from the floor up to the table to complete the packing, that is how I hurt my back from doing drastic movements for 12 hours every day, bending myself and lifting boxes all day in a repetitive way', explains Meredith, a *maquila* worker who was fired because of health conditions.

'During the nine months I worked in the factory, the pain kept increasing and the doctor [factories have in-house clinics] applied injections every day but I was not allowed to go to a hospital because he [the doctor] had been instructed to give sick leave permission only to women who had haemorrhages, miscarriages, or things like that'.

Meredith was finally fired, and now she is going for medical treatment at the social security hospital, she has been diagnosed with herniated discs and other associated problems. She is currently waiting for surgery. This is just one of many examples in which corporations and the state fail to protect basic labour rights.

Oxfam Honduras team

## Women organising

Colectiva de Mujeres Hondureñas (CODEMUH – 'Collective of Honduran Women') began as a feminist grassroots movement in the urban area of Choloma in the late 1980s. It was created by a group of women who wanted to bring about changes in Honduran society regarding women's rights and gender equality. Over the years, CODEMUH prioritised women's rights in the areas of labour, sexual and reproductive health, and gender violence. CODEMUH is made up of a network of *maquila* workers and other women who have direct experience of the unfair conditions and disadvantages of working in the factories.

CODEMUH has an executive board and a technical and administrative structure. Twenty-three women work full-time, many of whom have been *maquila* workers in the past, and there is also a network of 1,000 female volunteers and activists organised into 32 neighbourhood groups that include *maquila* workers, students, and so on.

CODEMUH helps to organise working women, strengthening their self-esteem and confidence. It provides counselling and support on an individual and collective basis, and holds workshops and training sessions in neighbourhoods and even inside the *maquilas*. On the advocacy side, it researches, writes, and publishes information and supports women whose rights have been violated by taking their claims either to the *maquila* responsible, or to court.

Advocacy, as a tool, has been used by CODEMUH since 2000, but it was not until 2003, when the organisation started to realise its potential, that it decided to use it in a more systematic, planned, and organised way. In 2004 an internal training programme was implemented which aimed to enhance the skills of women members who had shown potential in leading lobby activities, dealing with the press, or negotiating with *maquila* owners or public authorities.

With Oxfam support and training, and with the Institute for Social Research and Advocacy (an Oxfam partner NGO) taking CODEMUH through the process, an 'Advocacy School' was implemented over nine months. It combined workshops and fieldwork to apply tools and knowledge on lobbying and advocacy work. It worked with 25 women, mainly from CODEMUH's technical and directorial teams, to build their skills and also to generate institutional debate about CODEMUH's vision and agenda for the future. Volunteers and activists who were working in the *maquilas* participated in other workshops, mainly at the weekends, or during the night when they were not working. Although CODEMUH has been able to get attention and support to carry out some workshops on violence against women and sexual and reproductive rights, *maquila* owners would never allow employees to get training on labour rights.

#### **Developing skills to empower other women**

Nicole, a former *maquila* worker, started to get involved with CODEMUH in 2003 when a community facilitator came to her neighbourhood to form a women's group and offer workshops on gender, self-esteem, and labour rights. Today, Nicole works full-time at CODEMUH as a trainer.

'I can see the changes in women as they are trained, as they share experiences and learn new things', she says. 'As women we are not very good at speaking, or at least we have not had practice, and this is one of the strongest changes that I have seen. I don't expect women to be able to address a big audience or talk in public, but they do now speak out in places where they feel secure, when they can trust people, or when they feel they have to get something off their chests'.<sup>24</sup>

## Putting theory into practice: a campaign on occupational health

Two of the outcomes of this training process were the development of a three-year advocacy strategy, and the organisation of an advocacy team formed by seven women to shape and implement CODEMUH's campaign on occupational health.

The campaign aimed to raise awareness and influence *maquila* owners, public institutions, the media, and society in general about women's working conditions and respect for human and labour rights. CODEMUH wanted working women to see themselves as key agents of social and economic development. It also aimed to enhance their capacity to air their views and demand respect for their rights, particularly regarding health and safety conditions in the factories.

The campaign was launched in 2004. It involved four phases. In the first phase, CODEMUH developed research to provide evidence of health and safety-related risks at work and to support the advocacy agenda. In the second phase, the results of these studies were presented to the public and a two-fold lobbying strategy was delivered, targeting decision-makers in the government and the private sector and developing a more solid relationship with key journalists from local and national media. At this point the campaign had gained support from at least five civil-society organisations, including labour unions and some faith-based groups. Together they formed the Alianza para la Protección Laboral ('Alliance for Labour Rights Protection'). The campaign was also linked to a labour rights regional campaign bringing together women workers' organisations from five Central American countries to focus on working and health conditions inside *maquila* factories,<sup>25</sup> and to the Global 'Make Trade Fair' Campaign on Women's Labour Rights. It helped provide further support and backing for these campaigns, attracting global attention to labour issues and putting international pressure on governments, transnational companies, and national *maquila* owners.

### Going public and media coverage

On 1 May, Labour Day, unions in Latin America traditionally march through the streets of major cities. CODEMUH felt that it was time to take part in this public demonstration, and decided to join the march. CODEMUH also decided to give a speech to send out a message not only to *maquila* owners but also to society as a whole about working conditions inside *maquilas* and the impact on women's rights, particularly on occupational health. In May 2006, for the first time ever in San Pedro Sula in north Honduras, a women's organisation marched alongside labour unions. This attracted a lot of attention from the media and society. Historically, the march had been dominated by male trade unionists. CODEMUH's group turned out to be the largest and best-organised representation. The women's speech at the closing event was agreed to be one of the clearest, most focused, and most inspiring, and received extensive national media coverage.<sup>26</sup>

CODEMUH continued to participate in public demonstrations in 2007 and 2008, denouncing abuses and presenting proposals to change labour policies and practices. The way national media is approaching these issues is changing, and now people have access to more objective analysis of labour and health issues related to working conditions inside the *maquilas*. Conducting quality research has helped to back up CODEMUH's proposals. Below are some examples of how national media is now approaching the issue:

'The research revealed that 58 per cent of interviewed female workers are not included in the social security scheme; this reflects that within the *maquila* sector the application of our labour legislation is deficient.'

*La Tribuna* Newspaper, January 2007<sup>27</sup>

'The proposal demands an increase in indemnity amounts for work-related accidents and an increase in sanctions on entrepreneurs that fail to comply with national labour laws and international agreements.'

*La Prensa* Newspaper, March 2008<sup>28</sup>

'*Maquila* managers took advantage of the Independence holiday to shut down the factory [for good]...without complying with the labour rights duties to the employees. 250 employees have been affected by this; most of them are women.' [i.e. they lost their jobs and did not get severance pay].

*Tiempo Digital* News, September 2006<sup>29</sup>

In the third phase, key campaign messages were disseminated by means of radio spots and newspapers. There were educational and mobilisation activities at community level with women working in *maquilas*. Thirty-four new community groups were given the skills to communicate their messages and participate in the different activities. Workshops continued to be held with wider audiences to share the findings of the research and raise awareness about human and labour rights in the garment sector. In the last phase, media coverage was monitored to assess to what extent the approach of the media had changed and what key stakeholders were saying about women's labour rights in the apparel industry.

## Reaction and counter-reaction: pro-*maquila* messages

By looking at the media coverage and monitoring people's participation in radio programmes, televised debates, and workshops, it was obvious that the campaign had increased public attention to occupational health issues in the *maquilas*. As general opinion and the mass media started to shift in favour of CODEMUH's campaign, the Alliance for Labour Rights Protection also gathered support, and more civil-society organisations started to exert pressure on the government and on private companies.

The private sector counter-reacted with a media campaign of its own. Their campaign emphasised the economic contributions of the *maquilas* to the country's economy through exports and employment.

For a few weeks every radio spot for CODEMUH was followed by a *pro-maquila* message. The media continued to cover CODEMUH's activities and proposals, so the private-sector campaign put pressure on journalists to stop covering CODEMUH's events and/or producing any information related to the campaign objectives.<sup>30</sup>

Even though media coverage on campaign activities was reduced as a result of this pressure, the Alliance for Labour Rights Protection was able to influence the Honduran Congress. It demanded that the Secretary of State for Labour start reviewing the Honduran Labour Code, particularly a chapter on occupational health and safety.

## Shifting power relations: what has been achieved

Opening up space and pressuring authorities to review the occupational health and safety chapter in the Labour Code has been a big step, even though it is taking time and there are new barriers and continuing strong opposition from powerful political and economical elites in Honduras.

Other outcomes of the campaign are perceived to be equally important for working women in Honduras. CODEMUH has carried out surveys<sup>31</sup> and reflection sessions with women workers and allies to explore to what extent the campaign has helped to influence collective ideas and beliefs regarding labour rights. These found that:

- The Ministry of Labour started to implement some health and safety monitoring visits, although factory owners are still warned before they take place, and these visits are not systematic. This showed that denunciation of abuses and the claiming of rights by women and pressure groups like CODEMUH and its allies can lead to government and corporate action. Monitoring visits are a proxy indicator that the Honduran government and the private sector are recognising health and safety issues.
- Labour law reforms have been taken all the way to Congress, but are still waiting for approval, which could take many months.
- Some factories are improving some of the working conditions on safety and occupational health, although this is not systematic. Once again, pressure from civil society and workers has resulted in positive actions at various levels. Stronger law enforcement will be needed to achieve greater impact.
- Occupational health and safety issues have entered the public domain. Individuals, particularly women workers, have become more aware of the problems, the implications, and their own rights.
- There is greater recognition of CODEMUH's and other women's organisations' legitimacy to represent working women's rights.

Formerly, government officials and even labour unions would not recognise the voice of CODEMUH as representative, but after the campaign, CODEMUH has become an active and respected stakeholder in the labour-rights debate.

- Working women say that the attitudes and practices of inspectors, judges, and lawyers are slowly changing. More attention is being given to labour-rights violations as well as to following them up in order to resolve them.
- CODEMUH has increased the number and type of alliances with both public- and private-sector stakeholders working on health and justice issues at national and regional level.

The overall achievement is that the terms of the debate and power relations have been changed. The campaign has also led women to recognise when their rights are being infringed: 'If five years ago a *maquila* worker had been asked about labour conditions she would have replied the conditions were very good; they [*maquila* workers] were not aware of the responsibilities of *maquila* owners and investors regarding working conditions – now more of them know those responsibilities and their rights', said Maria Luisa Regalado, CODEMUH's co-ordinator.<sup>32</sup>

Changing policy is slow, because it is highly political and corporate interests are affected. These are the challenges for advocacy work when state institutions are weak. Many of the positive outcomes of the work concern changes in the ideas and beliefs of various stakeholders, from working women who now know more about their rights and are willing to say when they are being violated, to public officials who are more responsive to women's demands, as well as government and the private sector who recognise organisations such as CODEMUH as valid and legitimate groups that give voice to women in defence of their rights.

## Recommendations

Drawing lessons from CODEMUH's experience in developing capacity to lead advocacy and campaigning actions, some key recommendations can be made:

- Advocacy work on women rights, either at local or national level, will eventually lead to interaction with male-dominated structures in government, the private sector, or the media. Therefore, any advocacy-training programme for women's organisations needs to be aware that building women's confidence and leadership skills and ensuring that their voices are heard is as important as developing technical skills and knowledge. This can often be done by also building the capacity of local-level groups.

- Advocacy and campaigning work needs to work at many levels to keep pressure on targets coming from different points; organisations working in developing advocacy capacities can increase their effectiveness if they look at individual skills and potential capacities to complement each other and achieve a mix of strengths within the group. For example, women may not want to speak in public, but could be very persuasive as lobbyists.
- Analysis of context, power, and media coverage should be undertaken regularly to measure to what extent advocacy and campaign strategies are effective and to what extent changes are taking place.
- Advocacy on women's rights needs to incorporate strategies to influence ideas and beliefs. Mass media can play an effective role in changing the way society understands women's issues.
- Media attention to issues tends to be brief, so it is very important to understand who sets the daily information priorities and how, as well as what a journalist needs in terms of content, contacts, and time to produce a press or radio piece.
- Advocacy for women's rights needs to integrate not only women's voices and stories from within the movement, but also from other sectors in society. Mobilising other women to air their views, even if they were not *maquila* workers, proved to be a very powerful way to influence public opinion.
- Alliance building from local to international level can be necessary and is very effective, but it is hard and complex work. Understanding the added value of an alliance is very important in order to judge its effectiveness and relevance. It is also important to understand when these alliances are not working, and to have strategies planned for disengagement, to reduce risks.
- Strong and sound research carried out by qualified researchers and institutions is very important to back proposals but also to build an effective relationship with key allies, particularly with journalists and other media stakeholders.
- Besides building technical capacities, international NGOs can play a very significant role in building links with civil society, governments, and private-sector stakeholders inside and outside the country.
- Women's-rights advocacy work can be a long-term process. Funding organisations need to be prepared to support and accompany them beyond the project itself.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> US Department of State (2008) 'Background note: Honduras', [www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/1922.htm](http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/1922.htm) (last accessed September 2008).
- <sup>2</sup> The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (2006) 'Countries and regions – Partner countries – Honduras – Cooperation', [www.bmz.de/en/countries/partnercountries/honduras/zusammenarbeit.html](http://www.bmz.de/en/countries/partnercountries/honduras/zusammenarbeit.html) (last accessed September 2008).
- <sup>3</sup> A *maquiladora* was originally a miller who charged a *maquila*, or 'miller's portion' for processing other people's grain.
- <sup>4</sup> Central Bank of Honduras (2007) 'Actividad Maquiladora en Honduras Año 2006 y Expectativas para el Año 2007', Tegucigalpa, p. 7, [www.bch.hn/download/maquila/actividad\\_maquiladora\\_2006\\_exp2007.pdf](http://www.bch.hn/download/maquila/actividad_maquiladora_2006_exp2007.pdf) (last accessed October 2008).
- <sup>5</sup> War on Want (n.d.) 'Factory closures place thousands of livelihoods at risk', London, [www.waronwant.org/Factory%20Closures%20Place%20Thousands%20of%20Livelihoods%20at%20Risk+10644.twl](http://www.waronwant.org/Factory%20Closures%20Place%20Thousands%20of%20Livelihoods%20at%20Risk+10644.twl) (last accessed September 2008).
- <sup>6</sup> Four legal reforms and special decrees have paved the way to *maquilas* to enjoy fiscal exemptions: Free-trade Zones (ZOLI) in 1976, Temporary Imports Regime (RIT) in 1984, Industrial Processing Zone (ZIP) in 1987, US– Dominican Republic and Central American Free Trade Agreement (US–DRCAFTA) in 2005. From International Labor Organization (ILO) and CODEMUH's reports.
- <sup>7</sup> On 18 July 2007, CODEMUH presented a report on 'Women's Working Conditions in the Maquila Industry' to the Inter American Human Rights Commission in Washington DC. The report presentation was followed by a Petition to the Commission to follow up on the Honduran government violations to national and international labour rights frameworks and conventions. See CODEMUH (2007) 'Report to the Inter American Human Rights Commission on Women's Working Conditions in the Maquila Industry', [www.codemuh.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=21&Itemid=2](http://www.codemuh.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=21&Itemid=2) (last accessed September 2008).
- <sup>8</sup> G. MacEoin (1999) 'Maquila neoslavery, under conditions from bad to inhuman', *National Catholic Reporter*, [www.natcath.com/NCR\\_Online/archives/081399/081399i.htm](http://www.natcath.com/NCR_Online/archives/081399/081399i.htm) (last accessed September 2008).
- <sup>9</sup> G. MacEoin (1999), *op.cit.*
- <sup>10</sup> Honduras Association of Manufacturers (2007) 'Employment Generation Report', [www.ahm-honduras.com/html/datos/Empleosagosto2007.pdf](http://www.ahm-honduras.com/html/datos/Empleosagosto2007.pdf) (last accessed September 2008).
- <sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>12</sup> CODEMUH (2007), *op.cit.*
- <sup>13</sup> M.A. Martinez (2003) 'Labor Laws in Honduras', Tegucigalpa: Oxfam International.

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- <sup>14</sup> *La Tribuna* (2008) 'Honduras, el país más violento de América Latina', [www.latribuna.hn/news/45/ARTICLE/28916/2008-03-03.html](http://www.latribuna.hn/news/45/ARTICLE/28916/2008-03-03.html) (last accessed September 2008); RCT (2008) 'President takes action against the world's highest homicide rate', press release from the Rehabilitation and Research Center for Torture Victims, [www.rct.dk/Link\\_menu/News/2008/Murder\\_rate\\_Honduras.aspx](http://www.rct.dk/Link_menu/News/2008/Murder_rate_Honduras.aspx) (last accessed September 2008).
- <sup>15</sup> Proceso Digital (2008) 'Demandan esclarecer femicidios y respetar derechos de mujeres en Honduras', 8 March, [www.proceso.hn/2008/03/08/Nacionales/Demandan.esclarecer.femicidios/4530.html](http://www.proceso.hn/2008/03/08/Nacionales/Demandan.esclarecer.femicidios/4530.html) (last accessed September 2008).
- <sup>16</sup> ASEPROLA (2007) 'Impunidad y explotación laboral alientan el femicidio', press release, [www.aseprola.org/leer.php/82](http://www.aseprola.org/leer.php/82) (last accessed September 2008).
- <sup>17</sup> Alianza por la Protección Laboral (2007) 'Situación de los derechos laborales y el acceso a la justicia de los hombres y mujeres que trabajan en la maquila', [www.codemuh.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=22&Itemid=2](http://www.codemuh.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=22&Itemid=2) (last accessed September 2008).
- <sup>18</sup> See also W. Macdonald (2008) 'Work-related musculoskeletal disorders in a globalising world', Collaborating Centre Connection, [www.cdc.gov/niosh/CCC/CCCnewsV1N5.html#d](http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/CCC/CCCnewsV1N5.html#d) (last accessed September 2008).
- <sup>19</sup> National Research Council and C. Rigby (2004) *Monitoring International Labor Standards: International Perspectives – Summary of Regional Forums*, Washington DC: National Academies Press.
- <sup>20</sup> Centro de Derechos de Mujeres (2007) 'Violación de las garantías constitucionales de libertad de petición y asociación: represión y listas negras en las empresas maquiladoras de Honduras', San Pedro Sula, [www.derechosdelamujer.org/html/PUBLICACIONES/lista%20negra.pdf](http://www.derechosdelamujer.org/html/PUBLICACIONES/lista%20negra.pdf) (last accessed September 2008).
- <sup>21</sup> Make Trade Fair (n.d.) 'Honduras: Campaign for Labour Protection', [www.maketradefair.com/en/index.php?file=06022004160816.htm](http://www.maketradefair.com/en/index.php?file=06022004160816.htm) (last accessed September 2008).
- <sup>22</sup> National Research Council and C. Rigby (2004), *op.cit.*, p. 21.
- <sup>23</sup> Make Trade Fair (n.d.), *op.cit.*
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Oxfam House  
John Smith Drive  
Cowley  
Oxford  
OX4 2JY

Tel: +44.(0)1865.473727  
E-mail: [enquiries@oxfam.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@oxfam.org.uk)  
[www.oxfam.org.uk](http://www.oxfam.org.uk)