



**case study in Honduras**

# **DIPLOMAS TO DRIVE GENDER EQUALITY**



**Infrastructure  
Transparency  
Initiative**

# KEY FACTS

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50

women qualifying for  
diplomas

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Core CoST features of  
multi-stakeholder working  
and social accountability  
utilised



Research projects  
focused on women and  
environment,  
participation, economic  
growth and  
empowerment and more



Gender inequality in infrastructure exists worldwide - women only occupy 9% of senior roles, 13% of mid-level roles, and 22% of junior roles in infrastructure. In Honduras, the gender employment gap between women and men increased in 2021 to 33.7%. There were also few places for women to discuss, learn and propose solutions to sustainable infrastructure issues in Honduras.

To advance gender equality, CoST Honduras worked with the National Autonomous University of Honduras (UNAH) to create a joint online diploma in sustainable infrastructure for women and other marginalised groups. The contexts of gender inequality worldwide in infrastructure and in Honduras further highlight the importance and need for specific support and focus on women in infrastructure.



## A COMPREHENSIVE CURRICULUM

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50 women from a range of backgrounds, including lawyers; engineers; civil society leaders; members of trustees and water committees, as well as members of Citizen Transparency Commissions completed this diploma. The course had a broad curriculum to address the different backgrounds and needs ran from September 2021 to March 2022.

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**“ The strong voice and dedication of women participating in the course was clear from the start. The participants enjoyed an opportunity to enhance their own leadership. ”**

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The diploma was focused on three main goals:

1. Giving participants an in-depth understanding of the core CoST features of disclosure, assurance and social accountability, with an emphasis given to the role played by women.
  2. Supporting research on gender and infrastructure
  3. Creating a community of women working in sustainable infrastructure to continue driving gender equality in Honduras after the course.
- The diploma responded directly to the need to increase participation of women in infrastructure, and ensure that women's voices are heard as projects are designed and implemented.

The programme encouraged an exchange of experiences, the enrichment of knowledge, promoting critical debate around the impact of sustainable infrastructure and the role of women in this eco-



system. Participants learned about tools developed, such as Sisocs and Infras.

CoST's Head of Members and Affiliates, Evelyn Hernandez took part in the course and also started the course with an introduction to participants. Reflecting on the impact of the university programme, Evelyn said "It was really wonderful to be in a room filled with women and people from indigenous communities. The strong voice and dedication of women participating in the course was clear from the start, with them asking the vital questions about infrastructure and gender. The participants enjoyed an opportunity to enhance their own leadership and I'm sure that learning about the CoST features, and their own research projects will continue to gender equality in infrastructure in Honduras and beyond."



## THE DIFFERENCE MADE

Whilst diploma participants learned about all four CoST features, multi-stakeholder working and social accountability played crucial roles in the delivery and success of this university training.

CoST Honduras had substantive experience to be able to develop this course, having trained over 600 people across government, journalism, engineering, architecture and communications via the CoST Honduras Social Accountability School. In the CoST Honduras Social Accountability School, the participation of women (all members of citizen transparency commissions, local community level) had been fundamental, both in their participation and in their commitment.



The National Autonomous University of Honduras played an important role in facilitating the online platform used to teach the course, and issued the certificates. CoST Honduras and UNAH had previously worked together to train people to drive engagement and participation in infrastructure. The CoST Honduras Multi Stakeholder Group members provided vital insight for the development of the course's curriculum.

The university programme also supported the CoST feature of social accountability by educating and promoting participation of women in the infrastructure cycle, supporting them to be better placed to hold decision-makers to account.