

REMOVAL

Volume 1, Number 3, September 1 - December 31, 2025



10 *e* Años

ACEVAL
Academia Nacional de
Evaluadores de México

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

Dr. Alcides Fernando Gussi

Universidad Federal de Ceará
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5510-5286>

Dr. André-Noël Roth Deubel

Departamento de Ciencia Política
Universidad Nacional de Colombia
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8056-2035>

Dr. Asela Kalugampitiya

Asociación de Evaluación de Sri Lanka.
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1364-9207>

MC. Carlos Eduardo Flota Estrada, Maestría

Presidente del Consejo de Administración (Presidencia del Consejo)
Instituto de Administración Pública de Tabasco:
Villahermosa, Tabasco, MX
<https://orcid.org/0009-0007-8018-8021>

Dra. Claudia Vanessa Maldonado Trujillo

UAM-X
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0773-5993>

Dr. Esteban Tapella

Director del Programa de Estudios del Trabajo, el Ambiente
y la Sociedad (PETAS).
Universidad Nacional San Juan, Argentina.
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3835-4205>

Dra. Gabriela Pérez Yarahuán

Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas (CIDE)
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8359-9538>

Dr. Guillermo Miguel Cejudo Ramírez

Departamento de Administración Pública.
Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas (CIDE)
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7865-2557>

Dra. Karla Marlene Ortega Sánchez

Consejo de Investigación y Evaluación de la Política Social del Edomex.
Universidad de Guadalajara. , Secretaria Ejecutiva. CIEPS.
Profesora Investigadora, Universidad de Guadalajara.
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1915-2541>

Dr. Manuel Canto Chac

UIAM-X
<https://orcid.org/0009-0006-6418-2669>

Dra. María Bustelo Ruesta

Facultad de Ciencias Políticas y Sociología Departamento
de Ciencia Política y de la Administración.
Universidad Complutense de Madrid,
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7054-9889>

Dr. María Celeste Ghiano

Universidad Católica de Córdoba
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4432-6956>

Dra. Maritza Concha, Doctorado

Escuela de Administración Pública
Universidad de Florida Central
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4131-4906>

Dra Myriam Cardozo Brum.

UAM-X.
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5790-6749>

Dr. Pablo Rodriguez Bilella

Investigador del CONICET -Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones
Científicas y Técnicas
Universidad Nacional de San Juan, Argentina.
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3118-6376>

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Dr. Oscar Luis Figueroa Rodríguez

Editor en Jefe

Colegio de Postgraduados, Campus Montecillo

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4922-6321>

Dr. Carlos Ricardo Aguilar Astorga

UAM-L

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3760-8338>

Dra. María Cecilia Liotti

Directora de Evaluación

Liotti Consultores

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3899-1861>

Dr. Juan Felipe Núñez Espinoza

Colegio de Postgraduados, Campus Montecillo

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9234-0261>

Dra. Talina Merit Olvera Mejía

Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Hidalgo

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2951-8570>

Dra. Macarena Orozco Martínez

Universidad de Guanajuato

<https://orcid.org/0009-0008-2328-5164>

Dr. Christian Soledad Ortiz Chacha

Instituto de Salud Pública

Universidad Veracruzana

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2996-0617>

MC. Janett Salvador Martínez

Directora de Evaluación

C-Evalúa

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7824-6121>

Dra. Gerda Warnholtz-Brito

Instituto Nacional de los Pueblos Indígenas (INPI)

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6070-2264>

The opinions expressed in this document are the sole responsibility of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Academy of Evaluators of Mexico (ACEVAL), its editorial team or its scientific committee.

Volume 1, Number 3, September-December, 2025. REMEVAL is a quarterly publication edited by the National Academy of Evaluators of Mexico (ACEVAL). www.aceval.org Editor-in-Chief: Oscar Luis Figueroa Rodríguez. Copyright Registration No: 04-2025-022612111700-203 ISSN: in progress, both granted by the National Copyright Institute. Last modified: December 31, 2025.

Main contact

Oscar Luis Figueroa Rodríguez
C.P. 56246 Juarez 66, Santa María Nativitas
Texcoco, de Mora
contacto@remeval.org

Support contact

(595) 952 3034
contacto@remeval.org

Photograph: M.C. José Luis Cruz Flores

REMEVAL

EVALUACIÓN DEL ACCESO A LA JUSTICIA PARA MUJERES RURALES EN TEXCOCO, DESDE UNA PERSPECTIVA FEMINISTA

222

EVALUATION OF ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR RURAL WOMEN IN TEXCOCO, FROM A FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE

Claudia Lizbeth Juarez-Reyes

CAPACITACIÓN EN HUERTOS FAMILIARES Y SEGURIDAD ALIMENTARIA: EVALUACIÓN DE UNA INTERVENCIÓN EDUCATIVA EN UNA CASA HOGAR

242

TRAINING IN FAMILY GARDENS AND FOOD SECURITY: EVALUATION OF AN EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTION IN A CHILDREN'S HOME

Carlos Alberto Cortés-Rodríguez, Gladys Martínez-Gómez,
Gamaliel López-López, Aurelio Bastida-Tapia, Ma. de Lourdes Aguilera-Peña, Herón Verónica-Hernández

EVALUACIÓN DE IMPACTO DEL "MES TRECE" DEL PROGRAMA JÓVENES CONSTRUYENDO EL FUTURO

263

IMPACT EVALUATION OF THE "THIRTEENTH MONTH" OF THE YOUTH BUILDING THE FUTURE PROGRAM

Rodolfo Jacinto Ruiz

EVALUACIÓN MULTISITUADA PARA REVALORAR LA VIDA CON, DE Y DESDE LAS REDES Y COMUNIDADES ORIGINARIAS

283

EVALUATION OF PUBLIC POLICIES IN MEXICO: AN ANALYSIS OF THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF EVALUATION

Carolina Irene Márquez Méndez

**CAPITAL SOCIAL Y COOPERACIÓN RURAL EN COMUNIDADES DE
APRENDIZAJE CAMPESINO DEL PROGRAMA SEMBRANDO VIDA: UNA
EVALUACIÓN SOCIAL EN TLAXCALA**

301

**SOCIAL CAPITAL AND RURAL COOPERATION IN PEASANT LEARNING
COMMUNITIES OF THE SEMBRANDO VIDA PROGRAM: A SOCIAL
EVALUATION IN TLAXCALA**

Deniss Scarlet Morales Arellano, Aurelio León-Merino,
Oscar Figueroa-Rodríguez, Emmanuel Montero Monsalvo,
Mayra Patricia Pérez Román

EVALUATION OF ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR RURAL WOMEN IN TEXCOCO, FROM A FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE

Claudia Lizbeth Juarez-Reyes

Estudiante de doctorado en el Colegio de Postgraduados, Campus Montecillo

*Author for correspondence: lizjuarez2503@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This article presents a qualitative evaluation of the institutional performance of the Regional Prosecutor's Office of Texcoco, State of Mexico, regarding access to justice for rural women victims of violence. The research stemmed from the recognition that, despite legal advances in human rights and gender equality in Mexico, a gap persists between the legal framework and its implementation, limiting the exercise of rights for rural women victims of violence. The study seeks to highlight how structural inequalities of gender, territory, and class translate into discriminatory, ineffective, or exclusionary institutional practices. From a feminist and intersectional perspective, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 17 key informants (legal experts, public defenders, lawyers, legal advisors, police officers, women members of feminist collectives, and women victims of violence). The evaluation criteria used were: accessibility, effectiveness, equity, relevance, and application of a gender perspective. The results show low levels of effectiveness, practices of revictimization, systematic impunity, and a lack of relevant protocols, making it impossible to speak of an effective or equitable justice system. Despite some achievements, such as the presence of public defenders and the partial implementation of protocols, access to justice remains limited for rural women victims of violence. The evaluation identified critical areas for institutional improvement, including the creation of monitoring systems, the development of indicators, and the incorporation of participatory evaluations.

Keywords: Gender, Institutional violence , Participatory evaluation , Intersectionality , Revictimization.

INTRODUCTION

In Mexico, gender-based violence is one of the most persistent, widespread, and complex structural problems. Despite the legal recognition of women's human rights and the establishment of multiple institutional mechanisms for their

Citation: Juarez Reyes, C.L. 2025. Evaluation of access to justice for rural women in Texcoco, from a feminist perspective. *REMEVAL* 1(3): 222-241 <https://doi.org/10.63121/t09hev53>

Received:
November 28, 2025
Accepted:
December 19, 2025
Published:
December 29, 2025

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial 4.0 International license.



protection, the levels of femicide, disappearances, and impunity continue to reveal the State's ineffectiveness in guaranteeing the right to access justice. This situation is exacerbated when combined with other conditions of vulnerability, such as rurality, poverty, or belonging to ethnic groups. Within this context, rural women face specific structural barriers that place them in a position of double or multiple discrimination, both because of their gender and because of their place of origin or residence (IACHR, 2007; Lagarde, 1998).

The State of Mexico has become one of the epicenters of this crisis. In 2022 and 2023, it led the nation in femicides, disappearances of women, and domestic violence (INEGI, 2021; Publimetro, 2023; Ruido en la Red, 2022). Despite the issuance of two Gender Violence Alerts in the state (2015 and 2019), access to justice remains limited, and the institutions responsible for guaranteeing it have been accused of revictimizing women, acting with gender bias, or committing serious omissions (OCNF, 2023). In this context, the regional prosecutor's office in Texcoco was considered a representative case study for examining the contradictions between the legal framework, institutional policies, and daily practices in the administration of justice.

From a critical, feminist, and intersectional perspective, this evaluation argues that access to justice cannot be understood solely as the formal compliance with legal procedures, but rather as a process that must be effective, equitable, and sensitive to the conditions of structural inequality faced by rural women (Ferrer & Bosch, 2019; UN Women, 2021). Institutional evaluation means examining the fulfillment of the justice system's substantive functions: How accessible is the reporting process truly for a rural woman who is a victim of violence? What structural factors limit the progress of cases? Is there genuine reparation for the harm suffered? Is a gender perspective applied in judgments? These questions guide this work.

This article is framed within a qualitative institutional evaluation approach, focusing on the performance of the Texcoco Regional Prosecutor's Office in handling cases of violence against rural women, based on the principles of effectiveness, equity, accessibility, relevance, and a gender perspective. Unlike diagnostic or exploratory studies, this research seeks to assess the extent to which national and international regulatory commitments are being met, and how institutional and sociocultural conditions affect the realization of the right to justice.

Therefore, the central objective of this evaluation was to generate empirical and analytical evidence on the quality of the institutional response to gender-based violence in the rural context of Texcoco, State of Mexico. Through the analysis of testimonies, practices, and omissions, the study seeks to identify the achievements of the Public Prosecutor's Office in terms of access to justice, as well as the persistent challenges that limit the full realization of the human rights of rural women.

REFERENCE AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Access to justice for women, and particularly for rural women, is a complex field of study and action that encompasses legal, social, cultural, and institutional dimensions. This section develops the main concepts and frameworks that underpin the evaluation of the institutional performance of the Texcoco Regional Prosecutor's Office in providing services to rural women victims of violence. Five key areas are addressed: 1) the right to access justice from a gender perspective; 2) national and international legal and institutional frameworks; 3) institutional evaluation focused on equity; 4) structural and institutional violence against rural women; and 5) the intersectional approach as an analytical and critical lens.

The right to access justice is recognized in numerous national and international instruments as a fundamental human right. It implies not only the formal possibility of accessing judicial bodies, but also the existence of real conditions to do so without discrimination, with a guarantee of redress, and with a timely, impartial, and effective response (IACHR, 2007; UN Women, 2019). In contexts of gender-based violence, access to justice must also include the application of a gender perspective, understood as the consideration of the structural contexts of inequality in which the events occur, as well as the differentiated effects of norms and procedures on women and men (Ferrer & Bosch, 2019).

As the Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation (SCJN, 2013) has pointed out, gender-sensitive justice seeks to correct the historical and structural biases of the legal system, combating discriminatory stereotypes, guaranteeing conditions of equality, and promoting a judicial culture sensitive to difference. This vision is particularly relevant in the case of rural women, who, due to their geographic location, poverty, lower levels of education, and exclusion from public services, face greater obstacles in exercising this right (Lagarde, 1998).

In Mexico, women's right to a life free from violence is recognized in the General Law on Women's Access to a Life Free from Violence (LGAMVLV), the Political Constitution of the United Mexican States, and numerous international treaties ratified by the State. These include the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence against Women (Belém do Pará Convention), and the jurisprudence of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.

The "Judging with a Gender Perspective" Protocol, issued by the Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation (SCJN) in 2013, is an operational tool for judges to integrate a gender perspective into their judicial decisions. This protocol was

designed in response to international commitments undertaken by the Mexican State and has been used as a normative framework in several landmark cases, such as that of Mariana Lima Buendía (OCNF, 2023).

At the state level, the State of Mexico has developed a series of specific laws, such as the Law on Equality between Women and Men of the State of Mexico and the Law on Women's Access to a Life Free of Violence of the State of Mexico. However, the existence of these legal frameworks does not in itself guarantee their effective implementation. The gap between law and practice remains one of the major challenges in evaluating the justice system.

Based on the foregoing, the evaluative approach adopted in this work is grounded in the principles of equity-oriented evaluation (House & Howe, 1999; Scriven, 2007), which recognizes that public policies, programs, and institutions should be evaluated not only for their technical effectiveness but also for their capacity to reduce structural inequalities and promote social justice. In contexts of intersectional inequality, such as that faced by rural women, the evaluation must actively examine the State's capacity to guarantee fair, effective, and non-discriminatory access to justice services.

Based on the above, the following dimensions were proposed: accessibility, referring to the actual ease of accessing judicial bodies; relevance, addressing the cultural, territorial, and linguistic suitability of services; effectiveness, observing the capacity to resolve cases and guarantee reparation for damages; equity, identifying differentiated and fair treatment for people in vulnerable situations; and, as a dimension encompassing the previous ones, the incorporation of a gender perspective, identifying the active application, or lack thereof, of protocols and standards that consider historical inequalities. This involved analyzing not only laws and procedures, but also the concrete practices of judicial personnel (public prosecutors, judges, legal advisors, police officers, forensic experts from the judiciary, and lawyers) and the experiences of women interacting with the system. In this sense, the intersectoral analysis allows for the identification of elements present, or absent, in the justice system.

The concept of structural violence refers to those forms of systematic violence that stem from the very organization of society and that prevent certain social groups from fully exercising their rights (Galtung, 1990; Farmer, 2004). In the case of rural women, this violence manifests itself in the lack of access to health, education, justice, and employment services, as well as in the stereotypes that place them as second-class citizens within the state apparatus (Lagarde, 1998; IACHR, 2007). Added to this is institutional violence, understood as the set of practices and omissions by public institutions that violate human rights, especially when

individuals do not receive a timely, impartial, and fair response in legal processes (Vázquez, 2014).

Finally, this theoretical framework was based on the intersectional approach proposed by Crenshaw (1991), which allows us to understand how multiple systems of oppression (gender, class, ethnicity, place of residence, among others) interrelate to produce particular conditions of exclusion. In the case of rural women victims of violence, their experience in the justice system cannot be understood solely from the perspective of their gender, but also from that of their territorial location, their limited access to information, their lack of knowledge of the law, and their economic dependence. This approach sought to shift the analysis from the “individual case” to a structural and collective understanding of exclusion, paving the way for policies and evaluations that are more sensitive to the real living conditions of historically marginalized groups. In this sense, the present research evaluated the institutional performance of the Texcoco Prosecutor's Office by integrating these multiple dimensions to avoid reproducing a formalistic, punitive justice model that is blind to inequality.

METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN

The research was framed within a qualitative evaluation of institutional performance that, unlike diagnostic or exploratory studies, sought not only to describe situations but also to incorporate a critical assessment of the degree to which an institution fulfills its public purposes in relation to a set of predefined criteria (House & Howe, 1999; Scriven, 2007). In this case, the object of evaluation is the capacity of the Texcoco regional prosecutor's office to guarantee access to justice for rural women, in accordance with national and international legal frameworks.

The study, from a feminist and intersectional perspective, sought to understand how structures of gender, class, rurality, and power intersect in judicial processes (Crenshaw, 1991; Ferrer & Bosch, 2019). Furthermore, drawing on the tenets of critical theory (Schwartz & Jacobs, 2006), it identified power relations, institutional exclusions, and voices that have historically been silenced within justice systems.

For this purpose, the main techniques used were in-depth interviews and semi-structured interviews, directed at key informants linked to the justice system of the municipality of Texcoco and to regional feminist activism, a total of 17 people were interviewed (11 women and 6 men), classified as 3 agents of the Public Ministry, 2 public defenders, 1 legal advisor, 1 judge, 2 lawyers, 1 graduate in expert testimony, 1 graduate in expert testimony, 2 women victims of violence, 2 police

officers and 2 women members of feminist collectives.

These key informants allowed us to capture the multiple dimensions of institutional interaction, as well as the differential effects of judicial practices on the lives of rural women. Based on the equity-oriented evaluation approach (House & Howe, 1999), the criteria and indicators for evaluating institutional performance, shown in Table 1, were established and guided this analysis.

Table 1. Criteria and indicators used to evaluate the institutional performance of the regional prosecutor's office of Texcoco.

Evaluation criteria	Observable indicators	Source of information	Data type
Accessibility	Physical presence of services in rural areas, waiting times, availability to handle complaints.	Testimonies of rural women, judicial officials.	Narrative, testimonial.
Effectiveness	Number of complaints that reach resolution, average process time, perception of results.	Internal reports, interviews with MPs, lawyers, judges.	Documentary and qualitative.
Equity	Differences in treatment between rural and urban women, existence of discrimination or institutional violence.	Interviews with victims, collectives, and judicial personnel.	Narrative, experiential.
Relevance	Cultural and social adaptation of the service to rural conditions (language, times, formats).	User testimonials, indirect observation.	Narrative, contextual.
Gender perspective	Application of gender protocols, staff sensitivity, use of the "Judging with a Gender Perspective" protocol.	Statements from judges, public prosecutors, human rights defenders, and collectives.	Testimonial and normative.

Source: Own elaboration adapted from House and Howe (1999).

These criteria were analyzed as interrelated elements that shape the institutional capacity to guarantee effective, equitable, and non-discriminatory justice.

The data analysis was developed at three levels: 1) thematic coding: emerging categories associated with the evaluative criteria were identified from the interview transcripts. These categories included: barriers to access, revictimizing practices, gender stereotypes, impunity, restorative practices, among others; 2) critical-interpretive analysis: the analysis was guided by the logic of critical qualitative interpretation, which seeks to understand the meanings attributed by social actors to their experiences and relate them to broader institutional and sociopolitical structures (Álvarez-Gayou, 2003; Ferrer & Bosch, 2019); and 3) triangulation: information from different sources (interviews with victims, judicial personnel, collectives) was triangulated and the data were compared with normative frameworks and official statistics (OCNF, 2023; INEGI, 2021), which allowed for the identification of discrepancies between institutional discourse and judicial practice.

Throughout the research process, the ethical principles of anonymity, confidentiality, and informed consent were respected, principles that were especially

important given the vulnerable nature of the participants. To this end, fictitious names were used, and any information that could put the individuals involved at risk was avoided.

RESULTS

The study involved fieldwork to identify progress and obstacles in the process of reporting, filing lawsuits, investigating, sanctioning, and providing reparations in cases of gender-based violence in Texcoco. The spaces for conducting in-depth interviews were arranged according to available time and in compliance with the protocols established by the relevant authorities (the Texcoco courthouse, the public prosecutor's litigation unit at the Texcoco prison, and the Texcoco regional prosecutor's office). Based on the information gathered, a series of institutional practices were systematized. While these practices demonstrate significant progress, such as the existence of protocols and trained personnel, they also reveal serious limitations, as outlined below.

Evaluation of institutional achievements

The evaluation of the institutional performance of the Texcoco regional prosecutor's office identified a series of concrete advances that reflect efforts, albeit still insufficient, to guarantee the right of access to justice for rural women from a gender perspective. While these achievements do not compensate for the numerous existing structural barriers, they constitute a starting point for continuous improvement processes and represent the consolidation of years of feminist struggles for the recognition of women's rights (Table 2).

Table 2. Institutional achievements identified in the regional prosecutor's office of Texcoco (2023 evaluation).

Dimension	Identified achievement	Empirical evidence
Access to legal defense	Presence of public defenders with a gender focus	2 interviews with women defenders + testimonies from women
Justice with a gender perspective	Insufficient use of the Protocol for Judging with a Gender Perspective	Judge's statements and document review
Immediate protection measures	Application of restraining orders within the first 24 hours after a complaint	Testimonies from the Public Prosecutor's agents and victims
Information dissemination	Creation of an infographic on complaint processes and rights	Product derived from a thesis (Juarez , 2023)
Interinstitutional coordination	Referral to state institutions (CJM, IMEM, CODHEM) for comprehensive care	Declarations of legal personnel

Source: Prepared by the author using field research data.

The three most outstanding achievements identified in the Texcoco Regional Prosecutor's Office are: First, the Texcoco Regional Prosecutor's Office has a staff of Public Prosecutors and legal advisors. At the Texcoco Courthouse, there are Public Defenders and forensic experts, all of whom have specialized training in human rights and gender perspective. This reflects state efforts to comply with the commitments stemming from the General Law on Women's Access to a Life Free of Violence (LGAMVLV, 2007) and the Protocol for Judging with a Gender Perspective (SCJN, 2013). These professionals not only provide free legal advice and technical defense, but also act as sensitive companions, taking into account the particular circumstances of rural women, their precarious situation, their experiences of systematic violence, and the lack of knowledge many have of the legal system. The following comments from the interviewees are noteworthy in this regard:

“[...] To provide the respective advice [...], to tell them what their rights and obligations are, and what obligations we have as public servants in order to provide them with comprehensive support” (Licensed Public Prosecutor, Marisol, Texcoco, 2023).

“The service we provide is completely free, it is paid for by the State” (Public Defender of the Judicial Branch, Johana, Texcoco, 2023).

“[...] We receive training at the National Human Rights Commission (CNDH), we are constantly in courses, (...) in complete diploma programs, (...) the Judicial Branch provides us with training on the topics, on evidence, from psychometrics, from the protocols we use, (...) there are always discussion tables and analysis tables” (Clara, a graduate in expert testimony from the Judicial Branch, Texcoco, 2023).

The second documented institutional achievement is the partial use of the Protocol for Judging with a Gender Perspective, issued by the Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation (2013). The document indicates that, in some cases, female judges in the Texcoco judicial district have begun to incorporate elements of the protocol when evaluating evidence and issuing sentences, recognizing the structural inequality faced by women victims and their rural context. Although this practice is neither systematic nor uniform, it represents an important step toward transformative justice, where laws are not only applied neutrally, but also with consideration for the power relations that permeate the case (Ferrer & Bosch, 2019).

The third is the implementation of immediate protection measures, in which a greater willingness was also observed on the part of some public prosecutors to issue protection measures immediately after a report of violence, such as restraining orders or referrals to shelters and psychological services. This contrasts with practices from previous years in which reports were postponed or minimized. In this regard, it was noted:

“In this case, what we have requested is... a measure to remove the perpetrator of violence from the home. We do this through family law, before a criminal judge, even limiting visits to a certain distance or preventing the perpetrator from approaching the victims, or from going to the victim's workplace or other places they frequent. This is what has worked best for us.” (Private lawyer, Oscar, Texcoco, 2023).

However, while these achievements are significant in normative and symbolic terms, their scope remains limited and often depends on the personal will of legal professionals rather than on a systematic institutional policy. Furthermore, their impact is diminished by structural inequalities, such as the low educational attainment of victims, the lack of interpreters in Indigenous communities, and the patriarchal resistance of some institutional figures.

In general, the identified achievements can be organized according to the interview findings, as shown in Figure 1. This diagram groups and interrelates the actions taken by the Texcoco Regional Prosecutor's Office to assist women victims of violence. The first category corresponds to the complaints and lawsuits initiated, which include sensitive support. The second concerns immediate prevention measures, limited to the terms under which the complaint and lawsuit are filed, or when a restraining order or the removal of the perpetrator from the home is requested as a precautionary measure. The third category involves the application of protocols, which do not always integrate the first two, although in theory they should. The diagram indicates the presence of one category with a delay or absence of the other, or combinations of omission and/or delay. A recurring issue is the inability to determine the specific progress of the actions taken or their impact.

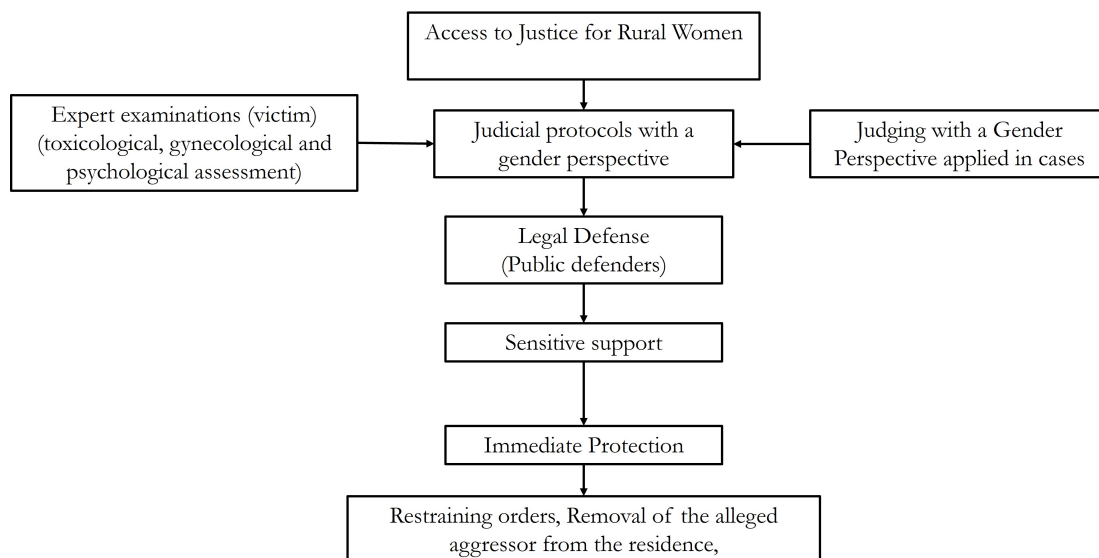


Figure 1. Achievements in access to justice in the regional prosecutor's office of Texcoco.

In this regard, it is noted that gender-sensitive justice is not limited to the application of protocols, but rather implies a profound cultural and institutional transformation that challenges traditional power hierarchies (Ferrer & Bosch, 2019). Therefore, the progress documented in Texcoco must be consolidated as institutionalized practices, not as exceptional acts.

Identified structural barriers

As noted above, despite some regulatory advances and the partial implementation of gender-sensitive protocols, rural women continue to face serious structural obstacles when trying to access justice. These obstacles are not incidental or solely attributable to individual factors, but rather stem from deeply rooted institutional and cultural patterns that constitute forms of structural and institutional violence (Farmer, 2004; Galtung, 1990). Table 3 presents the main barriers identified in the research and highlights the regulations they violate, based on the findings from fieldwork.

Table 3. Structural barriers to access to justice for rural women in Texcoco.

Type of barrier	Description	Empirical evidence	Rules violated
Institutional patriarchy	Discriminatory treatment, delegitimization of testimonies, cultural stereotypes	Testimonies from victims and feminist collectives	LGAMVLV (2007), CEDAW (1979)
Revictimization	Moral judgments, unnecessary exposure, institutional mistreatment	Interviews with women and officials	NOM-046, SCJN Protocol (2013)
Impunity	Unresolved cases, lack of judicialization	Statements from the Public Prosecutor and lawyers	Right to effective judicial protection
Misinformation and abandonment	Lack of clear information, absence of interpreters, institutional neglect	Testimonies of rural women	General Law on Victims (2013), right to information

Source: Prepared by the author using data from the systematization of field information.

The types of obstacles identified in the administration of justice at the Texcoco regional prosecutor's office begin with Institutional Patriarchy. This concept refers to the perpetuation of gender stereotypes, discrimination, and inequality within the justice system itself. The investigation documented numerous cases in which rural women were discredited or dismissed by judicial and ministerial personnel. Regarding this, one interviewee stated:

“The lawyer from DIF told me not to even go to the Public Prosecutor's Office because they weren't going to pay attention to me because I wasn't raped, bloody, beaten, or with any sign of violence” (Testimony of female victim, Luisa, Texcoco, 2023).

This type of discourse relates to what Lagarde (1998) conceptualizes as “cultural captivities”: gender mandates that position rural women as subordinate, dependent, and without legitimacy to act in the public sphere. Institutional personnel, operating under these logics, reproduce a system in which justice becomes a privilege rather than a right.

This is followed by revictimization, which is one of the main factors discouraging women from continuing legal proceedings. The research reveals that many of them suffer questioning, moral judgment, procedural omissions, and unnecessary exposure of their personal histories. Revictimizing practices were identified both in the taking of statements and in medical and psychological care. In this regard, one rural woman interviewed stated:

“Yes, there were difficulties because, they assigned me a lawyer and they changed her about twice, then they would summon me and I would go and the lawyer wasn't there and I had to go back again, so that made the process longer and there were times when I had to go down for my file, review it, make copies and all the movement, she was the only one who explained to me how the case was progressing” (Woman victim, Aitana, Texcoco, 2023).

This directly contravenes the provisions of national protocols, such as the Official Mexican Standard NOM-046-SSA2-2005, which requires unbiased care, as well as the Protocol of action for those who administer justice in cases involving the rights of people in vulnerable situations (SCJN, 2013).

Impunity, fueled by misinformation and neglect, emerges as one of the most structural barriers. The archive reports that a large proportion of complaints filed by rural women in Texcoco are neither prosecuted nor resolved, remaining as “open cases” indefinitely. Regarding this, a public prosecutor stated:

“[...] Sometimes what happens in family courts is that we cannot hold hearings within the deadline, because of the large number of cases we have, and sometimes that means that if it is five days, we will not hold it and it will be in ten, fifteen or twenty days, because of the entire workload” (Judge of the Judicial Power, Itzel, Texcoco, 2023).

The lack of follow-up and weak institutional commitment to punishing aggressors reinforce the structural distrust towards the justice system, especially among women most vulnerable due to their rural or impoverished condition.

Legal misinformation about judicial processes was identified as another significant barrier. Many rural women are unaware of their rights, their options when filing a complaint, or how to interpret legal procedures. This information gap is exacerbated by the lack of trained community outreach staff and the absence of interpreters or accessible materials in rural or highly marginalized areas. In this regard, one of the interviewees stated:

“[...] I did receive advice. But it was very bad, because ultimately we as people do not have the knowledge of everything that the law implies, so the lawyers use too much technicality and try to explain it to us in their own way” (Woman victim, Luisa, Texcoco, 2023).

While infographics and legal guides exist, many are not designed for audiences with low literacy levels, nor do they consider specific cultural contexts. This severely limits the effective exercise of the right to access justice. The information gathered in the interviews shows that forms of victimization can be a single occurrence resulting in judicial exclusion, or a combination of several, as illustrated in Figure 2 .

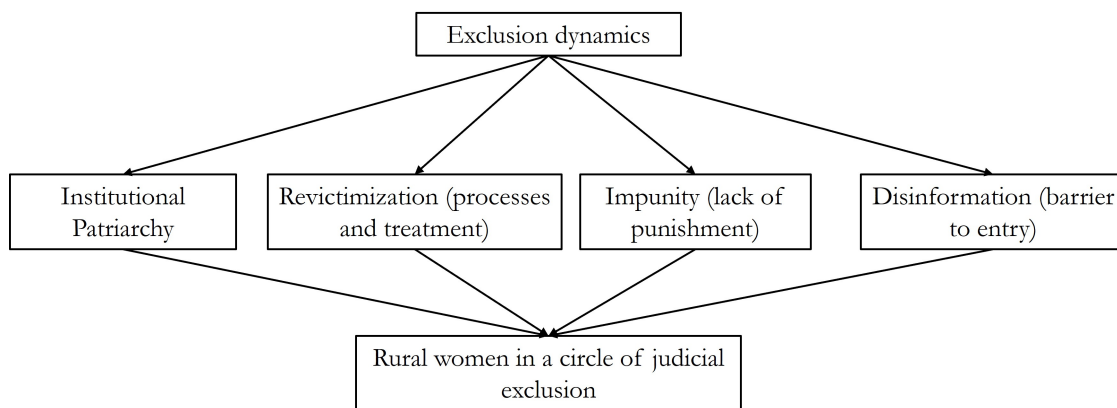


Figure 2. Dynamics of exclusion in access to justice for rural women .

In this sense, the results allow us to affirm that the Texcoco Regional Prosecutor 's Office operates within an institutional environment that reproduces discriminatory practices, even in the presence of progressive legal frameworks. The gap between law and practice is not circumstantial, but structural. As Farmer (2004) points out, institutional violence is masked as bureaucratic neutrality, but its effects are lethal in terms of human rights. The lack of sanctions, the abandonment of complainants, and the perpetuation of stigmas consolidate a cycle of judicial exclusion that undermines the transformative capacity of the rule of law. Evaluating these barriers from an intersectional perspective not only reveals their depth, but also the critical points from which action can be taken.

“[...] One of the biggest challenges is that the women victims then don't want to report it, that even after explaining to them the consequences, that we have to go to a public prosecutor to present this aggressor, they no longer want to report it, they regret it, because they have been living together for some time, because he is the one who contributes to the household, either to avoid conflict with the rest of the family and that is why they don't want to report it (...) you can't force them and it depends on many economic conditions, beliefs, etc.) (Citizen Security Police, Aldo, Mexico City, 2023).

Gap between the regulatory framework and its implementation

One of the central findings of this evaluation is the profound gap between the current legal framework and its actual application in the processes of access to justice for rural women in Texcoco. This discrepancy, identified both in interviews with judicial actors and in the testimonies of women and human rights defenders, demonstrates that the presence of laws, protocols, and institutional mechanisms does not guarantee their effective implementation or their translation into practices that transform the structural conditions of inequality and violence (Table 4).

Table 4. Comparison between regulatory achievements and their implementation in Texcoco.

Regulatory instrument	Legal/institutional obligation	Evidence of lag
LGAMVLV (2007)	Guarantee comprehensive access to justice with a gender perspective	Denial of comprehensive care, fragmented care
SCJN Protocol (2013)	Application of a gender perspective in the interpretation of evidence and judgments	Judges and prosecutors are unaware of the protocol or only partially apply it.
Gender Violence Alerts (2015, 2019)	Extraordinary measures to prevent and punish femicide and disappearance	Lack of compliance indicators at the local level
CEDAW, Belém do Pará	Guarantee the right to a life free from violence and to justice without discrimination	Rural women face discrimination, revictimization, and a lack of interpreters.
General Law on Victims (2013)	It guarantees the right to clear information, advice, and redress for damages.	Women sign documents without understanding them, and receive no guidance or support.

Source: Prepared by the author using data from the systematization of field information.

Mexico has a robust legal framework for women's human rights, having ratified international instruments such as:

- The CEDAW (1979)
- The Belém do Pará Convention (1994)
- The General Law on Women's Access to a Life Free of Violence (LGAMVLV) (2007)

At the state level, the State of Mexico has enacted the Law on Women's Access to a Life Free of Violence in the State of Mexico, in addition to having issued two Gender Violence Alerts (2015 and 2019), one of them focused on disappearances. The federal judiciary has developed technical instruments such as the Protocol for Judging with a Gender Perspective (SCJN, 2013) and the Protocol for Action for those who administer justice in cases involving the rights of people in vulnerable situations (2011), among others. At the local level, the Attorney General's Office of the State of Mexico has promoted the opening of specialized agencies for gender violence and the training of personnel.

Despite these regulatory advances, the interviews conducted reveal that these instruments are not applied systematically, in a coordinated manner, or effectively. The testimonies describe a series of institutional practices that contradict or ignore legal mandates, resulting in a fragmented, slow, revictimizing, and even punitive experience of access to justice for complainants. In this regard, one of the key informants stated:

“They disregard the emotional aspect, the sensitivity, the tact needed to attend to a woman who is a victim of violence and to know what her needs are throughout the entire process, to protect her and to make her feel safe next to a Public Prosecutor or a legal advisor, who knows perfectly well that these two people will support her throughout the process, that she has no reason to be anxious or feel less, since she is an important being and we will uphold her rights” (Licensed Public Prosecutor, Marisol, Texcoco, 2023).

In systematizing the information, four main areas of institutional shortcomings were identified. The first concerns the superficial or nonexistent knowledge of protocols, as many legal professionals have not been adequately trained in their use. In this regard, interviews revealed that some public prosecutors minimize the importance of the Protocol for Judging with a Gender Perspective or are even unaware of its existence. The second area is the lack of follow-up to Gender Violence Alerts (GVAs), which have resulted in symbolic actions rather than structural transformations.

It was identified that there are no effective mechanisms for compliance with these alerts at the municipal level. The third area is the inter-institutional fragmentation between the Prosecutor's Office, the courts, the Public Defender's Office, shelters, and feminist collectives, which is intermittent and reactive, weakening comprehensive support. The fourth is the cultural resistance within the justice system, where patriarchal institutional attitudes persist, hindering the full implementation of the regulations, especially for rural, Indigenous, or low-income women.

The gap between the normative and the operational constitutes a structural form of institutional violence that prevents women from exercising their rights under conditions of equality (Vázquez, 2014). In the case of rural women, this gap takes on an intersectional dimension, as it is amplified by poverty, geographical remoteness, and low levels of education. As Crenshaw (1991) argues, the intersection of oppressions creates situations where existing laws, although well-intentioned, do not reach those who need them most. Evaluating this gap is not a technical exercise, but an ethical and political one: it allows us to question the coherence between institutional discourse and its actual practice. In general, it is observed that the normative framework, when implemented as institutional practice, has two major

areas for improvement in preventing arbitrary application and systematic revictimization in rural women's access to justice in Texcoco (Table 5).

Table 5. Lag between regulatory framework and its implementation.

Laws	PG Protocol	Regulatory Framework				
		AVGM	Victims Law	LGAMVLV	CEDAW	NOM-046
Institutional practice						
MP Agents						Arbitrary application**
Public defenders						
Legal advisor						
Judge			Lack of follow-up on complaints			
Lawyers			Lack of knowledge of protocols*			
Experts						
Police						
Systematic revictimization***						

* The systematized information indicates, among the different actors, the lack of knowledge of the protocols and laws in some part of the justice administration process and at different levels as one of the outstanding areas for improvement for access to justice for rural women.
 ** Ignorance of the legal framework leads to an arbitrary application of justice.
 *** As a final result, women experience systematic revictimization, in some or different parts of the process.

DISCUSSION

The analysis of data collected at the Texcoco Regional Prosecutor's Office reveals a series of structural tensions between the current legal framework and the institutional practices that mediate access to justice for rural women victims of violence. This discussion is structured around three central findings of the evaluation: 1) low levels of effectiveness and serious equity deficiencies in the service processes; 2) persistent inaccessibility and ineffectiveness of the justice system despite legal advances; and 3) the relevance of qualitative evaluation as a strategy for identifying critical areas for institutional improvement.

The assessment reveals that access to justice in Texcoco, in its practical dimension, is characterized by a low institutional capacity to resolve cases promptly, provide follow-up, and offer reparations, reflecting a lack of structural effectiveness. According to interviews with public prosecutors and public defenders, most complaints are not brought to court, and the case files remain "in process" or are archived without notification or resolution.

This effectiveness deficit is exacerbated by the lack of clear outcome indicators, weak inter-institutional coordination, and poor accountability. Significantly, this ineffectiveness is most acute in cases involving women living in

rural areas, in poverty, or with limited education, indicating a failure to uphold the principle of equity in institutional treatment (House & Howe, 1999).

Equity cannot be evaluated solely as formal equality of treatment, but rather as the system's capacity to recognize and correct the differentiated access conditions faced by women. As Ferrer and Bosch (2019) point out, equitable institutional attention requires adjusting processes, language, timelines, and procedures to the social realities of the users, and this principle is far from being met in the Prosecutor's Office analyzed. Furthermore, the persistence of practices of revictimization, moral judgments, denial of immediate protection, and contemptuous treatment of rural women, documented in the testimonies of this research, demonstrates that equity is systematically violated, and that rural women access a deeply stratified justice system.

The study also highlights a recurring phenomenon in the field of human rights public policy in Latin America: the gap between progressive legal frameworks and exclusionary institutional practices (Farmer, 2004; Vázquez, 2014). In the case of the State of Mexico, there are robust laws, current gender violence alerts, provisional measures, judicial protocols, and signed international treaties; however, these instruments do not translate into effective access to justice for rural women victims of violence, revealing a structural dissonance between law and practice. This gap is due in part to the lack of mandatory gender-sensitive training, but also to cultural resistance within the judicial system, where stereotypes, denial of contexts of inequality, and delegitimization of complainants persist. This pattern is consistent with what Crenshaw (1991) described, who warned that the intersection of gender, class, and territory deepens the barriers to accessing rights for women living on the structural margins.

Furthermore, the lack of cultural and territorial relevance of judicial services (for example, the absence of interpreters or accessible materials and the use of technical jargon directed at women) constitutes yet another barrier in a chain that produces multiple forms of exclusion. This set of structural omissions renders the judicial system, in practice, inaccessible to many rural women victims of violence, directly contradicting the provisions of CEDAW (1979), the Belém do Pará Convention (1994), and the General Law on Women's Access to a Life Free of Violence (2007).

Thus, accessibility is not only physical or geographical, but also symbolic, institutional, and procedural. When a rural woman is treated with contempt, faces confusing procedures, receives incomplete information, or is subjected to harassment by state agents, her exclusion is reinforced, and a covert form of institutional violence is normalized (Vázquez, 2014).

One of the main contributions of this study is to demonstrate that qualitative institutional evaluation, when articulated with an intersectional approach, makes it possible to highlight not only improvements in institutional functions but also the impacts and repercussions on users. This perspective offers a transformative analytical view, as it moves away from purely administrative or numerical evaluations and focuses on the processes, meanings, and effects of public action (Scriven, 2007; Ferrer & Bosch, 2019).

Applying criteria such as effectiveness, equity, relevance, and gender perspective made it possible to identify critical areas for structural improvement in the Prosecutor's Office, such as:

- The need to institutionalize training in human rights and gender perspective with a territorial focus.
- The urgency of developing complaint monitoring mechanisms with public compliance indicators.
- The implementation of differentiated protocols that consider the particularities of rural and indigenous women.

Furthermore, the evaluation demonstrates that access to justice must be understood as a comprehensive process, not a one-off event. This implies ensuring support, protection, clear information, reparation for damages, and guarantees of non-repetition. From this perspective, the evaluation is not merely a control mechanism, but a tool for epistemic and social justice, as it recovers the voices of those who have historically been excluded from institutional processes (Fricker, 2007).

Finally, this evaluation reinforced the need to build a justice system that is no longer indifferent to structural inequality. It is not enough to enact laws or issue protocols: institutional will, budget, rigorous monitoring, and the active participation of women in transforming the judicial system are required. The case of Texcoco, while specific, is representative of many local realities in Mexico. Therefore, the findings of this study should be read as a wake-up call to the Mexican State: if justice does not reach rural women, Indigenous women, or women living in poverty, we cannot speak of an inclusive rule of law.

CONCLUSIONS

The research revealed a deficit in guaranteeing the right to access justice for rural women. Despite the existence of national and international legal frameworks aimed at ensuring women's right to live free from violence, rural women in Texcoco do not have equal access to the justice system. This limited access is due to both external structural conditions (such as poverty, geographic remoteness, low levels of

education, and a lack of support networks) and internal obstacles within the judicial system itself. This is exacerbated for women who, in addition to their rural status, face additional barriers due to age, education level, ethnicity, or disability. In this sense, current conditions do not allow us to speak of an effective or equitable system because one of the central findings of the evaluation is the contradiction between the formally guaranteed legal framework and institutional practices that, instead of operating from a human rights perspective, perpetuate logics of exclusion, punishment, and abandonment.

The findings highlight the urgent need to move towards a justice model that not only proclaims rights but is also capable of making them operational in unequal and adverse contexts. To this end, three priority areas for action are identified: strengthening institutional capacities, implementing monitoring and accountability mechanisms, and developing intersectional and culturally appropriate care protocols.

In summary, this evaluative exercise demonstrated that it is both possible and necessary to develop methodological tools that combine academic rigor with social sensitivity, in order to make visible the margins from which justice systems operate. Evaluating from a feminist and intersectional perspective is not merely a technical act, but a political exercise that challenges the status quo , reclaims women's voices, and demands structural solutions. At the same time, it reflected a reality that, with variations, is reproduced in many regions of the country, especially in those where inequality, classism, and institutional racism continue to define access to rights.

As a recommendation, based on the analysis conducted, the findings, far from being limited to a diagnosis, illustrate the opportunity to start from empirical evidence, the testimonies of the affected women, and the legal commitments of the Mexican State regarding human rights. Therefore, the following three key recommendations are proposed as strategies for continuous improvement: a) the design of a permanent institutional monitoring and evaluation system for access to justice with a gender perspective, and the provision of training in Human Rights and gender perspective to public servants; b) the establishment of quantitative and qualitative monitoring indicators on complaints, prosecution, sentences, and reparations; and c) the inclusion of participatory evaluations with rural women as active subjects of the evaluation process.

LITERATURE CITED

- Álvarez-Gayou, J. (2003). *Cómo hacer investigación cualitativa*. Paidós Educador.
- Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos (CIDH). (2007). *Acceso a la justicia para mujeres víctimas de violencia en las Américas*. OEA. <https://www.oas.org/es/cidh>
- Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review*, 43(6), 1241–1299. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1229039>
- Farmer, P. (2004). *Pathologies of power: Health, human rights, and the new war on the poor*. University of California Press.
- Ferrer, V., & Bosch, E. (2019). *La investigación y la intervención social desde una perspectiva de género*. Tirant lo Blanch.
- Fricker, M. (2007). *Epistemic injustice: Power and the ethics of knowing*. Oxford University Press.
- Galtung, J. (1990). Cultural violence. *Journal of Peace Research*, 27(3), 291–305. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343390027003005>
- House, E. R., & Howe, K. R. (1999). *Values in evaluation and social research*. Sage.
- Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI). (2021). *Encuesta Nacional sobre la Dinámica de las Relaciones en los Hogares (ENDIREH) 2021*. <https://www.inegi.org.mx>
- Juarez Reyes, C. L. (2023). *El derecho de las mujeres rurales al acceso a la justicia: logros y retos en la Fiscalía Regional de Texcoco, Estado de México [Tesis de maestría, Colegio de Postgraduados, Campus Montecillo]*.
- Lagarde, M. (1998). *Los cautiverios de las mujeres: madresposas, monjas, putas, presas y locas*. UNAM.
- Observatorio Ciudadano Nacional del Femicidio (OCNF). (2023). *Caso Mariana Lima Buendía: justicia con perspectiva de género después de 13 años*. <http://ocnf.org.mx>
- ONU Mujeres. (2019). *Marco normativo sobre acceso a la justicia para mujeres víctimas de violencia*. <https://www.unwomen.org>
- Publimetro. (2023, enero 6). *Edomex cerró 2022 con más de 100 feminicidios*. <https://www.publimetro.com.mx>
- Ruido en la Red. (2022, noviembre 9). *Edomex encabeza cifras de desapariciones de mujeres en 2022*. <https://ruidoenlared.com>
- Schwartz, H., & Jacobs, J. (2006). *Sociología cualitativa: Métodos y perspectivas*. UAM.
- Scriven, M. (2007). *Key evaluation checklist*. Western Michigan University.
- Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Nación (SCJN). (2013). *Protocolo para juzgar con perspectiva de género*. <https://www.scjn.gob.mx>
- Vázquez, M. (2014). *Violencia institucional hacia las mujeres: el papel de las agencias del Estado*. *Revista de Estudios de Género La Ventana*, 4(39), 190–212.

TRAINING IN FAMILY GARDENS AND FOOD SECURITY EVALUATION OF AN EDUCATIONAL INTERVENTION IN A CHILDREN'S HOME

Cortés-Rodríguez, C.A.; Martínez-Gómez, G.; López-López, G.; Bastida-Tapia, A.; Aguilera-Peña, M.L.; Verónica-Hernández, H. 2025. Training in family gardens and food security: evaluation of an educational intervention in a children's home

¹Profesor-Investigador, Ingeniería en Desarrollo Comunitario, Tecnológico de Estudios Superiores de Chicoloapan, Ejido de Chicoloapan, Estado de México.
²Profesor(a)-Investigador(a), Departamento de Preparatoria Agrícola, Universidad Autónoma Chapingo, Texcoco, Estado de México.
³Investigador en el Centro de Investigaciones Económicas, Sociales y Tecnológicas de la Agroindustria y la Agricultura Mundial (CIESTAAM), Universidad Autónoma Chapingo, Texcoco, Estado de México.

*Author for correspondence: gladysmartinezgomez@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Training in family gardens is an educational strategy that strengthens practical skills, supports food security, and promotes sustainable practices. In group homes, working in gardens is especially relevant for the cognitive development and well-being of vulnerable adolescents. The objective of this research was to evaluate the knowledge acquired from vegetable production training, in order to verify the learning achieved and assess the effect of the intervention. The study was conducted with 29 adolescents from the San Martín de Porres and Juan XXIII group homes, using a 13-question multiple-choice instrument administered before and after the training. Responses were coded dichotomously (1 = correct; 0 = incorrect) and analyzed using SPSS software. Statistical analysis included a paired-samples t-test to identify the overall effect of the intervention and McNemar's test with continuity correction to analyze changes in learning for each question. The results showed a statistically significant increase in the participants' overall knowledge level ($p < 0.01$). Furthermore, eight questions showed a significant increase in the proportion of correct answers ($p < 0.05$), while five showed no relevant changes. These results demonstrate the effectiveness of the training as an educational tool and its usefulness in increasing students' knowledge of food security and sustainability in institutional contexts.

Keywords: Learning, intervention effect, paired sample, sustainability.

INTRODUCTION

The population increase, estimated at 9 billion people by 2050, has increased the demand for food and, if not met, will raise levels of hunger and food insecurity in families (Gwacela *et al.*, 2024; Korpelainen, 2023). Based on the sustainable

Citation: Cortés-Rodríguez, C.A., Martínez-Gómez, G., López-López, G., Bastida-Tapia, A., Aguilera-Peña, M.L., Verónica-Hernández, H. 2025. Training in family gardens and food security: evaluation of an educational intervention in a children's home

REMEVAL 1(3): 242-262
<https://doi.org/10.63121/b6vj6z63>

Received:
 November 15, 2025

Accepted:
 December 11, 2025

Published:
 December 30, 2025

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial 4.0 International license.



development goals of the 2030 agenda (United Nations Nations, 2018) in which the eradication of poverty and hunger, care for the environment and the production of sufficient, safe, affordable and nutritious food under the principle of sustainability are highlighted, various strategies have been implemented to achieve these goals, considering the locality, climate, geographical, ecological, socioeconomic and cultural conditions of each territory (Ibarrola-Rivas & Galicia, 2017).

Given that approximately 805 million people worldwide suffer from malnutrition and have difficulty accessing food, there is an urgent need to implement actions that reduce food insecurity (Muñoz-Rodríguez *et al.*, 2020) without compromising the integrity of the environment and respecting the sociocultural structures of communities. In Mexico, 23% of the population lacks access to food; in rural areas, this figure is 32%, and in urban areas, it is 21% (Muñoz-Rodríguez *et al.*, 2020).

In this context, family gardens represent an alternative for food security, by maintaining continuous access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food for all people of present and future generations (Gwacela. *et al.*, 2024; Ibarrola-Rivas & Galicia, 2017). This approach considers the capacity of natural systems to conserve biodiversity, linking agroecosystems with the natural, sociocultural, technological and political wealth of the territories (Monroy & Martínez, 2024).

This form of production is one of the main means of livelihood for those who do not have land in addition to their household and has demonstrated the capacity to supply dense populations of up to 500 people km⁻² (Mellisse *et al.*, 2018). They are also important because they guarantee quick access to food and can be consumed regularly by low-income households (Gwacela *et al.*, 2024) and represent key spaces for the conservation of plant genetic resources (Korpelainen, 2023).

To contribute to the sustainability of community gardens and extend their benefits over time, it is important to produce high-quality vegetables, ensure that people demonstrate a genuine need to cultivate them, involve family members, and locate them in areas with available soil and water. Furthermore, participants should be trained to carry out the core activities in these production units (Muñoz-Rodríguez *et al.*, 2020). Non-formal training or education (Martínez and Romo, 2019) is the process by which people acquire knowledge and skills to perform a job more effectively (Cortés-Rodríguez *et al.*, 2024). Through this training, learners can incorporate fundamental concepts into their cognitive structure to achieve the establishment and sustainability of these gardens (Muñoz-Rodríguez *et al.*, 2020).

In this sense, learning about the usefulness of a garden, the types of vegetables and the nutrients they provide, the activities necessary to produce them, the use of organic fertilizers to reduce environmental impact, as well as pest and disease management, are crucial for producing quality vegetables. When training includes a

theoretical phase of assimilating concepts linked to what already exists in the cognitive structure of individuals, the development of skills through field practice and collaborative work leads to meaningful learning (Ausubel *et al.*, 2003) that lasts throughout life (Martínez, 2020).

This study aimed to evaluate the learning outcomes, before and after, of residents of the San Martín de Porres and Juan XXIII children's homes, in vegetable production with a focus on sustainability and food security. The training was conceived as a planned and structured process that involved selecting topics, organizing sessions, formulating objectives, designing the program, selecting materials, and choosing teaching techniques for group work based on a theory that promotes meaningful learning (Cortés-Rodríguez *et al.*, 2024). It was based on the principle that this training would strengthen cognitive and practical skills for vegetable production and contribute to food security by promoting sustainable production practices, as well as fostering an understanding of the nutritional value of food.

REFERENCE AND CONTEXTUAL FRAMEWORK

The concept of a family garden has multiple definitions given its diverse functions such as: the combined production of multipurpose trees, intercropping with other agricultural crops and livestock around the farm (Mellisse *et al.*, 2018). Family gardens are commonly identified as cultivated spaces around houses where a variety of foods providing micro and macronutrients can be obtained, such as vegetables, fruits, spices, herbs, ornamental and medicinal plants; as well as the raising of animals that are an important source of food energy, nutritional security, and economic sustenance for families (Korpelainen , 2023; Monroy; Martínez, 2024; Thamilini *et al.*, 2019; Wyatt, 2023).

In addition to providing nutritious food, family gardens generate cash income that contributes to household stability and allows for the conservation, maintenance, and fertility of the soil (Vibhuti *et al.*, 2019). In this sense, these spaces serve as a strategy for local food and economic sustainability, through the generation of local markets, which directly impacts the variation of families' diets.

In this way, training on family gardens becomes a key tool for promoting healthy diets through variety; for improving food self-sufficiency and reducing dependence on processed foods, which are linked to an increase in chronic degenerative diseases (Figuroa-Piña *et al.*, 2021; Ibarrola-Rivas & Galicia, 2017). It also offers women of reproductive age the opportunity to nourish themselves and reduce risks during pregnancy, preventing the development of malnutrition-related

diseases in newborns (Korpelainen , 2023). Similarly, this type of intervention enables the development of skills and strategies that contribute to the empowerment of those involved in cultivating the gardens and increase their access to nutritious food and supplemental income (Gwacela *et al.*, 2024).

Several studies have shown that training in vegetable production not only allows the development of knowledge and skills in science, but also encourages participation in classes, promotes emotional well-being and commitment to sustainable production practices (Blair, 2009; Eugenio- Gozalbo *et al.*, 2020; Smith & Motsenbocker , 2005). It also sparks the interest of participants (Martínez & Romo, 2019) and a critical awareness of agri-food systems, contributing to the formation of resilient citizens who are aware of their environment (Savary *et al.*, 2022).

In this sense, working in a garden can become a transformative experience for residents of a group home who face emotional, familial, and social challenges stemming from vulnerable circumstances (Ibarra & Romero, 2017). This activity strengthens self-esteem, fosters social connections, and develops healthy eating habits, thus contributing to overall well-being (Blair, 2009). Therefore, this study evaluated the learning outcomes of an intervention designed to improve nutrition in a group home as a productive activity and a means of knowledge transfer.

San Martín de Porres and Juan XXIII Children's Home

The San Martin de Porres children's home was founded in December 1965, and in April 1973, the name Juan XXIII AC was incorporated (CHSMPJ, 2025). Currently, it is run by three Catholic nuns who care for orphaned and abandoned children in vulnerable situations. The home's population fluctuates because it houses a group of orphaned and abandoned children of different ages in special circumstances while their legal status is being determined by the Federal Attorney General's Office.

The institution receives children of different ages, classified by the World Health Organization (WHO, 2017): early childhood (0-5 years); childhood (6-11); adolescence (12-18); and others who, due to physical or mental vulnerability, remain permanently at the home during their youth (14-26) and adulthood (27-59). The population is diverse in terms of sex, age, life histories, educational levels, etc. Of the 70 members, 29 were adolescents nearing adulthood, from whom data were obtained for this study.

To ensure their well-being and development, the children's home has the mission of protecting all its residents and instilling values in them so that they

become individuals with a desire for self-improvement (CHSMPJ, 2025). Regarding its vision, this institution seeks to empower them to be responsible for themselves by offering: psychological support, spiritual guidance, formal and non-formal education, housing, clothing, food, and recreational activities.

The training provided encompasses the physical, psycho-emotional, cultural, and social dimensions (CHSMPJ, 2025). In the cultural dimension, personal growth is fostered through participation in activities such as documentary research, museum visits, literature studies, cultural programs, and theatrical performances, leading to knowledge acquisition and cognitive development. Regarding the social dimension, students are educated to strengthen their interaction skills and develop an awareness that human beings are social by nature. Furthermore, teamwork is prioritized, encouraging a spirit of service and camaraderie. In this way, they not only ensure that the basic needs of their residents are met, but they go further by offering them a dignified life.

METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN

The article was structured in five sections: first, the introduction is presented, reflecting the importance of vegetable production for food security and sustainability; the second indicates the referential and contextual framework where the study was carried out, the San Martín de Porres and Juan XXIII Children's Home; the third details the methodological design (population, sample, method, technique and instruments for data collection) and describes the data processing; the fourth section shows the analysis of results and the discussion where the findings were presented and compared with the published literature; and finally, the conclusions are presented.

Study area

During July and August 2022, training was provided at this home using funds from the Institutional Strategic Project “Analysis of Policies, Programs, and Projects in Socio-ecological Systems for Sustainability in Mexico: The Sembrando Vida Program and University Projects,” with resources from the Autonomous University of Chapingo. As part of the project's activities, a greenhouse of approximately 100 m² was renovated so that participants could put the knowledge acquired during the training into practice. This home is located in the municipality of Texcoco de Mora, State of Mexico, at the geographic coordinates 19°31'07.2" north latitude and 98°50'26.9" west longitude (Figure 1).

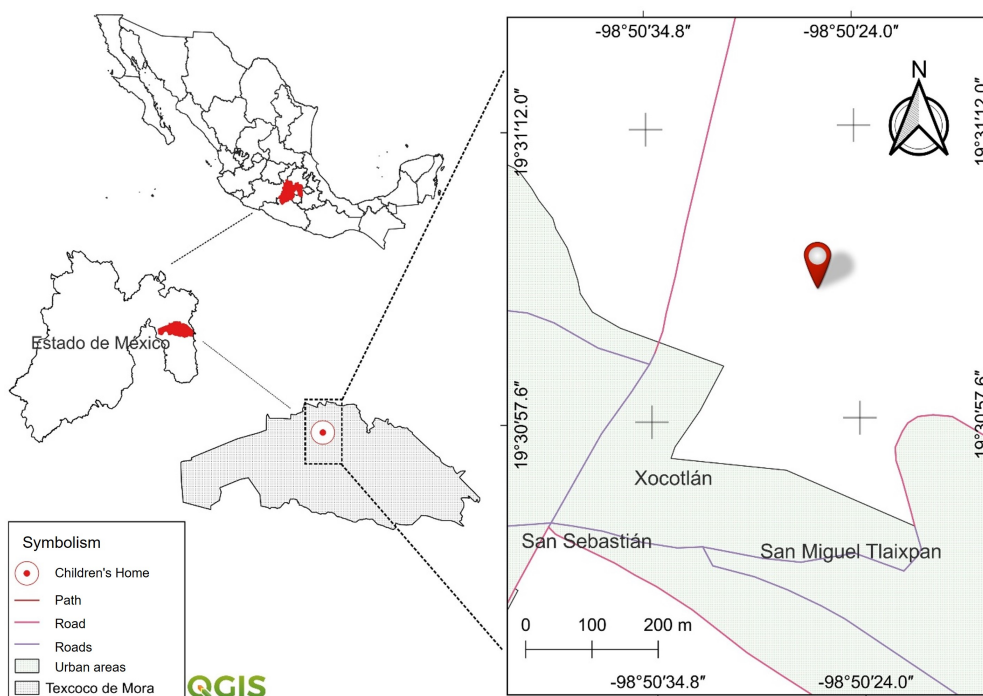


Figure 1. Location of the San Martín de Porres and Juan XXIII children's home.

Method, Population and Sample

The training was conducted with all members of the children's home, including 70 children of different ages and support staff. However, for the purposes of this research, a pre-experimental pretest- posttest design (Chávez *et al.*, 2020) was used with purposive sampling, including only 29 adolescents who were transitioning from childhood (age 10) to adolescence. The age range considered was 10-18 years, and participants were selected based on the following criteria: they were able to complete the survey titled " *Instrument to Evaluate Learning Before and After Training on Vegetable Garden Production,*" designed using *Google Forms* ; they were able to review, understand, and answer the questions independently, without adult assistance, thus minimizing the risk of response bias; and they were likely to take responsibility for and monitor vegetable production after the training.

Method, Population and Sample

Prior to the diagnostic assessment and activity definition stage, the establishment and management of the vegetable garden was carried out (Rendón *et al.*, 2023), where the instrument and topics designed and developed by the trainer

MC Gamaliel López López in his Guide for Vegetable Production in Gardens were used. The topics presented by the trainer were the following : Chapter I Basic requirements for the establishment of the garden (water, soil or substrate, space, nutrient source, genetic material, irrigation system); Chapter II, Garden Design and Construction (orientation, protection requirements, composting area, raised beds or containers (what they are, how to prepare them, resistance, durability, depth, the substrate); Chapter III, Planting Schedule (classification of vegetables by growing season , classification of vegetables by use, types of vegetables such as fruit or root and bulb vegetables), technical data of the crops, diagnosis of consumption patterns, frequency of consumption, preparation of the planting calendar, harvest period, shelf life); Chapter IV, Establishing Vegetables in Family Gardens (seed management, direct sowing, establishing the seedbed or nursery, procedures for sowing, care in the nursery, transplanting, spacing between plants); Chapter V, Garden Maintenance (cultural tasks such as irrigation, pruning, weeding, specific practices for each crop such as staking and hilling, main vegetable pests, main vegetable diseases, symptoms and prevention, Pest control methods, recommendations for biopreparations , disease control; Chapter VI Crop Nutrition and Organic Fertilizer Production (organic fertilizer production, the different phases such as: mesophilic, thermophilic or sanitizing, cooling, and maturation; the composition of materials, compost without the use of non-biodegradable materials, procedures for compost production and care, sanitization and safety, use of compost in plant nutrition according to the type of vegetable: leafy and flowering, fruit-bearing, root, bulb, and tuber vegetables). The topics presented at the beginning of the course-workshop and the support during the practical portion were provided by the trainer. Only the instrument proposed by the trainer was reviewed and validated by a team of researchers involved in the institutional strategic project, along with the trainer. The evaluation instrument consisted of 13 multiple-choice questions, each with three answer choices, only one of which was correct. The questions The survey results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Instrument to evaluate learning before and after training on the production of horticultural gardens.

Ask	Description
p01	What is a garden?
p02	What is the purpose of a garden?
p03	What types of vegetables can be produced?
p04	What activities are carried out to produce vegetables?
p05	What is the purpose of growing vegetables in a garden?
p06	What tools are used in vegetable production?
p07	What is a seed?
p08	Where are the seeds planted in a garden?
p09	What is a raised bed?
p10	What is a fertilizer?
p11	What is a plague?
p12	What are the main pests and diseases of vegetables?
p13	How to control pests and diseases in vegetables?

Source: Own elaboration.

Data analysis

The responses were recorded in *Google Forms*. Subsequently, they were captured and coded in SPSS software, assigning a value of 1 to correct answers and 0 to incorrect answers. To measure whether the training influenced the participants' level of knowledge, two statistical tests were used: first, the paired samples t-test (Garzón; Villota, 2020), and then McNemar's test with continuity correction (Ortega *et al.*, 2023).

The paired-samples t-test was useful for gaining an overview of the intervention's effect on adolescents' knowledge. This test compared the mean scores obtained before and after the training, using the same sample of individuals (Garzón; Villota, 2020). A statistically significant difference between the two scores suggests a substantial change in knowledge attributable to the training. The paired-samples t-statistic was calculated by subtracting the mean of the differences (\bar{x}) from μ (which will equal 0) from the numerator of the equation, and dividing the standard deviation of the differences (S_x) by the square root of the number of trained adolescents (n) from the denominator. The degrees of freedom for this test are the number of pairs minus 1. This is summarized in the following formula:

$$t = \frac{\bar{x} - \mu}{\frac{S_x}{\sqrt{n}}} \sim t_{p-1}$$

McNemar test , with continuity correction, was ideal for comparing dichotomous (correct/incorrect) responses to each question. Ortega et al. (2023) recommend using it when the sample size is small and the sum of incorrect answers is less than 25. A significant change in the number of correct and incorrect responses before and after the training provides detailed information about the subject area where knowledge improved. Contingency tables were used to systematize these changes (Table 2).

Table 2. Contingency Table.

	Post-test correct	Incorrect post-test
Pre-test correct	a	b
Incorrect pre-test	c	d

Source: Own elaboration.

Based on the information in the contingency table, the χ^2 statistic was obtained for each question . McNemar 's formula:

$$\chi^2 = \frac{(|b - c| - 1)^2}{b + c}$$

RESULTS

Characteristics of adolescents

Of the total number of adolescents considered, females predominated (62%) compared to males (38%). Regarding age, the highest frequencies were found in the 11- and 13-year-old groups (Figure 2). For females, the largest proportions were 11 years old (17%) and 13 years old (13%); while for males, the largest proportions were 10 years old (14%) and 13 years old (10%). Notably, all participants aged 16 to 18 years were female.

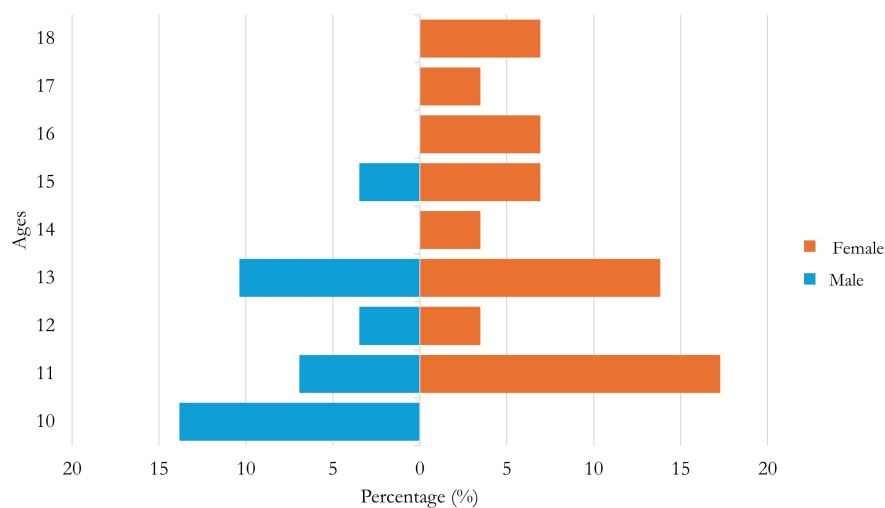


Figure 2. Sex and age of adolescents.

Source: Own elaboration.

Characteristics of adolescents

During the training, the teenagers acquired theoretical knowledge as well as practical field skills. In the theoretical phase (Figure 3), the concept of a garden and the basic requirements for its proper functioning were presented, such as water, space, quality soil or substrate, and seeds for planting vegetables. The importance of sunlight in plant development was emphasized, as was the need to establish a crop protection system (shade netting or a greenhouse) to provide better production control, making efficient use of water resources, controlling the microclimate, and ensuring the proper use of nutrients. The establishment of perimeter protection to safeguard the garden from animals, birds, or rodents was also highlighted, as was the concept of raised beds or containers for planting on the farm. Regarding planting schedules, vegetables were classified according to the season in which they thrive best, such as the spring-summer or autumn-winter cycle, which varies in the amount of light, humidity, and temperature. To have vegetables available year-round, ideas were presented that allow for staggered planting according to consumption needs, achieving a constant supply of food and nutrients.

The different types of sowing (direct sowing, seedbeds), their advantages and disadvantages, the transplanting procedure, and the spacing between seedlings based on their size to avoid competition were also explained. Regarding garden maintenance, cultural practices (watering, pruning, weeding, staking, and hilling) were highlighted. Participants were introduced to the concepts of pests and diseases, the main types that affect vegetables, and how to control or prevent them using natural

biopreparations (garlic, chili peppers, soap, tobacco, mineral solutions), hygiene practices, and vector control. Finally, crop nutrition and the use of organic fertilizers were discussed, including how to make compost and how to fertilize according to the type of vegetable (leaf, fruit, root, bulb).



Figure 3. Theoretical phase of the training process in vegetable production.

Note: (1) Formal presentation of the trainer by the Catholic nuns of the children's home; (2) Start of the course on family gardens; (3) Teenagers who attended the training.

In the practical phase (Figure 4), the participants applied the knowledge acquired in the classroom. First, they cleared the soil to remove weeds and stones that could hinder planting. The teenagers then experienced how to operate the greenhouse's side curtains, an effective mechanism for controlling humidity and temperature. They also learned that access to the garden must be controlled to prevent pests and rodents from entering.

The land was measured and three raised beds were prepared, incorporating nutrient-rich organic fertilizer. Two drip irrigation lines were then installed in each bed to provide water for the vegetables. Priority was given to planting vegetables that are frequently consumed at the home, as well as those species best adapted to the autumn-winter period due to the low temperatures. Among the vegetables planted were radishes, cilantro, chard, and lettuce.



Figure 4. Practical phase of training for adolescents.

Note: (1) Cleaning the work area to apply the acquired knowledge; (2) Opening and closing the side curtain of the greenhouse; (3) Measuring the land to establish the growing beds; (4) Preparing the soil and incorporating fertilizer; (5) Sowing and watering vegetables; (6) Vegetable that is about to be harvested.

Lessons learned from the training

According to the scores recorded before the training (Figure 5), there were adolescents who scored zero, while others reported a perfect ten from the outset. Overall, there was a wide dispersion in the level of knowledge, with the mean estimated at 6.2, a value slightly higher than 6.0, which is considered a passing grade in most Mexican educational systems. This result demonstrated that the participants had some knowledge of the topic, albeit basic.

Regarding the scores obtained after the intervention, the scores increased and the gap narrowed (Figure 5). The lowest score was 6.9, the highest was 10, and the average was 8.9, indicating learning derived from the training.

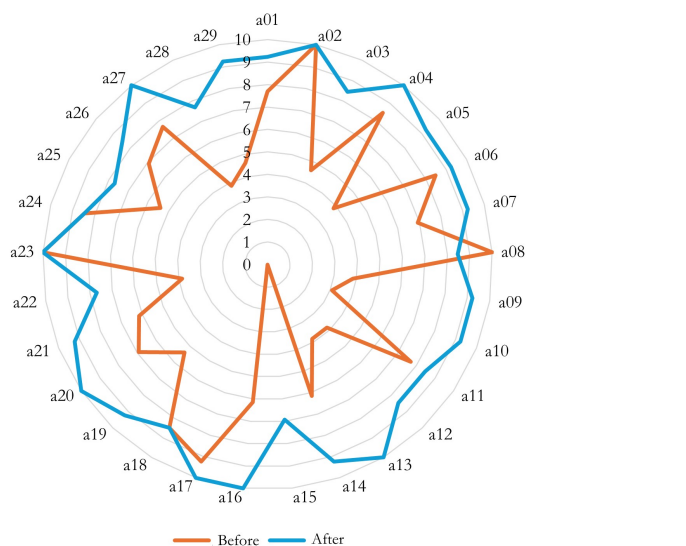


Figure 5. Distribution of scores by adolescent, before and after training.
 Note: a= adolescent.
 Source: Own elaboration.

Regarding the results of the paired-samples t-test (Table 3), the difference in mean scores before and after the training was found to be -2.6517. Since the t-statistic was estimated at -6.8970 and the p-value was less than 0.01, the statistically significant difference between the scores was confirmed. In other words, the improvement in knowledge after the intervention was confirmed. This result is consistent with that reported by Blair (2009) and Klemmer *et al.* (2005), who found that training promotes meaningful and contextualized learning.

Table 3. Result of the related samples t-test.

Moment	Average	Standard deviation	Difference means	of Standard deviation of the t differences	p-value
Before	6.2597	2.4546	-2.6517	2.0704	-6.8970
After	8.9114	0.8364			

Source: Own elaboration.

As Ibarrola-Rivas & Galicia (2017) point out, achieving food security requires the appropriation of agri-food knowledge. In this sense, the training provided to adolescents represents a step towards building local food systems, by fostering the development of skills for self-sufficiency, the selection of appropriate species according to the climate, and the ecological management of the garden.

Learning acquired in each question

Through knowledge analysis of each question, thematic areas were identified where adolescents improved or maintained their learning after the training. This information is fundamental because it provides elements for improving the course, as well as strengthening the work in the gardens as a policy tool promoting food security and sustainable development (Monroy-Miranda & Martínez-Gómez, 2024).

Before the training, the adolescents demonstrated knowledge about the usefulness of gardens (p02), as 24 of the 29 participants answered correctly (83%). In contrast, the most difficult question for the participants was "What is a pest?" (p11), as only 9 (31%) answered correctly (Figure 6).

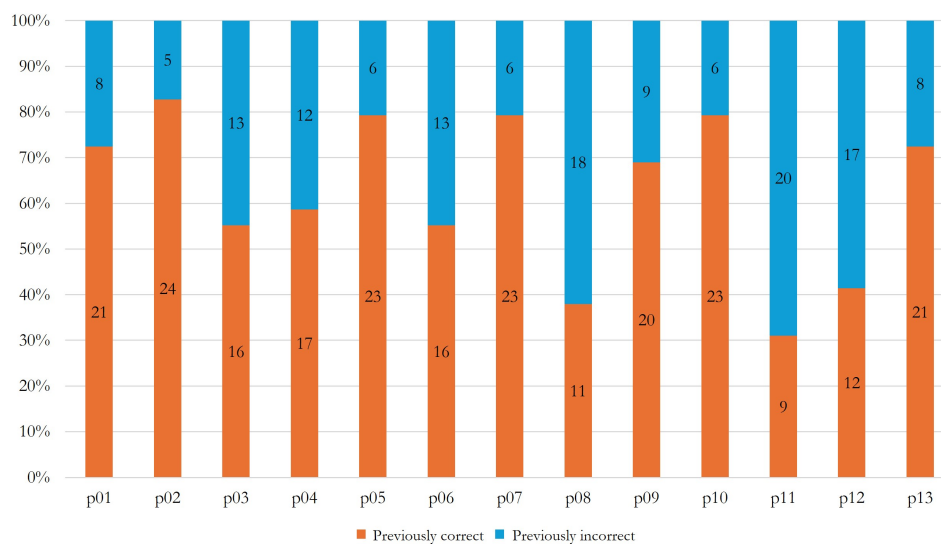


Figure 6. Correct and incorrect answers per question, before training.
Note: p = question.

Following the training, the number of correct answers increased for most questions (Figure 7). The most frequently answered questions were: What is a garden? (p01), What is the purpose of a garden? (p02), What is a seed? (p07), What is a raised bed? (p09), What is compost? (p010), and How can pests and diseases be controlled in the garden? (p13), with 28 out of 29 respondents answering correctly, representing 97%. This reinforces the idea that the adolescents successfully acquired useful knowledge to contribute to sustainable food production by growing nutritious vegetables with a low environmental impact, as recommended by Savary et al. (2022). One of the more challenging questions was: What types of vegetables can be grown? (p03), which 20 adolescents answered correctly (69%) and 9 answered incorrectly (31%).

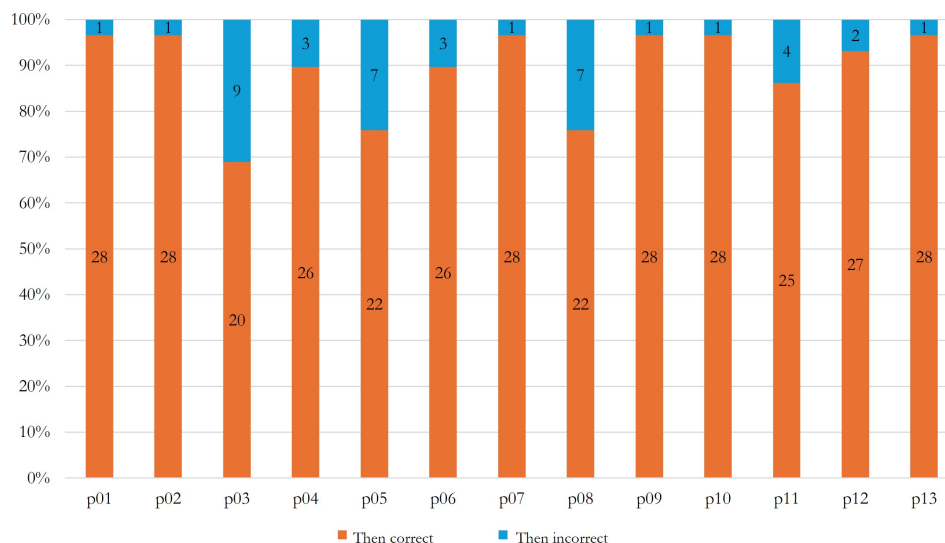


Figure 7. Correct and incorrect answers per question, after training.
 Note: p = question.

By comparing the correct and incorrect answers obtained before and after the training, statistically significant changes in knowledge were identified (Table 4). Eight questions showed an improvement in the correct answer rate ($p < 0.05$): p01, p04, p06, p08, p09, p11, p12, and p13. This means that learning increased in more than half of the questions. No differences were found in the remaining questions (p02, p03, p05, p07, p10), and therefore, an increase in knowledge could not be demonstrated in these areas. This suggests the need to reinforce content related to the importance of gardens, the types of vegetables available for dietary diversification, and the relevance of fertilizers for producing nutritious and safe vegetables (Savary *et al.*, 2022).

The question "What is the objective of producing vegetables in a garden?" (p05) was a particular case because it exhibited atypical behavior (Table 4). The number of adolescents who answered it correctly before the training was 23, and afterward, the number dropped to 22. Although the difference was minimal, this data represents a slight decline, which could be related to poor question design or the inclusion of confusing responses. Therefore, it is suggested that the question be reviewed to avoid future ambiguities and contribute to a better measurement of knowledge.

Table 4. Result of the McNemar test with continuity correction.

Question/ moment/ outcome			After		McNemar 's Test	
			Correct n(%)	Incorrect n(%)	χ^2	p-value
p01*	Before	Correct	21(72)	0(0)	5.143	0.016
		Incorrect	7(24)	1(3)		
p02	Before	Correct	24(83)	0(0)	2,250	0.125
		Incorrect	4(14)	1(3)		
p03	Before	Correct	12(41)	4(14)	0.750	0.388
		Incorrect	8(28)	5(17)		
p04*	Before	Correct	16(55)	1(3)	5,818	0.012
		Incorrect	10(35)	2(7)		
p05	Before	Correct	18(62)	5(17)	0.000	1,000
		Incorrect	4(14)	2(7)		
p06*	Before	Correct	13(45)	3(10)	5.063	0.021
		Incorrect	13(45)	0(0)		
p07	Before	Correct	22(76)	1(3)	2.286	0.125
		Incorrect	6(21)	0(0)		
p08*	Before	Correct	10(35)	1(3)	7,692	0.003
		Incorrect	12(41)	6(21)		
p09*	Before	Correct	20(69)	0(0)	6.125	0.008
		Incorrect	8(28)	1(3)		
p10	Before	Correct	22(76)	1(3)	2.286	0.125
		Incorrect	6(21)	0(0)		
p11*	Before	Correct	7(24)	2(7)	11,250	0.000
		Incorrect	18(62)	2(7)		
p12*	Before	Correct	12(41)	0(0)	13.067	0.000
		Incorrect	15(52)	2(7)		
p13*	Before	Correct	20(69)	1(3)	4,000	0.039
		Incorrect	8(28)	0(0)		

*Indicates statistically significant differences ($p < 0.05$).

Source: Own elaboration.

DISCUSSION

The results confirm that training in vegetable production through family gardens is an effective educational strategy for strengthening cognitive learning in adolescents living in vulnerable institutional settings, such as group homes. The statistically significant increase in the overall level of knowledge, evidenced by the paired-samples *t- test*, reflects that the intervention achieved its central objective: to evaluate the learning attained before and after a structured training process designed using a non-formal education and meaningful learning approach.

The increase in the average score, from 6.2 before the training to 8.9 after the intervention, suggests that the adolescents successfully incorporated fundamental concepts related to the establishment, management, and maintenance of vegetable gardens. This finding is consistent with that of Muñoz-Rodríguez *et al.* (2020), who emphasize that the acquisition of agri-food knowledge is a key component for advancing food security, particularly when training activities are developed in local contexts and with sociocultural relevance. It also aligns with Martínez and Romo (2019), who underscore that training processes, by combining theory and practice, promote the assimilation of technical content related to sustainable production.

From the perspective of meaningful learning proposed by Ausubel *et al.* (2003), the training structure, which integrated a theoretical conceptualization phase with a practical phase in the garden, allowed participants to connect new knowledge to their concrete experiences. The opportunity to immediately apply the content covered in the classroom to a physical space like the rehabilitated greenhouse facilitated the understanding of concepts such as soil preparation, seed use, pest management, and the application of organic fertilizers. This reinforces the idea that gardens function as pedagogical settings where learning transcends rote memorization and is grounded in direct experience (Blair, 2009; Eugenio- Gozalbo *et al.*, 2020).

McNemar 's test with continuity correction, provided relevant information on the thematic areas where the greatest progress was made. In eight of the thirteen questions evaluated, statistically significant increases in the proportion of correct answers were observed, particularly in those related to garden management, pest and disease identification, tool use, and understanding basic concepts such as raised beds and pest control. These results indicate that the training was especially effective in the operational and technical content, which is directly linked to daily vegetable production and low-environmental-impact practices, as noted by Korpelainen (2023) and Monroy & Martínez (2024) in their analyses of the sustainability of family gardens.

Conversely, five questions showed no statistically significant changes between the pre-test and post -test . In some cases, this can be attributed to the participants' already relatively high level of prior knowledge, as was the case with the question about the usefulness of the garden, which limits the potential for observable improvement. In other cases, such as the identification of vegetable types or the objective of producing them, the results suggest the need to reinforce this content in future training sessions, either through clearer teaching strategies or additional practical activities that facilitate conceptual differentiation. This type of finding is particularly valuable, as it not only allows for evaluating the impact of the intervention but also for adjusting and improving the design of training programs (Savary *et al.*, 2022).

One relevant finding was the atypical behavior observed in one of the questions, where a slight decrease in correct answers was recorded after the training. Although this change was not statistically significant, it highlights the importance of carefully reviewing the design and wording of assessment instruments. As Ortega *et al.* (2023) point out, in small samples and pre-experimental designs, the clarity of the questions is fundamental to avoiding ambiguous interpretations that could affect the measurement of learning. In this sense, the results not only reflect the effect of the training but also provide input for strengthening the instruments used in future assessments.

From a contextual perspective, the study gains relevance because it was conducted in a group home, an institutional environment characterized by heterogeneity in age, educational background, and vulnerability. Although this work focused exclusively on measuring cognitive learning, the results suggest that training in family gardens can constitute a solid foundation for building capacities oriented towards self-sufficiency and the responsible use of resources, key elements for local food security (Ibarrola-Rivas & Galicia, 2017; Gwacela *et al.*, 2024). In this sense, strengthening technical knowledge represents an essential first step towards consolidating sustainable food production practices.

CONCLUSIONS

This research explored the learning acquired by adolescents at the San Martín de Porres and Juan XXIII children's homes after training focused on vegetable production in a family garden. The results show that the training promoted learning related to vegetable production, while also strengthening cooperative work within an institutional context.

Before the intervention, participants obtained an average score of 6.2, which increased to 8.9 after the training, demonstrating a significant improvement in learning. Additionally, eight questions showed a significant improvement in the proportion of correct answers ($p < 0.05$), while five questions showed no substantial change. These findings allow us to assess the effect of the training, identify thematic areas that can be strengthened, and provide empirical evidence to improve educational practices related to food security.

This study contributes to the literature on learning processes in institutional contexts, particularly among adolescents living in group homes. Unlike most studies focused on school gardens, this study focused on a population with specific psychosocial conditions, providing a perspective that has been little explored in research on educational gardens.

Limitations of the study include its focus on a single age group within the children's home. Therefore, future research could consider including other age groups, from childhood and adolescence to adulthood, as well as people with disabilities, to broaden the analysis of the impact of these types of interventions.

Finally, the results suggest the importance of continuing the training support to foster meaningful lifelong learning focused on food security from a sustainable perspective. The experience following the training, in which the support continued and horticultural production was expanded according to the food needs of the group home, reinforces the potential of gardens as a viable alternative for strengthening food production in institutional settings such as group homes, nursing homes, prisons, or social rehabilitation centers.

LITERATURE CITED

- Ausubel, D. P., Novak, J. D., & Hanesian, H. (2003). *Psicología Educativa*. Trillas.
- Blair, D. (2009). The Child in the Garden: An Evaluative Review of the Benefits of School Gardening. *The Journal of Environmental Education*, 40(2), 15–38. <https://doi.org/10.3200/JOEE.40.2.15-38>
- Chávez Valdez, S. M., Esparza del Villar, Ó. A., & Riosvelasco Moreno, L. (2020). Diseños preexperimentales y cuasiexperimentales aplicados a las ciencias sociales y a la educación. *Enseñanza e Investigación en Psicología*, 2(2), 167-178. <https://doi.org/10.62364/4fx57130>
- CHSMPJ. (2025). *Casa Hogar San Martín de Porres y Juan XXIII A.C.: para niñas y niños huérfanos y desamparados*. <https://casahogarsanmartindeporres.org/>
- Cortés-Rodríguez, C. A., Martínez-Gómez, G., Romo-Lozano, J. L., Schwentesius Rindermann, R., & Sangerman-Jarquín, D. M. (2024). Necesidades de capacitación para desarrollar la habilidad emprendedora en agricultores de pequeña escala. El caso de la comunidad de San Pablo Huixtepec, Oaxaca. *Acta Universitaria* 34, e4106. <http://doi.org/10.15174/au.2024.4106>
- Eugenio-Gozalbo, M., Aragón, L., & Ortega-Cubero, I. (2020). Gardens as Science Learning Contexts Across Educational Stages: Learning Assessment Based on Students' Graphic Representations. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11(2226), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.02226>

- Figueroa-Piña, D. G., Chávez-Servín, J. L., de la Torre-Carbot, K., del Carmen Caamaño-Pérez, M., Lucas-Deecke, G., Roitman-Genoud, P., & Ojeda-Navarro, L. R. (2021). Evaluation of the effect of a school garden as an educational didactic tool in vegetable and fruit consumption in teenagers. *Nutrition Research and Practice*, 15(2), 235–247. <https://doi.org/10.4162/nrp.2021.15.2.235>
- Garzón Quiroz, M. Q., & Villota Oyarvide, W. R. (2020). Prueba t para muestras relacionadas e independientes usando RStudio, para qué sirve y cómo aplicarlo. In T. Fontaines-Ruiz, J. Pirela Morillo, J. Maza-Cordova, & Y. Almarza Franco (eds.), *Convergencias y divergencias en investigación* (pp. 192–203). Senescyt & OEI.
- Gwacela, M., Ngidi, M. S. C., Hlatshwayo, S. I., & Ojo, T. O. (2024). Analysis of the Contribution of Home Gardens to Household Food Security in Limpopo Province, South Africa. *Sustainability*, 16, 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su16062525>
- Ibarra Ibáñez, A. N., & Romero Mendoza, M. P. (2017). Niñez y Adolescencia Institucionalizadas en Casas Hogar. *Revista Electrónica de Psicología Iztacala*, 20(4), 1532–1555.
- Ibarrola-Rivas, M. J., & Galicia, L. (2017). Rethinking Food Security in Mexico: Discussing the Need for Sustainable Transversal Policies Linking Food Production and Food Consumption. *Investigaciones Geográficas*, (94). <https://doi.org/10.14350/ig.57538>
- Klemmer, C. D., Waliczek, T. M., & Zajicek, J. M. (2005). Growing Minds: The Effect of a School Gardening Program on the Science Achievement of Elementary Students. *HortTechnology*, 15(3), 448–452. <https://doi.org/10.21273/HORTTECH.15.3.0448>
- Korpelainen, H. (2023). The Role of Home Gardens in Promoting Biodiversity and Food Security. *Plants*, 12(13), 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.3390/plants12132473>
- Martínez, G. G. (2020). Conocimientos locales: aprendizajes a lo largo de la vida para la sustentabilidad. *Nueva Antropología*, 33(92), 36-48. <https://revistas.inah.gob.mx/index.php/nuevaantropologia/article/view/15992>
- Martínez, G. G., & Romo, J. L. L. (2019). Educación para la conservación de suelos entre los pequeños productores agrícolas. En R. de Gortari & M. J. Santos (eds.), *Políticas globales y prácticas locales para el cuidado del medio ambiente* (pp. 57-83). IIS-Bonilla Artigas. <https://www.iis.unam.mx/politicas-globales-y-practicas-locales-para-el-cuidado-del-medio-ambiente-mexico-espana-y-estados-unidos/>
- Mellisse, B. T., Descheemaeker, K., Giller, K. E., Abebe, T., & van de Ven, G. W. J. (2018). Are traditional home gardens in southern Ethiopia heading for extinction? Implications for productivity, plant species richness and food security. *Agriculture, Ecosystems & Environment*, 252, 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.agee.2017.09.026>
- Monroy Miranda, M., & Martínez Gómez, G. (2024). Sostenibilidad de los huertos familiares: un análisis bibliométrico sobre patrones de publicación científica. *Acta Universitaria*, 34, 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.15174/au.2024.4117>
- Muñoz-Rodríguez, M., Fernández-González, C., Aguilar-Gallegos, N., & González-Santiago, M. V. (2020). The Primacy of Politics in Public Food Security Policies: The Case of Home Gardens. *Sustainability*, 12(10), 1-21. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12104316>
- Organización Mundial de la Salud (OMS). (2017). *Programa de Educación Sexual CESOLAA (Curso de Educación Sexual on line de auto aprendizaje)*. Universidad de Chile, Escuela de Salud Pública y Unidad de TIC para la Innovación Educativa.
- Ortega Páez, E., Ochoa Sangrador, C., & Molina Arias, M. (2023). Pruebas para muestras relacionadas. Variables cuantitativas. *Evidencias En Pediatría*, 19(10), 1–7.
- Rendón García, A., López López, G., Bastida Tapia, A., & Hernández Montes, N. B. (2023). Puesta en marcha de un Huerto Escuela en las instalaciones de la casa hogar “Hogares Infantiles San Martín de Porres y Juan XXIII, A. C”. En F. Pérez, R. M. García, E. Figueroa, M. Jiménez, R. A. Pérez, & P. E. Escamilla (comp.), *Los Sistemas Ecológicos para la Sustentabilidad en México* (pp. 137-143). Asociación Mexicana de Investigación Interdisciplinaria A.C. <https://dicea.chapingo.mx/wp-content/uploads/publicaciones/SISTEMAS-SOCIO-ECO- para-LA-SUSTENTABILIDADr.pdf>

- Smith, L. L., & Motsenbocker, C. E. (2005). Impact of Hands-on Science through School Gardening in Louisiana Public Elementary Schools. *HortTechnology*, 15(3), 439–443. <https://doi.org/10.21273/HORTTECH.15.3.0439>
- Thamilini, J., Wekumbura, C., Mohotti, A. J., Kumara, A. P., Kudagammana, S. T., Silva, K. D. R. R., & Frossard, E. (2019). Organized Homegardens Contribute to Micronutrient Intakes and Dietary Diversity of Rural Households in Sri Lanka. *Frontiers in Sustainable Food Systems*, 3(94), 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fsufs.2019.00094>
- United Nations. (2018). *The 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals: An opportunity for Latin America and the Caribbean*. <https://repositorio.cepal.org/handle/11362/40156>
- Vibhuti, V., Bargali, K., & Bargali, S. S. (2019). Species composition, diversity and traditional uses of homegarden in Kumaun Himalaya, India. *The Indian Journal of Agricultural Sciences*, 89(9), 47-50. <https://doi.org/10.56093/ijas.v89i9.93479>
- Wyatt, A. R. (2023). “An instrument of grace”: Archaeological and ethnographic studies of homegardens in the American Neotropics. *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology*, 69, 101469. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaa.2022.101469>

The logo for REMEVAL, featuring the word "REMEVAL" in a blue, sans-serif font. The letter "E" is stylized with a yellow and orange gradient, resembling a sun or a flame.

IMPACT EVALUATION OF THE “THIRTEENTH MONTH” OF THE YOUTH BUILDING THE FUTURE PROGRAM

Rodolfo Jacinto Ruiz

Licenciado en Políticas Públicas por la UAM-L y maestro en Gobierno y Asuntos Públicos por la FLACSO, México.

*Author for correspondence: rodolfo.jacinto@estudiante-flacso.mx

ABSTRACT

This research quantitatively analyzes the impact of the so-called "thirteenth month" within the Youth Building the Future Program (PJCF), focusing exclusively on the active employment policy component, that is, on the employability outcomes of young beneficiaries who complete the program and seek formal employment through the National Employment Service (SNE). A quantitative methodology was used, based on SNE administrative records for the period 2020–2024. Using this information, two analysis groups were formed: a treatment group, comprised of young people enrolled in the "thirteenth month," and a control group, composed of young people who requested job placement services from the SNE but did not participate in the PJCF program. The *Inverse Probability method was used to estimate the causal impact of the "thirteenth month."* *Weighting (IPW)*, which allows balancing the observable differences between both groups and estimating the *Average Treatment Effect*. The results indicate that participation in the "thirteenth month" program is associated with a negative and statistically significant effect on formal employability: young people graduating from the PJCF program have a 77.96% lower probability of formal employment compared to those who did not participate but also sought employment through the National Employment Service (SNE). However, these findings should be interpreted with caution, particularly due to the indirect verification of formal employment in the control group. Therefore, it is evident that further evaluations using the original PJCF database are needed to validate these findings.

Keywords: Employability, impact, active employment policies.

INTRODUCTION

Over the years, Mexico has faced insufficient labor inclusion. This research understands inclusion as a fundamental component of social development that seeks to guarantee that members of the workforce obtain decent jobs, well-paid wages, and

Citation: Jacinto Ruiz, R. 2025. Impact evaluation of the "thirteenth month" of the Youth Building the Future Program **REMEVAL** 1(3): 263-282 <https://doi.org/10.63121/y4mdnv90>

Received:
November 16, 2025

Accepted:
December 10, 2025

Published:
December 30, 2025

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial 4.0 International license.



access to social protection. Labor inclusion aims to ensure that when the workforce enters the labor market, it does so in dignified employment (ECLAC, 2023).

In response to insufficient labor inclusion, starting in 2018, the Mexican government designed a new labor model with key elements such as a new labor justice system, freedom and democracy in unions, and a federal conciliation center and registry. As part of the Mexican government's efforts to improve labor inclusion, it created the Jóvenes Construyendo el Futuro (Youth Building the Future) Program (PJCF).

The PJCF (Youth Training Program) aimed to provide on-the-job training to young people aged 18-29. The incentives these young people receive include financial support equivalent to the minimum wage, depending on the year, medical insurance through the Mexican Social Security Institute (IMSS), and, starting in 2020, the "thirteenth month" (a stipend or bonus payment). This bonus consists of former PJCF beneficiaries receiving assistance from the National Employment Service (SNE) in their job placement efforts to find employment (STyPS, 2021; 2022; 2023 and 2024). This set of incentives and job placement mechanisms is part of the regulatory framework governing formal employment in Mexico, which establishes minimum rights regarding working hours, wages, and access to social security, as stipulated in the Federal Labor Law (2025).

The design of the PJCF, and the "thirteenth month," makes it a hybrid program within the context of active and passive labor market policies. This is because the program is active, on the one hand, by improving the employability of beneficiaries through workplace assistance and job¹ placement support via the "thirteenth month," and on the other hand, it is passive by providing welfare support through health insurance and a stipend equivalent to medical pay.

This research focuses solely on the active employment policy component and analyzes the impact of the "thirteenth month" (the period of early retirement). The research question is: what is the impact of the PJCF (Youth Care Fund) on the employability of young people who are part of the "thirteenth month"? An Inverse Probability Weighting (IPW), model is used to calculate the impact.

REFERENCE AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

During his 2018 address, then-President Andrés Manuel López Obrador made a total of 100 government commitments. Commitment number 17 of this agenda focused specifically on addressing the needs of 2,300,000 young people who were

¹Throughout this investigation, it is considered that the program does not provide training, since there is no body responsible for verifying each training session that beneficiaries receive at the workplace. What beneficiaries do receive is assistance at a workplace for twelve months.

neither studying nor working (López, 2018). In fulfillment of this commitment, the PJCF (Youth Training and Employment Program) began operating in 2019. The program's general objective is "to include young people aged 18 to 29 who are neither studying nor working in productive activities, fostering their connection with economic units willing and able to provide them with on-the-job training" (STyPS, 2021a; 2022a; 2023a and 2024a).

To achieve the overall objective, the program establishes four specific objectives. The first consists of providing scholarships to beneficiaries for a period of twelve months. The second ensures the provision of health insurance to these same beneficiaries for the same period. The third objective involves issuing certificates that accredit the work experience acquired by the participants, and the fourth seeks to facilitate the productive inclusion of the beneficiaries (STyPS, 2021a; 2022a; 2023a and 2024a).

The target population of the PJCF comprises young people aged 18 to 29 who are inactive in the labor market and in education. Its coverage is nationwide, with a priority focus on municipalities with high levels of marginalization or those with high rates of violence. To guarantee access to the program, both a digital platform and mobile offices are available to extend coverage to areas without internet connectivity (STyPS, 2021a; 2022a; 2023a and 2024a).

Once beneficiaries graduate from the program, a complementary strategy known as "Month Thirteen" is activated. This initiative provides options for young people to increase their employability by participating in training courses or, if they are looking for a job and were not hired at the workplace where they completed their training, the National Employment Service (SNE) offers them job placement services (STyPS, 2021a; 2022a; 2023a and 2024a).

“Thirteenth month ”

To support graduates of the PJCF and their effective integration into the labor market, the SNE utilizes the Employment Support Program (PAE). The overall objective of the PAE is "to achieve the labor market integration of job seekers through intermediation and labor mobility actions, with preferential attention to those who face greater barriers to employment" (STyPS, 2021b; 2022b; 2023b and 2024b).

The PAE is structured into two subprograms: job placement and labor mobility. The job placement subprogram is of particular interest to this research, as it is through this subprogram that the "Thirteenth Month" program seeks to connect graduates of the PJCF with employment. It is crucial to note that participation in this

strategy is voluntary and is managed by the graduates themselves through the Employment Portal, the National Employment Service Offices (OSNE), or Job Fairs (STyPS , 2021b; 2022b; 2023b and 2024b).

Hybrid nature of the PJCF

The combined design of the PJCF and the "Thirteenth Month" strategy gives the program a hybrid nature, placing it at the intersection of active and passive labor market policies. This duality is evident in that, on the one hand, the program seeks to improve young people's employability through twelve months of on-the-job training and, optionally, offers job placement services, thus defining it as an active policy. On the other hand, by providing a cash subsidy and access to social security (health insurance), it also functions as a passive policy (CONEVAL, 2022).

Table 1. Nature of the PJCF

Active	Passive
Attendance at a workplace Employment intermediation	Support equal to the minimum wage Health insurance

Source: Own elaboration based on Jacinto (2024).

Table 1 details the components of this approach. The active policy component is evident in the efforts to improve youth employability through 12 months of on-the-job training and, for those who are actively seeking employment, the job placement services offered by the National Employment Service (SNE), which aim to connect them with formal employment and reduce their reliance on informal networks. Additionally, the passive policy component is manifested in the financial support equivalent to the minimum wage and the medical insurance provided by the Mexican Social Security Institute (IMSS) during the on-the-job training period.

The results achieved by the PJCF during the 2019-2024 period have been the provision of services to almost three million young people (2,973,449) (STyPS , 2024c) and the enrollment of 240,648 young people in the "thirteenth month²." The results seem encouraging, but what implications does providing services to this number of young people have on the labor market? The following section seeks to answer this question.

²This figure is not the same as that presented in the sixth STyPS report of 2024. This is because it was found in the SNE database that there were young people who did not complete the twelve months of the PJCF, young people older than they could be, and duplicate records.

Overview of the youth labor market in Mexico

Prior to the start of the Joint Fiscal Resilience Plan (JFP), Mexico's economic growth showed a trend of sluggishness. In 2018, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew by a mere 2%. This slowdown worsened in 2019, with a decrease of -0.4%, and reached its most critical point in 2020 with a severe contraction of -8.4% due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Although it grew by 6% in 2021 as a result of the post-pandemic economic recovery, the subsequent period (2022-2024) has shown low growth, averaging 2.8% annually (World Bank, 2025).

Limited economic growth has not been enough to resolve the persistent problem of the young population segment that is neither studying nor working. In 2018, prior to the PJCF (Program for the Promotion of Youth and Children), there were 23,773,773 young people, of whom 21.7% were in this situation. The composition of this group showed that the majority were women (88.1%) compared to 11.9% men. Within this segment, 88.2% were engaged in domestic work, 9.4% in other occupations, and 2.6% were pensioners or disabled (INEGI, 2018).

Six years after the implementation of the Youth Participation Program (PJCF), by 2025, the youth population had reached 23,554,379. Of this total, the percentage of young people who are neither studying nor working had decreased to 17.5%. However, the gender participation gap had widened slightly, with 90% of women and 10% of men in this group. The predominant activities continued to be housework (86%), followed by other occupations (10.5%) and those receiving pensions or disability benefits (3.5%) (INEGI, 2025). These data reveal a decrease in the overall proportion of young people who are neither studying nor working, but simultaneously show an increase in female participation within this inactive group. This suggests that the program has not succeeded in reversing the trend of female inactivity, even though this population group represents a priority for the PJCF.

In addition to addressing youth inactivity, the Youth Employment and Training Program (PJCF) also aims to reduce youth unemployment. Before the program, the youth unemployment rate was 6.1% in 2018 (INEGI, 2018). By 2025, this rate had decreased marginally to 5.1% (INEGI, 2025). This reduction of just one percentage point indicates a limited improvement in the decrease in youth unemployment, raising questions about the program's effectiveness.

While the Youth Employment and Training Program (PJCF) has achieved a marginal reduction in youth inactivity and unemployment, the most pressing and structural problem facing the youth labor market is the high rate of informality. Despite the work experience gained by young people at the workplaces and the promised job placement services in the program's thirteenth month, informal employment continues to significantly affect them.

Table 2 presents a comparison of informality trends in the Mexican youth labor market for the years 2018 and 2025, emphasizing sociodemographic factors and the disadvantages associated with informal employment. It highlights that in 2018, 55.7% of young people worked in the informal sector (INEGI, 2018), a figure that remained virtually unchanged in 2025, reporting 55.3% informal employment (INEGI, 2025).

Table 2. Comparison between formal and informal work for young people aged 18-29 according to their sociodemographic characteristics.

Characteristics	Informal		Formal		Total	
	2018	2025	2018	2025	2018	2025
Year	2018	2025	2018	2025	2018	2025
Total	7,572,589	7,701,165	6,005,447	6,213,123	13,578,036	13,914,288
Sex						
Man	57.2%	55.8%	42.8%	44.2%	100%	100%
Women	52.8%	54.6%	47.2%	45.4%	100%	100%
Level of education						
Maximum basic education	49.6%	40.1%	27.8%	20%	100%	100%
upper secondary education	33.9%	37.9%	36.4%	39.4%	100%	100%
Higher education	16.5%	22%	35.8%	40.6%	100%	100%

Source: Prepared by the author based on INEGI 2018 and 2025.

Looking at Table 2, several trends stand out. Regarding the gender gap in informality, women's participation in this sector has increased slightly, from 52.8% in 2018 to 54.6% in 2025 (relative to all informal women), while men's participation has decreased from 57.2% to 55.8% (relative to all informal men). This exacerbates the trend observed in youth inactivity and suggests that young women continue to face greater barriers to accessing formal employment. With respect to the relationship between education and formality, a positive trend is observed; by 2025, the proportion of young people with higher education in formal employment is significantly higher (40.6%) compared to those with basic education (20%). However, it is relevant that the percentage of young people with higher education in the informal sector has also increased, from 16.5% in 2018 to 22% in 2025, indicating that even those with higher levels of education are also being employed in the informal sector.

Regarding occupational structure, the outlook for informal youth workers remained similar. In 2018, 66% of informal workers were wage earners and 15% were self-employed (INEGI, 2018). By 2025, these figures remained consistent, with

67.8% informal wage earners and 17.5% self-employed (INEGI, 2025).

Currently, according to INEGI (2025), the distribution of young people by sector of activity is predominantly concentrated in services (64%) and industry and manufacturing (27.2%). These figures are very similar to those of 2018, when young people were also mainly employed in the services sector (60%) and in industry and manufacturing (29%) (INEGI, 2018).

A key characteristic of informal work is the prevalence of part-time and long working hours. In 2018, one in four informal workers worked less than 35 hours. By 2025, this gap had widened, with one in three informal workers working less than 35 hours. At the same time, in 2018, 22.5% of informal workers worked more than 48 hours, a figure that increased to 24.7% in 2025, despite this being illegal under the Federal Labor Law³ and in a context where reducing the maximum workweek to 40 hours is being debated.

Precarious working conditions and low wages for young people in the informal sector remain a constant. In 2018, of all young people receiving wages: 28% earned up to the minimum wage, 47% earned between one and two minimum wages, and 25% earned more than two minimum wages. By 2025, a sharp change is observed: 70% of young people earn at most the minimum wage, 26% earn between one and two minimum wages, and only the remaining 4% earn more than two minimum wages. This significant shift in wage distribution can be attributed to the sustained annual increase in the minimum wage in Mexico since 2019. In this context, the financial support provided by the PJCF (Youth Support Program), equivalent to the minimum wage, becomes a financially attractive option for many young people employed in the informal sector.

Finally, regarding job search strategies, personal networks (family, friends, or acquaintances) remained the primary method in 2018, used by 55.45% of young people. This was followed by direct visits to employment centers (16.43%), while public and private intermediation services had a marginal share (0.63%). By 2025, these trends continued: networks remained the main channel (54%), although direct visits to employment centers decreased (13.23%), and the use of public and private intermediation services declined even further (0.48%). This underscores the persistence of informality in labor market entry mechanisms and the limited effectiveness of formal channels. In this sense, it appears that the PJCF (Youth Employment Program) is also not proving effective with the "thirteenth month" and the intervention of the National Employment Service (SNE).

³Federal labor law establishes a maximum of 48 hours that can be worked weekly (Federal Labor Law, 2025).

In summary, the results in the youth labor market show a picture of marginal changes despite the implementation of the Youth Compensation Program (PJCF). The reduction in key indicators such as the labor inactivity rate is minimal, youth unemployment remains low but with a slight decrease, and informality, although it has declined, has done so marginally. This situation represents a considerable challenge for the Mexican government, especially regarding the active labor market policy component, given that no other youth program in Latin America has allocated such a substantial investment, amounting to USD\$7,577,442,361.25 (during the 2019-2024 period) (STyPS , 2024c). In light of the results observed in the youth labor market, questions arise about the program's actual effectiveness, making it necessary to analyze what specific impact evaluations of the PJCF reveal.

PJCF Assessments

The first study analyzing the impact of the PJCF was conducted by the National Minimum Wage Commission (2021), part of the STyPS . It evaluated the program's impact during the 2019 COVID-19 pandemic, using the 2020 National Household Income and Expenditure Survey (ENIGH) and propensity score matching (PSM) to calculate youth employability.

The average results from CONASAMI (2021) indicate that young people participating in the program have a 26% employability rate compared to other young people with similar characteristics who were not part of the program. They also found that the quarterly income is higher (MXN \$8,222.00) than that of other young people and, during the pandemic, the program served as a minimum safety net (reducing the probability of food insecurity in beneficiary households by 3.4% and the probability of lacking access to health insurance by 20%).

The main criticism of this evaluation is its presentation of results indicating that the employability of young graduates from the program is double that of those who are not part of the program. This result is a comparison of averages from 14,823,203 young people, of whom 3,493,274 are employed. However, the program's impact is 26%, not 50% as presented by the CNSM. The second criticism of this evaluation is that it does not use the database held by the PJCF Unit, which would be ideal for assessing the program.

The second impact assessment of the PJCF is that of Rubio *et al.* (2022). They use Okun's Law as an instrument to assess the impact and a difference-in-differences model using the National Survey of Occupation and Employment (ENOE) for the period 2005-2021 and the beneficiary registry of the Secretary of Welfare from 2019-2021.

Rubio *et al.* (2022) found no impact on reducing unemployment. A likely explanation for this is that Okun's Law seeks to explain youth unemployment; however, the program is designed to address not only unemployment but also informal employment and youth inactivity—that is, those who are neither studying nor working.

The third impact evaluation used is that of CONASAMI (2023), which again uses the 2022 ENIGH survey and PSM data. Their results show that the program impacts youth employability by 31.8% compared to those who did not participate in the program. They also found an increase in beneficiaries' income (MXN \$9,557.00) compared to those without support, and access to health insurance, which is 25% higher for those participating in the program.

Once again, the criticism of CONASAMI (2023) concerns the presentation of results and the database used. Regarding the first point, they state at the beginning of the research that the employability of young people in the PJCF program is 60% and that they have three times the employability of young people who are not part of the program. This is incorrect because they are again comparing averages of 24,153,726 young people who are not part of the program. As for the second point, they again use a survey and not the database available at the PJCF unit.

The fourth and final study used on the program's impact is that of Sámano and Reyes (2025). The authors analyze the impact of the PJCF on homicides using interrupted time series and linear regression in the states of Coahuila-Baja California and Chiapas-Tabasco as control groups.

The results from Sámano and Reyes (2025) reported a nationwide reduction in intentional homicides and crime due to the program. However, when comparing the results at the state level, they found contradictions that prevented them from concluding that the program reduced the number of homicides and crime.

Based on the available impact evaluations of the program, we can establish that no evaluation was found that uses the database held by the PJCF unit. Nor was an evaluation found specifically for the "thirteenth month." The most frequently used method in the available studies is the PSM (Program Evaluation Method). The results found regarding the program's effects indicate an apparent impact on employability and, to some extent, on the employment landscape for young people.

This article aligns with the research line on the program's impact on employability and specifically focuses on the "thirteenth month." The question it seeks to answer is: What is the impact of the PJCF on the employability of young people who are part of the "thirteenth month" ?.

METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN

This research adopted a quantitative methodological approach focused on evaluating the impact of the Jóvenes Construyendo el Futuro (PJCF) program, specifically its active employment component known as "month thirteen." The central objective is to estimate the causal effect of this job placement strategy on the probability of obtaining formal employment, defined as registration with the Mexican Social Security Institute (IMSS). Since program allocation is not random, the analysis requires the use of quasi-experimental methods to control for selection bias and ensure comparability between participating and non-participating youth.

From an empirical standpoint, the ideal strategy for evaluating the impact of the PJCF would have been access to the comprehensive database of the Jóvenes Construyendo el Futuro Program Unit (UPJCF). However, given the impossibility of obtaining this information, the administrative records of the National Employment Service (SNE) were used, which constitute a relevant alternative source for analyzing the job placement process after program completion. This methodological decision involves specific assumptions that are explained throughout this section in order to clarify the limitations of the analysis.

Data sources

The databases used for this impact evaluation of the PJCF were provided by the National Employment Service Unit (USNE), which is part of the Ministry of Labor in Mexico, and are included in its administrative records. The information covers the period 2020-2024 for PJCF graduates participating in the "thirteenth month" and the period 2022-2024 for the remaining young people who requested services from the National Employment Service (SNE).

Information on the youth population not from the PJCF (Youth Care Program) was initially divided by service modality: job fairs, services at labor intermediation offices, and services through the employment portal. To eliminate duplication, the data was cross-referenced using the Unique Population Registry Code (CURP), resulting in 446,039 observations of young people not from the PJCF. For the Treatment Group, young people who were beneficiaries of the PJCF were filtered by their CURP, by program completion date, and by age. After this filtering, only enrollments up to the thirteenth month for the period 2022 to 2024 were considered, resulting in 38,555 observations⁴.

⁴Although the total number of young people enrolled since 2020 is 240,648.

The verification of employment success for graduates of the PJCF (Treated Group) is carried out through a direct comparison of the National Employment Service (SNE) databases with those of the Mexican Social Security Institute (IMSS) and the Institute for Social Security and Services for State Workers (ISSSTE), confirming that the young people have obtained formal employment based on the vacancy they applied for. However, for the Control Group (the remaining young people served by the SNE), this detailed verification is not a standard procedure. For this study, the SNE agreed to cross-reference its data with the IMSS using the Unique Population Registry Code (CURP), which guarantees that the individuals in this group are also formally employed. This asymmetry introduces a crucial methodological assumption: it is assumed that the employment success of the Control Group is attributable to the SNE's job placement services.

In both databases, the key variables (sex, age, education, and care) were recoded to ensure homogeneity. The outcome variable, employment success (employed), was defined based on IMSS discharge status. The treatment variable was created assuming that PJCF graduates received the treatment (the "thirteenth month" intervention), and the remaining young people who requested SNE services constituted the control group.

Description and characteristics of the control and treatment group

The final database used for the impact assessment consists of a total of 484,594 observations and shows a significant imbalance in the composition of the groups before the application of the IPW method. The control group (the remaining youth from the SNE) is significantly larger, with 446,039 individuals, while the treatment group (graduates of the PJCF/"Mes Trece") comprises 38,555 individuals. The descriptive analysis of the key covariates, detailed in Table 3, highlights several pre-intervention differences.

Table 3. Descriptive analysis of the covariates of the control and treatment groups

Variables	Control Group (rest of young people)	Treatment Group (JCF)
Sex		
Men	40.2%	42.5%
Women	57.5%	57.5%
Age		
18-21	25.8%	8.5%
22-25	38.6%	38.6%
>25	35.4%	52.7%
Schooling		
No schooling	15.9%	10.9%
Basic	29.5%	13.1%
Higher education	25.1%	31.9%
Superior	29.5%	44.1%
Type of care		
Job portal	63.7%	87.4%
Offices	29.7%	12.6%
Fairs	6.6%	0%
Employment		
Employee	66.8%	28.4%
Unemployed	33.2%	71.6%
Total observations	446 039	38,555

Source: Prepared by the author based on SNE (2024a and b).

Regarding age, the control group is significantly younger, with 25.8% in the 18-21 age range, compared to only 8.5% in the treatment group. In contrast, the treatment group is older, with 52.7% of participants aged 25 or older, compared to 35.4% in the control group. With respect to education, the treatment group tends toward a higher level of education; 44.1% of its members have higher education, compared to 29.5% in the control group, and a smaller proportion of young people with only basic education. Finally, the primary method of access to job portals for the treatment group (87.4%) is employment portals, while the control group shows a broader distribution, although also dominated by portals (63.7%).

Regarding the outcome variable, the overall analysis reveals a significant disparity in the employment rate. The control group shows a high employment rate of 66.8%, while the treatment group shows a notably lower employment rate of 28.4%.

Method for evaluating the impact of Inverse Probability Wighting (IPW)

Propensity Score (PS) method was used, and due to the large volume of data (484,594 observations), the IPW technique was chosen instead of traditional matching. The central objective of IPW (Huntington-Klein, 2021) is to eliminate selection bias from observable characteristics, generating a pseudopopulation where observations are comparable.

For the estimate to be valid, Conditional Ignorability (CIA) is assumed, where the treatment D_i is independent of the potential outcome $(Y_i(1), Y_i(0))$ conditional on X_i , that is:

$$(Y_i(1), Y_i(0)) \perp D_i \mid X_i$$

Likewise, the assumption of common support is necessary, which guarantees that all individuals have a positive probability of receiving or not receiving the treatment.

As a first step, the Propensity was estimated Score ($e(X_i)$), defined as the probability that an individual i , given their characteristics X_i , will be in the treatment group ($D_i=1$). This PS was estimated using a logistic regression model:

$$e(X_i) = P(D_i = 1 \mid X_i) = \frac{\exp(\beta' X_i)}{1 + \exp(\beta' X_i)} \text{ (Ecuación 1),}$$

Where D_i is the treatment variable and X_i is the vector of covariates.

Unlike matching, the IPW method creates a pseudopopulation by assigning each individual a weight, which is the inverse of their observed treatment probability. This ensures that the entire sample is used and w_i that the distribution of covariates is balanced across groups.

The *average was estimated Treatment Effect* (ATE), which is the impact of the program if the entire population, that is, both treated and untreated, had received the treatment. The weights w_i for the ATE estimate are given by

$$w_i = \frac{D_i}{e(X_i)} + \frac{1-D_i}{1-e(X_i)} \text{ (Ecuación 2),}$$

To reduce the instability that extreme weights (observations $e(X_i)$ very close to 0 or 1) can generate, these were truncated to the 1st and 99th percentiles. The balance of covariates after weighting was verified using the Standardized Mean Difference (SMD), ensuring that all the $SMD < 0.1$, in the weighted pseudopopulation.

Finally, to estimate the causal effect, τ_{ATE} a robust weighted logistic regression was performed, where the coefficient α_1 represents the Log-Odds of the treatment effect:

$$\log\left(\frac{P(Y_i=1|D_i,X_i)}{1-P(Y_i=1|D_i,X_i)}\right) = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 D_i + \gamma' X_i \text{ (Ecuación 3)},$$

Where the parameter of interest is α_1 , which can be translated as Odds Ratio (OR) by $\exp(\alpha_1)$.

MODEL RESULTS

The results of the impact evaluation of the "thirteenth month" of the Jóvenes Construyendo el Futuro (PJCF) Program are presented based on the estimation of a weighted logistic regression model using *Inverse Probability Weighting* (IPW) in Table 4. The coefficients are presented as *Odds Ratios* (OR), estimated from the IPW-weighted logistic regression model. An OR greater than 1 indicates a higher odds of job success (formal employment) compared to the reference category, while an OR less than 1 indicates a lower *odds*.

This strategy allowed the construction of a balanced pseudopopulation between the treatment group, graduates of the PJCF enrolled in the "thirteenth month", and the control group, young people who requested job placement services from the National Employment Service (SNE) without having participated in the program, controlling for observable differences in sex, age, education and type of care.

Table 4. Impact of the PJCF on formal employment (Logistic regression weighted by IPW).

Variable	Odds Ratio (OR)	95% CI
PJCF (Treatment)	0.2204***	[0.2143, 0.2267]
Sex: Male	1.2498***	[1.2247, 1.2755]
Education: Basic	0.6478***	[0.6048, 0.6939]
Education: Secondary	0.9683*	[0.9414, 0.9961]
Higher education	1.4944***	[1.4466, 1.5437]
Attention: Job Fair	1.1195***	[1.0777, 1.1630]
Attention: Job Portal	1.1295***	[1.1108, 1.1486]
(Intercept)	1.8875***	[1.7517, 2.0338]

Note: The omitted reference group for the education variables is upper secondary education. The reference group for sex and service modality is women and service at intermediary offices, respectively. Significance is presented as * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$ and *** $p < 0.001$.

Source: Own elaboration.

The central finding of the evaluation indicates that, after balancing the observed characteristics using IPW weighting, the PJCF program has a negative and highly significant effect on the probability of employment success. The estimated odds ratio for the treatment is 0.2204 ($p < 0.001$). This implies that the odds of

obtaining formal employment for PJCF graduates are 77.96% minors (*Cálculo:* $(0.2204-1) \times 100$) compared to untreated youth who also sought SNE intermediation services. The estimate is considered robust, given that the confidence interval (95% CI: [0.2143,0.2267]) is significantly below one ($OR=1$). Although the model indicates a negative impact, this interpretation is subject to the methodological assumption that the control group found employment thanks to SNE services. Verification of formal employment was carried out solely by checking status with the IMSS, without direct confirmation of the job vacancy. This limitation implies that the control group includes individuals who may have found employment through means other than the SNE, which could bias the magnitude of the ATE.

The inclusion of covariates in the weighted model confirmed several patterns consistent with the labor market. In terms of sex, the analysis indicates that young men (Sex: Male $OR=1.2498$) exhibit a 24.98% higher *odds* of job success compared to women, the reference category.

Education was confirmed as a key predictor. Young people with higher education gained the most, showing a 49.44% higher odds of formal employment ($OR=1.4944$) compared to the reference group, which is upper secondary education. Conversely, young people with Basic Education ($OR=0.6478$) face a disadvantage, with a 35.22% lower odds of job success than the reference group. Those with secondary education ($OR=0.9683$) showed a marginally significant effect, indicating odds very close to the reference group.

With respect to the service modality, job searching through Job Fairs ($OR=1.1195$) and the Employment Portal ($OR=1.1295$) was associated with an approximate increase of 1 2% in the odds of obtaining formal employment. This increase is statistically significant and is interpreted in comparison with the attention received in labor intermediation offices, the reference category omitted in the model.

DISCUSSION

The results obtained in this research contribute to the debate on the effectiveness of the Jóvenes Construyendo el Futuro (PJCF) program, particularly regarding its active policy component focused on job placement through the so-called "thirteenth month." The estimation of a negative and statistically significant impact on the formal labor market integration of program graduates should be interpreted as the result of a specific methodology, in addition to considering the conceptual and empirical frameworks already developed in the literature on employment policies in contexts of high informality.

From a structural perspective, the findings are consistent with the diagnosis put forward by ECLAC (2023), which indicates that labor inclusion in Latin America cannot be evaluated solely based on occupational placement, but rather on the

quality, stability, and formality of employment. In this sense, the fact that graduates of the PJCF face lower relative probabilities of formal placement suggests that the "thirteenth month" labor intermediation strategy fails to modify the structural mechanisms of access to employment in a market characterized by precariousness and persistent informality, as documented by INEGI data (2018; 2025).

Furthermore, the results include an analysis of the program's hybrid nature. As CONEVAL (2022) points out, programs that combine active and passive policies can create incentive tensions if there is no clear link between training, skills certification, and effective job demand. In the case of the PJCF, the operational emphasis on financial support and health insurance (passive components) appears to have outperformed the active job placement component, which could explain why the transition to formal employment does not consistently materialize upon program completion.

The estimated negative impact for the "thirteenth month" also allows for a critical reinterpretation of the results reported by CONASAMI (2021; 2023). While those evaluations find positive effects of the PJCF on employability using national surveys and comparisons of means, this study, by focusing specifically on the job placement stage and using administrative records from the National Employment Service (SNE), shows that these effects do not necessarily hold true when analyzing the concrete process of formal employment. This methodological difference reinforces the criticism already raised in the document regarding the use of databases not designed to evaluate specific program mechanisms and the aggregated presentation of results, which can exaggerate the impacts.

Similarly, the findings are consistent with those of Rubio *et al.* (2022), who found no significant impact of the Youth Employment Program (PJCF) on youth unemployment. Although their approach focuses on macroeconomic indicators and the use of Okun's Law, their results suggest that the program fails to substantially influence key indicators of the youth labor market. This study complements this evidence by showing that, even at the micro level of labor intermediation, the program's effect is limited and even adverse in terms of formal employment.

Furthermore, the results associated with the covariates reinforce diagnoses extensively documented in the manuscript itself. The persistent gender gap in formal labor market participation, evidenced by the lower probability of employment for women, is consistent with INEGI data (2018; 2025), which show a greater concentration of women in both inactivity and informality. This suggests that the PJCF, despite its broad coverage, has not succeeded in reversing structural inequalities that exceed the scope of an isolated training and job placement policy.

The determining role of educational attainment, meanwhile, confirms that active employment policies, such as the "thirteenth month" program, operate in a complementary, not a substitute, manner for educational pathways. As observed in the youth labor market landscape, even young people with higher education face increasing levels of informality, which limits the potential of labor intermediation to generate quality formal employment on a sustained basis.

Regarding the National Employment Service's (SNE) service delivery methods, the results favoring the employment portal and job fairs are consistent with the administrative evidence presented by the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare (STyPS) (2021–2024), which indicates a growing emphasis on digital mechanisms and direct job placement events. However, the fact that these positive effects do not offset the negative impact of the "thirteenth month" reinforces the hypothesis that the central problem lies not in the placement channel itself, but in the limited demand for formal employment capable of absorbing the program's graduates.

The use of administrative records from the National Employment Service (SNE) implies assuming that the labor market integration observed in the control group is attributable to intermediation services, an assumption that, if not fully met, could overestimate the performance of that group. However, as Huntington-Klein (2021) points out, the transparency of the assumptions and the robustness of the quasi-experimental design allow the results to be interpreted as a valid approximation of the causal effect, particularly when the confidence intervals remain clearly far from one.

Overall, the analysis of results and a comparison with existing literature suggest that the job placement component of the PJCF faces structural limitations in achieving its objective: improving the formal employability of young people. Far from invalidating the program's rationale, these findings reinforce the need to rethink the design of the "thirteenth month" (a specific program for young people) and to more effectively integrate training, skills certification, and the actual demands of the labor market, especially in a context where informality continues to be the dominant feature of youth employment.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of this research allow for a critical and well-founded assessment of the impact of the Youth Building the Future Program (PJCF), particularly its active labor market component focused on job placement through the so-called "thirteenth month." This assessment is based on the use of administrative records from the National Employment Service (SNE) and the application of an inverse probability model. Weighting (IPW), it was identified that participation in this strategy is

associated with a substantial reduction in the probability of formal labor insertion of young graduates of the program, estimated at 77.96% compared to non-participating young people who also used the labor intermediation services of the SNE.

This conclusion should be interpreted with caution. The findings obtained using SNE databases could partially refute previous evaluations such as those by CONASAMI (2021 or 2024). However, for conclusive validation and a deeper understanding of the program's impact, it is essential that future research access and evaluate the program using the original and complete UPJCF database.

Regarding labor market indicators, the results obtained only partially favor the program. While decreases in inactivity, unemployment, and informal youth employment rates are observed, these are minimal and do not justify the magnitude of the investment. This limited change is particularly concerning given that the Youth Employment Program (PJCF) concentrates the majority of the STyPS 's resources . In employment policies, the program has the largest budget allocation in all of Latin America, having been allocated USD \$7,577,442,361.25 during the 2019-2024 period.

The hybrid nature of the PJCF (Youth Training Program) conceptually represents a very favorable aspect for youth employability. However, in practice, the active labor market policy component is not being adequately utilized. This ineffectiveness manifests itself on two main fronts: first, workplace attendance is not providing young people with the desired employability, as demonstrated by the low subsequent job placement rates (26% in 2020 and 31.8% in 2022). Second, the job placement services offered through the "thirteenth month" and the National Employment Service (SNE) are also not being fully utilized, as a very low number of graduates register and actively participate in this crucial job placement stage. These findings underscore the need to review the design and implementation mechanisms of the PJCF and the "thirteenth month."

It is important to emphasize that the conclusions of this study should be interpreted considering its methodological limitations. The inability to access the comprehensive database of the Youth Building the Future Program Unit and the need to assume that the labor market integration of the control group is attributable to the services of the National Employment Service (SNE) introduce assumptions that could influence the magnitude of the estimated impact. Nevertheless, the transparency of these assumptions and the robustness of the quasi-experimental design allow the results to be considered a valid and conservative approximation of the "thirteenth month" effect.

LITERATURE CITED

- Banco Mundial. (2025). *Crecimiento del PIB (% anual)* [Base de datos].
<https://datos.bancomundial.org/indicador/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG>
- Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe (CEPAL). (2023). *Panorama Social de América Latina y el Caribe* (LC/PUB.2023/18-P/Rev.1). Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe. <https://repositorio.cepal.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/a7e44226-d41f-4a4a-b84e-f02e415bd620/content>
- Comisión Nacional de los Salarios Mínimos (CONASAMI). (2021). *El efecto del Programa "Jóvenes Construyendo el Futuro" durante la pandemia*.
https://www.gob.mx/cms/uploads/attachment/file/669952Estudio_EL_EFECTO_DEL_PROGRAMA_JCF_DURANTE_LA_PANDEMIA.pdf
- Comisión Nacional de los Salarios Mínimos (CONASAMI). (2023). *El efecto del programa Jóvenes Construyendo el Futuro usando datos de la Encuesta Nacional de Ingresos y Gastos de los Hogares 2022*.
https://www.gob.mx/cms/uploads/attachment/file/857719/El_efecto_del_programa_JCF_usando_datos_de_la_ENIGH_2022.pdf
- Consejo Nacional de Evaluación de la Política de Desarrollo Social (CONEVAL). (2022). *Estudio diagnóstico del derecho al trabajo 2022*.
- Huntington-Klein, N. (2021). *The effect: An introduction to research design and causality*. Chapman and Hall/CRC.
- Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI). (2018). *I Trimestre: Encuesta Nacional de Ocupación y Empleo (ENOE)* [Base de datos].
- Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía (INEGI). (2025). *I Trimestre: Encuesta Nacional de Ocupación y Empleo (ENOE)* [Base de datos].
- Jacinto, R. (2024). *Capacidades del servicio nacional del empleo en la implementación de la estrategia "mes trece" del programa Jóvenes Construyendo el Futuro* [Tesis de maestría, FLACSO México].
<https://www.linguee.es/espanol-ingles/traduccion/si+aplica.html>
- Ley Federal del Trabajo, [L.F.T.], reformada, Diario Oficial de la Federación, 2 de febrero de 2025, (México). <https://www.dof.gob.mx/tramites1.php?info=completa>
- López, A.M (2018). 100 compromisos de gobierno. <https://amlo.presidente.gob.mx/100-compromisos-de-gobierno/>
- Rubio Ugalde, G. J., Razo Zamora, L. A., y Loreda Castillo, L. A. (2022). Impacto de Jóvenes Construyendo el Futuro y desempleo juvenil de México. *Política Y Cultura*, (57), 109–134.
<https://doi.org/10.24275/XGVT1940>
- Secretaría del Trabajo y Previsión Social (STyPS). (2021a). *Reglas de Operación del Programa de Apoyo al Empleo*. Diario Oficial de la Federación.
<https://www.dof.gob.mx/tramites1.php?info=completa>
- Secretaría del Trabajo y Previsión Social (STyPS). (2021b). *Reglas de Operación del Programa Jóvenes Construyendo el Futuro*. Diario Oficial de la Federación.
<https://www.dof.gob.mx/tramites1.php?info=completa>
- Secretaría del Trabajo y Previsión Social (STyPS). (2022a). *Reglas de Operación del Programa de Apoyo al Empleo*. Diario Oficial de la Federación.
<https://www.dof.gob.mx/tramites1.php?info=completa>
- Secretaría del Trabajo y Previsión Social (STyPS). (2022b). *Reglas de Operación del Programa Jóvenes Construyendo el Futuro*. Diario Oficial de la Federación.
<https://www.dof.gob.mx/tramites1.php?info=completa>
- Secretaría del Trabajo y Previsión Social (STyPS). (2023a). *Reglas de Operación del Programa de Apoyo al Empleo*. Diario Oficial de la Federación.
<https://www.dof.gob.mx/tramites1.php?info=completa>
- Secretaría del Trabajo y Previsión Social (STyPS). (2023b). *Reglas de Operación del Programa Jóvenes Construyendo el Futuro*. Diario Oficial de la Federación.
<https://www.dof.gob.mx/tramites1.php?info=completa>

- Secretaría del Trabajo y Previsión Social (STyPS). (2024a). *Reglas de Operación del Programa de Apoyo al Empleo*. Diario Oficial de la Federación.
<https://www.dof.gob.mx/tramites1.php?info=completa>
- Secretaría del Trabajo y Previsión Social (STyPS). (2024b). *Reglas de Operación del Programa Jóvenes Construyendo el Futuro*. Diario Oficial de la Federación.
<https://www.dof.gob.mx/tramites1.php?info=completa>
- Secretaría del Trabajo y Previsión Social (STyPS). (2024c). *Sexto informe de labores de la Secretaría del Trabajo y Previsión Social 2023-2024*.
<https://www.linguee.es/espanol-ingles/traduccion/si+aplica.html>
- Servicio Nacional de Empleo (SNE). (2024a). *Registros administrativos del “mes trece” del PJCF* [Base de datos].
- Servicio Nacional de Empleo (SNE). (2024b). *Registros administrativos de los buscadores de trabajo durante los años 2022 y 2023* [Base de datos].
- Sumano, J. A., y Reyes, L. A. (2025). Impacto del programa Jóvenes Construyendo el Futuro en los homicidios dolosos en México. *Frontera norte*, 37(5): 1-23.
<https://doi.org/10.33679/rfn.v1i1.2404>

The logo for REMEVAL, featuring the word "REMEVAL" in a light blue, sans-serif font. The letter "e" is stylized with a yellow and blue circular graphic element behind it.

MULTI-SITE EVALUATION TO RE-EVALUATE LIFE WITH, FROM AND FROM INDIGENOUS NETWORKS AND COMMUNITIES

Carolina Irene Márquez Méndez

Acompañante e investigadora independiente / Red Nodo Norte y evaluadora emergente / EvalYouth LAC

*Author for correspondence: carolainarenamarquez@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This document analyzes the gap between government evaluation and the ways of life of Indigenous peoples in Mexico. From a life-revaluation perspective, it explores how hegemonic evaluation models, rooted in state, technocratic, and colonial logics, have reduced the complexity of community life to fragmented indicators, prioritizing administrative efficiency over dignity, mutual care, and the sustainability of multispecies life. Multi-sited evaluation is proposed as a method to decolonize public evaluation by focusing on situated, relational, and ethical processes that respect the autonomy of Indigenous peoples. In this way, it ceases to be merely technical and becomes a reflective practice that considers violations, memory, and ecosystemic needs throughout the life cycle. From this perspective, the analysis is structured with a multi-sited approach that integrates experiences from two contrasting yet complementary contexts: the Nahuatl community of Santa María Ostula, located in the coastal-mountain region of Michoacán, and an intercultural network of Nahuatl and Otomi women embroiderers living in the Monterrey Metropolitan Area. These experiences reveal the limitations of standardized evaluation models, highlighting diverse realities beyond comparative studies. The conclusion is that decolonizing evaluation involves shifting it from the exclusive domain of the State and private consultancies to a dialogue with the knowledge, practices, and experiences of Indigenous peoples, thus opening pathways for evaluation processes that are consistent with the plurality of life, autonomy, and sustainability in contemporary Mexico.

Keywords: Coloniality, situated epistemologies, collective autonomy, multispecies care.

INTRODUCTION

The realities experienced by Indigenous communities and networks in Mexico, government action, and institutional evaluation processes have historically followed divergent paths and logics. This disconnect is neither minor nor accidental:

Citation: Márquez Méndez, C.I. 2025. Multi-site evaluation to re-evaluate life with, from and from indigenous networks and communities. **REMEVAL** 1(3): 2283-300 <https://doi.org/10.63121/29bvq556>

Received:
November 12, 2025

Accepted:
December 14, 2025

Published:
December 30, 2025

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial 4.0 International license.



it reflects a structural fracture that has resulted in a sustained erosion of the balance between how public problems are addressed and the concrete conditions that sustain the lives of people and ecosystems. Within this framework, the evaluation of public action has been largely conceived from administrative and technical perspectives that remain detached from the human and multispecies bodies that experience the effects of these actions in their daily lives.

The underlying problem in this essay is that evaluation, far from being a process aimed at dignifying and protecting life, has operated as a tool for state management and, in many cases, for private economic interests. This orientation has limited its capacity to recognize the plurality of ways of life, community rhythms, and the trajectories of vulnerability experienced by Indigenous peoples in both rural and urban contexts. As a result, evaluation has become a distant, incomprehensible, or even suspect exercise for those who have been historically deprived of the possibility of deciding on their collective lives.

The difficulty in recognizing Indigenous peoples in assessments is linked to a broader pattern of colonial classification. As Bonfil (1972) pointed out, the definition of Indigenous has rested on contrast with a dominant culture, producing a distinction that seeks not to understand cultural diversity, but to manage it. In the Mexican context, this process deepened with the construction of a national identity based on *mestizaje* (racial and cultural mixing), which relegated Indigenous peoples to a pre-Hispanic past and denied their living presence in the present, especially in urban spaces (López, 2014). This denial translates into practices of assimilation, acculturation, and racialization that continue to shape how public policies are designed, implemented, and evaluated.

From this perspective, evaluation cannot be understood as a neutral exercise. On the contrary, it forms part of a power structure that, as Inclán (2018) warns, transforms specific communities into manageable populations, controlling their lives and deaths through complex bureaucratic mechanisms that expropriate their ability to decide on the meanings and forms of collective life. Within this framework, even participatory evaluation models often reproduce an instrumental logic: participation is limited to specific moments, without altering the priorities or criteria used to judge the value of a public action.

The tensions faced by Indigenous peoples in contemporary Mexico—armed conflicts, militarization, territorial dispossession, racialized displacement, multiple forms of violence, and urban precarity—reveal the limitations of these evaluative models. As documented by the Global Initiative for Indigenous Peoples' Rights in Mexico, these are processes of military and economic colonization sustained at the expense of Indigenous lives (IRPI, 2023). In parallel, as Mokrani (2011) warns,

neoliberal policies have contributed to a depoliticizing homogenization that renders invisible the distinct experiences of women, Indigenous peoples, and other marginalized groups, thus exacerbating their vulnerability.

Given this scenario, this essay begins with the premise that the evaluation of government action requires a profound rethinking. Evaluation is not an end in itself, but a means that can be strategically oriented to revalue the concrete lives of human and ecosystemic bodies that have been historically or circumstantially disregarded. From the perspective of the revaluation of life (Márquez, 2024), evaluation is conceived as a shared process that seeks to dismantle forms of vulnerability and multiple forms of violence, while strengthening dignity, multispecies mutual care, and the sustainability of life.

The thesis of this essay is that multi-sited evaluation, guided by a revaluation of life, constitutes an epistemological and political alternative for decolonizing the evaluation of government action in Mexico. This perspective allows for a reorganization of the criteria, observables, and meanings of evaluation, shifting it from its legitimizing function toward a situated process that engages with the living memory, knowledge, and practices of Indigenous peoples.

To develop this argument, the essay adopts a multi-sited approach that articulates experiences from two contrasting yet complementary contexts: the Nahuatl autonomous community of Santa María Ostula, in the coastal-mountain region of Michoacán, and an intercultural network of Nahuatl and Otomi women embroiderers living in the Monterrey Metropolitan Area. These experiences are not presented as comparative case studies, but rather as expressions of the complexity that characterizes contemporary Mexico and that challenges standardized evaluative models.

The aim of this essay is, therefore, to critically analyze the evaluation of government public action from the perspective of the revaluation of life, showing how multi-situation allows us to see the limitations of hegemonic models and open pathways for an evaluation oriented toward autonomy, dignity, and the care of life in its plurality. The following sections develop, first, a critique of the coloniality of evaluation; then, they delve into the revaluation of life as an epistemological horizon; and they explore the implications of multi-situation and its contributions to the evaluation of public action in rural and urban Indigenous contexts. Finally, they outline the legal guidelines that lead to the decolonization of evaluation and propose analytical categories from the perspective of the revaluation of life, derived from the analysis of the experiences mentioned.

DEVELOPMENT

The coloniality of evaluation and the distance from the lives of the people

Historically, the evaluation of government action in Mexico has been shaped by frameworks of rationality that prioritize administrative management, results measurement, and institutional accountability over understanding the real conditions that sustain the lives of people and ecosystems. This orientation has created a profound disconnect between evaluative processes and the everyday experiences of Indigenous peoples, a disconnect that cannot be explained solely as a technical problem, but rather as an expression of power relations rooted in colonialism.

Mexico is a country of contrasting realities; however, discontent with the design, the problematization, and the operation of public policy has been a constant shared by generations. Government inefficiencies, the distortion of the public sphere by formal or covert business interests, and the lack of resonance between policies and daily life are reflected even in international indicators, such as the Government Efficiency Index, where Mexico ranked 104th out of 193 countries in 2023. Nevertheless, as has been pointed out, a measurement of this kind says little when it is not consciously recorded in the lived reality of the people. The fundamental question is not only how efficient a government is, but for whom and at what cost to the lives of its citizens.

The difficulty in integrating Indigenous peoples into evaluation processes is closely linked to how they have been historically defined and classified. As Bonfil (1972) explained, the notion of Indigenous culture has been constructed in contrast to a dominant culture, without specifying its own content, but rather delimiting it based on what it is not. This form of definition has operated as a mechanism of exclusion that, far from recognizing the plurality of ways of life, has contributed to their subordination within national projects. In post-revolutionary Mexico, this process deepened through an identity politics based on *mestizaje* (racial mixing), which sought to generate national unity at the cost of rendering Indigenous peoples invisible and racializing them, especially in urban contexts where their living presence is denied or relegated to folklore (López, 2014).

This logic of colonial classification is not limited to the cultural sphere, but rather permeates the ways in which the State designs, implements, and evaluates its actions. Evaluation, in this sense, is not neutral. As Inclán (2018) warns, modern States tend to transform specific peoples into manageable populations, controlling their lives and deaths through complex bureaucratic structures that expropriate their ability to decide on collective life, its meanings, and its forms. From this perspective,

evaluation becomes an instrument for administering social life rather than a tool for its empowerment.

Even participatory models that have sought to incorporate the population into evaluation processes often reproduce this colonial logic. Participation, while seemingly inclusive, is limited to specific moments in the process and is organized according to externally defined priorities, generally aimed at improving public policy or government action as the ultimate goal. Within this framework, Indigenous peoples are called upon to validate diagnoses, indicators, or results, but rarely to define the criteria by which the value of an intervention is judged. This form of instrumental participation perverts the very meaning of evaluation, using communities as a means to gain legitimacy without altering the structures that produce vulnerability.

The consequences of this distance become particularly visible in contexts of heightened social and environmental tension. The trajectories of Indigenous peoples in contemporary Mexico are marked by ecocidal violence, the assassination of human rights defenders, the dispossession of their bodies and territories, racialized displacement, and massacres that are frequently erased from the national memory. As the Global Initiative for Indigenous Peoples' Rights in Mexico has pointed out, these processes constitute forms of military and economic colonization of territories, sustained at the cost of Indigenous lives (IRPI, 2023). The persistence of these dynamics demonstrates that the existence of legal frameworks or affirmative action does not, in itself, guarantee effective protection or the full realization of collective rights.

In this context, evaluation has also been used as a tool to legitimize institutions, ideologies, or political figures, reinforcing their disconnect from the concrete lives of communities. Evaluation focused solely on demonstrating efficiency, goal achievement, or quantifiable impact is insufficient to account for the social and environmental suffering experienced by Indigenous peoples. Furthermore, it contributes to normalizing forms of vulnerability by translating complex experiences into decontextualized data.

As Lugones (2011) points out, the colonial classification system aims to discourage the common good and fragment the possibility of collective organization. From this perspective, the gap between evaluation and lived experience is not accidental, but rather part of a social order sustained by the dismantling of community ties and the denial of other ways of inhabiting the world. Furthermore, as Mokrani (2011) warns, there is a depoliticization of differences that homogenizes women, Indigenous peoples, and other marginalized groups under a neutral citizenship, rendering invisible the specific conditions of their vulnerability.

This framework allows us to understand why evaluation, as it has been conceived and practiced, seems alien, incomprehensible, or even threatening to

Indigenous peoples. The distance is not only methodological; it is epistemic, political, and affective. Recognizing this coloniality of evaluation is an essential step in rethinking its foundations and opening the possibility of other ways of evaluating, oriented not toward the administration of populations, but toward the revaluation of life in its plurality. On this basis, the following section develops the approach of revaluing life as an epistemological horizon for decolonizing the evaluation of governmental public action.

The revaluation of life as the epistemological horizon of evaluation

In the face of the colonial nature of evaluation and the distance it has created from the concrete lives of Indigenous peoples, the revaluation of life is presented as an epistemological horizon that allows for a reorganization of the meaning, criteria, and evaluative practices. This approach does not stem from the need to optimize governmental public action as an ultimate goal, but rather from the urgency of sustaining life in its plurality, dignifying human and multispecies bodies, and strengthening individual and collective autonomy in contexts marked by multiple forms of vulnerability.

Since the revaluation of life, evaluation is no longer conceived as a technical exercise aimed at producing data for state management or institutional legitimation. Instead, it is redefined as a shared process of reflection, recognition, and learning rooted in the lived experience of communities. This shift implies reorganizing the energy, time, and resources involved in an evaluation, moving the emphasis from efficiency and control toward dignification, multispecies mutual care, and the sustainability of life (Márquez, 2024).

One of the central contributions of this approach is the recognition of living memory as an indispensable component of the evaluation. The trajectories of vulnerability experienced by Indigenous peoples cannot be understood through limited timeframes or isolated indicators. On the contrary, they require interpretation across the life course, integrating past experiences, present conditions, and future projections. Evaluation oriented toward the revaluation of life thus opens itself to an expanded temporality that allows for the identification of continuities, ruptures, and accumulations of harm that are often overlooked in traditional evaluative frameworks.

This approach also challenges the idea of neutrality that has historically accompanied evaluation. As noted in the previous section, evaluation has been used to manage populations, legitimize decisions, and uphold social orders that reproduce coloniality. From the perspective of revaluing life, it is recognized that all evaluation is situated and that its criteria respond to specific interests, values, and positions. Therefore, instead of concealing this political dimension, it is proposed to make it

explicit and deliberately orient it toward the dignification of life and the reduction of harm.

The revaluation of life also implies a shift in how we understand autonomy. It is not merely autonomy understood as a legal and political right against the State, but rather an autonomy that is lived and practiced in everyday life, in the collective capacity to decide how to organize life in common, how to care for bodies and territories, and how to relate to other social, state, and private actors. In this sense, evaluation is conceived as a strategic tool for strengthening autonomous processes, by offering comprehensive resources that allow for informed decisions consistent with one's own living conditions.

The emphasis on multispecies mutual care constitutes another fundamental axis of this epistemological horizon. The revaluation of life recognizes the interdependence between human bodies, territories, and ecosystems, and challenges the anthropocentric and utilitarian logics that have guided both public action and its evaluation. From this perspective, evaluation also implies questioning the impacts of governmental actions on the Earth's cycles, on ecosystem health, and on the relationships that sustain life beyond the human realm. This recognition broadens the evaluative field and connects it to the sustainability of life in a wide and relational sense.

In contrast to evaluative models that fragment reality into isolated components, the revaluation of life proposes a systemic and relational understanding. Evaluation becomes a space for articulating knowledge, ways of thinking and feeling, and practices that emerge from collective experience, recognizing that there are multiple forms of evaluation that have not always been named as such. In many Indigenous communities, assembly processes, collective deliberations, and shared decisions constitute evaluative exercises in themselves, even if they do not conform to institutional formats or have systematic documentation.

This recognition does not imply idealizing community practices or ignoring their internal tensions, but rather opening the possibility of supporting and strengthening these processes through collaboration and respect. The revaluation of life understands evaluation as a process of trial and error, where collective learning is built through doing, at the pace of each community and according to its material and emotional conditions. In contexts marked by armed conflict, clientelistic dynamics, or excessive workloads, this flexibility is essential to avoid reproducing new forms of vulnerability in the name of evaluation.

Multi-situation as an analytical key to understanding complexity

In this essay, multi-situation is not presented as a methodological strategy for contrasting cases, nor as a comparative resource aimed at identifying regularities. On the contrary, it is assumed to be an analytical key that allows us to understand the complexity of the realities that shape contemporary Mexico and, thereby, to highlight the limitations of standardized evaluative models. Multi - situation opens the possibility of articulating experiences that, although distinct in their territorial, historical, and political configuration, share structural conditions of vulnerability produced by coloniality , racialization , and the denial of autonomy.

Thinking about evaluation from a multi-situated perspective means moving away from the logic that seeks to homogenize reality under universal categories and administrative timelines. It involves recognizing that the ways of life of Indigenous peoples are not organized according to institutional calendars or the time constraints that typically guide the evaluation of public policies. In this sense, multi-situation allows us to broaden our perspective to integrate experiences that unfold at profoundly different scales, paces, and contexts, without forcing them to fit into a single interpretive framework.

The experiences underpinning this analysis come from two contrasting yet complementary contexts: the Nahua autonomous community of Santa María Ostula , located in the coastal-mountain region of Michoacán, and an intercultural network of Nahua and Otomi women embroiderers living in the Monterrey Metropolitan Area. These realities are not presented as representative cases or comparable units of analysis. Their analytical relevance lies in the fact that, when considered together, they allow us to appreciate a mosaic of experiences that reveals how coloniality operates in different ways in rural and urban areas, and how these differences affect the very possibility of evaluating government public action.

In the case of Ostula , community life is shaped by an active armed conflict, protracted legal processes, and a constant defense of their body-territory. These conditions create an environment where the priority is the preservation of life and collective integrity, and where the time available for external processes, such as institutional evaluation, is limited and contingent. Evaluation, understood from traditional frameworks, is alien to this reality, as it fails to capture the complexity of the decisions made daily to sustain life in a context of constant risk. From a multi-sited perspective, this experience demonstrates that evaluating without considering the conflict, militarization, and history of dispossession leads to partial interpretations that obscure the real conditions under which public action unfolds.

Meanwhile, the experience of the network of Nahua and Otomi women embroiderers in the Monterrey Metropolitan Area reveals another form of vulnerability, marked by urban racialization and the denial of Indigenous roots in a

region where the founding narrative is constructed from the Spanish colonial period. In this context, community life is woven under conditions of temporary insecurity, excessive workload, and institutional distrust, the product of trajectories of exclusion and the instrumental use of participation. This multifaceted situation allows us to recognize that, even in the absence of a visible armed conflict, urban dynamics produce forms of erosion and vulnerability that also affect the possibility of participating in and taking ownership of evaluative processes.

Taken together, these experiences show that there is no single valid way to evaluate, nor a universal model capable of responding to the plurality of realities experienced by Indigenous peoples. Multi-situational assessment does not seek to establish equivalencies or hierarchies between contexts, but rather to recognize that each experience embodies specific conditions that require their own criteria, rhythms, and languages. From this perspective, standardized assessment proves insufficient not only because of its technical rigidity, but also because it presupposes a homogeneity that does not exist in the real lives of these communities.

The multifaceted nature of the situation also highlights how evaluation has historically been a distant and, at times, incomprehensible exercise for Indigenous peoples. In both contexts, difficulties emerge in understanding the true scope of an evaluation, linked to a history of vulnerability that includes clientelism, institutional deception, mistreatment, and symbolic violence. The expectation that an evaluation will produce immediate changes coexists with the repeated experience of processes that do not lead to substantive improvements. This tension reveals that evaluation, as it has been practiced, has not taken root in daily life nor generated trust as a tool for collective decision-making.

From the perspective of revaluing life, multi-situation becomes a way to integrate what is often overlooked in evaluative exercises. It allows us to recognize that rural and urban experiences are not opposites, but rather part of a network of realities that share structural challenges, even though they are experienced differently. This integration of the excluded enables a broader understanding of social complexity and opens the door to evaluative processes built on the acceptance of plurality, instead of imposing a single set of criteria.

In this sense, multi-situational assessment is not a resource for accumulating information, but rather a way of interpreting reality that demands flexibility, listening, and openness to learning. It implies recognizing that evaluation processes must adapt to the rhythms of community life, not the other way around, and that the viability of an assessment aimed at revaluing life depends on the capacity to generate a common ground of understanding, trust, and shared meaning. This analytical framework ultimately allows us to situate assessment as a relational practice that is built in dialogue with the bodies, territories, and living memories of communities.

On this basis, the following section addresses the implications that this multi-sited approach has for the evaluation of government public action, particularly with regard to the reorganization of criteria, analytical units and decision horizons oriented towards the dignification, mutual care and sustainability of life.

Legal and political support for decolonizing evaluation

The proposal for a multi-sited evaluation aimed at revaluing life does not arise in a normative vacuum. On the contrary, it is embedded in a legal and political framework that recognizes, at least formally, the collective rights of Indigenous peoples and their right to self-determination. However, as previously noted, the existence of this normative framework has not been sufficient to transform the practices through which the State designs, implements, and evaluates public action. In this sense, the law operates here not as an automatic guarantee, but as a strategic support from which it is possible to contest the meaning of the evaluation and reorient it toward the dignification of life.

In the Mexican context, Indigenous peoples have a constitutional framework that articulates individual and collective human rights. Among these, the right to self-determination occupies a central place. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples establishes that “Indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development” (UN, 2008, Article 3). This recognition is not limited to a symbolic dimension, but rather implies the real possibility of deciding on processes that affect collective life, including those linked to governmental public action.

In addition, Convention 169 of the International Labour Organization, ratified by the Mexican State, states that “special measures shall be taken as necessary to safeguard the persons, institutions, property, labour, cultures and environment of the peoples concerned” (ILO, 1989, Article 4.1). This provision underscores that the protection of indigenous peoples cannot be reduced to formal inclusion in public policies, but rather requires specific measures that recognize their own ways of life, organization, and relationship with the land. From this perspective, the evaluation of public action should constitute one of these special measures, aimed at ensuring that state interventions do not perpetuate harm or violations.

However, as Inclán (2024) has warned, in institutional practice a logic of “inclusion by exclusion” persists, whereby Indigenous peoples are incorporated into participatory processes without this implying a real redistribution of decision-making power. This dynamic is also reproduced in evaluation, where participation is often limited to validating predefined diagnoses or results, without opening up space to

question the criteria used to assess the merit or value of a public action. Thus, the legal framework coexists with practices that continue to manage the lives of Indigenous peoples from external and hierarchical positions.

Legal support is especially relevant in contexts where violations are persistent and manifest in multiple dimensions: militarization, territorial dispossession, racialized displacement, violence against human rights defenders, and urban precarity. As has been documented, these processes not only violate specific rights but also comprehensively affect the possibility of sustaining life with dignity. In this scenario, evaluation focused on the revaluation of life is presented as a way to translate legally recognized rights into concrete practices that allow for the identification of harm, the prevention of further violations, and the strengthening of collective autonomy.

From this perspective, evaluation ceases to be a technical exercise subordinated to the logic of institutional accountability and becomes a political space where the very meaning of rights is contested. Evaluating from the perspective of revaluing life implies asking whether a public action effectively contributes to guaranteeing dignity, multispecies mutual care, and the sustainability of life, beyond its formal compliance or administrative efficiency. This question finds support in the regulatory framework, but it demands a situated reinterpretation that engages with the specific conditions of each community and territory.

The right to self-determination, understood from this perspective, is not limited to autonomy in legal and political terms vis-à-vis the State, but extends to the capacity of Indigenous peoples to define the criteria by which public interventions are evaluated. Multi-sited evaluation aligns with this principle by proposing that Indigenous peoples participate not only as informants or beneficiaries, but as active subjects in constructing the criteria, observables, and interpretations that guide the evaluative judgment. In this way, evaluation becomes a tool for exercising self-determination in everyday practice.

Furthermore, the regulatory framework allows for broadening the discussion to include other groups that, while not enjoying the same level of constitutional recognition, face similar forms of systemic vulnerability. Displaced persons, Afro-descendant communities, stateless persons, and other marginalized groups share the experience of being evaluated using frameworks that fail to acknowledge their specific living conditions. The proposal to decolonize evaluation, already supported by law in the case of Indigenous peoples, thus opens the possibility of rethinking evaluation as a broader collective right, linked to the protection of life in contexts of diversity and inequality.

Implications for the evaluation of public action: analytical categories from the revaluation of life

The analytical journey developed thus far allows us to argue that the decolonization of the evaluation of government action is not limited to conceptual critique or normative reconfiguration. It also requires translating into analytical criteria that allow us to reorganize how public action is perceived, interpreted, and valued in relation to the concrete lives of Indigenous peoples. From the perspective of revaluing life, these categories do not operate as closed technical indicators, but rather as analytical frameworks that guide the evaluative gaze toward dignity, multispecies mutual care, and the sustainability of life.

The categories developed below are not presented as empirical findings or as the conclusive results of a specific project, but rather as conceptual contributions that emerge from the dialogue between the critique of the coloniality of evaluation, the multi-sited approach, and the previously reviewed legal and political framework. Their value lies in their ability to broaden the evaluative field, shifting it from an instrumental logic toward a relational and situated understanding.

Comprehensive care for multispecies life

The first analytical category proposes placing the holistic care of multispecies life at the center of public action evaluation. From this perspective, evaluation involves questioning how government interventions impact health, nutrition, earth cycles, ecosystem balance, and the care practices that sustain daily life. This category challenges evaluative approaches that fragment reality into isolated sectors—health, environment, and social development—without recognizing the interdependencies that exist among them.

The holistic care of multispecies life also incorporates the recognition of living ancestral knowledge and practices, which have allowed Indigenous peoples to sustain their relationship with the land and ecosystems over time. From this perspective of revaluing life, this knowledge is not seen as secondary cultural inputs, but as fundamental for evaluating the coherence of public action with the conditions necessary for life. In this sense, evaluation shifts its focus from quantifiable results to relational, sensory, and symbolic dimensions that are often overlooked within institutional frameworks.

Care-oriented communications and transportation

A second analytical category refers to communication and mobility conditions as central components of life care. From this perspective, the evaluation of public

action incorporates an analysis of the languages, formats, and channels through which information is communicated, as well as the transportation infrastructures and practices that facilitate, or hinder, access to services, rights, and spaces for participation.

This category allows us to question the neutrality of communication and mobility designs, by highlighting how linguistic exclusion, the digital divide, and transportation insecurity affect women, older adults, people with disabilities, and other groups differently. Evaluating from a care perspective involves assessing whether communication and transportation systems promote dignity, accessibility, and equity, or whether they perpetuate conditions of vulnerability and risk.

From the perspective of revaluing life, this category broadens the evaluative field by recognizing that the possibility of participating in collective processes, including evaluative ones, depends largely on these material conditions. Thus, evaluation shifts from a focus on operational efficiency to a broader appreciation of the conditions that enable or restrict the exercise of autonomy in everyday life.

Harm reduction and violation prevention

Harm reduction is presented as a third key analytical category for evaluating public action. This category stems from the recognition that many government interventions, even when presented as beneficial, can generate unforeseen negative impacts or exacerbate existing vulnerabilities. Evaluating from the perspective of revaluing life implies developing a particular sensitivity to identify these risks and to analyze the capacity of public actions to prevent, mitigate, or repair harm.

Harm reduction incorporates active listening and shared analysis of the experiences of those who live with the consequences of public action. From this perspective, evaluation is not limited to measuring positive impacts, but rather extends to recognizing tensions, conflicts, and unintended consequences that affect the dignity and sustainability of life. This category is especially relevant in contexts marked by armed conflict, militarization, or dynamics of multiple forms of violence, where any intervention can have profound repercussions on the social fabric.

Furthermore, harm reduction is linked to the ability to establish preventative agreements and early warning mechanisms that allow for anticipating conflicts and addressing them before they escalate. In this sense, assessment becomes a tool for strengthening shared responsibility and collective care, rather than simply operating as an ex-post exercise in accountability.

Social reorganization of care and autonomy

A fourth analytical category focuses on the social reorganization of care as a condition for individual and collective autonomy. From the perspective of revaluing life, evaluating public action involves analyzing how care work is distributed, recognized, and valued in community life, and how public policies influence this organization. This category challenges evaluative models that ignore care burdens or treat them as variables external to the analysis.

The social reorganization of care makes visible gender inequalities and the specific conditions faced by women, older adults, and people with special needs. By incorporating this dimension, the evaluation focuses on assessing whether public action contributes to strengthening autonomy and dignity, or whether it reproduces systems that overburden certain bodies and groups. This perspective aligns with the recognition of the plurality of experiences and the need to create differentiated conditions for achieving a dignified life.

Documentation, living memory and decision-making

Finally, a fifth analytical category refers to documentation and living memory as central elements of decolonized evaluation. From this perspective, evaluation is not only about producing data for the present, but also about building records that allow us to sustain the historicity of experiences and support decision-making over time. This category challenges the short-term nature of many institutional evaluations and proposes a perspective that integrates past, present, and future.

Situated documentation, guided by a reevaluation of life, is conceived as a tool to strengthen the voice of Indigenous peoples and to collectively validate the analyses that emerge from experience. By recognizing living memory as a legitimate source of knowledge, evaluation becomes a process that contributes to autonomy and the collective capacity to influence decisions that affect communal life.

CONCLUSIONS

This essay began by recognizing a structural gap between the evaluation of government action and the ways of life of Indigenous peoples in Mexico. Throughout its development, it was shown that this gap is not a technical or circumstantial problem, but rather the result of a historical configuration rooted in the coloniality of the state, the racialization of bodies, and the subordination of life to administrative, instrumental, and utilitarian logics. From this perspective, evaluation

has functioned more as a mechanism for institutional management and legitimation than as a tool aimed at dignifying and protecting life.

The first analytical conclusion drawn from this work is that hegemonic evaluation models are insufficient to understand and value the complexity of Indigenous peoples' lives. By prioritizing fragmented indicators, short timeframes, and externally defined criteria, evaluation has rendered invisible trajectories of vulnerability, living memories, and fundamental ecosystemic conditions essential for sustaining life. This inadequacy cannot be remedied with technical adjustments or the superficial incorporation of participatory mechanisms, as the problem lies in the epistemological assumptions that guide the evaluation itself.

Secondly, the analysis suggests that revaluing life constitutes a viable epistemological and political horizon for decolonizing the evaluation of government action. By reorganizing evaluation around dignity, multispecies mutual care, and the sustainability of life, this approach shifts the focus of evaluative judgment from institutional efficiency to the concrete conditions that enable or hinder living with dignity. Evaluation thus ceases to be a means of optimizing policies and becomes a relational, situated, and ethically oriented process capable of recognizing harm, preventing further violations, and strengthening collective autonomy.

A third conclusion relates to the contribution of multi-situation as an analytical key. The essay showed that considering evaluation from a multi-situation perspective allows us to understand the complexity of contemporary Mexico without homogenizing or hierarchizing experiences. The rural and urban realities of Indigenous communities cannot be addressed from a single, standardized evaluative framework, since each context is shaped by specific historical, territorial, and political conditions. Multi-situation does not operate as a comparative technique, but rather as a way of interpreting that integrates what has been excluded and expands the field of what can be evaluated, revealing the limitations of universal models.

Fourth, the normative analysis concluded that the proposal for a multi-sited evaluation aimed at revaluing life has significant legal and political support, particularly regarding the right to self-determination and the State's obligations to adopt special measures to safeguard the lives, institutions, and territories of Indigenous peoples. However, the study showed that this normative support does not automatically translate into evaluative practices consistent with these rights. Therefore, decolonizing evaluation implies challenging the meaning of its application, reorienting it toward the effective exercise of autonomy and not merely toward formal compliance with the law.

A fifth conclusion concerns the essay's contribution to the field of evaluation, expressed in the formulation of analytical categories oriented toward the revaluation of life. Categories such as the holistic care of multispecies life, harm reduction, the

social reorganization of care, and situated documentation broaden the evaluative horizon and offer conceptual tools for reinterpreting public action from the perspective of concrete life. These categories are not fixed indicators or operational formulas, but rather analytical frameworks that can guide evaluative processes sensitive to plurality, community rhythms, and ecosystemic conditions.

Furthermore, by explicitly stating the epistemological and ethical stance from which the analysis is constructed, the essay avoids the illusion of neutrality and assumes the responsibility of producing knowledge committed to the dignification of life. This approach does not seek to replace the autonomous evaluations carried out by the people themselves, but rather to engage in dialogue with them and contribute to the construction of shared meanings. Consequently, decolonizing evaluation is considered an open, transitional, and necessarily collective process. It is not about replacing one model with another, but about opening pathways so that evaluation ceases to be an alien practice and becomes a tool at the service of life.

In a context marked by socio-environmental collapse, violence, and the fragility of institutional frameworks, multi-sited evaluation oriented towards the revaluation of life is presented as a seed to strengthen autonomy, repair damaged bonds, and sustain life in common with dignity.

LITERATURE CITED

- Bonfil Batalla, G. (1972). *El concepto de indio en América: una categoría de la situación colonial*. Instituto Nacional Indigenista.
- Inclán, D. (2018). *El problema del Estado en América Latina*. Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.
- Iniciativa Global por los Derechos de los Pueblos Indígenas en México. (2023). *Colonización militar, despojo territorial y resistencia indígena en México*. IRPI.
- López, R. (2014). *Mestizaje, racialización y negación de lo indígena en el México urbano contemporáneo*. *Revista Mexicana de Ciencias Sociales*, 59(2), 45–67.
- Lugones, M. (2011). *Hacia un feminismo descolonial*. *La Manzana de la Discordia*, 6(2), 105–119.
- Márquez Méndez, C. (2016). *Participación, organización y vida colectiva en contextos rurales*. Editorial Académica.
- Márquez Méndez, C. (2024). *Revaloración de la vida: fundamentos para una evaluación situada y descolonizada*. Manuscrito en preparación.
- Mokrani, D. (2011). *Movimientos sociales, Estado y alternativas en América Latina*. En D. Mokerani (Coord.), *Crisis civilizatoria y cambio social* (pp. 23–54). CLACSO.
- Organización Internacional del Trabajo. (1989). *Convenio 169 sobre pueblos indígenas y tribales en países independientes*. OIT.
- Organización de las Naciones Unidas. (2008). *Declaración de las Naciones Unidas sobre los Derechos de los Pueblos Indígenas*. ONU.

SOCIAL CAPITAL AND RURAL COOPERATION IN PEASANT LEARNING COMMUNITIES OF THE SEMBRANDO VIDA PROGRAM: A SOCIAL EVALUATION IN TLAXCALA

Deniss Scarlet Morales Arellano¹, Aurelio León-Merino¹, Oscar Figueroa-Rodríguez^{1*}, Emmanuel Montero Monsalvo¹, Mayra Patricia Pérez Román²

¹Posgrado de Socioeconomía Estadística e Informática-Desarrollo Rural, Colegio de Postgraduados campus Montecillo.

²Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México, México.

*Author for correspondence: figueroa@colpos.mx

ABSTRACT

Government's main strategies aimed at addressing rural poverty, promoting food self-sufficiency, and strengthening the social fabric through community organization. Within this framework, the objective of this research was to evaluate the contribution of the Sembrando Vida Program's Farmer Learning Communities (CACs) to social capital formation and rural cooperation in the municipalities of Españita, Hueyotlipan, and Xaltocan, Tlaxcala. A quantitative study was conducted using a structured questionnaire administered to a non-probability sample of 50 beneficiaries from six CACs. The instrument included indicators related to the satisfaction of basic needs, participation in community organization, and levels of trust and cooperation among members. The data were processed using SPSS software. The results show that the CACs have partially contributed to strengthening social bonds, particularly in terms of coexistence, cooperation, and basic organization. However, they face limitations such as: concentration of leadership, low participation from certain groups, and tensions arising from the program's institutional context. Furthermore, it was identified that the program fulfills a social rather than a productive role, allocating financial aid primarily to meet essential needs (food, health, and housing), and to a lesser extent, to expenses related to productive activities. It is concluded that Community Agricultural Cooperatives (CACs) are important for building social capital in rural areas, but their impact depends on strengthening the participation, technical training, and autonomy of producers through institutional adjustments.

Keywords: Rural development, social programs, peasant communities, public policies.

Citation: Morales Arellano, D.S., León-Merino, A., Figueroa-Rodríguez, O., Montero Monsalvo, E., Pérez Román, M.P. 2025. Social capital and rural cooperation in Peasant Learning Communities of the Sembrando Vida Program: a social evaluation in Tlaxcala. *REMEVAL* 1(3): 301-320. <https://doi.org/10.63121/48dmbz74>

Received:

November 11, 2025

Accepted:

December 13, 2025

Published:

December 30, 2025

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial 4.0 International license.



INTRODUCTION

In Mexico, the persistence of rural poverty and social inequality has historically been one of the main challenges for public policy. Despite the numerous strategies implemented by the State to address the structural deficiencies of large sectors of the population, conditions of disadvantage continue to be evident in rural communities, linked to insufficient income, limited access to basic services, and precarious productive activities. These problems are not only reflected in economic indicators but also in the weakening of community ties, the fragmentation of the social fabric, mistrust among local actors, and a decline in collective capacity to face the challenges of rural development (Barba, 2015; CONEVAL, 2022).

In this context, social programs have been conceived as central instruments of social policy to mitigate the effects of poverty and improve the living conditions of the population. Starting in the 1990s, Mexico systematically adopted cash transfer schemes, initially conditional, aimed at strengthening the human capital of families living in poverty through access to education, health, and food (SEDESOL, 2005; Barba, 2016). While these programs achieved significant progress in reducing income poverty, various studies have documented their limitations in having a sustained impact on transforming productive structures and, particularly, on rebuilding the social fabric in rural areas, where dynamics of exclusion, institutional dependence, and weak community organization persist (Barba, 2015; Martínez, 2020).

The program's design stems from the recognition that rural problems are not limited to insufficient income, but are deeply linked to the loss of organizational capacity, community fragmentation, and weakened social participation. In this sense, the Community Action Committees (CACs) incorporate elements of farmer field schools, rural extension services, and adult education, promoting knowledge sharing, cooperation, and collective decision-making regarding agricultural and community work (Manzo *et al.*, 2007; Aguilar *et al.*, 2010). Likewise, the program relies on agroforestry systems such as the Agroforestry Production System (SAF) and the Intercropped Maize with Fruit Trees (MIAF), which aim to integrate food production, environmental conservation, and income diversification in contexts of high socio-environmental vulnerability (Turrent *et al.*, 2017; Altieri & Toledo, 2011).

However, despite the institutional and budgetary importance of the Sembrando Vida Program, empirical social evaluations analyzing the effects of the Peasant Learning Communities at the local level remain limited. Most existing studies have focused on regulatory, productive, or environmental aspects, neglecting organizational dynamics, trust relationships, cooperation processes, and the forms of coexistence that develop within the Communities. This lack of evidence is particularly relevant in territories where moderate poverty and social disadvantage

coexistence that develop within the Communities. This lack of evidence is particularly relevant in territories where moderate poverty and social disadvantage continue to be prevalent, as is the case in the state of Tlaxcala (CONEVAL, 2022).

="b`h`Y`a`i`b`M`U`j`h`y`g`c`Z`9`g`U`j`h`z`<`i`Y`n`h`j`d`U`b`z`U`b`X`L`U`r`W`b`z`c`W`h`X`j`b`h`Y`W`b`h`U`f`Y`j`c`b`c`Z`h`Y`g`H`U`W`U`z`g`f`i`W`i`f`U`d`f`c`V`Y`a`g`d`f`g`g`z`j`b`W`X`j`b`g`c`X`j`f`U`X`j`c`b`z`k`U`h`f`g`M`V`h`z`j`a`j`h`X`d`f`c`X`i`W`j`Y`X`j`Y`f`g`Z`W`j`c`b`z`U`b`X`X`d`Y`b`X`b`W`c`b`c`k`!`n`j`X`W`c`d`g`5`W`f`X`j`b`l`c`X`L`U`Z`c`a`7`C`B`9`J`5`@`f`R`S`&`z`U`g`j`b`j`Z`W`b`h`d`f`c`d`e`f`h`c`b`c`Z`h`Y`d`c`d`i`U`j`c`b`j`b`h`Y`g`y`c`W`j`h`y`g`j`Y`g`j`b`a`c`X`f`U`h`d`c`j`Y`h`z`k`j`W`f`y`g`f`M`g`h`Y`Y`W`b`c`a`j`W`U`b`X`g`c`W`U`X`j`Y`c`d`a`Y`b`h`c`d`d`e`f`h`i`j`h`y`g`z`c`f`Z`f`a`j`b`j`Z`a`j`j`Y`g`U`b`X`f`Y`j`b`z`c`f`V`g`h`Y`f`X`d`Y`b`X`b`W`c`b`g`c`W`U`d`f`c`f`l`a`g`="`b`h`g`W`b`h`l`z`h`Y`G`a`V`U`b`X`c`j`X`U`f`c`k`j`b`j`@`Z`L`D`f`c`f`l`a`j`Y`a`Y`f`Y`g`U`g`U`f`Y`Y`U`b`i`j`b`h`f`j`Y`b`h`c`b`z`c`f`U`b`U`m`j`b`k`j`h`Y`f`h`Y`Y`W`b`c`a`j`M`g`d`d`e`f`h`i`j`U`b`X`c`f`j`U`j`b`U`d`f`c`W`g`y`g`d`f`c`a`c`h`X`h`f`c`i`j`h`Y`7`c`a`a`i`b`j`m`j`5`W`j`c`b`7`c`a`a`j`h`Y`g`f`7`5`7`g`j`Z`Z`M`j`Y`n`W`b`h`f`i`h`Y`h`c`g`f`Y`b`j`h`Y`b`j`b`j`g`c`W`U`W`d`j`U`U`b`X`f`Y`j`Y`b`f`U`j`b`j`h`Y`g`c`W`U`Z`W`j`W`h`h`Y`W`a`a`i`b`j`m`j`Y`"

6U`j`X`c`b`h`Y`g`y`W`b`g`X`f`U`j`c`b`g`z`h`g`U`f`j`W`U`j`a`g`h`c`W`b`X`i`W`U`g`c`W`U`j`Y`U`i`U`j`c`b`c`Z`h`Y`:`U`f`a`Y`f`@`Y`f`j`b`j`7`c`a`a`i`b`j`h`Y`g`f`7`5`7`g`c`Z`h`Y`G`a`V`U`b`X`c`j`j`X`U`D`f`c`f`l`a`j`b`j`h`Y`a`i`b`j`M`U`j`h`y`g`c`Z`9`g`U`j`h`z`<`i`Y`n`h`j`d`U`b`z`U`b`X`L`U`r`W`b`z`H`U`W`U`z`h`f`c`i`j`U`b`U`n`g`g`c`Z`g`c`W`U`W`d`j`U`U`b`X`f`i`f`U`W`c`d`Y`f`U`j`c`b`"i`g`j`b`j`U`e`i`U`b`h`j`U`j`Y`U`d`d`f`c`U`W`U`b`X`U`g`f`i`W`i`f`Y`X`e`i`Y`g`j`c`b`b`j`f`Y`z`h`Y`g`i`X`m`g`Y`g`h`c`j`X`b`h`Z`n`h`Y`Y`i`h`b`h`c`k`j`W`h`Y`7`5`7`g`j`U`j`Y`W`b`h`f`i`h`X`h`c`g`f`Y`b`j`h`Y`b`j`b`j`i`f`i`g`z`c`f`j`U`j`b`U`j`c`b`z`U`b`X`W`c`d`Y`f`U`j`c`b`U`a`c`b`j`d`f`c`X`i`W`f`g`z`U`g`k`Y`U`g`c`k`h`Y`Y`W`b`c`a`j`M`g`d`d`e`f`h`i`j`g`i`g`X`h`c`W`j`Y`f`U`g`W`b`Y`Y`g`"H`Y`j`c`U`j`g`h`c`d`f`c`j`X`Y`Y`a`d`j`f`W`j`Y`j`X`b`W`h`U`i`U`c`k`g`z`c`f`U`b`i`b`X`Y`g`U`b`X`j`b`j`c`Z`h`Y`d`f`c`f`l`a`j`g`g`W`d`Y`U`b`X`j`a`j`U`j`c`b`g`Z`c`a`U`g`c`W`U`U`b`X`h`f`f`j`h`c`f`j`U`d`Y`f`g`j`W`j`Y`Z`W`b`h`f`i`h`j`b`j`h`c`h`Y`U`W`X`a`j`W`X`Y`U`Y`U`b`X`h`Y`j`a`d`f`c`j`Y`a`Y`b`i`c`Z`d`i`V`j`W`d`c`j`M`j`g`U`j`a`Y`X`U`i`f`i`f`U`X`j`Y`c`d`a`Y`b`j`b`A`Y`j`W`"

ANALYTIC AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The social evaluation of public programs in rural contexts requires an analytical framework that allows us to understand not only the immediate economic effects of interventions, but also the social processes activated in these territories. In this sense, social policy aimed at rural development must be analyzed from a comprehensive perspective that considers the structural conditions of poverty, the organizational capacities of communities, and the strength of the social bonds that sustain collective life. According to Barba (2015), social policies in Latin America have historically favored cash transfer schemes as a strategy to alleviate poverty; however, their reach is often limited when they are not accompanied by processes that strengthen social capital and community capacities.

Contemporary social programs, such as *Sembrando Vida*, are part of an approach that recognizes well-being as a multidimensional phenomenon, in which income improvement must be linked to access to services, social organization, and community participation (CONEVAL, 2022). In rural areas, these dimensions are particularly relevant due to the persistence of structural deficiencies that limit economic self-sufficiency and weaken the social fabric. While cash transfers help alleviate immediate needs such as food, health, and housing, several authors warn that, on their own, they do not guarantee the eradication of poverty or the transformation of the social conditions that perpetuate it (Barba, 2016; Martínez, 2020). Hence the importance of analyzing the structural limitations of these types of interventions and their integration with organizational and educational processes.

In this context, the concept of social capital is central to understanding the social effects of rural programs. Bourdieu (1986) defines social capital as the set of real or potential resources associated with possessing a lasting network of relationships based on mutual knowledge and recognition. From a territorial perspective, Bebbington (1999) points out that social capital is a fundamental asset for rural communities to mobilize resources, strengthen their capacity for collective action, and cope with vulnerable situations. Pretty (2003), for her part, emphasizes that cooperation, trust, and social networks are key elements for the success of rural development initiatives, especially in contexts where material resources are limited.

The importance of social capital in rural areas is expressed in its capacity to sustain mutual aid practices, facilitate knowledge exchange, and strengthen organizational processes. In peasant communities, social capital is built not only through formal relationships but also through daily life, shared cultural practices, and collective work. These elements allow communities to develop adaptation strategies in the face of adverse conditions such as poverty, food insecurity, and environmental degradation (Torres, 2008).

Closely linked to social capital is the concept of social fabric, understood as the network of relationships, values, and norms that enable coexistence, cooperation, and community organization. According to the Secretariat of Public Security (2011), the social fabric is sustained by bonds of trust, solidarity, and participation, and is weakened when conditions of poverty, inequality, and exclusion limit people's capacity to interact in a supportive manner. In rural contexts, the fragility of the social fabric manifests itself in low community participation, the concentration of leadership, and distrust of institutions, which restricts the possibilities for collective action.

The dimensions of trust, coexistence, cooperation, and organization constitute operational components of the social fabric and are fundamental to its empirical

analysis. Trust facilitates the exchange of knowledge and collaboration; coexistence strengthens community ties; cooperation allows for the coordination of efforts to achieve common goals; and organization articulates these relationships into structures that guide collective action (Yáñez *et al.*, 2006; Velásquez, 2007). In poverty-stricken settings, these dimensions are often strained by resource scarcity and unequal power relations, making their evaluation essential in social programs with territorial reach.

Within this context are the Farmer Learning Communities (CACs) of the Sembrando Vida Program, conceived as spaces for community gathering, training, and organization. The CACs incorporate elements of farmer field schools and rural extension services, promoting collective learning based on experience, knowledge sharing, and experimentation within the community itself (Aguilar *et al.*, 2010; Guevara *et al.*, 2003). They also draw on principles of adult education, where knowledge is constructed horizontally and contextually, recognizing the prior knowledge of the producers (Manzo *et al.*, 2007).

From this perspective, Community Action Centers (CACs) function not only as a technical training mechanism but also as a social space that strengthens community ties and promotes rural cooperation. The regular interaction between producers and technicians, as well as the implementation of collective activities, creates favorable conditions for building social capital and regenerating the social fabric in rural communities.

Finally, the study relies on the theory of change as an analytical framework for interpretation, rather than as a strict causal model, to understand the role of the Peasant Learning Communities within the Sembrando Vida Program. From this perspective, it is assumed that the program's inputs (monetary transfers, technical and social support, and the creation of formal organizational spaces) are linked to collective activities developed in the Learning Communities, which generate immediate outputs related to community life, basic organization, and knowledge sharing. In the long term, these outputs impact the strengthening of cooperation and organization, and potentially community well-being (Retolaza, 2010; Rogers, 2014). In this sense, the theory of change helps to guide the understanding of the Learning Communities' contribution to the regeneration of the social fabric in impoverished rural contexts, recognizing that these results are conditioned by institutional, organizational, and territorial factors, and are not automatic effects of public intervention.

METHODOLOGY

This research was conducted using a quantitative approach, with a cross-sectional, non-experimental, and evaluative-perceptual design, aimed at analyzing the social effects of the Sembrando Vida Program based on the direct experiences of its beneficiaries. This approach allowed for the measurement, at a specific point in time, of perceptions associated with the operation of the Farmer Learning Communities (CACs), particularly in relation to the building of social capital, rural cooperation, and the use of the economic support provided by the program. The cross-sectional design is relevant for social evaluation studies in rural contexts, where longitudinal access to the population is often limited by institutional, territorial, and political factors.

Study area

The study was conducted in the state of Tlaxcala, specifically in the municipalities of Españita, Hueyotlipan, and Xaltocan, which exhibit structural conditions of moderate poverty and social deprivation. These municipalities were selected due to their participation in the Sembrando Vida Program and the active presence of Community Action Boards (CACs). According to information from the 2020 Population and Housing Census, these areas have a high proportion of rural population engaged in small-scale agricultural activities (Table 1).

Table 1. Population of the study area.

Municipality	Total population	Female population		Male population	
		Total	Percentage	Total	Percentage
Little Spain	9416	4830	51.30	4586	48.70
Hueyotlipan	15190	7764	51.11	7426	48.89
Xaltocan	10601	5588	52.71	5013	47.29

Source: Prepared by the author using data from the 2020 Population and Housing Census of INEGI.

Likewise, data from CONEVAL (2022) show that Hueyotlipan has the highest percentage of population living in moderate poverty, followed by Españita and Xaltocan (Table 2), which reinforces the territorial relevance of the analysis.

Table 2. Prepared by the author using information from the Annual Report on the Situation of Poverty and Social Backwardness 2022.

Poverty	Municipalities		
	Little Spain	Hueyotlipa	Xaltocan
Moderate	64.29%	72.50%	48.47%
Extreme	7.40%	13.22%	5.64%

Source: Prepared by the author using data from the 2020 Population and Housing Census of INEGI.

Population and sample

The study population consisted of active beneficiaries of the Sembrando Vida Program, members of the Peasant Learning Communities in the selected municipalities. A non-probability convenience sampling method was used, considering the following inclusion criteria: a) belonging to the Sembrando Vida Program, b) being part of an active Peasant Learning Community, c) residing in one of the study municipalities, and d) expressing willingness to participate voluntarily in the research.

In total, 50 questionnaires were administered to producers belonging to six Farmer Learning Communities: Ocelotzin , Productores Española, La Costa, Sobre el Camino Grande, Unión de Campesinos en Desarrollo, and Forjadores del Campo (Table 3). It is important to note that, although a larger number of CACs was initially considered, limitations in access to the population arose during fieldwork due to the refusal of some communities to participate, which reduced the final sample size. This situation constitutes a methodological limitation that must be considered when interpreting the results, as it restricts the possibility of statistical generalization.

Table 3. Communities visited.

Municipality	Peasant Learning Community
Little Spain	Ocelotzin
	Producers Spain
	The Coast
	The Epazotes
	Los Panchos
Hueyotlipan	Recova
	On the Big Road
	Hueyo Group
	The Floats
Xaltocan	Union of Farmers in Development
	Forgers of the Field
	Producers of the Ascension
	Topilco Producers

Source: Own elaboration

Data collection instrument

The instrument used was a structured questionnaire with a Likert scale, consisting of 119 items, with response options ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” The questionnaire was designed based on the study’s analytical variables and organized into thematic blocks that allowed for the measurement of specific dimensions of social capital and social fabric. The variables considered were:

trust, organization, cooperation, knowledge, experience, and destination of economic support, which were operationalized using previously defined indicators, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Communities visited.

Variable	Indicator	Sum
Trust	Security	Y22, Y47, Y50, Y52, Y65, Y70, Y91, Y94
	Honesty	Y54, Y64, Y67, Y73, Y82, Y116
	Links	Y12, Y14, Y15, Y 21,Y 28, Y58, Y117
Organization	Agreements	Y40, Y60
	Stake	Y33, Y45, Y57
	Time	Y23, Y26, Y29, Y59, Y69, Y75
	Responsibility	Y18, Y 76, Y81, Y 90
Cooperation	Solidarity	Y19, Y37, Y46, Y53
	Collaboration	Y25, Y48, Y51, Y61
Knowledge	Skills	Y 11, Y 35, Y78, Y86, Y87, Y88, Y89
	Attitudes	Y55, Y 62, Y 63, Y71, Y79, Y96
	Capabilities	Y17, Y41, Y83, Y84, Y85, Y93, Y95
Experience	Habits	Y38, Y77
	Beliefs	Y92, Y32, Y36
	Values	Y66

Source: Own elaboration

Additionally, the instrument included a sociodemographic characterization section, which allowed for contextualizing the results based on variables such as age, gender, education level, and household headship. Regarding the instrument's reliability, internal consistency statistics were calculated, yielding acceptable values for the scales used, thus supporting the questionnaire's validity as a measurement tool.

Data collection instrument

The collected information was systematized in a digital database and processed using SPSS statistical software. Descriptive statistical techniques were employed for the analysis of frequencies, percentages, and totals per variable, which allowed for the identification of perception patterns among the participants. The results are presented in an organized manner in tables and figures, facilitating the reading and interpretation of the findings.

Ethical considerations and difficulties in the field

The study was conducted under ethical principles of voluntariness, confidentiality, and respect for participants. During the questionnaire administration, producers were informed about the purpose of the research, and the academic use of the information was guaranteed. Nevertheless, some reluctance to participate was identified, primarily associated with the perception of an implicit "no evaluation" policy for the program. These difficulties influenced both the sample size and participants' willingness to complete the instrument. Despite this, the information obtained from those who were willing allowed for a robust analysis of the program's social effects, while acknowledging the inherent limitations of evaluative studies in rural and politically sensitive contexts.

METHODOLOGY

Analyzing the sociodemographic profile of the producers allows us to contextualize the social outcomes of the Sembrando Vida Program and understand the structural conditions under which the Farmer Learning Communities operate. According to the data obtained, the participating population is characterized by a predominance of adults and the elderly, with a marginal presence of young people (Table 5). More than half of the producers are elderly, reflecting the aging of the rural population and the limited participation of young people in the program's productive and organizational activities.

Table 5. Age of participants.

Age group	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
YOUTH	1	2.0	2.0	2.0
ADULTS	23	46.0	46.0	48.0
OLD AGE	26	52.0	52.0	100.0
Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Source: Own elaboration

In terms of gender, male participation is higher, although with variations among communities. Some Community Action Boards (CACs), such as Forjadores del Campo, have a greater number of female participants, while in others female participation is clearly a minority (Figure 1). This distribution highlights persistent gender inequalities in access to and participation in rural organizational spaces, despite the fact that the program rules formally promote inclusion.

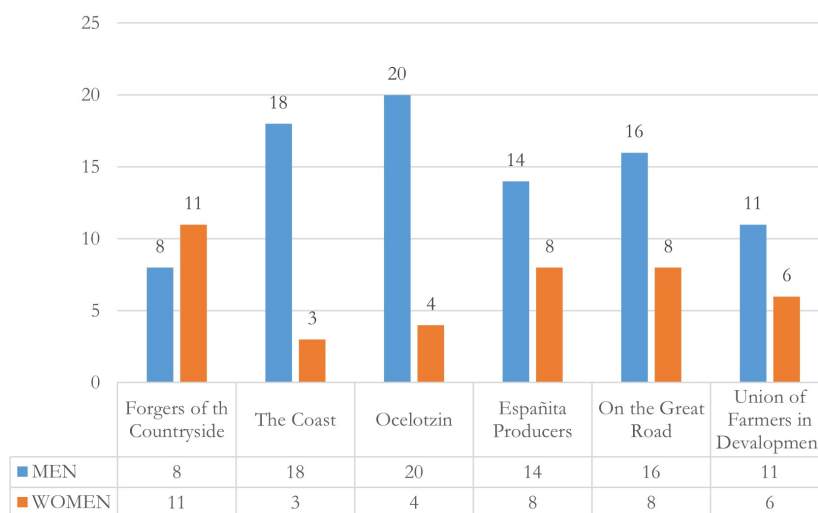


Figure 1. Participation of Women and Men within the CACs .

Source: Own elaboration

Regarding education, most producers have basic levels of education, mainly completed primary and secondary school, with a smaller proportion having reached upper secondary education (Table 6). These educational conditions influence collective learning processes and the way in which the technical and organizational content promoted in the CACs is assimilated. As for household headship, a significant proportion of those surveyed identify as heads of household, which implies additional economic and social responsibilities that affect the use of financial support and their community participation.

Table 6. Schooling of the respondents.

Schooling	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
He didn't go to school	2	4.0	4.0	4.0
first year	1	2.0	2.0	6.0
second year	2	4.0	4.0	10.0
third year	2	4.0	4.0	14.0
fourth year	2	4.0	4.0	18.0
sixth year	21	42.0	42.0	60.0
second year of secondary school	1	2.0	2.0	62.0
third year of secondary school	13	26.0	26.0	88.0
baccalaureate	6	12.0	12.0	100.0
Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Source: Own elaboration

Participation in the CACs

78% of the surveyed participants reported being solely producers, while 22% were members of the board of directors, either as president, secretary, or treasurer. The low participation of producers in holding positions on the CAC board is related to their reluctance to serve, as they do not consider themselves suitable for the roles. They cited limitations in mobility, health, and knowledge as their main reasons.

At least 74% of the producers (since the Program began) have never been members of their Community Agricultural Council's (CAC) Board of Directors. In the Recova CAC in the Municipality of Hueyotlipan, the position of president was held by the same person for five consecutive years. In 2025, with the start of a new six-year presidential term, the first change in this position took place. The main reason given for the continuity in the position was the repeated election by the producers, who valued the individual's capabilities.

In this regard, the results show that, although formal structures such as boards of directors and internal agreements exist, participation in representative positions is limited and concentrated among a small group of people. Most participants identify primarily as producers, while only a minority are part of the representative bodies (Table 7). This low turnover of leadership and the perceived lack of capacity to assume organizational responsibilities generate internal dependency that restricts collective ownership of the CACs, even though scheduled activities allow for a certain level of coordination and completion of basic tasks.

Table 7. Participation in the CACs .

Range	Forgers of the Field	The Coast	Ocelotzin	Producers Spain	On the Great Road	Union of Farmers in Development	Total
LOW	2	0	0	1	0	0	3
AVERAGE	1	8	7	4	3	6	29
HIGH	3	2	5	4	3	1	18
Total	6	10	12	9	6	7	50

Source: Own elaboration

However, cooperation was more clearly observed in productive and training activities promoted by the program, such as the production of inputs, nursery management, and reforestation efforts. These initiatives strengthen practices of mutual aid and solidarity among community members; however, cooperation tends to weaken when activities involve higher economic costs, additional uncompensated efforts, or benefits perceived as unequal. This situation demonstrates that cooperation, while present, is closely linked to the material and organizational conditions in which it takes place.

Among the participants surveyed, 66% were men and 34% were women. Of the 6 CACs to which the questionnaire was applied, only the Forjadores del Campo

CAC had a higher number of female producers; the other CACs showed a higher number of men (Figure 2).

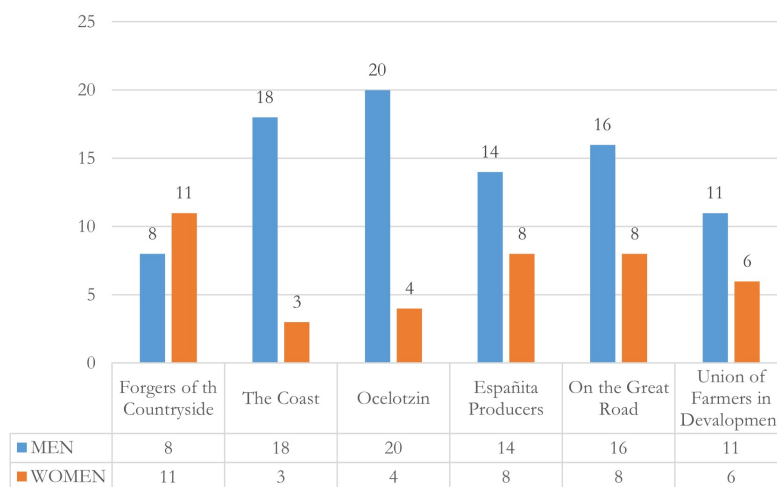


Figure 2. Women and Men within the CACs

Source: Own elaboration

There is little participation of women in the Ocelotzin and La Costa Peasant Learning Communities, both in the municipality of Española. Although 60% of the producers strongly agreed that women were given a voice and vote to participate in a position on the Board of Directors or that their opinions were taken into account, in the CACs where there has been a woman as president, there are comments from these women indicating that they are ignored when they propose their work plan and that it is very difficult for them to lead others because their instructions are not followed.

Participation and leadership are closely linked to factors such as age, gender, and prior experience. Women, although formally entitled to voice and vote, face obstacles to exercising effective leadership, resulting in limited impact of their proposals and internal tensions within the Community Action Boards (CACs). These dynamics highlight that building social capital is not a neutral process, but rather one permeated by power relations that limit equitable participation and condition the scope of the organizational processes promoted by the Sembrando Vida Program.

Share capital in CACs

The results related to social capital show that community-based cooperatives (CACs) function as important spaces for building social connections among producers; however, these processes develop unevenly depending on the dimension

analyzed and the specific community. In general, CACs foster daily interaction, information exchange, and basic collaboration, although these advances do not automatically translate into strong relationships of organizational trust or equitable participation.

Regarding the trust variable, a significant proportion of producers perceive an environment of respect and honesty within their communities, which facilitates interaction and collective work (Table 8). However, levels of trust vary considerably among communities and are influenced by prior organizational experiences, the prolonged tenure of certain leaders, and the perception of inequality in decision-making processes. These factors generate internal tensions that limit the consolidation of deeper and more sustainable trust.

Table 8. Perceived honesty among respondents from the CACs.

Range	Forgers of the Field	The Coast	Ocelotzin	Producers Spain	On the Great Road	Union of Farmers in Development	Total
LOW	1	6	3	3	0	5	18
AVERAGE	4	1	2	4	3	2	16
HIGH	1	3	7	2	3	0	16
Total	6	10	12	9	6	7	50

Source: Own elaboration

Learning and knowledge in the CACs

The analysis of variables associated with learning and knowledge shows that Farmer Learning Communities fulfill a relevant function as spaces for the exchange of knowledge and the sharing of experiences, beyond their formal role as a mechanism for technical training. The producers recognize that regular interaction within the CACs fosters the exchange of practical knowledge, agricultural techniques, and lessons learned throughout their farming careers, which strengthens collective learning processes based on shared experience (Table 9).

Table 9. Total sum of the knowledge variable .

Range	Forgers of the Field	The Coast	Ocelotzin	Producers Spain	On the Great Road	Union of Farmers in Development	Total
LOW	4	6	2	0	1	4	17
AVERAGE	1	2	9	5	0	2	19
HIGH	1	2	1	4	5	1	14
Total	6	10	12	9	6	7	50

Source: Own elaboration

The results indicate that perceived knowledge levels are heterogeneously distributed among the communities, with a significant proportion of producers at medium and high levels. This distribution suggests that learning does not occur uniformly nor depend exclusively on institutional training, but rather is built upon the dialogue between technical knowledge and local knowledge. In this sense, the farmers' experience emerges as a central component of the training process, since many of the practices promoted in the Community Action Boards (CACs) are adapted and reinterpreted based on empirical knowledge, observation of the environment, and collective experimentation.

However, the analysis also reveals limitations in the quality and depth of technical support, associated with the heterogeneous training of the facilitators and the recurring perception that, in some cases, the producers possess more practical knowledge than the assigned technical staff. This situation generates horizontal learning processes that strengthen the producers' autonomy, but at the same time calls into question the effectiveness of the training model when it fails to consistently integrate technical knowledge with farmers' knowledge. The training thus tends to become a space for exchange rather than specialized instruction, which limits its transformative potential in terms of productivity.

Destination of financial support

Regarding the use of financial support, the results confirm that a significant portion of producers use the funds for both agricultural work and basic needs. In the agricultural sector, the support is primarily used to purchase supplies and tools, pay for agricultural labor, and produce materials required for training activities within the Community Agricultural Cooperatives (Table 10). However, producers indicate that these expenses often represent an additional financial burden, especially when weather conditions affect productivity and reduce expected income.

Table 10. Part of the support allocated to the countryside.

LEVEL	Forgers of the Field	The Coast	Ocelotzin	Producers Spain	On the Great Road	Union of Farmers in Development	Total
LOW	2	1	0	1	0	3	7
AVERAGE	3	6	4	6	1	3	23
HIGH	1	3	8	2	5	1	20
Total	6	10	12	9	6	7	50

Source: Own elaboration

Regarding basic needs, the financial support significantly contributes to covering expenses for food, health, housing, clothing, and education, confirming the social nature of the program and its relevance to the immediate well-being of rural

families. This use of income reflects that, in contexts of moderate poverty, the priority for households is not productive investment, but rather the daily maintenance of their lives.

Finally, the social use of income is manifested in expenditures associated with community festivities, the purchase of household goods, and support in cases of death. Although these expenditures are often classified as non-productive from a conventional economic perspective, they fulfill a relevant social function by strengthening family and community life, as well as bonds of solidarity. These findings demonstrate that income not only has a material value, but also a symbolic and relational value, which directly impacts social cohesion and the community dynamics of the Rural Learning Communities.

DISCUSSION

The results obtained in the social evaluation of the Community Action Committees (CACs) of the Sembrando Vida Program allow us to reflect on the scope and limitations of rural social policies when they incorporate organizational and community components. Based on the analysis of social capital, rural cooperation, and the allocation of economic support, it is confirmed that the program's effects partially transcend the material dimension, although they fail to consolidate as structural processes of social transformation. This aligns with critical perspectives on cash transfers in contexts of rural poverty (Barba, 2015; Martínez, 2020).

Regarding social capital, the results show that community action groups (CACs) contribute to creating spaces for interaction that strengthen coexistence, basic trust, and cooperation among producers. This finding aligns with Bebbington's (1999) perspective, who points out that social capital is a key asset for collective action in rural areas, particularly when economic and productive resources are limited. However, as Pretty (2003) warns, the mere existence of social networks does not guarantee sustained development processes if they are not accompanied by mechanisms that promote equity, participation, and the distribution of power within the organizations.

Trust, identified as a central dimension of social capital, manifests itself unevenly among the cooperatives analyzed. While producers acknowledge relationships of respect and collaboration in daily activities, the persistence of long-term leadership and low staff turnover generate tensions that weaken organizational trust. This phenomenon can be interpreted in light of Bourdieu (1986), who warned that social capital is not a neutral resource, but rather is permeated by power relations

that determine who has access to the benefits derived from belonging to a network. In this sense, the cooperatives, in some cases, reproduce dynamics of social capital concentration that limit their transformative potential.

Regarding organization and participation, the results show that the formal structure of the Community Action Boards (CACs) does not necessarily translate into collective ownership of the organizational process. Low participation in leadership positions and a perceived inability to assume responsibilities reflect an organizational fragility that aligns with the observations of Velásquez (2007) and Yáñez *et al.* (2006) on the vulnerability of the social fabric in contexts of poverty. These conditions are exacerbated by gender inequalities, where women, although formally included, face cultural and symbolic barriers to exercising effective leadership, reinforcing the arguments of Arribillaga (2002) and Martín-Moreno (2008) regarding the structural obstacles to women's leadership in community spaces.

Regarding rural cooperation, the findings show that it is primarily activated in productive and training activities promoted by the program, such as the production of inputs and the management of nurseries. These practices confirm Pretty 's (2003) observation that cooperation tends to strengthen when there is a clearly defined common objective. However, cooperation weakens when activities involve additional economic costs or uncompensated efforts, highlighting the limitations of social capital under adverse material conditions. This result reinforces the idea that cooperation cannot be sustained solely by community will but requires supporting structural conditions.

The analysis of learning and knowledge allows us to identify Community Agricultural Councils (CACs) as relevant spaces for non-formal education and collective learning, in accordance with the approaches of rural extension and farmer field schools (Aguilar *et al.*, 2010; Guevara *et al.*, 2003). The centrality of farmers' experience in learning processes confirms that local knowledge remains a fundamental resource for productive and social adaptation in rural contexts. However, the limited technical training of some facilitators and the lack of specialization in agricultural issues reduce the effectiveness of institutional support, generating tensions between technical and empirical knowledge, as Manzo *et al.* (2007) point out.

Regarding the use of the financial support, the results reinforce the characterization of the Sembrando Vida Program as a social rather than a productive program. The use of income to cover basic needs aligns with the arguments of Barba (2016) and CONEVAL (2022), who acknowledge that cash transfers have an immediate impact on well-being but do not, on their own, modify the structural conditions of poverty. Likewise, the social use of income for festivities, community

support, and funeral expenses demonstrates that money fulfills a symbolic and relational function, contributing to social cohesion, as suggested by Gómez (2001) and Torres (2008) in their analyses of rural community life.

From a theory of change perspective, the results allow us to interpret the Peasant Learning Communities (CACs) as an intermediate link between the inputs of the Sembrando Vida Program and the social regeneration processes that the institutional design envisions as desirable. The results show that the CACs manage to activate immediate outputs and intermediate results, particularly in terms of coexistence, functional cooperation, collective learning, and partial strengthening of social capital. However, the chain of change weakens before achieving deeper structural impacts due to persistent limitations such as the concentration of leadership, low turnover in positions, gender inequalities, and organizational fragility. These findings confirm that the regeneration of the social fabric is not an automatic result of monetary transfers or the creation of organizational spaces, but rather a complex process that requires continuity, institutional strengthening, and organizational training. Consequently, the theory of change allows us to situate the program's true scope, demonstrating that its main contribution lies in the social and relational sphere, rather than in the structural transformation of rural well-being.

CONCLUSIONS

The social evaluation of the Farmer Learning Communities (CACs) of the Sembrando Vida Program in the municipalities of Españita, Hueyotlipan, and Xaltocan, Tlaxcala, allows for the identification of relevant scopes and limitations of rural social policies aimed at community strengthening. The results show that the CACs constitute significant spaces for social interaction and coexistence, generating immediate products and intermediate results, such as the partial strengthening of social capital, functional cooperation, and collective learning. However, these advances do not translate into a sustained regeneration of the social fabric, since the chain of change is conditioned by structural, organizational, and institutional factors that limit collective appropriation, organizational autonomy, and the long-term transformation of rural well-being.

The findings show that community-based cooperatives (CACs) contribute partially to strengthening social capital, particularly in areas such as community life, basic cooperation, and knowledge sharing. However, these advances are uneven and fragile, as organizational trust is limited by the concentration of leadership, low turnover in positions, and gender inequalities, which restrict collective ownership of organizational processes. Furthermore, while CACs function as important spaces for informal learning, where farmers' experiences play a central role, limitations in technical support reduce their transformative potential in terms of productivity.

Regarding the allocation of financial support, the results confirm the predominantly social nature of the Sembrando Vida Program, as it is primarily used to cover basic needs and, to a lesser extent, to support productive and social activities that strengthen community life. While this income contributes to the immediate well-being of rural families, it is insufficient to structurally alter the conditions of poverty and vulnerability.

Taken together, this research provides territorially situated empirical evidence on the social effects of the Sembrando Vida Program, by highlighting the organizational and relational processes that emerge during its implementation. The results lead to the conclusion that the regeneration of the social fabric is not an automatic outcome of providing economic support or creating organizational spaces, but rather requires sustained processes of institutional strengthening, training, and community participation that acknowledge the conditions and inequalities present in rural areas.

Furthermore, the study contributes to the academic debate by showing that the regeneration of the social fabric cannot be assumed to be an automatic result of providing economic support or simply creating organizational spaces. Building social capital requires sustained processes of training, participation, and institutional strengthening that acknowledge the territorial conditions, power relations, and inequalities existing in rural communities.

LITERATURE CITED

- Altieri, M. A., & Toledo, V. M. (2011). *La revolución agroecológica de América Latina: rescatar la naturaleza, asegurar la soberanía alimentaria y empoderar al campesino*. *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 38(3), 587–612.
- Aguilar, J., Guevara, R., & Ramírez, E. (2010). *Extensionismo rural y escuelas de campo para agricultores*. FAO.
- Barba, C. (2015). *La política social en América Latina: enfoques y dilemas*. FLACSO.
- Barba, C. (2016). *Transferencias monetarias y política social en México*. FLACSO.
- Bebbington, A. (1999). *Capitals and capabilities: A framework for analyzing peasant viability, rural livelihoods and poverty*. *World Development*, 27(12), 2021–2044.
- Bourdieu, P. (1986). *The forms of capital*. En J. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education* (pp. 241–258). Greenwood.
- Consejo Nacional de Evaluación de la Política de Desarrollo Social (CONEVAL). (2022). *Informe anual sobre la situación de pobreza y rezago social*. CONEVAL.
- Guevara, R., Aguilar, J., & Ramírez, E. (2003). *Escuelas de campo y desarrollo rural*. FAO.
- Manzo, F., Sánchez, J., & López, R. (2007). *Educación popular y desarrollo rural*. Universidad Autónoma Chapingo.
- Martínez, R. (2020). *Gasto social, pobreza y estancamiento productivo en México*. CEPAL.
- Pretty, J. (2003). *Social capital and the collective management of resources*. *Science*, 302(5652), 1912–1914.
- Retolaza, I. (2010). *Teoría de cambio: una herramienta para la planificación orientada a resultados*. Hivos.
- Rogers, P. (2014). *Theory of change*. UNICEF.
- Secretaría de Desarrollo Social (SEDESOL). (2005). *Informe de programas sociales*. Gobierno de México.
- Secretaría de Seguridad Pública. (2011). *Reconstrucción del tejido social*. Gobierno de México.
- Torres, G. (2008). *Capital social y desarrollo comunitario*. UNAM.
- Turrent, A., Wise, T., & Garvey, E. (2017). *Milpa intercalada con árboles frutales*. Tufts University.
- Velásquez, F. (2007). *Participación social y acción colectiva*. Siglo XXI.
- Yáñez, R., Velásquez, J., & Pérez, L. (2006). *Organización comunitaria y participación social*. FLACSO



