

crucial to ensure the protection of the victims' interests during the judicial process. In addition, despite high-levels of violent killings of women in the country (299 violent deaths in 2022), there is a lack of integral legislation on violence against women, intrafamily violence, homicides, domestic violence and rape that allows an effective prosecution, judgement and sanction of femicides and other forms of violence against women and girls such as trafficking, violence against women and girls in places of detention, in educational and work centres, in public spaces, violence in courtship, violence against women and girls in contexts with a high presence of gangs; however, quantitative information on this is limited.

Congress is still pending to approve the law on the functioning of shelters for victims of gender-based violence presented in 2018. Finally, reforms made in 2020 and 2021 to the criminal code represented a major backward step for the investigation of organised crime, money laundering and drug trafficking. Some of these reforms were abrogated recently, however there are still other decrees that need to be abrogated, in view of the installation of an International Commission against Impunity (CICIH for its acronym in Spanish) in the country.

In this framework, the Executive power also has an important role to play in promoting access to justice through a policy or a national plan. The Ministry of Governance and Justice (*Secretaría de Gobernación, Justicia y Descentralización*), is **yet to adopt a National Plan** for improving the coordination from the local to the national level on extrajudicial conflict resolution mechanisms, the promotion of the application of alternative methods of justice, the improvement of information of victims on their rights within the formal justice system and the improvement of the coordination with civil society organisations that work on access to justice in particular of women, indigenous people, LGTBIQ persons, human rights defenders among others. Historically, there has been a **lack of coordination of main stakeholders** at the national and local level that are relevant to address obstacles on access to justice for the population. To date, the Ministry of Governance and Justice and Supreme Court of Justice have had limited communication and coordination of key actions. There is also a lack of a mutual understanding on main needs of different sectors of the population, in the different regions in the country, to adopt inter-institutional policies and strategic actions to tackle structural causes of violence.

It remains critical to work closely with the judiciary, especially with the **Constitutional Chamber of the Supreme Court of Justice**. This Chamber is responsible for upholding and interpreting the constitution, ensuring that laws and policies align with constitutional principles, it reviews laws, executive actions, and judicial decisions to determine their constitutionality, including issues that disproportionately affect access to justice, such as discriminatory practices, violations of due process, or unequal treatment. This Chamber has the responsibility to resolve *amparos* (legal protection proceedings), actions of unconstitutionality, habeas corpus requests, among other functions, that are key to ensure legality and human rights protection. It sets precedent-setting or landmark decisions that can facilitate access to justice and promote the protection of rights of persons in situation of vulnerability. Finally, its work can also enhance court processes, promoting transparency, addressing inefficiencies and strengthening the independence and integrity of the judiciary. However, this Chamber has suffered from unjustified delays in resolving legal remedies and has demonstrated a lack of knowledge of international human rights standards when arguing its resolutions. In addition to the Constitutional Chamber, the Action will also work closely with the **Criminal, Civil and Administrative Chambers of the Supreme Court of Justice**, who also are in need of improving the application of international obligations on human rights issues, in their resolutions. The strengthening of their technical knowledge as well as of their independence will contribute to fight against impunity.

3. Insufficient capacity of civil society and the most vulnerable sectors to make use of the legal system

Persons in situation of vulnerability face numerous obstacles to access justice on a basis of equality, linked to a structural context of discrimination and inequality, including discriminatory laws, procedural and evidentiary requirements and practices and gender stereotyping. This is compounded by the limited quality legal aid, advice, and representation available to such persons, in addition to the absence of complementary services, such as psycho-social support. In 2021, Honduras ranked 126th out of 139 countries on the World Justice Project Rule of Law Index in 2021 which measures how the rule of law is experienced and perceived.