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## ***Closing gaps: Making Social Protection Work for Women in Mexico – Independent Final Evaluation.***

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▶ **Independent Final Evaluation of  
the *Closing gaps* Joint  
Programme: *Making Social  
Protection Work for Women in  
Mexico – MEX / 19 / 50 / UND***

**Teodoro Sanz and Patricia Fuertes**

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## ► List of Acronyms

AHIFORES	International Fruit and Vegetables Alliance for Social Responsibility
ASI	Association for Social Investment
CACEH	Support and Training Centre for Household Workers
CDAA	Agricultural and Agro-industry Development Board
CENDI	Initial Development Centre
COLMEX	College of Mexico
ENOE	National Survey of Occupation and Employment
ENUT	National Survey on Time Use
EVAL	ILO Evaluation Office
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
ICAT	Labour Training Institute
ILSB	Simone de Beauvoir Leadership Institute
INEGI	National Institute of Statistics and Geography
IMSS	Mexican Institute of Social Security
INMUJERES	National Institute of Women
INPI	National Institute of Indigenous Peoples
OCRE	Organization for Cooperation and Development
ORC	Office of Resident Coordination
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
UN WOMEN	United Nations Organization for Women
ILO	International Labour Organization
PAJA	Care Programme for Agricultural Workers
PARDEV	ILO Development Partnerships
PWD	Persons with Disabilities
PRODOC	Programme Document
Programme	Closing Gaps Joint Programme
PROIGUALDAD	National Programme for Equality between Women and Men
PUNO	Participant United Nations Organizations
RAJ	Regions of Temporary Agricultural Work Assistance
REJIA	Network of Men and Women Temporary Agricultural Workers
SCJN	Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation
SEDECO	Secretariat of Economic Development of Mexico City
SISEMH	Secretariat of substantive equality between women and men
SINACTRAHO	National Union of Domestic Workers
UNS	United Nations system
SOCPRO	ILO Department of Social Protection
STPS	Secretary for Labour and Social Welfare
STYFE	Secretariat of Labour and Employment Promotion
THP	The Hunger Project
ToC	Theory of Change
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

## ► Executive Summary

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The “Closing Gaps” Joint Programme implemented by the ILO, the FAO and UN Women, *aimed to increase access to social protection for women in Mexico and, in particular, to improve access for domestic workers and migrant women temporary agricultural workers.* The Programme contemplated the following outcomes: (i) implementation of integrated multisectoral policies on women's access to social protection, including a National Care Strategy, and (ii) strengthening the capacities of key stakeholders to increase women's access to social protection.

With a budget of USD 2,400,000 for the period 2020-2022, the Programme was implemented in the states of Chiapas, Jalisco, Mexico City, Oaxaca, and the State of Mexico.

The evaluation identifies the outcomes achieved by the Programme, why and how they were achieved, the processes followed, and the factors that explain its scope or the delays or problems in implementation. Provides an evaluation of the Programme support to increase access of domestic workers and women temporary agricultural workers to social protection and care services in the states of Chiapas, Jalisco, Mexico City, Oaxaca, and the State of Mexico. It also analyses the inter-agency of the Programme in relation to the outcomes achieved and approaches the situation of target groups in the face of the pandemic and the responses of the Programme in that context.

The evaluation covered the period February 2020 to May 2022, was of a non-experimental nature, had a participatory approach that sought to identify and analyse the vision of the different actors involved. The evaluation criteria were: relevance and validity of design, effectiveness, efficiency, management effectiveness, gender mainstreaming, and sustainability and impact orientation.

Primary and secondary sources of information were used. Primary information was collected through: (i) virtual individual and group interviews for partner actors, collaborators, and Programme PUNOs teams, women temporary agricultural workers and; (ii) online surveys addressed to actors involved in the Programme implementation and capacity building actions. For secondary sources, documentary review was applied

The interviews were semi-structured based on 3 guides designed per type of actor (partners, executing teams and collaborators. 34 people were interviewed, representatives of the agencies (FAO, ILO and UN Women and OCR), partner institutions, collaborating institutions and also women temporary agricultural workers in Oaxaca.

Online surveys were three: (i) “Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme,” addressed to representatives of the institutions involved in the Programme’s actions and was answered by 29 persons; (ii) “Survey on Training in rights of Woman Temporary Agricultural Workers,” answered by 67 people who received training (among public servants, community promoters, temporary agricultural workers, representatives of agricultural enterprises), and (iii) “Survey on the online Course of Labour Inspection”, answered by 7 participants participating in the course.

### **Relevance and validity of the design**

The Programme was aligned with much of the relevant public policies to address the social protection gaps faced by women in Mexico: decent employment, gender equality, and care as a right. There is consensus among the actors consulted that, because of the issue addressed, it is a totally strategic Programme for public policy makers at all levels of government (national and sub-national.)

The Programme is relevant as it proposes to address the structural causes of social vulnerability of women and, specifically, of groups of vulnerable women (domestic workers and women temporary agricultural workers,) generally invisible to public policy, who have also been among the groups most affected in labour, economic and social terms by the COVID 19 pandemic.

The design of the Programme is appropriate and consistent as there is a relationship between objectives, outputs, and outcomes. Its diagnosis clearly identifies the causes of women's social vulnerability and the gender inequalities that underlie it. The strategies chosen had the potential to contribute to closing gaps in women's social protection in the medium and long term, while the Programme had a duration of only two years; the evaluation therefore considers that the deadlines for the achievement of some outcomes and outputs, particularly those involved in the process of public policy development, were not properly estimated.



The design of the Programme is relevant as it defines an intervention to improve women's access to social protection and care with the participation of three specialized UNS agencies (ILO, UN Women and FAO). The experience and expertise of each agency ensured specialized treatment of the different causes of the problem addressed.

## Effectiveness

The Programme achieved a significant level of expected outcomes. Policies and changes in regulations to improve women's access to social protection and care services were developed and proposed, pending implementation, as established in Outcome 1. The approved extended protection strategies for women temporary agricultural workers in the states of Jalisco and Oaxaca were worked under a more realistic approach of graduality considering short, medium, and long-term stages for their implementation.

In Outcome 2, partner actors with the power to improve social protection and care recognize that the Project has strengthened their capacities to improve women's access to social protection and care services in: (a) know-how on social protection and care; (b) updated diagnoses, innovative looks on social protection and gender; and (c) development of innovative tools to promote access to decent employment, social protection, and care services.

For women temporary agricultural workers, it has been possible to establish bases that will allow legitimizing and working at local levels to improve social protection for them (dialogue mechanisms in the process of institutionalization; strengthened actors and technical bodies.) For domestic workers, the approval process for the compulsory scheme was provided with technical assistance, from the decisive support of the Programme to deliver the pilot of the compulsory IMSS affiliation regime to its approval in the Senate of the Republic. There is a long way to go in terms of effective compliance with the law that requires the affiliation of domestic workers to social security, which is driven by a process to change employers' behaviour and mindset.

At the local level, the ad hoc strategies for social protection of domestic workers were not delivered in 5 states, nor were labour inspection mechanisms established, as provided for in Outcome 1. This was due to the pandemic and the change of priorities that this meant to sub-national governments, coupled with the characteristics of the Mexican legal system that only allows labour inspection protocols to be applied if there is a national standard that establishes it. Instead, inputs were developed to build such strategies with a look to the future (diagnoses of barriers for domestic workers to access to social protection, comparative studies of domestic labour inspection.)

There is a willingness in State Labour Secretariats to work on domestic work inspection mechanisms; but the approved mandatory affiliation regime for domestic workers does not provide for the inspection of domestic work. In the case of women temporary agricultural workers, the evaluation identified the need to expand efforts to achieve labour inspection mechanisms for them as part of a comprehensive and cross-sectional view of the Programme on the two target groups.

The *"It's Only Fair"* media and networking campaign for the rights of domestic workers was successfully developed by the Programme, whose objective was to make these rights known to the targeted employers' segment to whom it was addressed, which are formal workers and those considered "progressive."

In the case of the care system, a pilot of care services with great replication and escalation potential was achieved at the municipal level as a cost-effective intervention. However, no work was done on the development of care service models for rural areas, no care pilot for rural municipalities or for women temporary agricultural workers. The big challenge lies in scaling up from local to national level and in incorporating the needs of rural care and care services. With regard to the national care system, it has been proposed and its benefits and costs sustained, and more work of political impact is required with investment decision-makers at the national and sub-national levels, and with actors such as the Ministry of Finance and Public Credit.

The COVID 19 pandemic meant both an initial alteration in the planned programming and in the estimated timeframe for the achievement of outcomes, and an opportunity to position the idea and objectives sought by the Programme. In both cases, the Programme's response in terms of adjustment of programming and activities was adequate.

A significant degree of gender mainstreaming was achieved in the design and implementation of the Programme in its three components, which is mainly explained by the gender expertise and policies of each agency. In addition, the success of the Programme is recognized as having involved and worked with the gender mechanisms of the Mexican State at all levels of government, which enhanced the expertise of UNS agencies.

Consideration of other conditions in the reality of women to deal with the vulnerability affecting them -such as indigenous, rural, migrant and disability- has been differentiated according to components of the Programme. The

women temporary agricultural worker component gave greater consideration to indigenous and rural conditions, noting that the ILO and IMSS have developed information materials on the rights of domestic workers in native languages. With regard to persons with disability, PRODOC already pointed out that PWD was a vulnerable group of indirect influence and therefore did not identify a roadmap for the treatment of disability in the groups of workers served by the Programme.

The factors that explain achieving the outcomes of the Programme are mainly the following: (i) evidence-based strategy of political dialogue, which allows the participation of decisive actors in improving social protection of women and important levels of ownership of what was built from dialogue spaces; (ii) having taken advantage of the existing institutions at the different levels of government and/or in the territories such as work and promotion networks, mechanisms and bodies specialized in labour training; (iii) having supplemented what partner bodies of the central government or sub-national governments had already done and added value to it; and (iv) expertise, experience and working methodologies of UNS agencies involved.

### **Management effectiveness and efficiency**

The evaluation identifies that, joint strategies have been implemented among agencies in terms of social dialogue, media campaign for the rights of domestic workers, and monitoring and evaluation process. In turn, it considers that these joint strategies have been less visible in terms of gender, formalization of work/employment, labour inspection, and care strategy for the two target groups.

The Programme had a sufficiently integrated monitoring system that allowed the process indicators defined for the Programme to be followed; it had coordination spaces among the Programme's PUNOs; and created periodic reports on process indicators and their assumptions. Executing teams believe that all this contributed to transparency of management and to the development and timely adjustment of programming.

The inter-agency status of the Programme led the three agencies, each from its component, to develop actions toward gender-based social protection. The FAO applied the concept of expanded social protection for women temporary agricultural workers; the ILO strengthened its approach and methodology of support to domestic workers developed through its years of experience in the field; and UN Women managed to link, in the discourse and proposals that it promoted, the centrality of care in social protection systems.

The great challenge of inter-agency is to achieve joint and cross-cutting views and strategies on the same problem to be addressed. Other challenges include: (i) establishing progress indicators in inter-agency; (ii) having an internal and external communication strategy aimed at transmitting the Programme's joint character; and (iii) identifying incentives for UNS agencies to participate in a joint Programme, such as expanding networks; inter-agency learning; sharing space and resources; and/or building on the experience of the ILO, UN WOMEN and the FAO in carrying out this Programme.

### **Impact and sustainability**

There is evidence of the Programme's contribution to the development of policies and regulations that should allow in the future, as from implementation, to improve women, domestic workers, and women temporary agricultural workers access to social protection and care services. This contribution was made in the form of inputs to nourish change processes initiated by the United Mexican States; in turn, the Programme has been an enabler of actions aimed at defining progress made in social protection of women.

One of the main effects of the Programme is that it gave visibility to domestic workers and women temporary agricultural workers in public policies; to their right to social protection and care from a gender perspective; and key concepts such as extended social protection, protective floors, care as a right and services. A process of legitimizing social protection and care policies for the most vulnerable groups of women in Mexican society was also initiated; and a change in the discourse of certain "hard" actors (entrepreneurs, employers) is identified with regard to the rights of vulnerable working women and care work.

In addition, these groups of workers have been linked and represented with sub-national government bodies, which opens up opportunities to improve social protection for these groups at the local level. Mechanisms for the social protection of women and care services have also been created (inter-agency workgroups, municipal and urban care service pilots) and contribution was made to the belief of a group of policy makers (STPS, IMSS) on the relevance of awareness-raising and change-of-mindset strategies to operate social changes for the social protection of vulnerable women's groups.

The likelihood of sustaining the Programme's achievements is differentiated according to outcomes and outputs developed. These depend on the degree of ownership achieved with respect to practices, outputs and outcomes and the decision-making power and permanence of the actors with whom they worked. The level of ownership has been given by the work and coordination with the technical commands of partner institutions and the application of methodologies that have improved management practices of these partner actors and that are intended to be immediately adopted.

In other cases, sustainability of the achievements still requires strengthening the organization of target groups themselves. In the case of women temporary agricultural workers this is a line of work that must be addressed in any social protection strategy targeted to them; meanwhile, domestic workers have strengthened their union organization and trade union for decades, an effort that must continue to be supported by technical accompaniment and political advocacy.

The Programme's contribution to substantial coverage of protection systems for all the poor (SDG Target 1.3,) implies processes with medium- and long-term roadmaps that could not be covered by the actions contemplated by the Programme in only two years. Programme impacts will only be identified when the policies and regulations pursued are implemented and evaluated, which requires longer deadlines, building a larger social base that makes the agreements and policies pursued enforceable, as well as increased advocacy work to achieve its implementation.

## Lessons Learned

**Lesson Learned 1:** *Policy timeframes are different from programming timeframes.* Although actors who know public management processes were involved and estimates were made about the timing of implementing policies driven, with or without a pandemic, it is clear that implementing them depends on political decisions beyond programming.

**Lesson learned 2:** *Political dialogue supported in evidence as an effective strategy.* Programme development shows the benefits of political dialogue based on evidence to achieve ownership and sustainability of outcomes, and as a key element to legitimize the policies promoted.

**Lesson learned 3:** *Inter-agency in an intervention needs to be built, not a starting point but a point of arrival.* Inter-agency needs to be built on the capacity of agencies to converge on concepts, approaches, working methodologies, strategies. It is necessary to establish an organization and working mechanisms that allow convergence and to establish appropriate indicators to measure and monitor their progress.

**Lesson learned 4:** *Ownership and sustainability of an intervention must be worked on taking into account the different levels of management and decision-making in partner institutions with social protection responsibilities.* While focusing on technical commands is key, it is also key to work on ownership of management at the highest level.

**Lesson learned 5:** *Working sustainability with those remaining in the territory.* Since political instability and high employee turnover in partner bodies are one of the characteristics of State management, it is necessary to design strategies to address this limitation to ensure the continuity of the outcomes achieved. Working directly with target group organizations, communities and civil society is the best strategy for ensuring sustainability.

**Lesson learned 6:** *Having a joint and explicit strategy to incorporate the gender approach across the components of an intervention contributes to better outcomes.* A joint gender strategy in the Programme would have enabled to tackle the needs common to both target groups (domestic workers and women temporary agricultural workers) in a cross-cutting manner in care issues and in the various policies and strategies developed and driven by the Programme, where rural care is a pending issue. Also, in labour inspection, it would have allowed it to be done with a gender approach and to be applied to women temporary agricultural workers as well.

## Best practices

**Best practice 1:** Diagnosis and mapping of care services and identifying gaps in care as an entry point for developing model/care services is a practice that allows building on what already exists and identifying new needs and/or segments of the population without care and/or new services and/or the need to improve existing services. This was the case with the pilot care experience developed in the Iztapalapa City Hall.

**Best practice 2:** Working with pilots and systematization, and dissemination of their outcomes along with the actors executing the experience facilitate building referents, replication, and scaling. In the case of the Programme, supporting the IMSS domestic workers' affiliation pilot and the care services pilot at Iztapalapa City Hall allowed

recommendations for the proposed mandatory regime to be developed in the first case, and in the second case, building reference for other municipalities and open possibilities to scale the implementation of care services.

**Best practice 3:** The use of existing institutions and the generation of added value from them enables them to be enhanced and results in cost-effective actions and sustainable products. The care pilot in Iztapalapa uses the progress made by the City Hall's care, as well as its infrastructure, to generate a cost-effective care service for a segment of the unattended population. The Social Protection Inter-Agency Cooperation Board for women temporary agricultural workers in Jalisco boosted the SISEMH in the development of work oriented to building a policy in the territory and became a reference point for other bodies within the government (the Secretariat of Labour, Secretariat of agricultural development) and for other states (Sinaloa, Chiapas, Nuevo Leon.)

**Best practice 4:** Communication campaigns are key as part of comprehensive strategies aimed at achieving (in the medium and long term) cultural and behavioural changes in key actors in defining women's access to social protection (public policy-makers, employers of domestic workers, employers of women temporary agricultural workers.) Following the "It's Only Fair" campaign, STPS is willing to adopt the employer awareness strategy for compliance with domestic work regulations, through communication campaigns.

## Recommendations

**Recommendation 1:** Define impact and effect indicators on the effective access of vulnerable workers to social protection and services. In particular, in terms of "transforming gender relations into social protection;" women's empowerment; and changes in women's use of time.

**Recommendation 2:** Develop a rural care service pilot. Increased participation of UN Women in the Social Protection Inter-Agency Cooperation Board for women temporary agricultural workers in Jalisco is recommended to identify the possibility of creating a care service pilot in a rural municipality, as was done in the Iztapalapa City Hall.

**Recommendation 3:** Work on a line of employment and income generation and livelihood insurance, in the case of women temporary agricultural workers. The aim is to generate rural development opportunities in the areas of expulsion from which women temporary agricultural workers come, and to this end it will be essential to add new actors to the political dialogue mechanisms and as partners in the Programme, such as the Secretariat of Agriculture and Rural Development.

**Recommendation 4:** Work on the gender-focused labour inspection line for the enforcement of labour rights of domestic workers and women temporary agricultural workers, identifying the real possibilities and resistance of the United Mexican States to develop the mechanisms and human resources necessary to extend labour inspection as a strategy for the fulfilment of the rights of these labour groups. Greater ILO participation in the Social Protection Inter-Agency Cooperation Board for women temporary agricultural workers in Jalisco is also recommended, in order to identify initiatives to have work inspection mechanisms of women temporary agricultural workers.

**Recommendation 5:** Take into account the heterogeneity that characterizes employers (domestic workers and women temporary agricultural workers) in the social protection diagnoses and in terms of: (a) their conditions of employment, (b) formality/informality, and (c) access to social protection, in order to identify the roadmaps to be followed and the most appropriate strategies for these employers to promote social protection of women workers.

**Recommendation 6:** Broaden reading of the impacts of the pandemic on vulnerable groups served. The pandemic increased the need for greater connectivity: new forms of work, relationship and communication are increasingly based on new information technologies; and access to connectivity and digitalisation are also imperative for social and economic inclusion. These connectivity and digitalisation gaps, which mainly affect rural and indigenous women, should be considered in the expanded social protection strategies that have been achieved in the development of the Programme.

**Recommendation 7:** Work on the links between local and national social protection policies for women temporary agricultural workers. An advocacy strategy at the national government level is needed to make the group of women temporary agricultural workers and their problems visible to the national government, as has been achieved at the local level through the Programme. The problem of social vulnerability of men and women temporary agricultural workers is of scale, as it is a population that continuously mobilize across the different territories, dispersed and predominantly incommunicado, which poses challenges of assistance and design of services and resources and, without the assistance of the national government it will be difficult to adequately assist them.

**Recommendation 8:** Strengthening the inter-agentiality of joint programmes requires innovations in forms of organization, work and communication that allow convergences, integration and transversality of the specialities and capacities of participating agencies. In addition, establishing inter-agency indicators in programme development could support the consolidation of this UNS work strategy. It is also recommended to have a joint communication strategy aimed at the various partner actors, and in relation to joint and cross-cutting objectives, actions, and methodologies.

# 1. Context in which the Closing Gaps Joint Programme is developed

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1. Mexico is one of the twenty largest economies in the world (Ramírez, *et al*: 2020)<sup>1</sup> and belongs to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD); however, it has high rates of social, economic, ethnic cultural, urban-rural and gender inequality. In the context of the COVID 19 pandemic, official figures indicated that poverty in Mexico affected 43.4% of its population, and among indigenous and rural populations, poverty reached 79%. In terms of access to decent employment and social protection, in 2017, 57.2% of employed population was informal, revealing the degree of social vulnerability affecting the Mexican working population.
2. The diagnosis made for the design of the Closing Gaps Joint Programme (the Joint Programme or simply the Programme) indicates as the main antecedent the low articulation of public policies for social protection and care in Mexico, which results in the low coverage of the working population in general and, specifically, in the non-coverage of vast vulnerable labour sectors such as paid domestic labour and the temporary agricultural workers' sector. These working sectors are characterized by a high degree of "feminization" of work, that is, by the majority or significant presence of women, as well as by the job insecurity they face, without the enjoyment of labour rights and without access to social protection.
3. The deficit in social protection among women is mainly explained by the lack of decent work opportunities; a legal framework that excludes them from social protection; the limited scope and coverage provided by the social protection system; and the burden of unpaid care work, even greater in rural communities.
4. The National Survey of Occupation and Employment- ENOE (National Statistics and Geography Institute - INEGI, 2020)<sup>2</sup> showed by 2019 approximately 2.5 million domestic workers in Mexico, the vast majority of whom were women, of whom 96.7% (2.4 million) worked informally, without full enjoyment of labour rights and without social protection. In addition, slightly more than one fifth of the total female population in Mexico (21.1%) lives in rural localities; in these, 16% of households are headed by a woman<sup>3</sup>. Among the rural women's population, the group of internal migrant temporary agricultural workers is identified: the National Network of Men and Women Temporary Agricultural Workers of Mexico (REJJA) estimates that about 3 million people are temporary agricultural workers and internal migrants, of which 20% are women, mainly of indigenous origin (REJJA: 2020, p.2)<sup>4</sup>.
5. Women temporary agricultural workers usually work without contracts, without access to legal benefits, and without care services for themselves and their dependants. Lopez and Molina (2018)<sup>5</sup> note that at the end of the period 2004-2016, 80% of Mexican women temporary agricultural workers worked without receiving legal benefits (p. 114)<sup>6</sup>. In general, the authors report an overview of important but insufficient progress made in labour rights<sup>7</sup> in this group.

<sup>1</sup> Ramírez, B, Nava, I, Grados, A, Badillo, G. 2020. "Unequal participation of Mexican women in social security access and benefits." Latin American Journal of Social Development, No. 30. Mexico City. January - June 2020.

<sup>2</sup> INEGI, 2020 "National Survey of Occupation and Employment 2019."

<sup>3</sup> According to ENOE 2019 (INEGI, 2020), in 2019, female population in Mexico reached 64 million, and rural female population was around 13 million women.

<sup>4</sup> REJJA.2020. "Internal temporary agricultural workforce in Mexico in the face of the COVID 19 pandemic." Available in: [https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/SP/COVID/NGOs/Red\\_Nacional\\_de\\_Jornaleros\\_y\\_Jornaleras\\_Agr%C3%ADcolas\\_-\\_Mexico.pdf](https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/HRBodies/SP/COVID/NGOs/Red_Nacional_de_Jornaleros_y_Jornaleras_Agr%C3%ADcolas_-_Mexico.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Lopez, J y Molina, A. (2018). "The employment situation of women in the agricultural sector in Mexico 2004-2016." Economic Analysis, Number 83, Volume XXXII. Second quarter of 2018.

<sup>6</sup> In Mexico, Legal benefits include: Social security, minimum 6-day holiday according to the number of years worked, with pay, a holiday premium and a Christmas bonus equivalent to a 15-day pay per year of seniority or proportional thereto, if less than one year has been worked.

<sup>7</sup> Lopez and Molina point out that in the period 2004-2016, the number of women agricultural workers who received no remuneration was reduced, while the group that worked between 40 and 48 hours a week increased and the group that worked less than 15 hours a week was reduced. In addition, the group receiving average total income equivalent to two minimum wages increased. There was also a significant gender-wage gap in relation to male agricultural workers (p,112-113 and 115.)

6. It is also recognized that the limited or no access to social protection of these workgroups is based on gender inequalities that characterize patriarchal societies such as Mexico, to which are added other inequalities such as ethnic cultural inequalities or those of place of residence (urban-rural). Other traits common to these vulnerable sectors are the underestimation of women's productive work as they are considered "feminized" sectors such as paid domestic work; the invisibility of unpaid hours of work (domestic and care) by women workers; and failure to recognize its implications for access to decent work. In Mexico, women spend on average 50.2 hours a week on unpaid domestic and care work, while men spend 19.4 hours a week (National Institute of Women - INMUJERES, based on the Survey on Time Use – ENUT-2019.)

## Mexico: public policies and relevant regulatory framework

7. The public and regulatory policy framework in Mexico related to policy strategic areas of the Programme comprised a set of public plans and programmes that, directly or indirectly, had the potential to cover domestic workers and women temporary agricultural workers. Also, the legal and regulatory framework comprised a set of conventions, laws, standards that directly and indirectly covered these workgroups; for example, in 2018 the population of temporary agricultural workers was included in the Labour Law and in 2020 the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 189 on paid domestic work (household work as it is called in Mexico) was ratified.
8. Women temporary agricultural workers are a population of workers that pose challenges of identification, scope, and coverage for public policies: they are part of the temporary agricultural workers that have a massive presence in the country, a high spatial mobility, and are not registered or insufficiently registered with the Mexican State at all levels. It is related to the economic and labour supply and demand dynamics generated among the areas of greatest poverty and wealth in the country: the southern states - characterized by the high level of poverty, with mainly rural and indigenous population, small productive units, and a high percentage of landless population - provide cheap and informal labour to the Northern states, characterized by the agro-export emporiums.
9. Providing assistance to this working group requires the conjunction of public policies for comprehensive rural development, productive and labour formalization, guaranteeing sustainable livelihood to produce income and employment, as well as social protection, in both the worker's expelling areas and in receiving or destination areas and in the areas in-between.
10. The following table shows that in Mexico there have been policies with potential to assist this group; however, integration of key strategic policy areas is low for an optimal coverage and assistance. The less developed areas are gender care and equality, women's invisibility and gender relations within the group of agricultural workers. Social protection is limited to health, food, education services rather than the extension of social security and/or legal benefits for this group, and mainly for male workers. Nor is there any connection with integrated rural development policies and employment formalization.

► **Table 1. Women temporary agricultural workers and public policies in Mexico as of 2019 per strategic policy area of the Joint Programme.**

	Social protection;	Decent work (labour formalization)	Gender equality	Interculturality	Care
Implementation Plan for Agenda 2030, prepared in 2019	X	X	X	X	X
National Development Plan 2019-2024 Mexican Social Security Institute (IMSS)- WELFARE Programme for rural population	Community medical services in the context of the pandemic for the rural population	-	-	X	-
Act on equality between women and men	X	X	X	X	X

Source: ILO et al (2019), REJJA (2020), IMSS (2021). Own Making.

Note. "X" if the policy in question states or contemplates the area of interest; "-" if that area is not identified in the policy.

11. The National Development Plan 2019-2024 of the Mexican State aims to provide universal access to social protection and social security for the entire working population. According to this national objective and in the

face of the COVID 19 pandemic, the IMSS defines in 2020 a social protection strategy for the rural population excluded from the social security affiliation system, by which it managed to cover with medical and community services about 11.6 million people living in marginalized rural and urban localities in 19 states, and among these, 4.1 million people living in predominantly indigenous localities (IMSS: 2021, p.6)<sup>8</sup>.

12. Another important milestone in public policy for this working group was the Care Programme for Agricultural Workers (PAJA) operating in the period 1990-2018. PAJA worked in places known as Regions of Temporary Agricultural Work Assistance (RAJ) and was aimed at supporting agricultural workers and their families in food, education, health, and other contingencies faced by this migrant population in their journeys to production areas (REJJA, *ibid.*) While it was not a programme to improve working conditions for these workers, assistance to this vulnerable working group was direct. PAJA had a fund to support the development of basic services, in the form of a subsidy for the local construction of basic services in early childhood development, care centres, rooms and play centres. After deactivation, it has not been replaced by another programme of similar scope in the care of this population (REJJA, *ibid.*)
13. As regards domestic workers, the following table shows that the policy framework aimed at this workgroup presents a greater integration in terms of strategic policy areas for their care, compared with women temporary agricultural workers.

► **Table 2. Domestic workers and public policies in Mexico to 2019. (Per strategic policy area of the Joint Program.**

	Social protection;	Decent work	Gender equality	Interculturality	Care
Ratification of the ILO Convention 189	X	X	X	-	-
Federal Labour Law and Social Security Act	X		-	-	-
Federal Law to Prevent and Eliminate Discrimination			X	X	
PRO-EQUALITY Programme	X	X	X	-	X

Source: ILO et al (2019), Government of Mexico and CEAV (2020). Own Making.

Note. "X" if the policy in question states or contemplates the area of interest; "-" if that area is not identified in the policy; and blank if no information is available.

14. In Mexico, recent labour reforms and legal decisions have been made that favour and/or open ways to recognize and improve working conditions of domestic workers. The organizational development of the unions of domestic workers in Mexico over the past 20 years has been the mainstay of these regulatory progress made in recognising their rights. However, figures from the IMSS Portal<sup>9</sup> as of 2021 allow us to note that greater efforts are needed to implement innovative strategies to realize their rights. As of 2021, only 27,000 domestic workers (1% of Mexico's 2.2 million) are affiliated with the social security system; hence, the unions of domestic workers – which promoted ratification of ILO Convention 189 – advocate a political discourse that extends beyond just legal progress made. (ILO *et al*: 2020 p. 33).
15. On the latter, in December 2018, the Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation (SCJN) declared unconstitutional the exclusion of domestic workers from the compulsory social security regime of the IMSS. The decision ordered the IMSS to implement, in the first half of 2019, a pilot programme to affiliate domestic workers in a special social security regime, in whose design the particularities of domestic work should be considered. Challenges to affiliate working people are diverse due to the complexities of the modalities in which paid domestic work takes place (domestic workers with more than one employer or shifts and working only a few days a week, which causes the employer not to meet the minimum to be able to affiliate individually the domestic worker.)
16. ILO-sponsored Convention 189 was ratified on 3 July 2021. Analysts (ILO et al, 2019)<sup>10</sup> point out that progress made in implementing this Convention will depend on the context at the federal level and the key role of the

<sup>8</sup> IMSS.2021. "Institutional Programme of the Mexican Institute of Social Security 2020-2024: Progress and Outcomes 2020. Programme derived from the National Development Plan 2019-2024" Mexican Institute of Social Security. Available in: <http://www.imss.gob.mx/sites/all/statics/pdf/transparencia/rendicion/PIIMSS-2020-2024-InformeAvance.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.imss.gob.mx/>

<sup>10</sup> ILO, COPRED, STYFE, SEPI. 2019. "Report on the situation of the rights of domestic workers in Mexico City", March.



States. They also note that there is no supervising mechanism to ensure its implementation, taking into account that ILO instruments are not binding.

17. The reforms to the Federal Labour Law and the Social Security Act in 2019 (ILO *et al*, *ibid.*, p. 20.21) are counted as part of the progress made in favour of this group of workers. One of the changes with the reform of the Federal Labour Law was the obligation to establish a working relationship with domestic workers by written contract. As for the Permanent Social Security Programme for Domestic Workers, it is not yet approved, but there is a Bill to Reform Initiative being discussed in the Senate of the Congress of the Republic and is expected to be approved this year 2022.
18. In the framework of these reforms, a pilot programme was launched in March 2019, that incorporated domestic workers into IMSS, which was intended to provide them with access to illness and maternity; work risks; disability and life; retirement, lay-off and old age; day-care centres and social benefits. Nevertheless, analysts (ILO *et al*, *ibid*) note that the reforms to the Federal Labour Law in Mexico are conspicuously lacking to guarantee the labour rights of domestic workers and the limits and working conditions are vaguely outlined<sup>11</sup>.

## Gender perspective and care

19. The development of public policies to improve the conditions of paid domestic work involves considering the implications of socially underestimated work as it is largely linked to the low merit attributed to women. In this regard, such policies require the concrete and cross-cutting mainstreaming of the gender approach and strategies.
20. The General Law for Equality between Women and Men in Mexico provides that public policy must contribute to transforming asymmetric power relations and structural situations of inequality between women and men, making visible the presence of discriminatory gender stereotypes in regulatory production and interpretation and in the valuation of work, such as in the case of domestic workers.
21. The National Programme for Equality between Women and Men 2020-2024 (PROIGUALDAD) (Government of Mexico, 2020) derives from the National Development Plan 2019-2024 and is linked to the National Policy for Equality between Women and Men. Its priority objective 2 includes addressing domestic workload and care through families, the State, communities, and the private sector. With its priority strategy 1.4, the programme considers promoting programmes and reforms to improve working conditions and expand social security and protection of working women; and through its priority strategy 2.1, it proposes strengthening the institutional framework for domestic and care work, to ensure models of action favourable to co-responsibility, recognition, and decent exercise of such work. As regards care work, the Constitutional Reform to articles 4 and 73 was approved by the House of Representatives and is being ruled by the Senate, as is the General Law of the National Care System.

## The Closing Gaps Joint Programme

22. In view of the nature and magnitude of social vulnerability affecting women in Mexico, the objective of the Programme is to increase their access to social protection, and specifically increase access of domestic workers and women temporary agricultural workers. The Programme is implemented in the states of Chiapas, Jalisco, Mexico City, Oaxaca, and the State of Mexico, which concentrate the largest proportion of domestic workers and women temporary agricultural workers. However, it is expected to benefit a wide range of women at the national level by improving access to public care services and policies, supporting the adoption of a permanent social protection regime by IMSS for domestic workers, and create social protection strategies tailored to women temporary agricultural workers.
23. The main strategies of the Programme have been to improve the regulatory framework related to social protection and care, so that they extend to these excluded groups; and to strengthen the capacities of competent actors of the State and civil society (household employers and enterprises.) These strategies are developed under a rights approach including gender approach in all its components, social dialogue approach and territorial approach that emphasizes local issues (States and municipalities as direct actors) and in

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<sup>11</sup> For example, they point out that tasks are not specifically defined, nor are working hours, there is little clarity about productivity and quality of tasks, since they are supposed to be carried out according to the tastes of employers.

permanent interaction with the national level. The Programme also notes that it works with an interculturality approach.

24. The deadline to implement the Programme is February 2020-May 2022 and the total cost of its implementation is USD 2,400,408. The Programme brings together specialized work of three United Nations agencies with direct competencies in dealing with social protection and targeted population groups; the ILO, with competencies in employment, labour rights and social protection, labour inspection, paid domestic work; the United Nations Organization for Women (UN Women), with competencies in gender strategies in development and care policies; and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), with competencies in rural development policies, gender and interculturality, and agricultural workers.

25. The Programme envisages achieving the following outcomes<sup>12</sup>:

- Implementation of integrated multisectoral policies on women's access to social protection, including a National Care Strategy.
- Strengthening the capacities of key stakeholders to increase women's access to social protection.

26. The expected impacts of the Programme to 2022 are as follows:

- A mandatory and permanent social security regime for domestic workers established by IMSS; and an awareness campaign to promote the formalization of domestic workers in 2 States. The actors involved in the campaigns are expected to continue the effort at the national level in the following years, so that within 8 to 10 years (within the framework of the Plan to implement Agenda 2030) the IMSS would have affiliated between 15% and 20% of domestic workers<sup>13</sup>.
- Coordination mechanisms foreseen for the national care system established and operating in collaboration with the relevant actors identified, having validated a pilot at the municipal level validated for replication; and the basis for a universal care system that provides access to the 46 million people in need of care (children, older adults and people with disabilities.)
- Mexican institutions of local governments will have designed a strategy that directs actions for social protection of women temporary agricultural workers, promoting effective public policies for this sector. In the first and second year of the Programme, a basic study will have been developed for the construction of an Agenda and a roadmap for the realization of rights of agricultural workers, involving employers and the competent authorities.

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<sup>12</sup> [Annex 1](#) presents outputs linked to each outcome, performance and output indicators, and the distribution of responsibilities of United Nations System agencies (UNSS) on the components of the Programme.

<sup>13</sup> The goal for this increase differs in the documents reviewed. The Programme design document states that 4% of domestic workers and women temporary agricultural workers (around 2.5 million people) will gain access to social protection (J SGD Fund: 2019, p. 3). The statement on the impacts of the Joint Programme to 2022, however, provides that, following campaigns to formalize domestic workers, within 8 to 10 years, IMSS will be able to affiliate between 15% and 20% of domestic workers.

## 2. Evaluation background

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### 2.1. Objective, scope, and recipients of evaluation

27. **Objective.** The evaluation sought to identify the outcomes achieved by the Joint Programme, why and how they were achieved, the processes followed, and the factors that explain delays or implementation issues. The aim was also to analyse the contribution of the Programme to the expected outcomes and others related to gender equality, women empowerment, especially domestic workers, and women temporary agricultural workers. In addition, it was analysed how inter-agency developed by the Programme contributes to the achievement of the outcomes achieved. Inter-agentiality means the conjunction and synergy generated by expertise, competencies, specialities, as well as the specific capacities of each of the PUNOs of the Programme: ILO, UN Women and FAO.
28. The evaluation also aimed to identify lessons learned from the Programme, which can support learning and decision-making for future programming aimed at expanding social protection to women in vulnerable working sectors. Also, learn lessons on how the pandemic impacted on the situation of those groups identified as target populations and how the Programme provided support to stakeholders in this crisis.
29. **Scope of the Evaluation.** The evaluation was conducted from February to May 2022 and covered the period from February 2020 to May 2022. Regarding geographical scope, the evaluation provides an evaluation of the Programme support to increase access of domestic workers and women temporary agricultural workers to social protection in the states of Chiapas, Jalisco, Mexico City, Oaxaca, and the State of Mexico.
30. **Internal recipients of the Evaluation.** The ILO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean; the ILO Office for the Andean Countries; the Joint Secretariat of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Fund; UN Women; FAO; the Office of Resident Coordination (ORC); the ILO Department of Social Protection (SOCPRO); the ILO Evaluation Office (EVAL) ; and the ILO Development Partnerships (PARDEV).
31. **External recipients of the Evaluation.** National and sub-national public institutions in Mexico participating in the Programme, civil society organizations, workers' and employers' organizations and academic institutions.

### 2.2. Evaluation approach, criteria, and questions

32. The evaluation followed the Norms and Standards for Evaluation of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG), the Evaluation Policies of the ILO, UN Women and FAO.
33. **Focus of Evaluation.** In response to the objectives set out, the evaluation took into account the following approaches: participatory, results-based management, inter-culturality, and systemic or integrality. It has also considered the Programme's Theory of Change (ToC).
34. **Evaluation criteria and questions.** The evaluation has taken into account the following criteria: (i) relevance and validity of design; (ii) effectiveness; (iii) management effectiveness; (iv) efficiency; and (v) impact and sustainability guidance. For each criterion, questions have been developed and in each of them elements of judgement and indicators have been identified so that they can be answered more effectively. The evaluation Matrix detailing each of these aspects is attached as [Annex 2](#).
35. **Relevance and validity of the design** analysed whether the objectives and design of the Programme respond to the identified needs of the population and to the strategic priorities of the country and the UNS in Mexico; how relevant the joint participation of UNS agencies is and how synergies are expected to be complemented and built; how the gender and non-discrimination approach is incorporated into the Programme; and whether the Programme has targeted people with disabilities (PWD). The coherence and completeness of the Programme's ToC and its limitations were also evaluated; the adequacy of its performance and output/process indicators; whether the relevance of the Programme in the context of a pandemic was maintained and strategies to reposition interventions and/or address new pandemic demands were adopted; and what the participation and contribution of UNS agencies, public institutions and other stakeholders has been during the Programme design.

36. Effectiveness, analysed the extent to which outputs were realized and the results expected achieved in the Programme design, as well as what the main factors explaining the level of progress are; their contribution to the SDGs; whether the products developed took into account the specific problems of women, PWD and other vulnerable population groups; and what the implications of the COVID-19 crisis have been for the implementation and effectiveness of the Programme.
37. Management Effectiveness reviewed whether the governance structure and management model of the Programme facilitated obtaining outcomes; and to what extent the capacities of the UNS agencies and the institutional arrangements achieved have contributed to better manage the Programme; and what synergies or intersections with relevant national partners have been harnessed and contributed to the achievement of the Programme's outcomes. It was also enquired whether a monitoring and evaluation system/mechanism has been put in place to measure progress made in the implementation of the Programme and whether the results of monitoring and evaluation are disseminated to stakeholders and used for decision-making and/or accountability.
38. Efficiency evaluated whether the Programme has strategically allocated resources to ensure the fulfilment of activities and achievement of outcomes in the expected time: whether it shows a level of financial execution consistent with the level of progress in technical execution; and also to what extent inter-agency has contributed to improving implementation efficiency.
39. Orientation toward impact and sustainability, analysed how effective the Programme has been in generating or strengthening capacities of relevant individuals and institutions in Mexico (at the national and sub-national levels) in the area of social protection to address problems in the short and long term; whether the Programme has favoured the ownership of intervention by the main partners and whether they are willing to maintain the outcomes after the intervention is completed and have a budget for it. It also analysed the main effects being achieved in social protection, care systems, formality, technical training in the target population of the Programme, and to what extent emphasis is put on the development and/or implementation of regulations and design and/or implementation of national and sub-national public policies on social protection. Finally, it analysed what measures were taken to ensure sustainability of the outcomes achieved by the Programme in view of the negative impact of COVID-19.
40. It should be noted that, since it is a Programme seeking mainly to contribute to the development of public policies, these will still have to be implemented and subsequently evaluated to know whether the situation of target groups has actually improved. To that extent, the focus of evaluation has been on the Programme's capacities to achieve the implementation of the proposed policies and its ability to involve representatives of target groups.
41. Gender mainstreaming. Gender approach was addressed in accordance with the EVAL Guide on Mainstreaming Gender in Evaluations<sup>14</sup>, as well as the UN Women's Manual "How to manage gender-focused evaluations"<sup>15</sup>. Questions about the gender approach were incorporated into the criteria of relevance and validity of design, effectiveness, and orientation toward impact and sustainability. The gender approach is a tool for analysing the relationships between women and men and their implications in the various dimensions of their personal, social, economic, and cultural development. In this regard, the gender and human rights approach has guided the evaluation work as a tool for analysing the problems addressed by the Programme, the strategies proposed to solve them and their scope in terms of processes, outcomes, effects, and impacts. Some criteria used to bring closer the degree of gender approach mainstreaming in the Programme have been to analyse whether the design of the intervention is based on diagnoses that analyse the causes and implications of gender in the problem addressed; whether the intervention has gender indicators to measure processes, outcomes, effects, and impacts; and whether the intervention has a defined and joint gender strategy that addresses cross-cutting the different components of the intervention; and whether it guides and empowers partner actors and collaborators on the scope of such a gender strategy and how to implement it.
42. Inclusion of persons with disabilities. The evaluation reviewed whether the Programme design has been inclusive for PWD: to what extent it contemplated these persons within its target or have included the

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<sup>14</sup>Guidance Note 3.1: Integrating gender equality in monitoring and evaluation" ([https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms\\_165986.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_165986.pdf)).

<sup>15</sup> <https://glocalevalweek.org/sites/default/files/2019-06/UN-Women-Evaluation-Handbook-es.pdf>.

requirement of non-discrimination and accessibility related to disability; and whether the PWD have been consulted, through their representative organizations, for the design of the Programme.

## 2.3. Sources and data collection methods

43. The evaluation was non-experimental and developed with a participatory approach that sought to identify and analyse the vision of the different actors involved (executing teams, partners, collaborators, direct beneficiaries) on the outcomes, effects and impacts achieved by the Programme, sustainability thereof, implementation of the strategies and approaches chosen in their design, adaptation to the context of the COVID 19 pandemic and inter-agency of the Programme.
44. Primary and secondary sources of information were used to answer evaluation questions. In the case of primary sources, the information collection methods were individual virtual interviews (through Zoom meetings) to partner actors, collaborators, and Programme PUNOs teams and online surveys, also to representatives of the different actors involved in the implementation of the Programme, as well as to beneficiaries of the capacity-building actions developed by the Programme. In the case of secondary sources, the method used was document review.
45. The interviews used the semi-structured interview research technique, based on a guide designed per type of interviewee. Three interview guides were available: one for representatives of Agency teams, one for representatives of partner actors, and a third for representatives of collaborating actors (see [Annex 3](#) for these guides.) A total of 34 people (9 men and 25 women), representatives of agencies (FAO, ILO and UN Women,) the United Nations Resident Coordination Office, 13 partner institutions<sup>16</sup>, 4 collaborating institutions<sup>17</sup>, and 4 women temporary agricultural workers in Oaxaca were interviewed ([Annex 4](#) presents the list of people interviewed.)

► **Table 3. Distribution of interviewees per role in the Programme of the institutions they represent and sex.**

Type of Institution	# of institutions	# of people interviewed		
		Total	Men	Women
Agencies	4	8	3	5
Partner institutions	13	16	5	11
Collaborating institutions	4	6	1	5
Women temporary agricultural workers		4	0	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>25</b>

Source: List of actors interviewed in Annex 4 . Own Making.

46. 3 online Surveys were applied (questionnaires of the surveys applied are presented in [Annex 5](#).) The online surveys were addressed to the universe of people appearing in the directories submitted by the Programme. In order to have the most answers, two reminders were sent for each questionnaire, and they remained online two weeks each. Response rates were 46% (Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme), 22% (Survey on Training in Women Temporary Agricultural Workers' Rights) and 28% (Survey on Online Course of Labour Inspection.)<sup>18</sup>

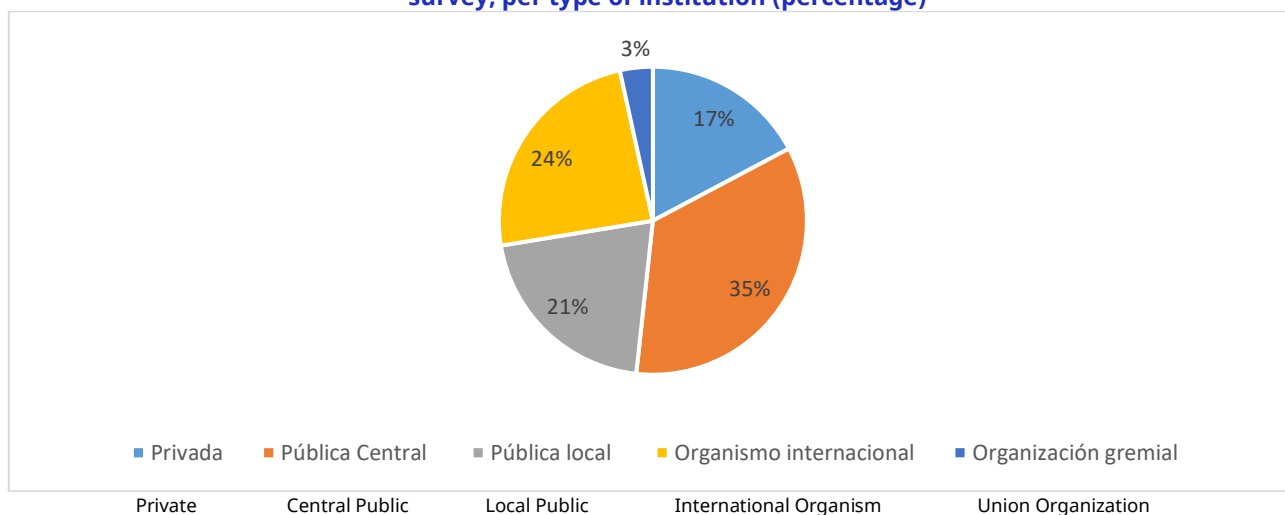
<sup>16</sup> Ministry of Substantive Equality of the State of Jalisco; Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare of the State of Jalisco; Government of the Municipality of Autlan-Jalisco; Institute of Indigenous Peoples (INPI); Institute of Labour Training (ICAT); IMSS; Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (STPS); Office of the Presidency- Former Agenda 2030 Secretariat; Secretariat of Labour and Social Welfare – EDOMEX / Government of the State of Mexico; Mayor of Iztapalapa; Fair Home Association; Support and Training Centre for Household Employees (CACEH); National Union of Domestic Workers (*SINACTRAHO*).

<sup>17</sup> Association for Social Investment (ASI); Agricultural and Agro-industry Development Board (CDAA); The Hunger Project (THP); and Simone de Beauvoir Leadership Institute (ILSB).

<sup>18</sup> Further details of the reminders sent for each survey are presented in [Annex 6](#) "Survey Reminder History."

47. The “Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme” aimed to collect information on a portion of the questions and indicators in the Evaluation Matrix. It was addressed to representatives of the institutions involved in the activities of the Programme and was answered by 29 people (46% out of the 63 people asked to respond to the Survey.) As shown in the following graphic, more than half of those who answered the Survey (56%) belong to public sector institutions (central government, local and provincial governments); about one quarter (24%) are members of UNS agencies teams (FAO, ILO, UN Women); third, the participation of private sector institutions (17%) and a very small participation of organizations of the Programme target groups (3 per cent)<sup>19</sup> is noted. 68% of respondents are women and 32% are men.

► **Graphic 1. Institutions that participated in the Closing Gaps Programme and that responded to the survey, per type of institution (percentage)**



Source: Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme.

48. The other two surveys aimed to approximate the outcomes of the capacity-building actions developed by the Programme (trainings, courses, workshops.) The “Survey on Training in Women Temporary Agricultural Workers Rights” was distributed to 300 people (among public servants, community promoters, women temporary agricultural workers, representatives of agricultural companies) who received training and has been answered by 67 people, or 22%. Among those who responded to the Survey, 13% are women temporary agricultural workers, 59% public servants, 3% community promoters, 7% representatives of agricultural companies and 18% were representatives of NGOs and the Academy. Also, 67% are women and 33% are men. In turn, the “Survey on Online Labour Inspection Course,” which was distributed to the 25 actors who participated in the labour inspection course was answered by only 7 participants (28% of participants in the online course), of which 2 are women and 5 are men<sup>20</sup>.

49. The secondary sources of information reviewed can be classified into the following categories ([Annex 7](#) presents details of the secondary sources):

- Documentation on Programme design.
- Documentation on Programme implementation (quarterly and annual reports).
- Documentation on budget and Programme budget implementation.
- Documentation on Mexico's national frameworks .

<sup>19</sup> The survey respondents belong to the following institutions: Ministry of Substantive Equality between Women and Men of the State of Jalisco, INMUJERES, INPI, IMSS, Secretariat of Economy / Executive Secretariat of the Council of the National Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, Presidency of the Republic, Secretariat of Labour and Employment Promotion, Ministry of Labour of the Government of the State of Mexico, ICAT, Integral Development for the Autlan Family of Navarre, Fair Home, AHIFORES, ASI, Driscolls, The Hunger Project, Centre for Studies in International Cooperation and Public Management, A.C, ILO, FAO and UN WOMEN.

<sup>20</sup> It should be noted that the out-of-time delivery of information on course databases (directory of participants) did not allow the development of one of the questionnaires planned to be applied (Training for Domestic Workers.)

- Publications achieved in the development of Social Dialogue strategy with evidence.
- Programme studies/publications.

50. For each evaluation criterion, the information collected from the primary and secondary sources identified in the preceding paragraphs was triangulated to try to support the evaluation findings as much as possible.

## 2.4. Ethical considerations

51. The evaluation was framed within the ILO Policy Guidelines for results-based evaluations<sup>21</sup> and was carried out according to the regulations and quality standards of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (Development Assistance Committee – DAC/OECD), the Code of Conduct of the United Nations Evaluation Group System, focusing on independence, impartiality, conflict of interest, honesty and integrity, responsibility, confidentiality, accuracy, completeness, reliability, and transparency.

52. The information provided by interviewees and/or respondents was treated with absolute confidentiality. Regarding the interviews, interviewees were explained the context of the evaluation at the start of the interviews and were given room to ask any questions they had.

53. In addition, prior to the evaluation the Evaluation Team stated that they had no interest or conflict in conducting the evaluation, as they had not participated in the design and implementation of the Programme and had no personal relationship with their managers and/or participants.

## 2.5. Difficulties and limitations in the evaluation

54. The evaluation has also had limitations, mainly difficulties in contacting representatives of the final target groups, due to the restrictions of the context of the COVID 19 pandemic and the social and connectivity conditions these groups face as they lack access to the Internet and digital media. Most of the evaluation period took place during the development of the third wave of the pandemic in Latin America, which substantially reduced the possibilities of achieving direct and face-to-face interaction with the final recipients of the Programme. However, through coordination with the FAO team, a group interview was achieved with 4 women temporary agricultural workers from Oaxaca, which provided important inputs for the evaluation in terms of their expectations, social protection needs and the dimensioning of other vulnerabilities in them and in their family group (incidence of disability, characteristics of workplace harassment that they suffer and that makes it necessary to have a gender-focused labour inspection mechanism for agricultural workers.)

55. With regard to interviews with representatives of agencies, partner institutions and collaborating institutions, 15 of the 49 interviews planned could not be conducted (i.e., 30%): in 2 cases they rejected the interview request; in 10 cases they did not respond to the interview request; and in 3 cases they agreed to have the interviews, but for various reasons they could not attend on the agreed day<sup>22</sup>.

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<sup>21</sup> [ILO Policy Guidelines for Results-Based Evaluation: principles, rationality, planning and management.](#)

<sup>22</sup> Details of the interviews that could not be conducted are provided in [Annex 8](#).

## 3. Evaluation Findings

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### 3.1. Relevance and validity of the design

**Question 1. To what extent does the Programme incorporate into its design the framework of national and territory policies on social protection, decent employment, gender equality and non-discrimination, interculturality and human rights? To what extent does it reflect the needs of its target audience?**

56. The Programme aligned itself directly with the framework of policies related to social protection and care, reflected in the Implementation Plan of Agenda 2030 (which establishes social protection of universal access as one of its pillars); the National Development Plan 2019-2024 (which has prioritized access to basic social protection for vulnerable, rural and indigenous populations)<sup>23</sup>; and the PRO-EQUALITY Programme (cross-cutting gender equality policy package that puts care at the centre of the universal social protection system.)
57. With regard to employment, labour formalization, and income generation policies, the actors consulted note that at the beginning of the current management of the central government a policy of “Work Dignification” was defined to which the Programme has been aligned. STPS and ICAT officials point out that the Programme has *“properly aligned itself with constitutional reforms and policy of the current Labour Dignification Management”* as well as the labour training policies initiated in 2019, to accredit paid domestic work and improve income of domestic workers.
58. The evaluation considers it relevant that the Programme turned the attention to a social group with a massive presence, although invisible to public policies, such as migrant women temporary agricultural workers, who constitute rural and indigenous populations, with which it managed not only to align itself with the priority policies of the Mexican state, but go further by making them visible and raising the urgency of directing actions toward them aimed at generating multisectoral public policies for expanded social protection, adapted to their needs.
59. The timing at which the Programme is designed and implemented should be highlighted. The approach to social programmes management changes from the start of a new government in Mexico. It backs away from the focus to go for universalization of public services and programmes, without intermediate stages or adjustment stages. This actually left vulnerable sectors (such as women temporary agricultural workers and their families) ever more vulnerable by disabling programs such as PAJA that worked for 30 years and that - although of limited coverage - was the only intervention of the government that specifically served the country's temporary workers.
60. The Programme made it possible to turn the eyes of states toward a population that was left without coverage by the government. Although, due to the scale and dimensions of the problem, the isolated action of the states is insufficient, and the government state is required to add efforts, Jalisco and Oaxaca have responded to the call for action in favour of the group of women temporary agricultural workers by the Programme and its actions. The foregoing reveals the relevance of the Programme from its component of women temporary agricultural workers.
61. The Programme's response to the characteristics and needs of the context has also been high in terms of the other components. The constitutional reform processes initiated in Mexico in 2019 were the precedent for the Programme's inception and opened up the possibility of operating regulatory changes aimed at recognizing care as a right. The Programme aligned itself with the process of ratification of the ILO Convention 189 on domestic workers and generally aligned itself with constitutional reforms by providing guidance and inputs. It

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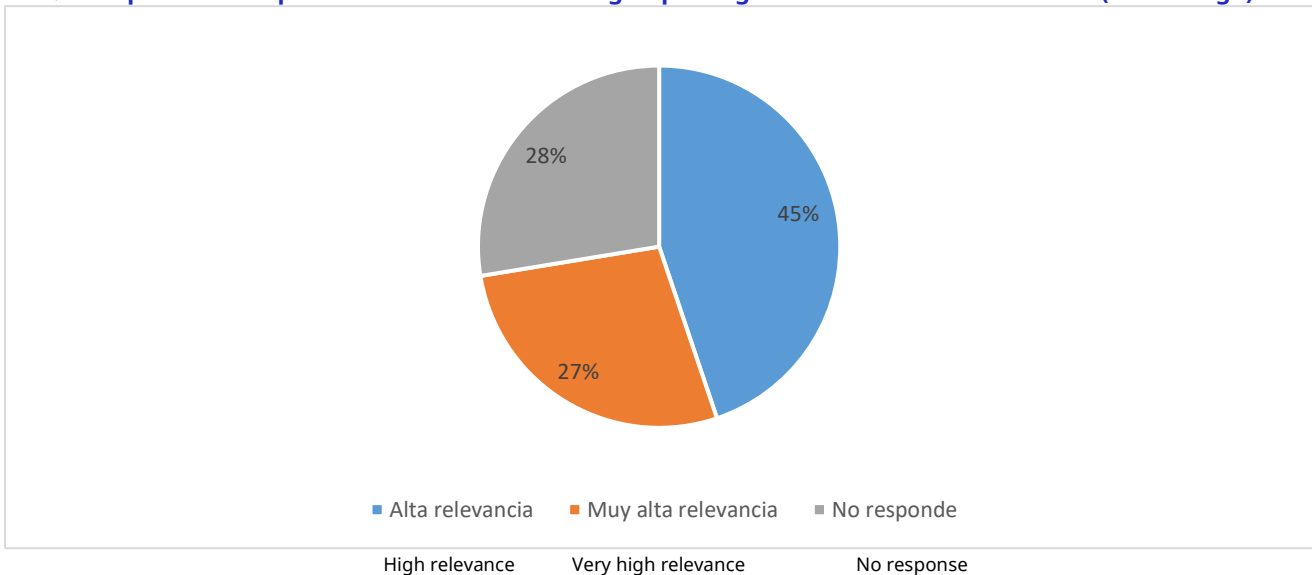
<sup>23</sup> The Mexican State's National Development Plan 2019-2024 aims to provide universal access to social protection and social security for the entire working population. In 2020, in line with this national objective and in the face of the COVID 19 pandemic, the IMSS defines a social protection strategy for the rural population excluded from the social security affiliation system, by providing medical and community services to about 11.6 million people living in marginalized rural and urban localities in 19 States and, among them, 4.1 million living in predominantly indigenous localities (IMSS: 2021, p.6.)



contributed to the drafting of legislation to establish a compulsory social protection regime for domestic workers and a bill for the establishment of a national care system.

62. The Programme has based its design and the different stages of its development on carrying out studies on the problems addressed, focusing on a set of needs of target groups. In the case of domestic workers, a study has been conducted identifying the main socio-labour barriers they face in accessing social security; another on the experiences of paid domestic work inspections in the Latin America and the Caribbean region, which points to the needs and challenges of labour inspection in this labour field; and a third analysis study of the outcomes of the IMSS pilot test in compliance with the SCJN decision on the affiliation of domestic workers to social security. The evaluation considers that, based on such studies, the Programme made specific efforts to meet the identified needs of target groups.
63. In the case of women temporary agricultural workers, looking at their protection needs stemmed up from the concept of expanded social protection including regulatory, contributory, and non-contributory aspects. Thereby, it addresses not only attention to socio-labour needs, but also other gaps in attending social and economic services (education, attention to gender-based violence, care services) impacting the social vulnerability that affects them. Thus, the concept includes the approach and needs of assurance of livelihood and income generation.
64. 45% of actors consulted through the “Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme” consider the relevance of the Programme to be “High” before the pandemic and 27% to be “Very high;” while in the context of the pandemic, the latter percentage increased to 55%. Representatives of public institutions (central government and local and provincial governments) associated with the Programme, who are key actors in the development of social protection policies, are mainly accountable for the high evaluation of the relevance of the Programme before and in the context of the pandemic<sup>24</sup>.

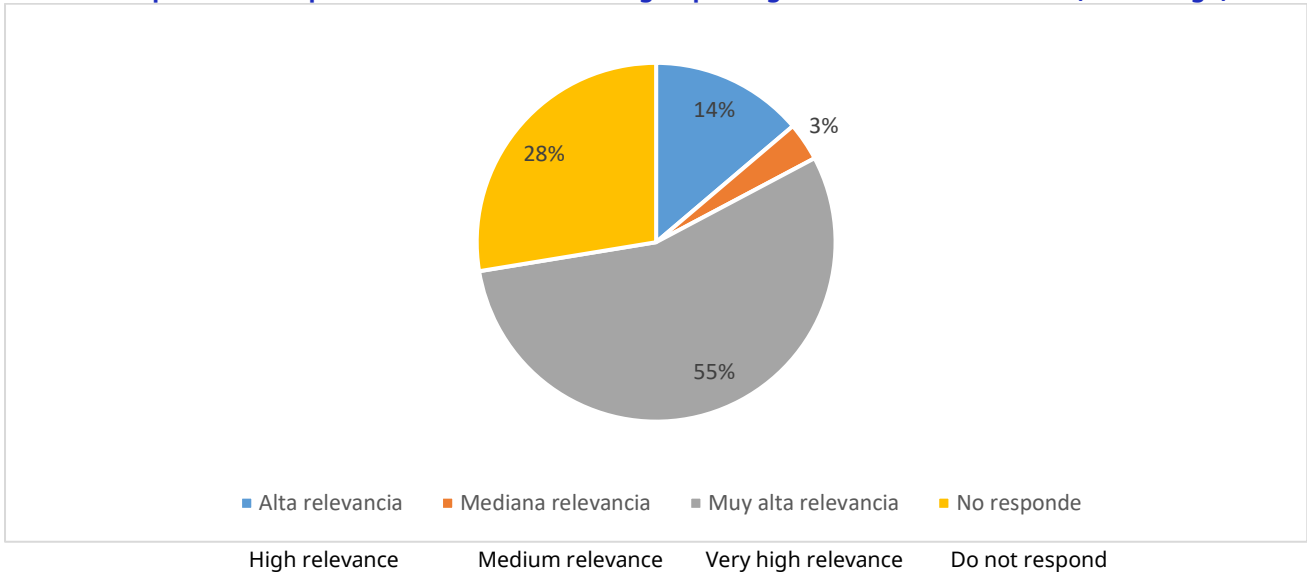
► **Graphic 2. Perception of Relevance of Closing Gaps Programme Before the Pandemic (Percentage)**



Source: Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme.

<sup>24</sup> See [Annex 9](#) for outcomes details.

► **Graphic 3. Perception of Relevance of Closing Gaps Programme in the Pandemic (Percentage)**



Source: Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme.

65. In consideration of the foregoing paragraphs, the evaluation considers that the Programme was relevant in terms of its alignment with the policy framework and the needs of the context. A former federal state official who participated at the start of the Programme said, *“Closing Gaps was considered a 360° programme, that is, strategic no matter what...regardless of numbers, the important thing was that it allowed to drive the implementation of other programs in the state.”*

**Question 2. Given the nature of the problem addressed by the Programme, how relevant is the joint participation of UNS agencies involved? To what extent was it anticipated in the Programme design that the approaches, capacities, expertise of each of these agencies would complement and generate synergies?**

66. The diagnosis of the Programme Document (PRODOC) on the different structural causes of social vulnerability of women and their gender roots made it clear that they are facing a multidimensional problem that calls for directing joint strategies toward its solution and, by specialized actors called to achieve a joint work; this constitutes a planning, organizational and operational challenge.
67. The evaluation considers that it was relevant to define an intervention with the joint participation of UNS agencies, specialized in social protection, formalization of employment and promotion of decent work (ILO), rural and agricultural development from a sustainable livelihood approach (FAO), and gender strategies and development of care systems (UN Women.) The experience and expertise of each agency in those subjects ensured specialized treatment of the different causes of the problem addressed. The challenge was to achieve cross-sectional and integrated views on the problem they addressed and to operate joint strategies.
68. The Programme design distributed and organized the work and responsibility of the agencies by component and according to their expertise: ILO was responsible for the domestic workers component; FAO was responsible for the women temporary agricultural workers component; and UN Women of the care component and was in charge of the Programme's communication strategy (responsible for campaign design and production.)
69. The evaluation considers that this distribution of agency work per component limited interactions between agencies in terms of the application of approaches, working methodologies, and capacities to jointly tackle the problem addressed. A distribution of agency work by joint strategy could have allowed a more cross-sectional and comprehensive look and treatment of the problem of social protection and care in target groups, as well as greater interactions, complementarities, and synergies between agencies.

**Question 3. How is the gender and non-discrimination approach incorporated into the Programme? Were the underlying causes of gender inequality and discrimination addressed in social protection? To what extent does the Programme design contribute, a priori, to reducing the gender inequality and non-discrimination gap? How is the planned contribution of UNS agencies to gender and non-discrimination approaches reflected in the Programme design and how do they complement each other?**

70. The actors consulted considered that the Programme had incorporated the gender approach, since it intended to address social vulnerability in women as problematic with gender-based structural causes and because of the discrimination they face in their condition as women. The evaluation considers that targeting gender gaps is the starting point for gender analysis and action.
71. The evaluation considers that the Programme addressed the structural causes underlying women's social vulnerability and a set of strategies for overcoming the same. The diagnosis supporting the Programme identified the gender-based structural causes underlying the problem of women's social vulnerability: inequality between women and men in the use of time, unequal domestic work and unpaid care, underestimation of women's productive work, and limited access to decent and formal work. The strategies of the Programme were defined based on this identification. One of the main ones was to solve the problem of unequal distribution of the care load between women and men, for which one of the components of the Programme is the establishment of a National Care Strategy.
72. In addition, by focusing attention on public policies and society as a whole, the reality of social vulnerability of vulnerable women worker groups such as domestic workers and women temporary agricultural workers, the Programme addressed one of the least addressed causes by public policies, such as the underestimation of productive work developed by these women within these sectors (which, in the case of domestic workers represent the vast majority of workers.)
73. Gender-based diagnoses and studies also accompanied the development of the Programme in each component to accompany the policy dialogue strategy with evidence. Barriers faced by women to access social protection (in regulatory aspects, access to care services, information on social protection) were identified to nurture the spaces for dialogue and policy-building aimed at reducing social protection gaps for women.
74. In addition to the development and use of updated gender-sensitive social protection diagnostics, other best practices in incorporating this approach have been the inclusion of representatives of target groups in the spaces and mechanisms in which the social protection strategies achieved were built; as well as the field presence of agencies such as the FAO, which has made a difference for populations such as women temporary agricultural workers, *"women temporary workers have been heard, they have felt someone care about them,"* said the social representative/promoter of the municipality of Autlan.
75. Partner actors such as SISEMH in Jalisco consider that their gender expertise in the development of outputs in their interaction with the Programme was important to achieve the outcomes. The same is perceived in terms of the participation of public institutions (such as INMUJERES) specializing in gender and public policies. One of the most effective strategies of the Programme to ensure the gender approach is to have convened and worked with highly qualified public and civil society bodies in the application of the gender approach, which created synergy with the gender expertise of each agency.
76. As to gender indicators, they are not identified in the design of the Programme. Since it is a "for women" intervention, indicators are defined with respect to women. Thus, the evolution of the value of the "Percentage of domestic workers affiliated to the social security system" indicator can account for the improvement in the situation of women with respect to themselves and not for the variation in the gender gap in access<sup>25</sup>. Likewise, while the Programme aims at empowering women in target groups, it fails to define indicators of this empowerment.
77. The ILO took care of domestic workers because of its years of experience in promoting their labour rights as women workers and formalizing their work and from a gender and non-discrimination approach; while the FAO was responsible for women temporary agricultural workers, as an expert agency in rural development and

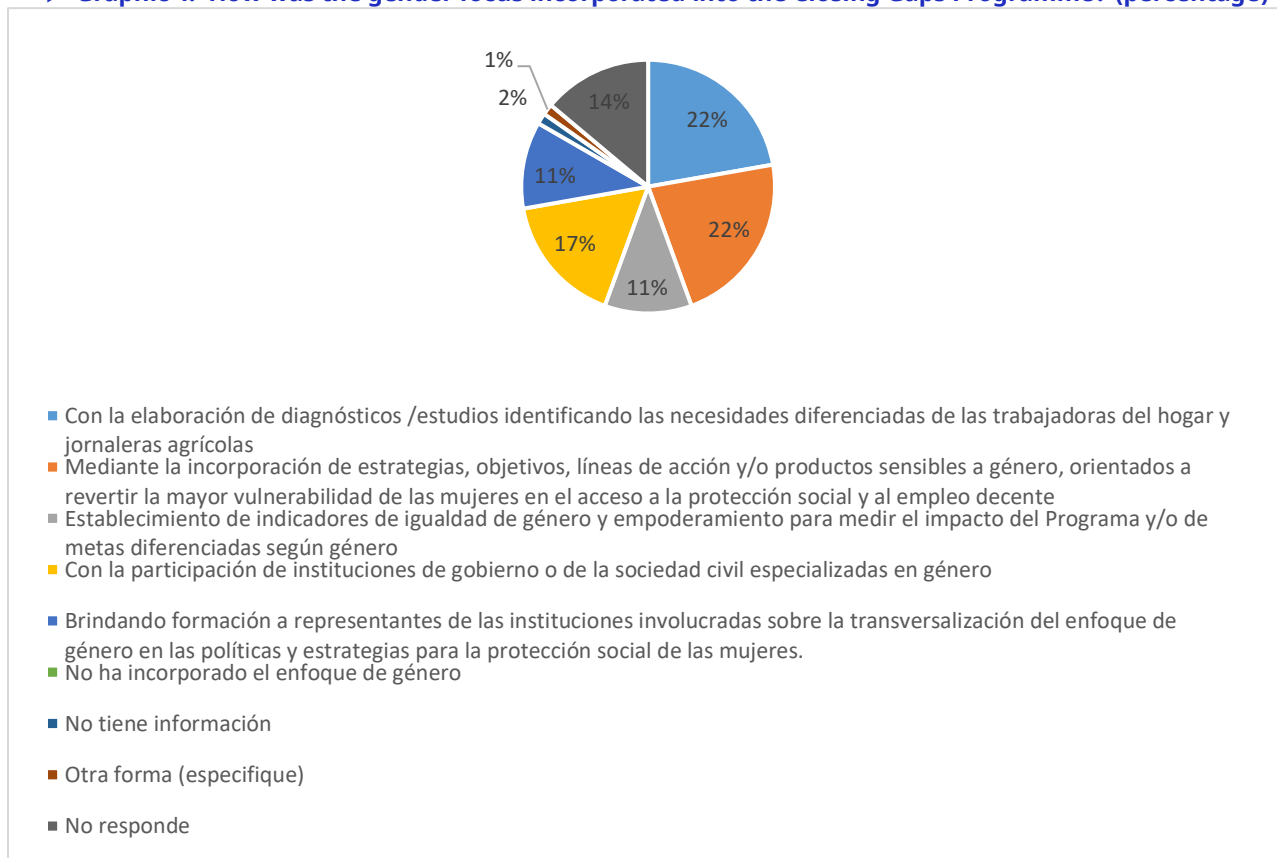
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<sup>25</sup> Gender gaps, as the very concept of gender, are defined in a relational sense, comparing the situation of women with that of men, in any dimension or variable of reality.

agriculture from a gender perspective and from its knowledge of the territories and their networks. In turn, regarding the care component, the accumulated experience of UN Women is expressed as follows by the former coordinator of the care component of the Programme “... we must consider the more than 20 years of experience of UN Women in developing statistics, research and tools such as ENUT, which provides a solid foundation for the Programme” and to this must be added its communication and advocacy capabilities aimed at taking advantage of the context of “global drive for the recognition of care.”

- 78. To incorporate the gender and non-discrimination approach into the Programme, the FAO had a gender and social protection specialist assigned to the Programme. While the ILO and UN Women teams relied on gender and non-discrimination directives and mandates from their own agencies.
- 79. The evaluation considers that the Programme incorporated the gender approach, although a joint and explicit strategy was needed to do so across components. This is noted, for example, in the care aspect in the various policies and strategies developed and driven by the Programme, where rural care is a pending issue. Or, in the fact that collaborators report that they did not have specific guidance or training regarding the treatment of cross-cutting approaches such as gender within the framework of the Programme and its design.
- 80. In line with the above, the actors consulted through the “Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme” point out that there were three main manners in which the Programme incorporated the gender approach: by developing diagnoses and studies that have allowed identifying women's differentiated needs in access to social protection (22% of respondents); considering gender-sensitive objectives, strategies, lines of action and products to overcome women's vulnerabilities in their access to social protection (22% of respondents); and through the participation of government institutions and/or civil society specialized in gender, such as INMUJERES, the Secretary of Substantive Equality between Women and Men- SISEMH of the State of Jalisco or the Simone de Beauvoir Leadership Institute- ILSB (17% of respondents.)

► **Graphic 4. How was the gender focus incorporated into the Closing Gaps Programme? (percentage)**

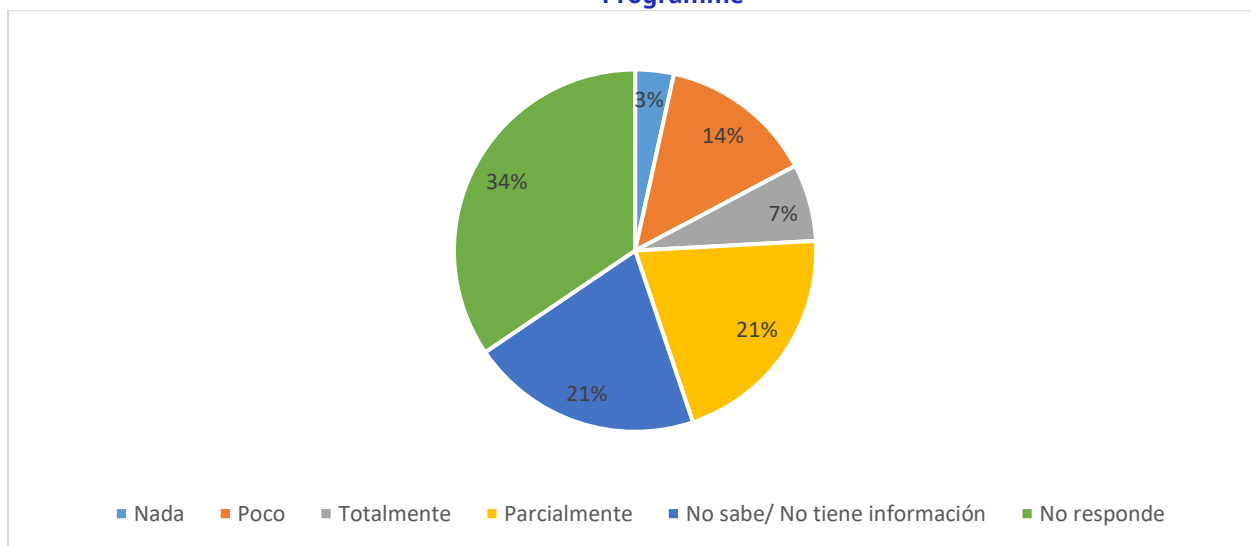


Source: Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme.

**Question 4. To what extent has the Programme included PWD among its target public? Has it included disability-related non-discrimination and accessibility requirement?**

- 81. The Program’s PRODOC notes that the Programme, by “addressing the reduction of gender inequalities and poverty, will make a significant contribution to SDG target 8.5” (JSDF: 2019, p.15.) This target establishes the achievement of “full, productive employment and decent work for women and men, including young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for equal work.” On the other hand, PRODOC identifies PWD as a vulnerable group of indirect influence of the Programme (JSDF: 2019 p.3.)
- 82. The PRODOC also marks the intersectionality to be applied in the intervention but does not mark a roadmap/strategy to identify and incorporate disability in dealing with target groups (domestic workers and temporary rural workers.) One way could have been to identify the incidence of disability in problems related to social vulnerability of domestic workers and women temporary agricultural workers through diagnoses and studies that supported the development of the Programme's outputs; however, the socio-economic profiles of domestic workers and women temporary agricultural workers obtained and/or referred to in the studies carried out under the Programme did not include women workers with disability or their family groups as a factor of vulnerability.
- 83. In the care component, in the development of technical inputs for the Law/Act, PWD was proposed as a target population of the national care system and estimates were made of the demand for care services represented by PWD, but there is no structured treatment of the topic in the outputs developed as part of the component, such as the care pilot in Iztapalapa City Hall or the proposal to professionalize care work, which is oriented to the care of children and older adults.
- 84. As mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, perception of the consideration of persons with disability in the development and outputs of the Programme is low among the actors consulted through *the “Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme,”* as shown by the fact that less than one third indicates that it was considered “Totally” (7%) or “Partially” (21%.)

► **Graphic 5. Consideration of persons with disability in the actions and outputs of the Closing Gaps Programme**



Nothing Little Totally Partially Does not know/ in not informed Does not respond

Source: Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme

**Question 5. Has the Programme design been appropriate and realistic to achieve the outcomes it intends to achieve? Are the strategies, outputs, and activities complementary to each other? Does it adequately identify the risks and assumptions of the intervention, the measures to mitigate the occurrence and/or effects of the risks? Does it identify strategies to promote the sustainability of outcomes? What is the expected contribution of UNS agencies to output delivery and achievement of objectives and how do they complement one another?**

85. The PRODOC claims that the lack of social protection and care services for Mexican women and, specifically, for domestic workers and migrant women temporary agricultural workers is explained by the lack of decent work opportunities; a legal framework that excludes them from social protection and care services; the limited scope and coverage provided by the existing social protection system; and the overburden of unpaid, unrecognised and invisible care work that is most pressing in rural communities (JSDG Fund: 2019, p.17.) Likewise, underestimation of women's productive work in these work fields, invisibility of unpaid care work and its consequences on opportunities for access to decent work are also causes of gender-based social vulnerability to which are added other inequalities such as ethnic cultural (indigenous) or place of residence (urban-rural.)
86. The Programme ToC is as follows: "If existing policies and legislation are strengthened to protect women, especially women from vulnerable groups, if key actors gain knowledge and skills in social protection management and programming, and if incentives are established to promote women workers' affiliation to social protection, then women's access to adequate social protection schemes and care services will increase, closing the current gaps for their full mainstreaming into the formal economy and full enjoyment of their rights" (JSDG Fund: 2019, p. 17.) Consistent with this ToC, the Programme design proposes as outcomes the achievement of a set of "multisectoral and integrated policies implemented for increasing access to social protection for women" as well as "actors with competence in social protection and strengthened care," with greater knowledge to extend the same and addressed to women. The evaluation considers that the strategies chosen to achieve these outcomes and outputs and the actions planned for their scope are logically related to the outcomes sought.
87. The design approach is appropriate, focusing on improving regulation and legislation -the greatest contribution to solving lack of access to social protection and care services for Mexican women and for domestic workers and women temporary agricultural workers. The Programme's ToC provides that a set of "incentives" are to be established to achieve compliance with improved labour policies and regulation in favour of vulnerable groups (domestic workers and women temporary agricultural workers.) Accordingly, a strategy for identifying and communicating incentives for specific actors was included to achieve the improvement of women's social protection. This strategy had different expressions in the components of the Programme.
88. In the domestic worker component, the ILO and its partners (employers' organizations such as Fair Home Association) identified and reported "incentives" for employers of domestic workers, specifically, the benefits to be given to employers by affiliating the domestic worker in social security were made visible (for example, they no longer have to make unexpected expenses to cover health emergencies of the domestic worker.)
89. In the women temporary agricultural workers component, interviews with the FAO team identify that, in perspective, work for the social protection of women temporary agricultural workers will incorporate the identification and promotion of incentives for employers to improve women workers' access to social protection. This will be facilitated by trade agreements between Mexico, the United States and Canada in the agro-exporting sector: *"Companies are motivated to obtain stamps and certifications on the quality of the products they export also in terms of observing social and labour rights, environmental considerations, all of which open up opportunities to improve the social protection of women temporary workers."*
90. In the care component, UN Women determined and reported the economic benefits of implementing a national care system in terms of employment and income generation, as strong evidence for policy makers with the ability to determine whether or not to make investments in care, in their task and search for "smart" public investments.
91. Among the various causes of social vulnerability of women that were identified and among the various strategies for reversing them, the Programme design chose to address strategies that could have a scale impact in terms of women's access to social protection and care services. Identification and development of effective public policies is the best way to produce structural changes and scale improvements in the groups served. Similarly,

capacity-building in actors linked to the identification and development of public policies has the potential to achieve multiplier effects, in terms of replication and scaling capabilities.

92. The challenge to be address is the correct identification of public policies to be promoted and to agree on investing in their sustained development, as well as to make them a reality at the different levels of public management (national, local, and federal.) That is, to achieve institutionalization of the policies driven and their outcomes to make them sustainable over time, taking into account that institutionalization of public policies is certainly a medium- and long-term process. To that extent, the evaluation considers that the design of the Programme was realistic in terms of the possibilities of promoting effective policies for women's access to social protection, but the deadlines for their institutionalization exceed those set by the Programme, given the time it often takes to "legitimize" a public policy from the outcomes it achieves.
93. According to ILO Recommendation 204 on the transition of economic units from the informal to the formal economy, social protection policies need to go with improvements in the capacity of states and their economies to promote and generate formal and decent employment<sup>26</sup>. In this regard, the Programme design considered in each component actions that would improve employment conditions and income generation. A training process to professionalize women domestic workers was planned and implemented in partnership with ICAT in the domestic worker component. In the women temporary agricultural workers component, the expanded social protection strategy in Jalisco envisages inclusion of temporary workers in income-generating programs already underway in the state (*Fuerza Mujer* Programme.) And in the care component, the curriculum proposal to professionalize care work is aimed at turning it into an opportunity for decent and better paid work. Likewise, the methodology developed to determine costs and benefits of investing in a national care system evidences the advantages for the country in terms of decent, direct, and indirect employment generation, and estimates the returns in tax revenues.
94. Even so, from the testimonies collected from a group of women temporary agricultural workers in Oaxaca, it is necessary to tackle with greater emphasis the strategy of employment and income generation within the extended social protection scheme for women; women temporary workers consider it among the three priority care needs, along with health and education and job training in the areas of origin. *"Many of us no longer want to migrate, or that our children migrate and suffer like us to go to work in the countryside, we would like to have employment opportunities in our localities, learn to do business. We know how to make handicrafts, meals, etc., but we don't know where to sell, we need them to train us."* Staying in their places of origin with the support of rural and productive development strategies is a way for them to break the circle of poverty and secure their sons and daughters a different future.
95. With regard to the alignment of resources invested in the development of the Programme with the problems and needs to be addressed to increase women's access to social protection and care, the evaluation considers that the resources invested in their development would have to be evaluated and contrasted over the next three years in relation to the extent to which the policies promoted are institutionalized and the number of workers in both labour groups (domestic workers and women temporary agricultural workers ) to gain access to social protection and care services.
96. The PRODOC identified four assumptions that need to be monitored: (a) the Mexican state's commitment to progress made toward social protection for the most vulnerable groups such as domestic workers, rural and indigenous people; (b) Secretariats and Congress highly committed to progressing toward the gender equality agenda; (c) unpaid care work positioned as a national priority to reduce gender inequalities; and (d) strength of partnership between participating United Nations Agencies (PUNO) and the Mexican government to jointly promote the achievement of the SDG in the country.
97. The evaluation considers that these assumptions were well identified and adequately monitored in the development of the Programme and had a follow-up plan; in addition, quarterly and annual reports included a follow-up to assumptions and risks. However, with regard to the strategy of regulatory and legislative improvements, the evaluation and the Programme teams themselves consider that an assumption on the timing of achieving the adoption of laws and public policies in the country should have been taken into account. In fact,

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<sup>26</sup> Promote the creation, preservation and sustainability of enterprises and decent jobs in the formal economy and the coherence of macroeconomic, employment, social protection, and other social policies" (ILO: 2015, p. 2.)

these timing is often indeterminate, given changes in the political, social, and public administration context (changes in government management, changes in priorities, turnover of authorities.)

98. Other assumptions made implicitly are unclear, such as those that supported the intervention aimed at women temporary agricultural workers and whether there were minimum conditions to start working with them. Collaborators who facilitated field work in Oaxaca and Jalisco noted that in the beginning of the field actions the main challenge was to establish minimum conditions (that did not exist) to promote a process of building public policy. For example, there were no channels established to locate temporary workers (only one NGO worked with a group of them,) they do not have digital media, their organizations are still not representative, the language with which to address them is many times different from Spanish, the pandemic had changed the roads they travelled, among others. They therefore note that the work carried out with this target group was initial and exploratory.
99. The Programme was developed based on political dialogue supported by evidence as a work strategy in the territories, for which they developed in-depth diagnoses and studies on the different topics linked to the solution of social protection gaps. This strategy is highly relevant for addressing multidimensional problems that demand the participation of diverse and heterogeneous actors -such as gaps in social protection affecting women- and has also been one of the most valued strategies by the Programme's partner actors. The success of this strategy requires an accurate and permanent identification of key actors in social protection, the construction of dialogue spaces and continuous monitoring, which the Programme and the teams of the agencies involved ensured in its development. It also requires institutionalization of spaces and mechanisms of dialogue created.
100. The diagnoses and studies achieved in the three components of the Programme have nurtured and enhanced the strategy of political dialogue and were carried out by academic institutions of recognized experience in each topic (College of Mexico - COLMEX in the case of the care component and the Association for Social Investment - ASI in the women temporary agricultural workers component.) The information they provided has had a significant impact on the work of partner actors involved and has been highly valued and has favoured their ownership. The "Social Protection Inter-Agency Cooperation Board for women temporary agricultural workers" formed in the states of Jalisco and Oaxaca under the Programme, and in which the expanded social protection strategy for women temporary agricultural workers is built, are evidence of the relevance of this Programme strategy.
101. Another strategy that has favoured the possibilities of ownership, and therefore the sustainability of the outcomes, has been carrying out qualitative studies as part of the identification and documentation of best practices in training actions for target groups, in which the voice of trained people is collected and in whose elaboration the training institutions were involved. This was the case with the ICAT in its interaction with the ILO to implement the course on professionalization of domestic work *"We have found it very important to prepare with the ILO the paper on best practice in training women domestic workers. We do satisfaction evaluations but had not done these qualitative studies before, where voice is given to trained individuals. It gave us a number of areas to improve our work as a training institution."* Through these experiences developed within the framework of the Programme, ICAT has been able to identify among trained domestic workers those with a profile of trainers, whom it considers ICAT can prepare to mirror and scale training proposals developed for them.
102. It was up to each agency to contribute to the outputs related to the component under its charge. While the components of the Programme were worked intensively and with the expertise of the agency in charge of them, it would have been desirable to work more interactions among agencies from connectors between components. This is reflected in the fact that the actors consulted have little understanding of the Programme as a joint intervention of three agencies, since most perceive that they worked with one agency rather than three; some point out that in any case it was perceived as if they had been *"three separate programmes or projects."*
103. The limitations in achieving a cross-sectional and inclusive approach to intervention respond to structural issues (*"each responds to its mandates, approaches and directives"*) and also originate in the design of the Programme, specifically in the manner in which the components of the Programme were distributed, according to the expertise of each agency. While this distribution has a lot of common sense, in practice it may have limited interactions between the teams of the agencies, which are vital in the case of a multidimensional problem and an Inter-Agency Programme.



104. For example, PRODOC foresaw to improve labour inspection work through an inspection protocol coupled with strengthening the Mexican State's capabilities to conduct and extend inspections for domestic workers (since they were in the process of approving a compulsory social insurance law, which implies the obligation to establish an inspection system.)<sup>27</sup> However, PRODOC did not foresee working on labour inspection for women temporary agricultural workers, even though temporary agricultural workers are included in the General Labour Act and working on labour inspection was feasible for women temporary agricultural workers, as well as for domestic workers. The testimony gathered among a group of women temporary agricultural workers from Oaxaca for this evaluation illustrates the urgency of strengthening and expanding labour inspection work in states with presence of temporary agricultural workers population and from a gender perspective *"in work fields women suffer constant sexual harassment from stewards and also abuse of women stewards... we don't get paid for extra jobs... we have to bring our own water...we don't have a place to leave our children."*
105. The evaluation considers that, since improvement of labour regulation was one of the main strategies of the Programme and a need of both target groups, this strategy should also be applied to women temporary agricultural workers, also considering the expertise of one of the Programme's agencies in the field (the ILO.) Consulted in this regard, the Programme team notes that in the regulatory aspect it was sought to take advantage of the opportunity presented by the context for domestic workers (ratification of Convention 189) and that, in these terms, the situation of social protection of the group of women temporary agricultural workers was even more precarious (invisibility), so, the starting point for working on it should be from the basics (visibility and reporting on their rights). A similar situation is identified in the case of rural care, which could have been incorporated into the proposals for care systems and models that have been worked on in the Programme (national system law, care pilot in Iztapalapa.)
106. One case where the benefits of achieving a cross-sectional and inclusive look at the problem they face is noted as well as the strategies envisaged for its solution is the far-reaching communication campaign on the rights of women domestic workers, in which the three agencies managed to interact, under the leadership of UN Women (who has the greatest expertise in communication campaigns) and after having identified that women temporary agricultural workers are also employed as domestic workers in the areas where they arrive. The Programme team notes that in order to achieve this joint strategy and joint work, in which the three components were related, individual component studies were required.
107. The evaluation finds that the Programme needs to look in a cross-cutting and inclusive way at the two target groups and their needs for social protection and care services, and, in terms of the package of strategies and proposals that were directed toward them: regulatory improvements, labour inspection protocols, care services, stakeholder strengthening, incentive identification. This situation was recognized while developing the Programme and the teams set out to identify the areas in which convergences that are necessary between the components need to be worked on. A technical report on this subject is under preparation and as referred by the Programme team, it seeks to identify the convergences and opportunities of the components: it maps supply, regulation, and care solutions with a focus on the local, rural, including women temporary workers, and finding options in cooperativism and supply from women domestic workers. *"Being three agencies, I think we may have failed to work better on linking the components. We have tried, but we need greater convergence. There are a few tasks that we have tried to tackle altogether as in the campaign, but it is true that there may have been a lack of more convergence on other points."*
108. The teams consulted consider that there are several challenges that PUNOs face in operational and/or programmatic terms to design joint interventions, such as the different platforms for allocating and reporting resources, incentives for collaborative work, among others. Joint programmes such as SDG Fund correspond to new forms of work for the UNS, so it is natural that they provide areas of opportunity in this regard, and lessons are expected to be learned from them to consolidate such interventions.
109. The cross-sectional and integrative approach could have been supported by the Technical Committees or Advisers that were included in the organizational chart of the Program. However, these Committees were not developed in the amount and form it was planned, mainly due to the pandemic context; only one was held at the beginning of the Programme and one in March 2022.

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<sup>27</sup> This protocol could not be implemented as a rule is required and the permanent regime for domestic workers has not yet been adopted.

**Question 6. Does the Programme have appropriate indicators for what is to be achieved? Are targets to achieve realistic within the expected time frame? Does it have a monitoring and evaluation system/mechanism to measure progress made toward the implementation of processes, delivery of outputs and the achievement of outcomes?**

110. According to the Programme's approach, the objective or change sought is to increase access of women and domestic workers and women temporary agricultural workers to social protection and care services. The evaluation finds that the Programme does not get to define indicators of the changes sought, i.e. the effects and impacts of the Programme, for example: "Percentage of women domestic workers and women temporary agricultural workers who access social protection and care services with the implementation of policies promoted by the Programme." The evaluation also identifies the need for indicators on women's empowerment once they have access to social protection and care services, and in relation to improvements in women's use of time.
111. The evaluation considers that the Programme has had indicators that account for the outcomes, outputs and activities proposed to achieve the objective sought (e.g., number of persons trained, number of persons reached with campaign, number of participating institutions.) Although in some cases, what really are effect indicators have been defined as output indicators, for example: "Increase in the percentage of social insurance affiliation of domestic workers" (it is the expected effect of promoted policies, campaigns) or "Changes in employers' perceptions of the rights of domestic workers" (this is the expected effect of communication strategies, of establishment of incentives for employers, of training carried out.)
112. Most of the actors consulted believed that the deadlines set by the Programme for achieving outputs and outcomes were realistic. For these actors, it was the pandemic context that altered some initially anticipated deadlines, *"the Programme has been accurate in deadlines, goals and resources, if it had not been for the pandemic that meant alterations in times, deadlines, policy priorities of partner actors."*
113. The Programme had a monitoring and evaluation plan, with established spaces, timeframes, and formats to report on progress of agreed programming, follow-up of assumptions, definition of corrective and mitigation actions. In particular, the executing teams evaluated quarterly reports, which allowed them spaces for reflection on the progress of the Programme and its components *"The rules of the JSDG Fund establish preparation of quarterly reports and what I have seen is that these spaces help to have a general look and not just a glance at each of its components. These spaces help to see how the three components are strengthened and the topics that are being addressed."* They also point out that the Programme's monitoring and evaluation system contributed to the achievement of outcomes in terms of transparency *"A monitoring and evaluation plan was implemented from the beginning and with the Programme design. Each agency has, per component, its monitoring and evaluation tasks to follow-up goals. In general, we have felt the system quite friendly and, above all, transparent, which has allowed us to identify when there were delays and transparently expose them to the agencies and partners."*

**Question 7. To what extent is the COVID-19 crisis accentuating the social protection deficit, informality, working in precarious situation for the target population? How is it affecting efforts to address these social and work problems? Is the Programme still relevant to the priorities of the actors in the context of the COVID-19 crisis? How has the Programme been adapted to promote access to social protection and care services in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic?**

114. The actors consulted identify that the context of the COVID -19 pandemic has had and will have an impact on social protection deficit of women in the target groups through the reduction of income, increase of labour and productive informality, and the crisis of care that it has generated. As for the latter, the period of mandatory confinement and home office increased care load and an even more unequal distribution between women and men, increasing the care load for women and men. Staff officer of the Iztapalapa City Hall -where, with the support of the Programme through the care component a successful pilot to care for the age group 4 to 8 years old, called the "Colmenas" was achieved- illustrates the chain impacts of the pandemic and the urgency of identifying and developing comprehensive care services *"the pandemic left orphanhood, parents who lost their jobs, educational authorities still fail to measure the extent of school drop-out, and all this weighs on care and women. We need to give attention to working parents with children in this population of children and adolescents who need to recover from what has been lived in the pandemic, to provide them with a safe space where they receive care and training."*

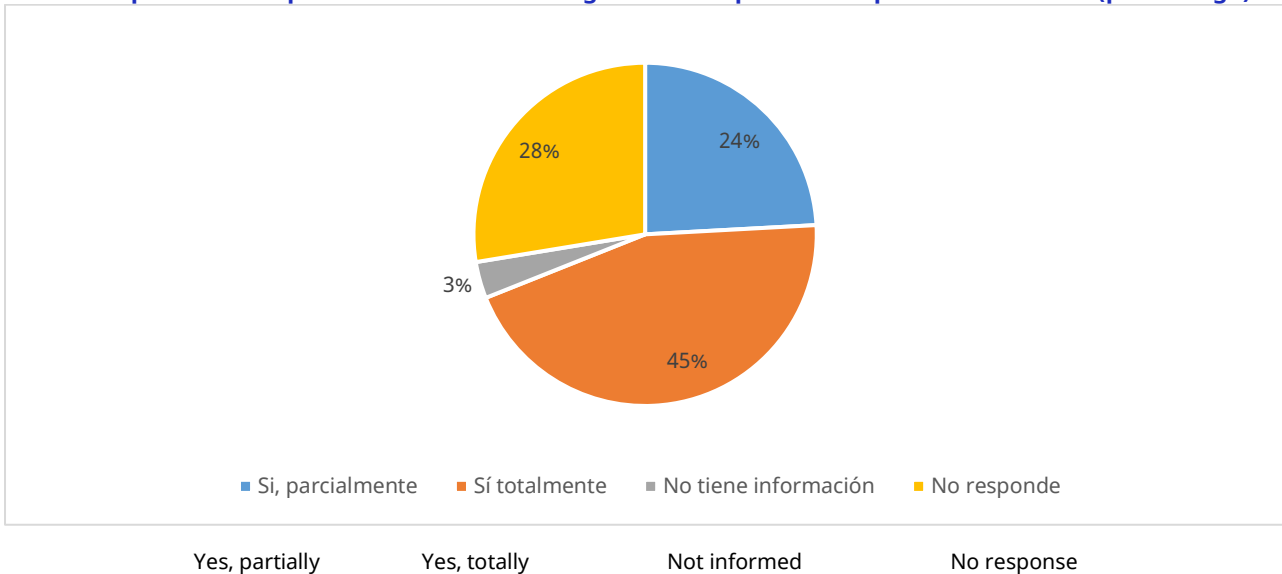
115. The pandemic context also increased the prevalence of virtual interaction media and spaces in daily life, transaction development, access to information, education, and training for work, all of this exacerbates the connectivity and digitalisation gap affecting women workers of vulnerable groups served by the Programme in their access to decent and formal employment and social protection. In particular, the digital and connectivity gap exacerbates the vulnerability of rural and indigenous women and needs to be taken into account in social protection strategies targeted at them.

116. In the case of domestic workers, the impacts on their working conditions have been diverse: untimely loss of employment or extension of working hours, reduction of wages, aggravation of health conditions at work, among others. In the case of women temporary agricultural workers, one consequence of the pandemic context was their greater isolation; also, rural dispersion and the low connectivity and low level of digitalisation of the rural population made the challenge of directing actions toward this working group greater.

117. The state of emergency and the health, economic and social crisis determined by the pandemic meant a shift in public management priorities in the short and medium term. This affected the development of interventions in certain areas of public policy favouring some over others, such as health and social protection and employment, which became a priority attention.

118. Most actors consulted through the “Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme” consider that the Programme was “totally” (45%) or “partially” (24%) adapted to the pandemic context.

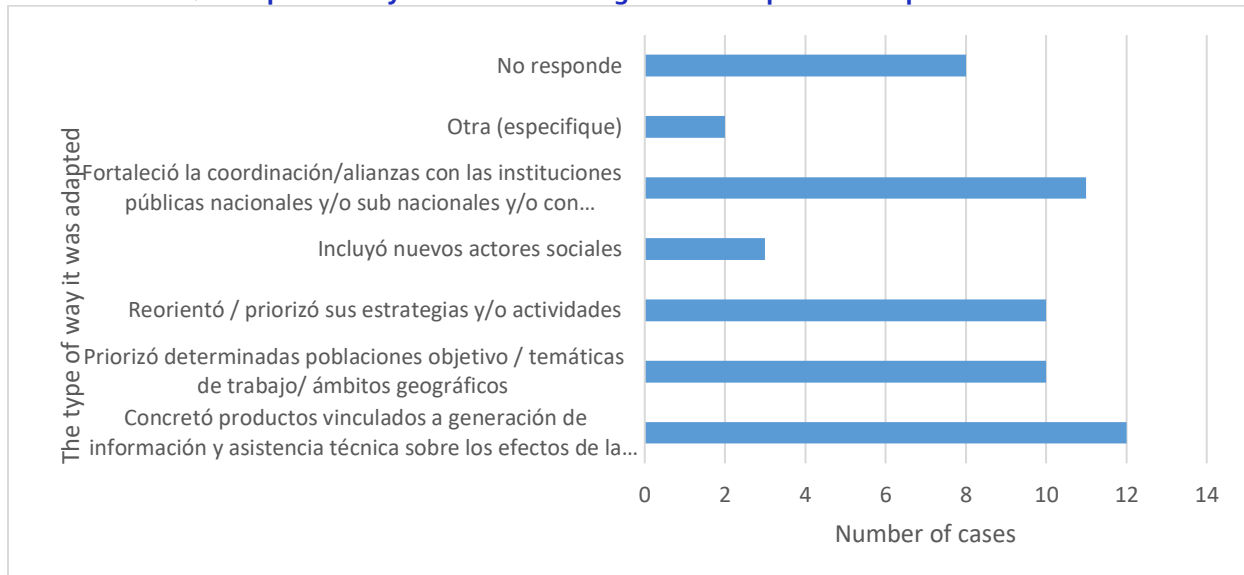
► **Graphic 6. Perception of whether the Programme adapted to the pandemic context (percentage)**



Source: Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme.

119. According to the same Survey, most actors consider that the main actions taken by the Programme to respond to the complex context of the pandemic were to deliver outputs linked to the generation of technical data and assistance on the impact of the pandemic on social protection and care and/or existing institutionality to address the pandemic; and to strengthen coordination and partnerships with national and sub-national public institutions and/or international agencies.

▶ **Graphic 7. Ways in which the Programme adapted to the pandemic context**



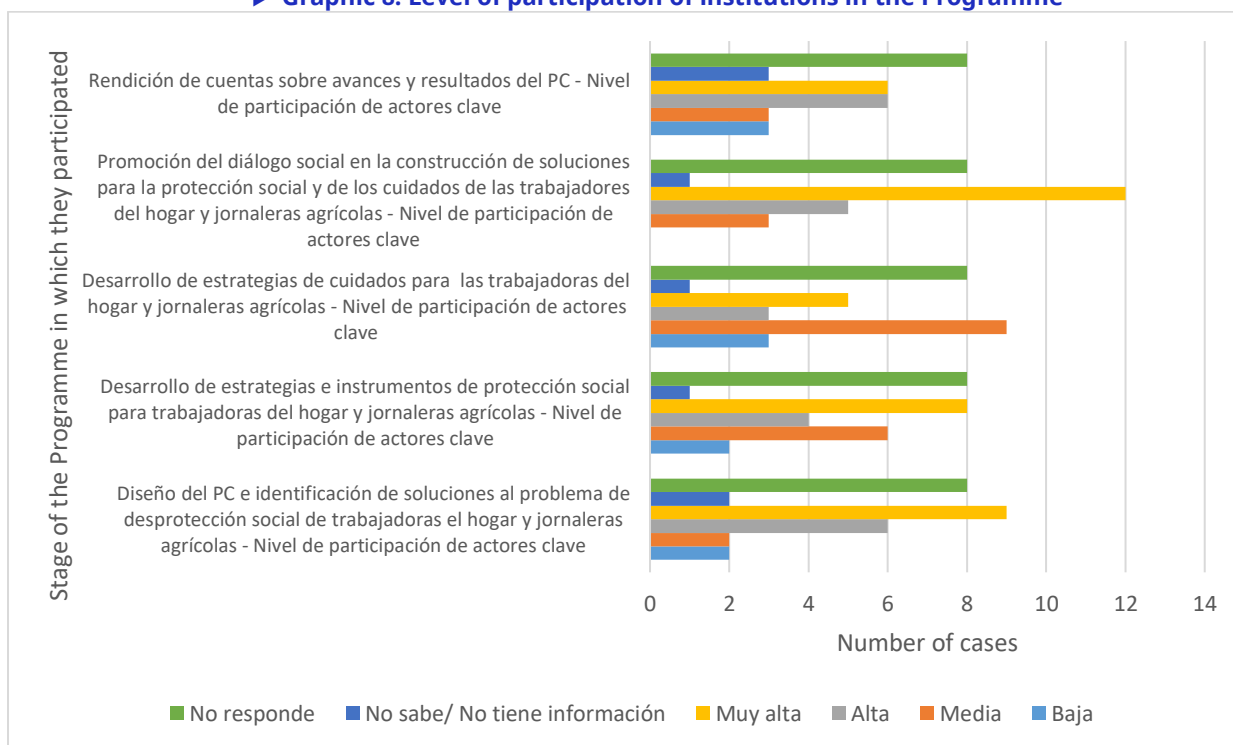
Source: Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme.

**Question 8. What has been the participation and contribution of UNS agencies, public institutions and other relevant stakeholders and actors during the design of the Program? To what extent, does the design of the Programme consider any strategy or measure to promote the continued participation of actors during the implementation of the Programme?**

120.The evaluation considers that the Programme had and implemented a successful and effective strategy to promote the participation of the various actors in its development, which is the Evidence-Based Political Dialogue as a strategy of work in the territories; for this purpose, it developed in-depth studies and diagnoses on the different subjects relevant to the solution of social protection gaps.

121.The actors consulted through the “Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme” point out that the participation of their institutions has been “Very high” in three stages of the development of the Programme: (a) in political dialogue, which more than a stage has been a work strategy for the Programme; (b) in the design of the Programme and the identification of solutions to social vulnerability affecting women and target groups (domestic workers and women temporary agricultural workers); and (c) in the elaboration of social protection strategies achieved for these target groups.

▶ **Graphic 8. Level of participation of institutions in the Programme**



Source: Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme.

**3.2. Effectiveness**

**Question 9. To what extent have the outputs been delivered, and the expected outcomes achieved in the design of the Programme? What are the main factors that explain the level of progress? Have the risks and assumptions foreseen in the design been met and measures taken to mitigate the occurrence and/or effects of the risks? What have been the main internal and external constraints/challenges they have faced in the Programme during its implementation and what are the key success factors?**

122.In the first outcome (Implemented integrated multisectoral policies for women's access to social protection,) the Programme developed actions and outputs that enabled and/or contributed to the scope of the following:

(a) a proposal for a general care system law; (b) a proposal for a permanent care system law for domestic workers; and (c) two strategies for expanded social protection for women temporary agricultural workers in the states of Oaxaca and Jalisco.

123. Nationwide public policies promoted by the Programme (permanent regime for domestic workers and care system) await approval in the Senate of the Republic, while local-level policies are approved (extended protection strategies for women temporary agricultural workers in Jalisco and Oaxaca). These policies have been built with key actors and socialized at all levels deemed necessary, thereby contributing to their legitimization. Their implementation and institutionalization will depend on how far they can be legitimized.
124. The latter relates to the estimation of deadlines by which it is possible to implement public policies. The Programme teams note that they might have been implemented were it not for the pandemic. However, they also recognize that *“time for politics is different from time for programming”* and that it is also influenced by the political will and commitment to comply with what was established<sup>28</sup>. Other actors consider that the Programme was ambitious from the outset in terms of outcomes and deadlines. The approved extended protection strategies for women temporary agricultural workers in the states of Jalisco and Oaxaca were worked under a more realistic approach of graduality considering short, medium, and long-term stages for their implementation. ORC representatives note in this regard that *“Everything achieved by the Programme is more commendable given that it was accomplished in the context of a pandemic and also considering that changes in public legislation and policies are often far-reaching and exceed the 2-year deadline for the project, and that it is a complex Programme, with many actors.”*
125. In the cases of the general law of care and the strategies of extended social protection for women temporary agricultural workers, the multisectoral character of these is clear. They were built in multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral spaces, which involved processes of much communication and accompaniment to deputies, senators, public officials in key sectors and with direct competence in improving social protection. In some cases, addressing social protection of these groups requires new actions and services and additional resources. In that regard, one difficulty identified for the multi-sectorality of policies pursued (especially for national-level policies such as the care system) is that the government has determined that any new policy should be implemented using whatever is available, without generating new budgetary allocations.
126. The proposal for a general care system law was worked directly with INMUJERES and congresswomen members of the Equality Commission of the Congress of the Republic; and the Ministry of Finance and Public Credit has been informed of the analysis of the benefits and costs of social investment in the care system. According to representatives of the Agencies interviewed, this has been part of the development of the cost methodology (which was based on the methodology developed and implemented by UN Women in countries such as Uruguay, Turkey, and South Africa) and validation of the parameters chosen. They have used the simulator prior technical assistance from the Programme and have organized workgroups on the national care system. Unfortunately, despite the insistence of the Evaluation Team, an interview with a representative of the Secretariat could not be held to be able to hear from a direct source, more details about their participation in the methodology and/or their evaluation of the analysis carried out.
127. At the local level, a Care System Pilot was carried out at the Iztapalapa City Hall, which presents a methodology to develop local care systems and a toolbox for replicating them in other municipalities. A curriculum proposal for the professionalization of care was also achieved and implemented by ICAT.
128. Strategies for expanded social protection for women temporary agricultural workers in the states of Jalisco and Oaxaca were worked at inter-agency session, in which representatives of women temporary workers, companies, public administrators and other representatives of civil society participated, achieving agendas and inter-state agreements. Collaborating actors who encouraged and facilitated inter-agency and inter-state processes to deliver strategies for the protection of women temporary agricultural workers point out that a challenge faced in building multisectoral strategies was the arduous task of identifying the competences of the various actors, identifying who was to do what, and defining what was to be done *“some lines of work have had to be stretched to fit into a competition of certain actors.”*

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<sup>28</sup> Which, in turn, is linked to one of the intervention assumptions provided for in the PRODOC: “Ministries, Parliaments highly committed to improving regulations and protection policies for target groups.”

129. In the case of the law on the permanent working regime for domestic workers, the Programme advised and accompanied the unions of domestic workers throughout the design and advocacy process in the National Congress. The ILO team notes that this is an achievement of trade unionists and that the Programme has fulfilled its sustained support for this long-term work that the unions of domestic workers began decades ago in the country and in the Latin American region. The pilot test of the affiliation of domestic workers following the ruling of the SCJN was an important element in the process followed to achieve the approval of the mandatory regime. The actors consulted describe the importance of the Programme in delivering the pilot test *"... in the case of the pilot test of domestic workers affiliation, in charge of the IMSS, after ruling, the technical accompaniment and inputs provided by the Closing Gaps Programme to IMSS allowed the pilot to be implemented, not to remain in process."*
130. Some outputs foreseen by the Programme that had to accompany approval and implementation of the permanent labour regime for domestic workers, such as the labour inspection protocol(s) for domestic work (in their national and local versions) could not be delivered because they are subject to the passage of law. However, in anticipation of an early passing of law, progress has also been made in the development of a study on labour inspection experiences in domestic work in Latin America and the Caribbean and training to labour inspectors is expected to be provided in precisely these experiences; all aimed at developing a pilot for inputs and to support the development of a future inspection protocol for the domestic work sector.
131. A challenge faced by the Programme is the links between the local and the national. UN Women's representative points out, about the achievements in the care component: *"All of this is developed. The challenge is how to transfer it to the states."* In the case of cost and determination of returns on investment in care systems, the methodology developed was adapted to the state<sup>29</sup>. The dialogue of care developed involves all sectors and seeks to build lessons from the local level, as well as exchanging experiences that can contribute to the National Care System.
132. In general, the idea of the job was to go from building local public policies to national public policy. The actors consulted evaluate the Programme's emphasis on the local but note that they need to establish the roadmap or links between the local and the national, which is crucial to the sustainability of the achievements at the local level. For example, in the case of women temporary agricultural workers, officials from the state of Jalisco, the Municipal Government of Autlan, or specialists from ASI consultancy, point out that the problem of temporary workers is of scale, very complex because it involves a population in constant movement across the different territories, dispersed and predominantly incommunicado, which poses a series of challenges of assistance and design of services and resources, which overcomes them. Without the national government's assistance, it will be difficult to address these challenges properly, so an advocacy strategy at the national government level is necessary to make the group of women temporary workers and their problems visible, as achieved at the local level through the Programme.
133. These actors mark the importance of continuing to add and engage local businesses. They are often innovative in identifying solutions and need incentives generated at the national level (e.g., IMSS) to commit to improving protection for women temporary agricultural workers. The forgoing, taking advantage of the international policy framework, of agreements such as those established between Mexico, Canada and the United States, which favour the application of regulations in favour of compliance with human rights, environmental and social protection in the production of agro-exports. They also mark the importance of generating rural development opportunities in expulsion areas from which women temporary workers come (Secretariat of Agriculture and Rural Development.)
134. In the second outcome (key actors strengthen their capacities to increase women's access to social protection,) the actors consulted identify the following achievements: (a) they improved their capacities in terms of knowledge of social protection and certain population groups that were "invisible" to them until the Programme; (b) The Programme has enabled them to obtain information that allows them to build public policies on social protection. The testimony of a social worker from the Municipal Government of Autlan – Jalisco (a Municipality that has identified hostels of companies where temporary workers stay once employed) illustrates these progresses made: *"as a professional one always tries to be updated. I knew about gender violence and health issues,*

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<sup>29</sup>The person interviewed from one of the Agencies pointed out that this methodology, although done for one state, can be mirrored in the other states. They also point out that it is a concrete contribution of the Programme to the Global Alliance for Care, which is a platform to enhance the work done in Mexico.

*but I knew little about women temporary agricultural workers (...) The information provided by Closing Gaps has been timely and very good."*

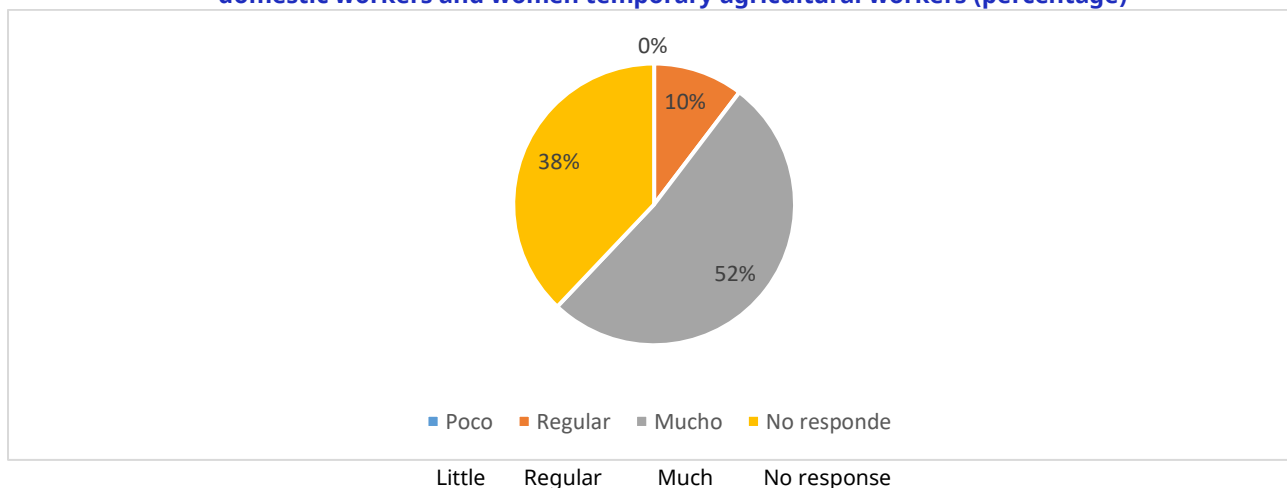
135. In the Domestic and Care Workers components, job training proposals were developed for the professionalization of domestic work and care, which were implemented with the ICAT. The methodology applied by the ILO to identify best practices in the training developed is highlighted by ICAT, considering that it has strengthened its knowledge management capabilities.

136. The Programme added value to these efforts, allowed improving ways to identify best training practices in the case of ICAT, and included new training topics such as occupational health and safety. It also identified care services for an age group not yet served by the City Hall's care services in Iztapalapa, such as children between 4 and 8 years old through the "Colmena" service. The official of the Municipality said, *"Our participation in the Programme allowed us to cover a population group that we had not seen and thus provide a more integral assistance, start tying links, because it is all like a chain."*

137. The evaluation identifies that capacity-building has been achieved through training actions and also through the development of the Programme itself. The Inter-Agency Committee on Social Protection for women temporary agricultural workers in charge of building protection strategies is under the responsibility of the Secretariat for Substantive Equality of the State of Jalisco and, the development of the Programme coincided with the opening of this Secretariat as a mechanism for women to move forward.<sup>30</sup> *"By activating this Board, we have been able to develop a job that is our expertise and to expand our capacities to convene and activate actors for gender equality."*

138. About half of the actors consulted through the "Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme" state that they strengthened their institutions' capacities "Very much" from their participation in the Programme in the following fields: (a) know-how on social protection and care; (b) updated diagnoses, innovative looks on social protection and gender; and (c) development of innovative tools to promote access to decent employment, social protection and care services.

► **Graphic 9. Perception of strengthening know-how on social protection and gender-based care for domestic workers and women temporary agricultural workers (percentage)**

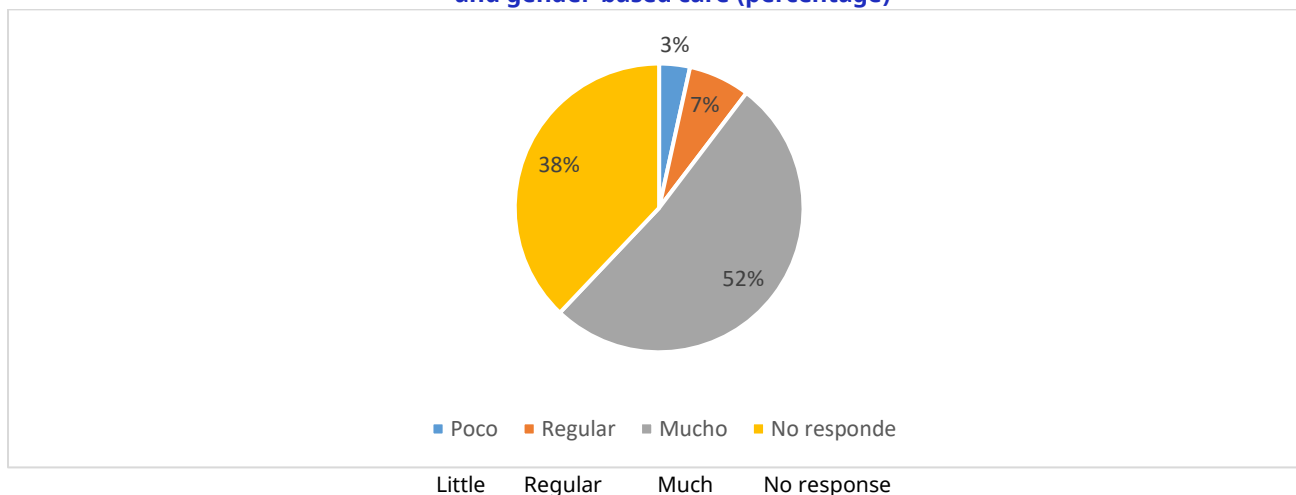


Source: Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme.

<sup>30</sup> A mechanism for women to move forward is a term that defines bodies created to ensure compliance with gender equality policies, principles, mandates for gender equality and the empowerment of women. For example, gender equality commissions in Secretariats, gender focal points or women's management or secretariats, or equality between women and men. SISEMH is defined as a mechanism for moving forward/progress.

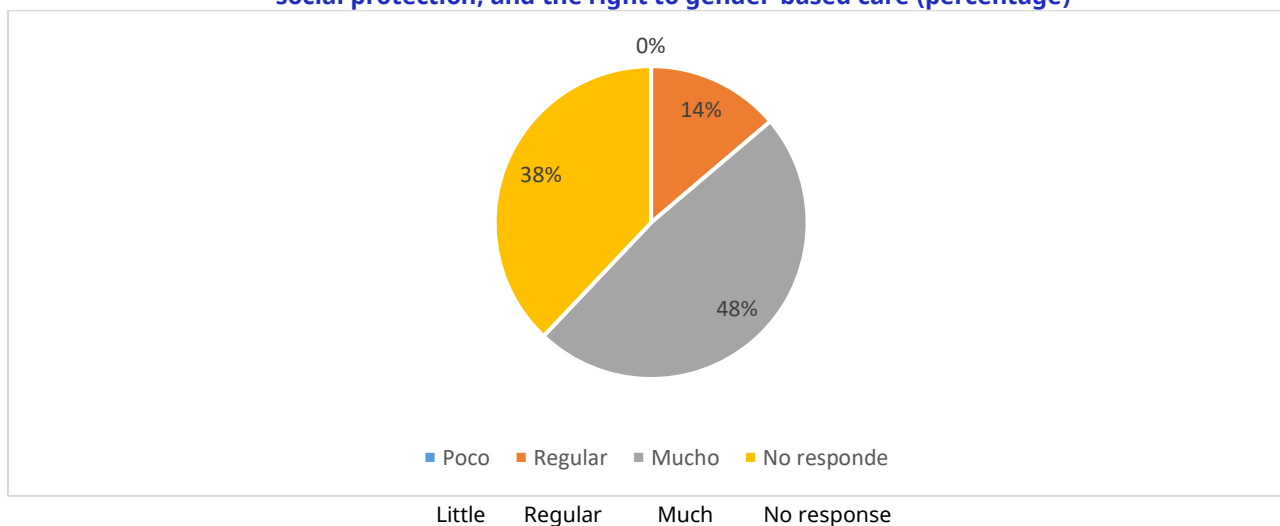


▶ **Graphic 10. Perception of capacity building for up-to-date and innovative diagnoses on social protection and gender-based care (percentage)**



Source: Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme.

▶ **Graphic 11. Perception of capacity building to develop innovative tools to promote decent employment, social protection, and the right to gender-based care (percentage)**



Source: Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme.

139. The scope of outputs and outcomes at sub-national levels has been differentiated per Programme component.

- Together with the permanent labour regime for domestic workers, “Formalization of strategies for domestic workers ad hoc proposed and adopted in all 5 states” should be achieved at the national level; for this purpose, it was planned to carry out diagnoses on the barriers faced by domestic workers for their formalization in the 5 states as well as proposals for inspection mechanisms for domestic work in Jalisco, Mexico State and Mexico City. Diagnoses were made and published, while the proposals for labour inspection mechanisms were not developed, because the federal-level law to give the green light to the development of such mechanisms at the local level is not in place.
- In the case of the National Care Strategy formulated with a local perspective as a pillar of the social protection System, a care pilot was developed in the Iztapalapa City Hall, which is expected to produce mirroring and scaling effects. A systematization study was developed on this experience.
- In the case of formalization and social protection strategies for women temporary agricultural workers, they are called “Strategy and Social Protection Plan for Agricultural Workers” and their gradual implementation is proposed in the states of Jalisco and Oaxaca.

140. Some effects and impacts of the Programme identified by the actors are different from those foreseen by PRODOC. One of them is the visibility of social groups that are not “tracked or registered” by public policies and society in general. *“Visibility of the group of women temporary workers and positioning of social protection for them in the debate on public policies in the state is one of the main outcomes of working with the Programme.”* In these terms, the first steps have been taken to legitimize social protection and care policies for these vulnerable groups and women.
141. It is not only about visibility of a social group but about social concepts and needs such as care or women's rights and needs. In this regard, changes in stakeholder speeches are recognized in sectors considered “hard” as some corporate guilds. *“We have succeeded in bringing local and federal governments together with businesses and recognizing the needs of temporary workers through a partnership pact.”* Entrepreneurs or employers also note the effects of this visibility of vulnerable working groups made up of women. The FAO Executing Team notes *“Skills have been developed in employers in their willingness to listen and share information on the issue of women temporary workers.”* This view is corroborated by the words of the representative of the CDAA of Jalisco, which brings together 23 agricultural companies: *“The Council has undertaken a challenge for Jalisco, to be a model of work welfare in the country. Let employers be proud to contribute to improving working conditions, not only because they can be certified, but because they are really convinced that this is the best way forward.”*
142. Another identified effect, not foreseen in the PRODOC, is the development of “referents” based on the instruments developed to achieve dialogue and build protection policies. *“The Social Protection Inter-Agency Cooperation Board for women temporary agricultural workers and the work oriented to building a social protection policy in the territory, under the charge of the Secretariat of Substantive Equality has become a reference point for other bodies within the government (the Secretariat of Labour, Secretariat of agricultural development) and for other states (Sinaloa, Chiapas, Nuevo Leon.)*
143. According to the actors consulted, progress made toward achieving outcomes and outputs is mainly explained by the following factors:
- The implementation and effectiveness of the Strategy of Political Dialogue with evidence: the different elements that make up the strategy such as identification of relevant actors, and use of evidence, the programmed follow-up and accompaniment to dialogue spaces by the Agencies, are elements whose conjunction allows to develop outputs and achieve ownership by contributing to their sustainability. *“They are clear on the steps to be taken, follow up in prompt and timely manner, especially the FAO.”*
  - Having taken advantage of the existing institutions at the different levels of government and/or in the territories, such as institutionalized mechanisms, work networks, specialized bodies in labour training. *“A positive aspect of the FAO is that it links its strategy with the Secretariat for Substantive Equality, a very dynamic state institution. Thus, the government has been very much involved.”*
  - Having added and/or supplemented what partner bodies of central or sub-national government were already doing. For example, ICAT already had the standard of competencies for domestic work and care, already trained and certified domestic workers since 2019; or the Iztapalapa City Hall, since 2019, had the “Public Care System Program” that provided support to caregivers of older adults and/or PWD and assisted working women with children under five years old with the Centres for Initial Development (CENDI).
  - The expertise and experience gained, as well as the working methodologies of each of the UNS agencies involved. *“To make it here, we must consider the more than 20 years’ experience of UN Women in the development of statistics, research, and tools such as ENUT, which gives the Programme a solid foundation. There is the added value of experience.”*

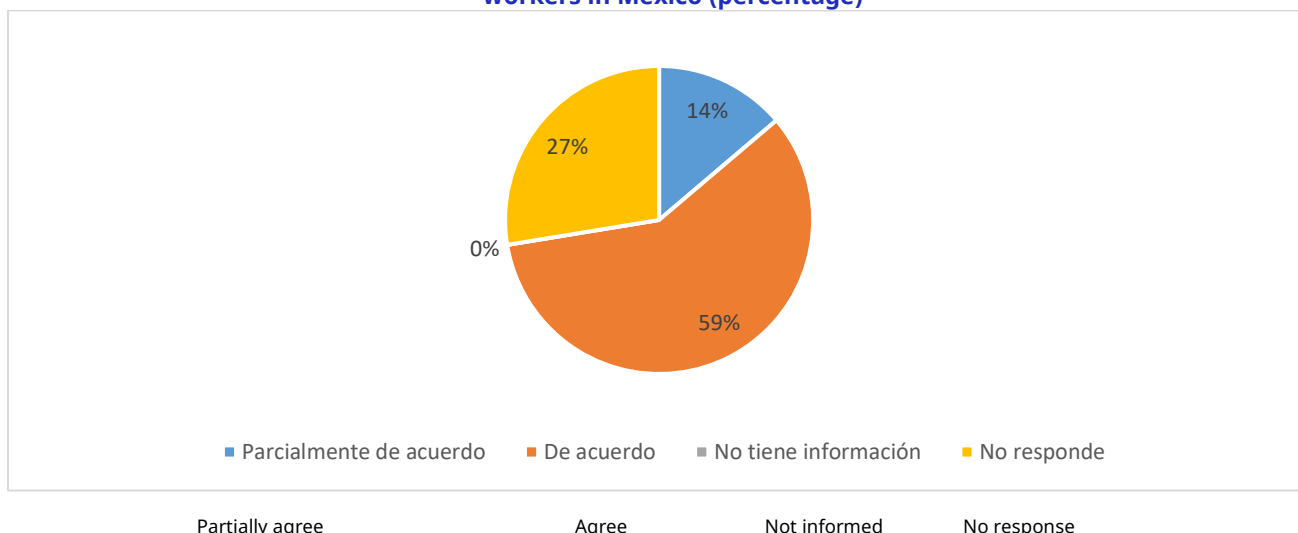
**Question 10. To what extent have the outputs developed in the Programme taken into account the specific problems of women and other vulnerable groups? Are any representative organizations involved in the implementation of the Programme or working with these groups? What have the contributions of UNS agencies been during the implementation of the Programme in terms of gender and non-discrimination and PWD?**

144. The evaluation considers that the outputs of the Programme take into account central aspects of the problem of women with regard to social protection deficit. The diagnosis points to “a legal framework that excludes them” and, consequently, policies and regulations promoted for social protection specifically consider women’s access, proposing ways to lift restrictions that mean barriers to the formalization of their work. In the case of domestic workers, a compulsory affiliation regime was proposed, and in the case of women temporary agricultural workers, the extended protection strategies approved in Jalisco and Oaxaca apply the concept of extended protection that considers regulatory action, contributory and non-contributory, and shines a light on a range of needs by women temporary agricultural workers as a vulnerable group.

145. The diagnosis also gave priority attention to care service gap affecting working women in Mexico in the two target groups of the Programme. This gap responds to unequal use of time between women and men, due to unequal distribution of domestic work and unpaid care between women and men. The main output of the Programme to address this cause of social vulnerability for women is the Strategy for a National “defeminized” and “defamiliarized” Care System, which involves co-responsibility between women and men as well as between states, private sector and civil society in the provision of care services.

146. 59% of actors consulted in the “Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme” “Agree” that the strategy and outputs of the Programme take into account the causes of the social vulnerability gap for women, and 14% “partially agree” with that statement.

► **Graphic 12. Perception on whether the Programme considered strategies and outputs that adequately sized the causes of social protection and care gaps in domestic workers and temporary agricultural workers in Mexico (percentage)**



Source: Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme.

147. The PRODOC notes that the Programme will have a direct influence on indigenous and rural women and an indirect influence on migrant populations and PWD. The actors consulted in the interviews agree that the Programme was mainly “a gender program” and that the other conditions were not sufficiently integrated. The evaluation considers that inclusion and treatment of these conditions in target groups (domestic workers and women temporary agricultural workers) was differentiated per component. The following table shows the consideration of these conditions in the outputs of the Programme, starting from: (a) mention of such a condition in diagnostic documents, and (b) inclusion of concrete actions to address it in strategies and/or outputs. The women temporary agricultural worker component takes into account a larger part of these conditions in women, since the ILO and IMSS have developed information material on the rights of domestic

workers in native languages. In the care system component, the cost-and-return methodology for care investment includes dependent PWD among target population.

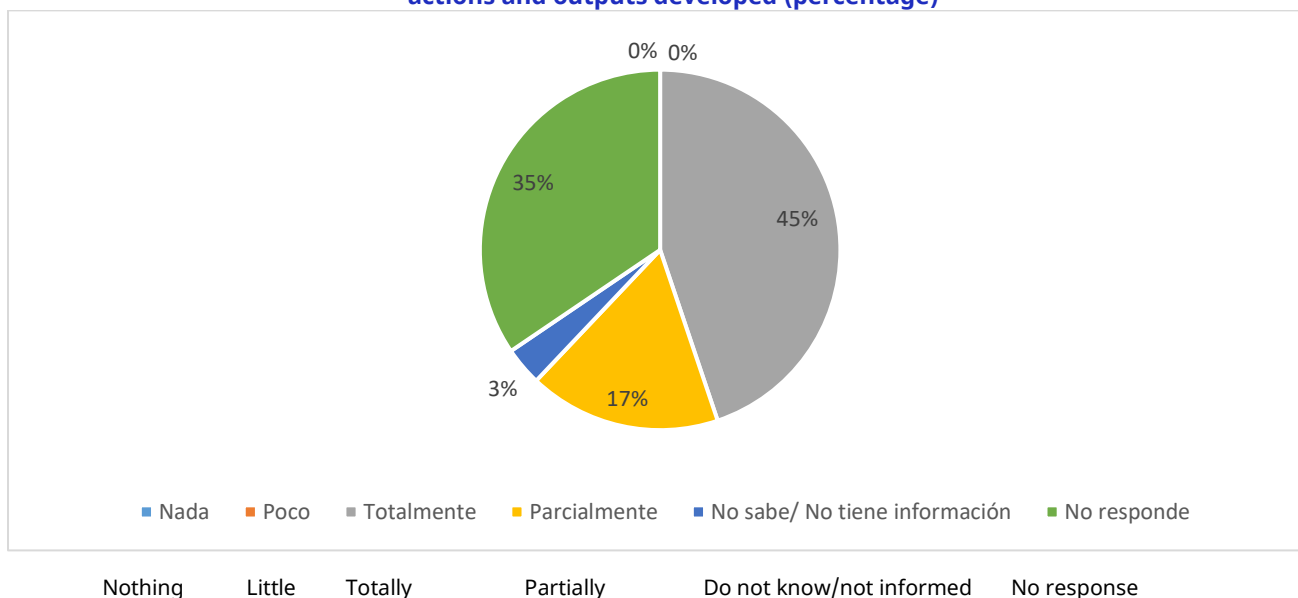
► **Table 4. Situation of inclusion of indigenous, migrant and disability conditions in the strategy and outputs of the Closing Gaps Programme.**

Condition/Inclusion	Domestic Workers	Women temporary agricultural workers	Care System
Indigenous/Rural	Yes (worked with IMSS informative guidelines on domestic workers' standards in native languages: Nahuatl, Zotzil and Mizteco)	Yes	No
Migrant	No	Yes	No
Disability	No	No	Yes (mention level only, not concrete actions)

Source: Documentary review of Programme, interviews conducted with Closing Gaps Programme teams. Own Making.

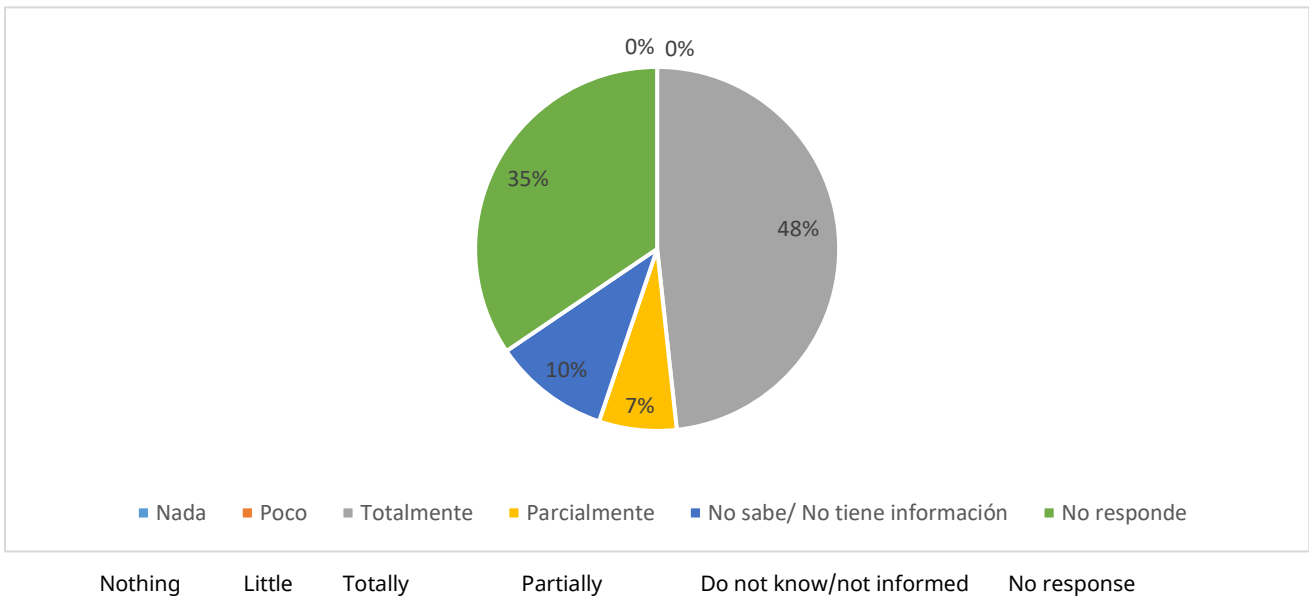
148. The "Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme" finds that 62% and 55% of the actors consulted "totally" or "partially" agreed that the indigenous and rural condition of women was considered in the outputs of the Programme, respectively. As to migrant condition, only 28% "totally" or "partially" agreed that it was considered in the Programme. In any case, it is noted that the percentage of those who do not respond or say they do not have information on inclusion of these conditions in the Programme outputs and strategies is very high.

► **Graphic 13. Perception of whether the Programme considered indigenous condition of women in the actions and outputs developed (percentage)**



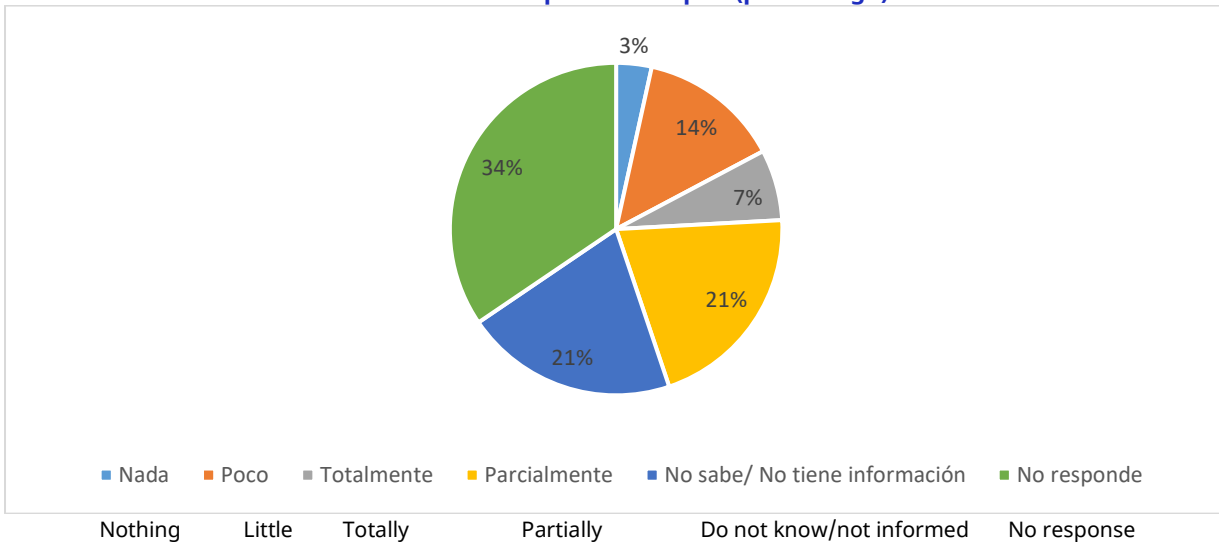
Source: Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme.

▶ **Graphic 14. Perception of whether the Programme considered rural condition of women in actions and outputs developed (percentage)**



Source: Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme.

▶ **Graphic 15. Perception of whether the Programme considered migrant condition of women in actions and outputs developed (percentage)**



Source: Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme.

149. The evaluation considers that a greater technical effort is needed to effectively include these conditions of women (an intersectional analysis,) mainly in diagnosis through questions such as: How do indigenous/migrant/disability condition of women or their family group exacerbate the social protection gap? How do factors associated with these conditions exacerbate this gap? Through the answers to these questions, the best ways to consider them could be identified in outputs and strategies to reduce social vulnerability in women and the risk of leaving out a significant number of women within the target groups of the Programme would be minimized.

150. The interview to a group of women temporary agricultural workers in Oaxaca illustrates the incidence of disability in their family groups and its impact on their situation of social vulnerability *“Margarita, does not speaking Spanish, was forced to be married when she was 13, she became a widow and married for the second time*

*when she was 19, her husband went to work to the United States but then he had an accident and returned with a disability that does not let him work. Margarita is already a grown up and has to work to sustain both of them;” “there are cases of women temporary workers with Down children, others with mental problems, they have no place to leave them, they cannot leave them alone, one of them had a daughter with mental retardation who was abused.”* The implications in terms of care services or direct transfers for severe disability are immediate and could be part of the expanded social protection strategies that have been achieved for these workers in Oaxaca and Jalisco.

151. Based on the information reviewed from the actors involved in Political Dialogue Spaces, the evaluation considers that the implementation of the Programme involved the participation of organizations working with women domestic workers (the unions of these workers themselves, domestic workers’ employers’ organizations) and with women temporary agricultural workers (an NGO that worked with them and through which the Programme could start working in Oaxaca and Jalisco.) In the case of indigenous condition, work has been done with INPI. However, there are no PWD organizations with which the Programme has worked.

### **Question 11. What was the Programme's contribution to affiliating domestic workers to social protection, to designing and implementing the social protection agenda for women temporary agricultural workers, and to developing a national care strategy?**

152. The evaluation considers that there is evidence of the Programme’s contribution to the progress made toward development of policies and regulations that should allow in the future to improve access of women, domestic workers, and women temporary agricultural workers to social protection and care services.

153. The actors consulted state that the Programme's contribution to affiliation of domestic workers has been mainly in two ways: (a) with specialized studies and diagnostics for public policy planning; it is thus stated that public administration does not have sufficient budgetary resources and has little space to carry them out; and (b) facilitating that the Central State delivers actions that favour social protection of women. In this respect, it is noted that the pilot test of affiliation of domestic workers in charge of IMSS was carried out thanks to the sustained technical accompaniment of the Programme; it also enabled studies that facilitated the development and evaluation of the test and provided recommendations for the compulsory affiliation regime of domestic workers.

154. The Programme's contribution to registration/affiliation of domestic workers should be seen as a first step in a process of cultural and mentality change in a segment of employers of domestic workers. This contribution consisted, first, of support to deliver the pilot in charge of the IMSS and then, of the joint campaign *“It’s Only Fair”* in the media and social networks, aimed at a segment of employers of domestic workers in favour of their labour rights. The campaign was led by UN Women, with the participation of the ILO, FAO, OCR, and was carried out in the first two-month period of 2022.

155. The objective of the campaign was initially (according to PRODOC) *“affiliation of domestic workers to social security;”* however, after the diagnosis made among employers, its scope was better measured, because it gave light to the fact that achieving affiliation through a media campaign was not a realistic or direct outcome, but could be the end point of a cultural and employer-mind change process, which means a longer time and involves the development of a set of parallel strategies (labour inspection, definition of incentives for employers, among others.) Thus, the campaign’s objective was changed to *“raising awareness of a segment of employers (those progressive and formal) about the rights of domestic workers.”* According to the evaluation study of the campaign, it was far-reaching and reached the segment of employers to which it was addressed. Representatives of STPS and IMSS consulted through the interviews, say that *“It has been a far-reaching campaign, and we believe that this is the strategy that we will continue to strengthen to complete affiliation of domestic workers to social security.”*

156. This campaign focused on a segment of employers, those formal and considered *“progressive”*<sup>31</sup>, while recent studies in Mexico (INEGI in Florez: 2019)<sup>32</sup> point out that more than half of the employers of domestic workers are informal workers without access to social security. This reaffirms the need to extend these campaigns to

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<sup>31</sup> In turn, this decision is explained because in the research phase prior to campaign design, one of the main findings was that it was unlikely to get the campaign to reach all employers, and the recommendation was to focus on a particular segment.

<sup>32</sup> Florez, N. 2019. *Profile of employers of domestic workers in Mexico*. ILO. Available in: [https://www.ilo.org/travail/info/publications/WCMS\\_697143/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/travail/info/publications/WCMS_697143/lang--en/index.htm).

more segments of the heterogeneous universe of employers, even more so taking into account the negative effects of the pandemic on formal employment among employers of domestic workers.

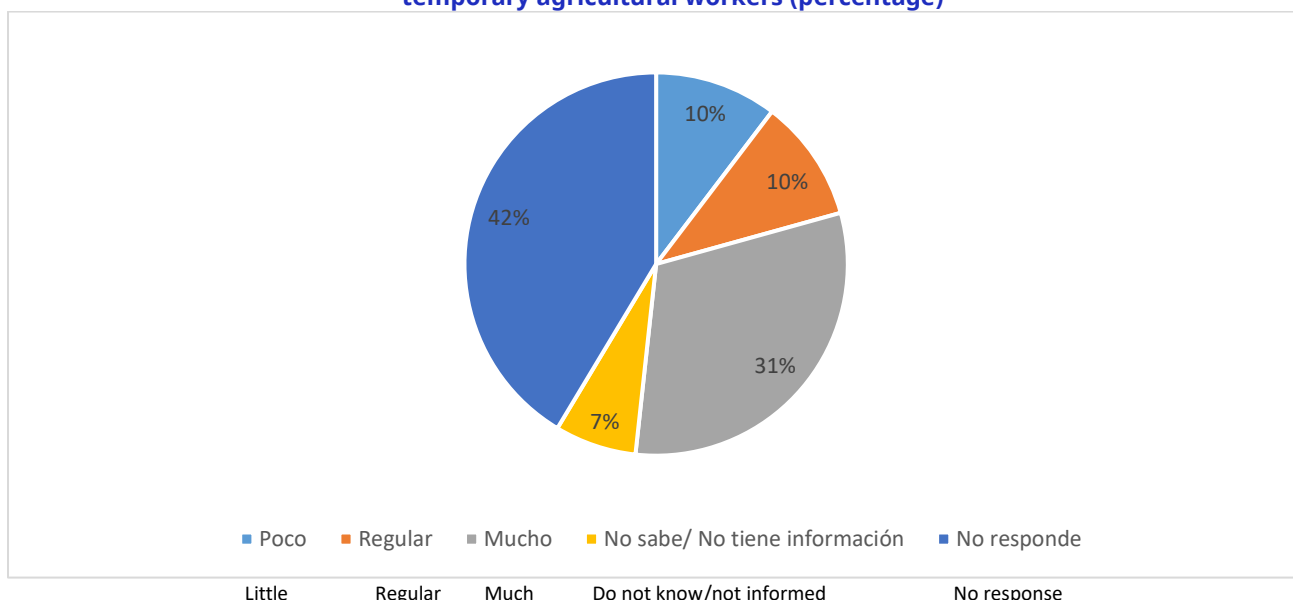
157. It is worth noting that adding the central state and the federal states to the call for employers' action through other strategies has also been important. Thus, states such as Jalisco, through its Secretariat for Substantive Equality and Secretariat of Labour, tested other innovative strategies: they sent letters to employers along with power bills to remind them of the need to join affiliate domestic workers to social security.

158. According to affiliation figures for domestic workers published by the IMSS Portal (ibid), in 2021 there were 27,000 domestic workers affiliated to social security, while in February 2022 this figure increased to 43,680. The increase in affiliations has been significant in the period referred to and can be explained by the legislative progress made that have been taking place since 2019 toward compulsory affiliation of domestic workers to social security (including the SCJ ruling) and the development and evaluation of the IMSS affiliation pilot, in which the Programme made a decisive contribution.

159. According to the actors consulted, the contribution of the Programme to the design of expanded social protection strategies for women temporary agricultural workers in Oaxaca and Jalisco was through: (a) planned and sustained technical accompaniment to inter-state and inter-institutional boards created for social protection of women temporary agricultural workers; (b) scheduled follow-up of agreements reached at these workgroup sessions for their future delivery and implementation; and (c) advancement of a Promotion Network for Social Protection of Women Temporary Agricultural Workers in Jalisco and Oaxaca that will allow for the dissemination of strategies achieved among the population of women temporary agricultural workers.

160. 41% of the actors consulted through the "Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme," considers that the Programme contributed "Much" or "Regular" to the progress/adjustments of legislation and regulations linked to access to social protection for domestic workers and women temporary agricultural workers.

► **Graphic 16. Perception of the Programme's contribution to the development/adjustment of legislation and regulations linked to access to social protection for gender-focused domestic workers and women temporary agricultural workers (percentage)**

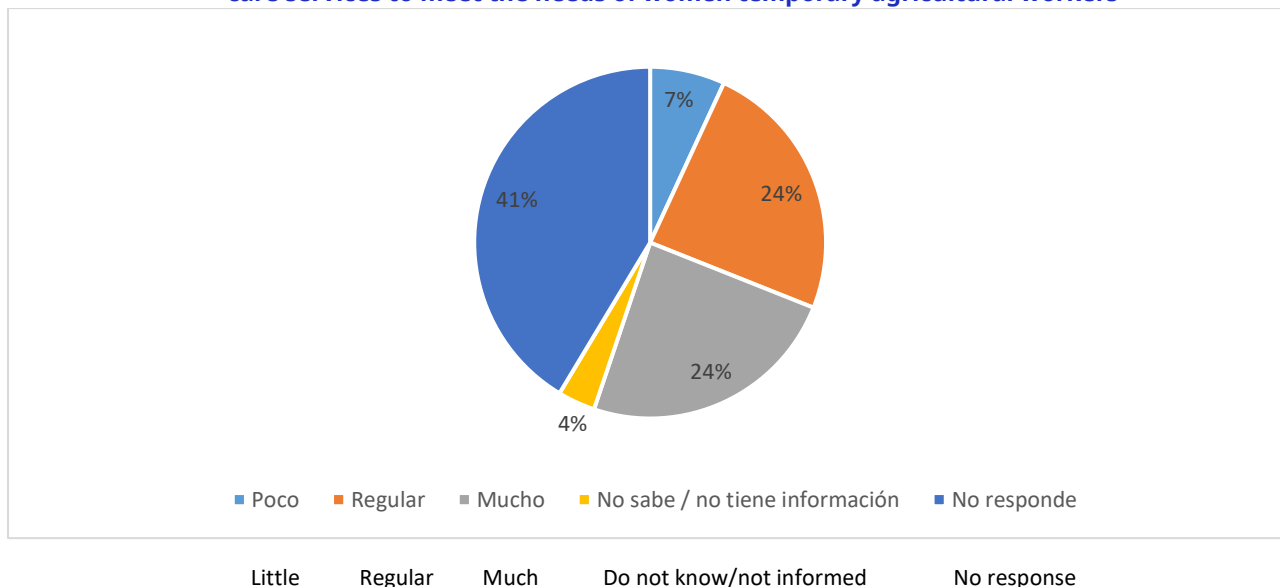


Source: Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme.

161. Regarding the development of a national care strategy, UN Women noted that it contributed with: (a) a proposal for a care system and not just care services; (b) inputs for the proposal of the System Act; (c) generation of evidence on the feasibility of investing in a care system through a methodology to estimate returns on investment in care; and (d) capacity-building of local actors such as Mayors, including the curricula proposal to professionalize care work with a gender and human rights perspective. "We have mapped what already exists in each City Hall in terms of care services, and we accompany with technical assistance to formulate a local care system that is implemented in the Iztapalapa pilot (...) It includes a mapping of care gaps at family and women level."

162.48% of the actors consulted through the “Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme” believe that the Programme contributed “Regular” or “Much” to the development of a national care system.

► **Graphic 17. Perception of the Programme's contribution to the development of local/national and rural care services to meet the needs of women temporary agricultural workers**



Source: Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme.

**Question 12. What are the implications of the COVID-19 crisis for the implementation and effectiveness of the Programme? To what extent have the response of UNS agencies been timely, effective to continue with the planned activities, and achieving the planned objectives? How was the Programme adapted to the context of the pandemic?**

163.The pandemic has been an element of disruption to intervention programming. At the beginning of the Programme, the pandemic forced us to look for alternatives to face-to-face encounters and delayed the implementation of field actions. In the meantime, the poor operability of “Technical Committees or Advisory Committees” was notorious during the period of mandatory quarantines, and this poor operability impacted the chance to achieve a comprehensive and cross-sectional view of the components by executing teams.

164.In the case of the components that had to work national laws (care system, domestic workers regime,) the pandemic meant extending timeframes and changing priorities in public policy and in the dynamics of key partners. According to executing teams, the pandemic explains that some products such as “ad hoc strategies for the social protection of domestic workers” were not achieved or delivered in all 5 states which were part of the first outcome of the Programme. They also believe that, had the pandemic not occurred, the main policies pursued could have been implemented. Regarding the latter, the evaluation considers that although the pandemic had important implications, in fact, it was not decisive in the failure to implement the policies pursued, but rather responds to assumptions about deadlines that were not met and to the fact that a great deal of political influence is still required with key actors such as the Ministry of Finance and Public Credit (domestic). In the case of the entity that decides on public investment, it will be important to identify strategies to develop an effective dialogue with this actor.

165.The context of the pandemic has also had implications that favoured some aspects of the development of the Programme. In this regard, the FAO team notes that it enabled them to add more key actors and work more deeply on UNS strategies such as political dialogue on social protection policies for women, in a context that made face-to-face interaction difficult. Far from paralysing it, the Programme's executing teams report that they relied on virtual tools so, they could reach actors who, in another context, would not have been able to participate due to the distances and costs involved in the face-to-face mode. In other words, the pandemic created an opportunity to gather a larger group of certain actors, and the Programme and its executors knew how to make good use of it.



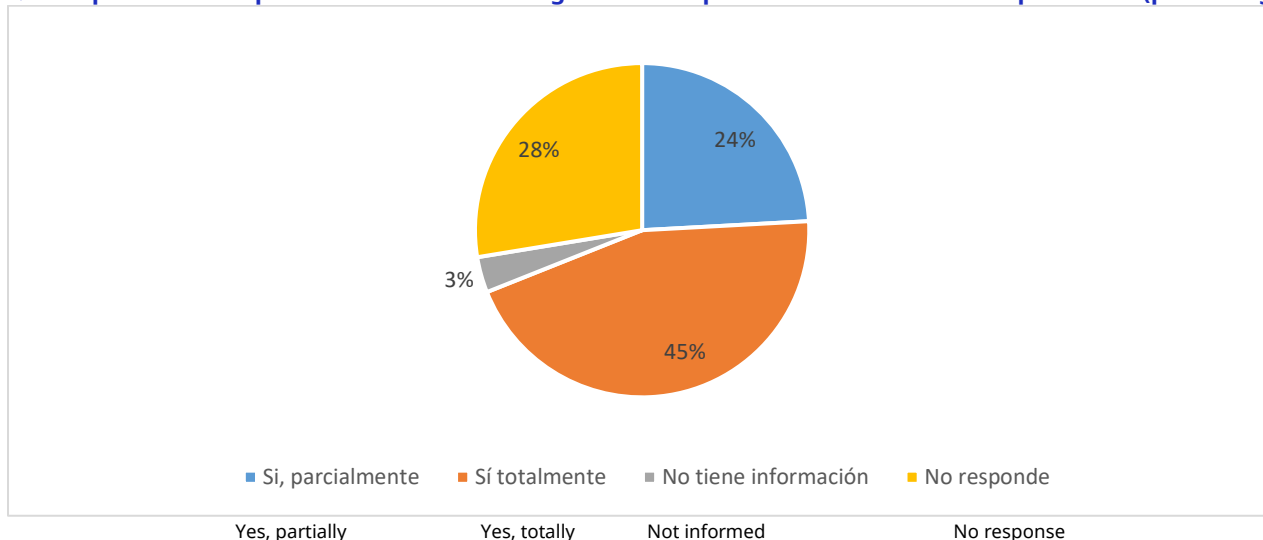
166. Regarding target population and social vulnerability, the pandemic has meant not only a health crisis but also a care crisis, to that extent it placed the social vulnerability issue in the public policy agenda and, in the midst of it, the importance of care, care services and policies, and caregivers. The pandemic also meant the need to intensify and extend occupational safety and health measures and standards for domestic workers and for women temporary agricultural workers facing a growing work vulnerability. Thus, in the context of a pandemic, the Programme and its components of care system and domestic workers became even more relevant.
167. The evaluation considers that the Programme's response to the pandemic with its three components was adequate and timely. The Programme was adapted to the context of the pandemic by delivering studies and outputs that identified and reported on its impacts on target groups in critical areas such as: changes of domestic workload and unpaid care, impact of employment and/or deterioration of working conditions.
168. In the case of domestic workers, and in response to the request of organizations supporting domestic workers (CACEH), health protection protocols were developed, and a series of virtual talks and workshops were provided to guide domestic workers in their safe return to employer homes when quarantines were lifted. Specifically, the ILO, based on its expertise, included the development of and training in the first Guide to Occupational Health and Safety for Employers and domestic workers.
169. In the case of women temporary agricultural workers, the diagnosis to build the strategies of expanded social protection<sup>33</sup>, developed in the field and within the framework of the pandemic itself with a participatory approach, allowed to identify impacts on this population in terms of their main vulnerabilities: lack of job opportunities in the places of origin and job insecurity; exposure to health insecurity because they had to leave to survive; connectivity and digitalisation gap for them and their family groups in terms of education; and limitations on care services. Some of these impacts on women temporary agricultural workers vulnerabilities were included in the expanded social protection strategies that were built, although others should be considered in the future, such as attention to the connectivity and digitalisation gap and rural care services.
170. The evaluation also considers that a broader reading of the impacts of the pandemic on vulnerable groups served is required. Thus, the pandemic intensified the need for greater connectivity: new forms of work, of relationship and communication are increasingly based on new information technologies; and access to connectivity and digitalisation are also imperative for social and economic inclusion. In that regard, the connectivity and digitalisation gaps that affect women, mainly rural and indigenous women, should be considered in the expanded social protection strategies that have been achieved in the development of the Programme.
171. Two thirds of the actors consulted through the *"Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme,"* consider that the Programme got "totally" (45%) or "partially" (24%) adapted to the context of the pandemic. Depending on the type of institution, those who consider that the Programme "totally" adapted to the context of the pandemic are, first, representatives of the three UNS agencies that implemented the Programme (ILO, FAO and UN Women); second, representatives of public institutions of central government; and third, representatives of institutions of local or provincial government<sup>34</sup>.

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<sup>33</sup> "Strategy and Social Protection Plan for Women Temporary Agricultural Workers in Jalisco." ASI. 2022

<sup>34</sup> See [Annex 10](#) for outcomes details.

▶ **Graphic 18. Perception of whether the Programme adapted to the context of the pandemic (percentage)**



Source: Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme.

172. Some elements of the context related to the organizational and working culture of the agencies enhanced the Programme's response to the pandemic. In the case of the FAO, the pandemic initially held back the possibility of face-to-face work that was vital with a population such as women temporary agricultural workers, while virtual communication was almost infeasible given the connectivity and digitalisation gaps they face. However, the FAO has two elements in its organizational and working culture as an agency that enabled it to address the context: *"Less cabinet, more ground,"* and this remained in the pandemic, the agency did not put restrictions on its teams' field work, to which we must add its capacity to work in the field supported by networks it has developed in the territories. This allowed it to reach a very complicated group such as women temporary agricultural workers, added to the collaboration of a civil society body such as ASI, an expert in participatory research. It was not easy to reach the group of women temporary agricultural workers in the Oaxaca – Jalisco circuit, but the FAO made it, in the context of a pandemic supported by these elements of its organizational and working culture.

173. Another case is that of the ILO; part of its working culture is to have and develop guidelines and protocols. In the context of the pandemic, most partners turned to the ILO to develop protocols on health protection in the face of the pandemic and to train domestic workers in this area.

174. A possible inhibiting factor in the response of agencies would have been administrative procedures, sometimes lengthy, to adjust and/or redirect resources to address an emergency such as the context of the pandemic. In this regard, some partner actors point out that *"a challenge for the ILO is how to react and respond more readily to the circumstances... help us more to transmit to employers that, although the pandemic hit everyone, there were ways to deal with domestic workers and not leave them without a job or wages as indeed happened... other agencies, as they were more flexible, were faster in responding to the pandemic."* In this regard, the ILO in the Guidance on Health, and Safety at Work, and in the respective trainings, included a specific module on negotiation between employers and workers in the context of the pandemic. One of the difficulties was that there are no employers' organizations in the household sector. In any case, what actors state rather refers to the timing of the response of cooperation agencies to redirect actions and resources in facing a crisis.

175. In addition, for other actors, the Programme and its administration meant opportunity and flexibility to address adjustments in objectives and in the development of actions. SINACTRAHO representatives point out: *"Working with the Programme has been a good experience for us, administratively it was friendly, especially in the face of necessary adjustments and changes that had to be made in the time of the pandemic, there was flexibility."*

**Question 13. How has the Programme contributed to the achievement of SDG, particularly SDG 1.3 and 5.4?**

176. According to the opinion of former officials of the Agenda 2030 Secretariat, the Mexican public administration considered the Programme to be of strategic importance for accelerating development targets to 2030 *"It was the first time that it focused on vulnerable and rural working women...and it was strategic as well, not so much because*

*of the numerical targets, but because of the impact it could have on strengthening other programs in public management, especially those linked to SDG.”*

177. In the opinion of these former officials, the Programme contributed to the progress of SDG in Mexico, primarily because it enabled actions with the potential to accelerate the achievement of SDG, which otherwise, without support for public management, would not have been possible to achieve. One example is the implementation of the pilot on the affiliation of domestic workers following the failure of the SCJN. While the mandatory regime will still require more advocacy work to define reforms that allow a substantive improvement in social protection for these vulnerable and poor women’s working group in Mexico, it has helped lay the groundwork for such improvement.
178. In the case of women temporary agricultural workers, the Programme’s contribution to SDG, is to have made visible to the state governments with presence of temporary agricultural workers, the reality of these rural, vulnerable, and poor workers. Interinstitutional agreements have been reached at the local level to attend their expanded social protection, which must be accompanied and monitored for compliance.
179. Regarding the Programme’s contribution to “substantial “coverage of protection systems” for “all” the poor (SDG Target 1.3), said achievement implies roadmap processes that could not be covered by the actions envisaged by the Programme in only two years. An example of such situation is explained by the UN Women official who led the “It’s Only Right” campaign in the media and networks for the rights of domestic workers, focused on a segment of the heterogeneous universe of employers. *“When we set the campaign’s targets after the employer-based diagnosis, it became clear to us that the target could not be to increase domestic workers affiliation, as this required a process beyond the time and resources of the Programme (...) The media campaign set realistic objectives, to make a segment of employers aware of the rights of domestic workers,”* as a contribution to the social transformation process in favour of future affiliation. In line with this statement, the campaign evaluation study noted that the objective of increasing awareness of the rights of domestic workers in this segment of employers was achieved, but this does not directly result in the change in behaviour in employers over their decision to affiliate the domestic worker.
180. As to recognizing and appreciating unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, social protection infrastructures and policies, and the promotion of shared responsibility in the household and family (SDG Target 5.4), the Programme has contributed inputs to the design of a national care system that has been considered by actors who define public investments, who have been presented with the costs and benefits of investing in a care system. The challenge is to convince, through a sustained advocacy strategy, actors such as the Ministry of Finance and Public Credit, who have decision-making power over this investment.
181. At the local level, a care service pilot has been developed for a segment of the unattended population such as children and adolescents between 6 to 14 years old, in the Iztapalapa City Hall. For its implementation, a high-level political dialogue was established with the Mayor de Iztapalapa and the heads of the Welfare Secretariat and the labour Secretariat of Mexico City. This pilot, -which until 2021 covered only 40 children and adolescents- and the challenge lies in the replication capacity of local City Halls and sustainability of these services. The actors interviewed consider that sustainability of this care service is in the hands of management levels of the municipality, with whom it will be necessary to work in the future.
182. In general, the evaluation considers that coverage of considerable services can only be established when the policies and services promoted by the Programme are finally implemented (except for the domestic work scheme that is already in force, and which already allows to follow-up affiliations.) Also, scaling up coverage of social protection systems promoted by the policies driven by the Programme does not depend directly on the agencies, although it does require the identification and support of longer-term processes, greater advocacy work with more actors and allies, providing more accompaniment and follow-up in the future and in perspective.

### 3.3. Management effectiveness

#### **Question 14. Does the governance structure and management model of the Programme facilitate outcomes and efficient implementation? How did agencies work to provide a coherent set of actions, complementary and adaptable toward the expansion of social protection in the context of the UN Framework for Cooperation on Sustainable Development and reform of the UNS?**

183. The governance structure of the Programme consists of two coordinating bodies for implementation (a Coordinating Committee and a Technical Group for Implementation); a technical advisory body (Advisory Committee or Group); the overall strategic orientation of a Resident Coordinator; and the coordination and supervision of the Programme by the lead agency (ILO.) This governance structure operated effectively in terms of coordination for implementation, while the work of the technical advisory mechanism was limited (one meeting in 2020 and another in March 2022), mainly due to the pandemic. ORC representatives interviewed note in this regard that, instead, the agencies held bilateral meetings with the members of the Advisory Committees. They also point out that *“the Programme has been an example of inter-agency work, because of the level of coordination achieved and the willingness to work together shown by the three agencies.”*

184. The strategic leadership of the resident coordinator can be analysed by identifying joint strategies and integrated and strategic processes in the operation of the Programme<sup>35</sup>. ORC representatives interviewed point out in this regard that *“the role of the ORC has been to ensure the integrity of the joint work of the agencies to deliver achievements in terms of social security affiliation of woman workers and in terms of the care system.”* The evaluation identifies joint integrated strategies in terms of social dialogue, media campaign for the rights of domestic workers, and integrated monitoring and evaluation process. In turn, the evaluation considers that these joint and cross-cutting strategies have been less notorious or visible in terms of gender, formalization of work/employment, labour inspection, and care strategy for the two target groups.

185. The evaluation also considers that it was necessary to define an effective communication strategy of the Programme, both internally and externally, on its joint nature, in terms of objectives, strategies, joint methodologies and in terms of the relationship with partners and collaborators. PRODOC refers that such a strategy exists; however, the *“Survey for Institutions Participating in the Programme”* shows that a significant number of representatives of these institutions did not answer questions about the Programme because they lacked information or simply because they did not know what to answer.

#### **Question 15. Has a monitoring and evaluation system/mechanism been put in place that adequately and timely measures progress made in the implementation of the Programme at output and outcome level? Are monitoring and evaluation results disseminated to stakeholders and used by UNS agencies for decision-making, accountability, and/or information dissemination among stakeholders?**

186. The Programme had a “Monitoring and Evaluation Plan and Knowledge Management Plan,” which contains the main requirements for monitoring and evaluating the intervention. In line with the fact that the Programme had process indicators (activities, outputs, and outcomes), but not impact and effect indicators<sup>36</sup>, the monitoring and evaluation system implemented has reported on the processes but not on the changes sought (effects and impacts.)

187. The process monitoring and evaluation system implemented had quarterly and annual reporting spaces and formats, which give a detailed account of the programme's development. The information in these reports is mainly qualitative and therefore, does not always provide a clear account of the magnitude of the activities, in terms of, for example, number of beneficiaries. There is also no systematic quantitative information or detailed reports on activities financed by transfers allocated to domestic workers organizations (SINACTRAHO, CACEH.)

188. According to executing teams, the Programme monitoring and evaluation system contributed to transparency, mainly in relation to the Programme's partner actors. This proves that the Programme's monitoring and

<sup>35</sup> For a description of the functions of each instance, see PRODOC (JSDG Fund: 2019 p. 54-56.)

<sup>36</sup> In turn, this responds to the formulation of JSDG Fund projects, which require that funded proposals be short-term (two years) and capable of achieving impacts and effects, and yet the definition of indicators of the desired changes is not required.

evaluation was adequately reported to stakeholders. They also noted that the information in the system allowed them to revise and ensure compliance with programming. However, the results of the “*Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme*” show that it is in accountability for progress made and outcomes of the Programme where partner actors and collaborators believe that they were less involved (only 41% of respondents said they had a high or very high level of participation, while the rest said this level was medium or low or did not respond.)

**Question 16. To what extent did the Programme seek to take advantage of the institutional nature of public policies and programmes and of the main projects/initiatives of key actors in social protection, employment, formality, technical and vocational training? To what extent did the agencies coordinate with these country partners? What synergies or intersections with relevant national partners were exploited and contributed to the achievement of the Programme's outcomes?**

189. The evaluation considers that one of the main factors explaining the scope of part of the Programme's outcomes has been the ability of the agencies to identify and take advantage of the institutionality of existing policies, programmes and/or projects in key social protection agencies and give them added value. The cases illustrating this capacity have already been exposed in the framework of this evaluation, such as the care pilot in the Iztapalapa City Hall and the establishment of the inter-institutional and inter-state workgroup sessions for the social protection of women temporary agricultural workers in Jalisco. In the care pilot, this was achieved through a diagnosis of services and care gaps that identified where it was most appropriate to intervene, generating greater synergies and added value; in the inter-institutional workgroup session of Jalisco, the role of the then recently created SISEMH was taken advantage of and enhanced.

190. Coordination of agencies with partner actors in each component has been important. The actors consulted indicate that the FAO has made a scheduled follow-up and accompaniment to the bodies and agreements established at the inter-agency Jalisco workgroup session for the social protection of women temporary agricultural workers. *“They were convened institutionally by appealing to the mandate of each actor, but they were also asked to play a role in promoting the social protection issue for these vulnerable groups, seeking to become active entities in this process.”*

191. In the case of care, the pilot in the Iztapalapa City Hall developed in partnership and coordination with ILSB, UN Women and the leaders of the Social Welfare Directorate of the City Hall. The actors consulted state that it will be necessary to expand this coordinated work with the senior management of the City Hall to guarantee sustainability of what was developed through the pilot.

192. The actors consulted point out that it will generally be important to build a greater social base to promote the implementation of the policies supported by the Programme, for which it will be vital to coordinate and establish alliances with other relevant actors of civil society and local communities, especially given the high turnover of staff in central and local government: *“working and coordinating with those who remain in the territory.”*

### 3.4. Efficiency.

**Question 17. Has the Programme strategically allocated resources to ensure the fulfilment of activities and achievement of outcomes in the expected time, and shows a level of financial execution consistent with the level of progress in technical execution?**

193. PRODOC presents the budget as outcomes and outputs (disaggregated as per Outcome 1, Outcome 2, Communication and Evaluation Strategy)<sup>37</sup> and also according to general expenditure items. However, information on joint budget execution in such terms has not been available. In other words, there are reports per agency, but a centralized and/or joint account of the Programme's budget implementation is not kept. In

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<sup>37</sup> Details of the budget are presented as per the Programme's outcomes and outputs on pages No. 90 to 93 of PRODOC (JSDG Fund, 2019.)

this regard, it is suggested to standardize the budget execution reporting formats following the outcomes logic as stated in PRODOC and to have a single joint budget execution report.

194. The total budget amount of the Programme was US\$ 2´400.408, of which US\$ 2,000,000 (83.3%) correspond to the Closing Gaps Programme and US\$400.408 (16.7%) to the complementary contributions of Participating United Nations Agencies (PUNO.) Meanwhile, distribution of the total Programme budget per agency shows that 32.5% is provided by the ILO, 42.3% by UN Women and 25.2% by the FAO.

► **Table 5. Distribution of the Programme budget, as per agencies.**

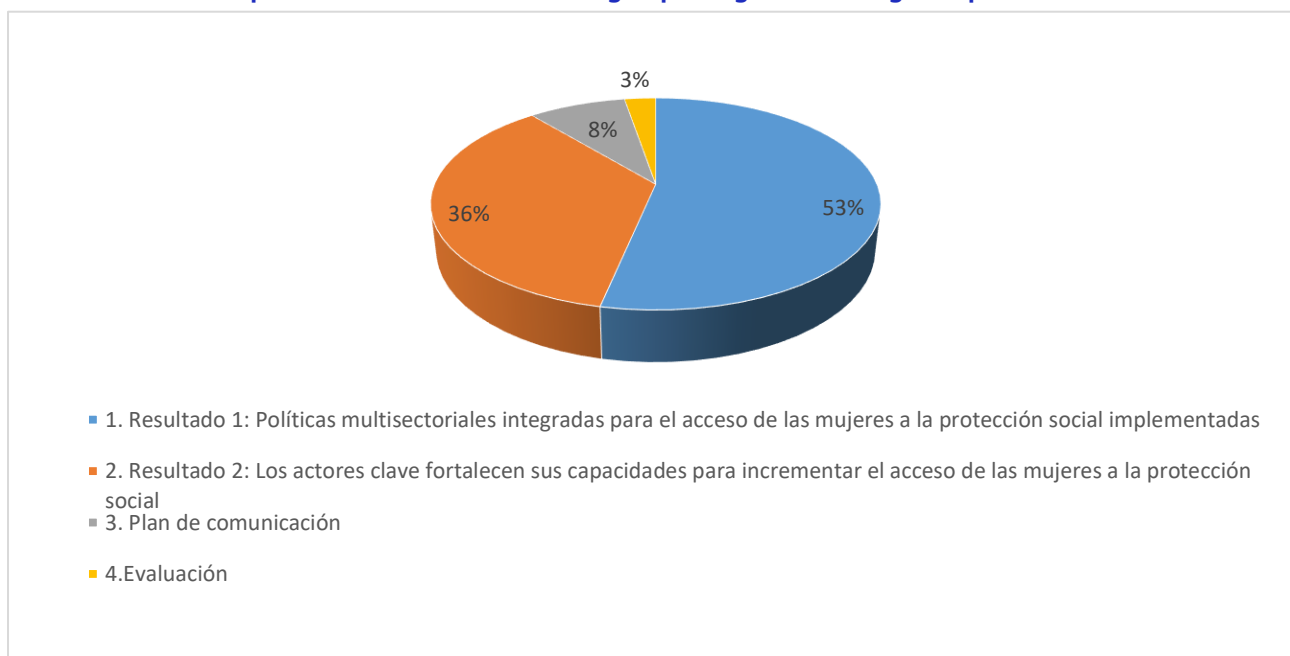
Agencies	Closing Gaps Programme		PUNO		Total	
	US\$	%	US\$	%	US\$	%
ILO	660.479	33.0%	119.254	29.8%	779.733	32.5%
UN Women	855.451	42.8%	160.714	40.1%	1,016,165	42.3%
FAO	484.070	24.2%	120.440	30.1%	604.510	25.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,000,000</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>400.408</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>2,400,408</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: PRODOC (JSDG Fund: 2019). Own Making.

195. The evaluation considers that budget distribution per outcomes was strategic, since it prioritized building and implementing public policies of social protection that the diagnosis identified as the main cause of the gaps to be closed. Of the total Programme budget:

- US\$ 1,279,344 corresponds to Outcome 1; that is, 53.3% of the total.
- US\$ 856.185 corresponds to Outcome 2; that is, 35.7%.
- US\$ 200.678 corresponds to the Communication Plan (8.3%.)
- US\$ 64.200 corresponds to Programme evaluations (2.7%.)

► **Graphic 19. Distribution of Closing Gaps Programme budget as per outcomes.**

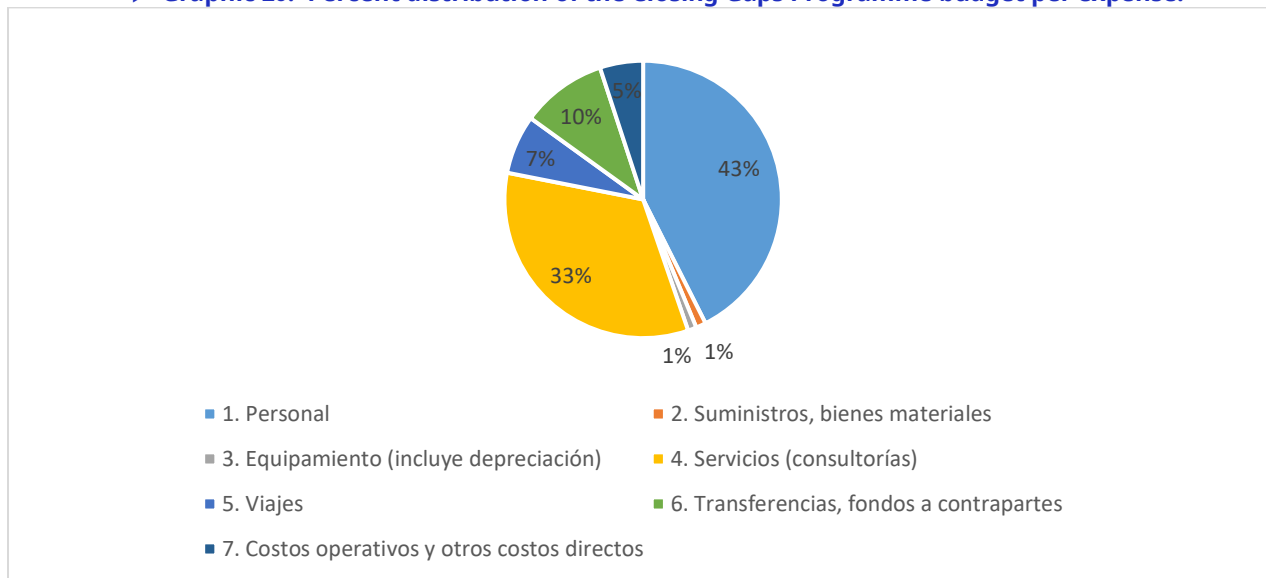


PRODOC (JSDG Fund: 2019, p. 90-93.) Own Making.

196. According to general expenditure items, the highest allocation of Programme resources was to staff costs (43%); second, to payment of services (33%) mainly for preparation of studies and/or development of technical assistance and advice; and third, to direct transfer of funds to some counterparts (10%), for example to CACEH and SINACTRAHOC in the domestic worker component of the ILO. This expenditure structure is consistent with the strategies defined by the intervention: thus, the highest financial allocation is directed to specialized human

resources in charge of facilitating the processes, mechanisms, and inputs necessary for building public social protection policies, their accompaniment and follow-up, as well as strengthening of capacities in key actors.

► **Graphic 20. Percent distribution of the Closing Gaps Programme budget per expense.**



Source: PRODOC (JSDG Fund: 2019, p. 84). Own Making.

197. As of April 2022, US\$ 1,934,892 have been executed, corresponding to 96.8% of the US\$ 2,000,000 total Programme budget. This percentage is 96.9% in the ILO, 100.0% in UN Women and 90.8% in the FAO. By the end of the Programme, each agency is expected to have executed 100% of the resources. As shown in [Annex 11](#), the level of budgetary implementation is very similar in Outcomes 1 and 2, and this is true for each of the agencies.

► **Table 6. Level of Programme budget execution per agency.**

	Budget (US\$)	Executed as of April 2022 (US\$) <sup>1/</sup>	% Execution
ILO	660.479	640.228	96.9%
UN Women	855.451	855.451	100.0%
FAO	484.070	439.699	90.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,000,000</b>	<b>1,935,378</b>	<b>96.8%</b>

Source: Information on financial execution of the Programme, provided by agencies in April 2022.

1/ The amounts considered in the “Executed” column include the amounts committed.

198. Finally, it should be noted that most of the Programme’s budget was implemented in 2020 and 2021. Thus, in the case of the ILO, 33.3% of the total executed by the ILO in the Programme, was in 2020, 51.6% in 2021 and 15.1% in 2022. While in case of the FAO, 43.4% of the total executed in the Programme by the FAO in Outcomes 1 and 2 was in 2020, 51.3% in 2021, and 5.3% in 2022<sup>38</sup>.

**Question 18. To what extent has inter-agency in Programme management contributed to improving implementation efficiency? Has the Programme’s intervention been more efficient compared to what could have been done with a single agency intervention? What are the challenges for joint and inter-agency work? How could mandates or expertise of other agencies not participating in the Programme be added? What incentives exist or could exist in the agencies for joint work?**

199. At the beginning of the Programme implementation, inter-agency raised certain difficulties. It was the first time that a Joint Programme had been developed in Mexico and there were no references. According to some

<sup>38</sup> In the case of UN Women, no disaggregated information in years is available.

consulted actors, the initial difficulties were administrative (complex confluence of accounting, financial and logistical processes to develop certain actions) and also in terms of the presence and joint representation of agencies in the territories, some were better known or had more presence in certain territories and vis-a-vis certain actors.

200. PUNOs consider that inter-agency has worked in the Programme and that one of the main reasons that explains it is that each agency has its well-defined responsibilities according to expertise and that, as a result, there are no duplicities or uncertainties about what it is incumbent upon each of the agencies. They also highlight as critical success factors the legitimacy and prestige that agencies have in the country; empathy among their representatives and their positive attitude toward joint work. Furthermore, they emphasize that UN reform since 2019 and the creation of cooperative frameworks that demand inter-agency have favoured joint work.
201. PUNOs state that inter-agency enabled them to expand their networks, which may have contributed to better implementation and greater efficiency. To verify the foregoing, it would be desirable to have inter-agency progress and good management indicators in the development of a Joint Programme.
202. Expanded networks and the mere fact three different agencies with different specialities were set to thinking and acting towards social protection of women with a gender focus, constitute elements that may have caused Programme actions to be more efficient in relation to those of a single agency intervention. The “It’s Only Right” media campaign in favour of domestic workers, where interaction of the three agencies was experienced and where the importance of expanded networks from inter-agency is noted, is a clear example of its benefits in terms of outcomes and more efficiency.
203. One of the main challenges of joint and inter-agency work is to achieve joint looks and strategies on the same problem, even more so in interventions on a significant scale. This requires integrating the capacities and specialities of UNS agencies in the face of cross-cutting problems and issues, and generating integrated processes based on the identification of convergences in approaches, methodologies, strategies.
204. Regarding Programme representation as a joint intervention vis-a-vis the various partners, a communication, presentation, and joint representation strategy was required in agency territories as co-executing agents of the Programme, presentation of their specialities and their transversality in the intervention. The actors point out in this regard *“the recommendation is that they should be presented as a common front, with common objectives and strategies;”* *“It would have been important for us to have coordinated to apply the same methodology (...) With the ILO, we applied a methodology that served us a great deal to identify and systematize best practices and, in the course on care that was worked with UN Women, this was not done.”*
205. While partner actors were aware that other agencies were involved in the Programme, most stated that they interacted with a single agency with cross-cutting problems and issues that required interaction with the three agencies (labour formalization, labour inspection, care, gender.) Actors consulted consider it necessary *“that the vision of the three agencies be present, or be transversal in all actions, so that it is not understood as separate actions.”* In consideration of this and the foregoing paragraph, it is understood that another challenge for Programme inter-agency is to develop - from the outset - an effective communication strategy toward counterparts on the joint nature of the Programme, and the advantages for counterparts of relying on the joint work of specialized UNS agencies.
206. Another important challenge of joint and inter-agency work is to identify incentives and disincentives for UNS agencies to participate in a Joint Programme. A first point here is to properly distribute and estimate the incremental workload that a Joint Program will involve for agency teams. In this regard, PUNOs teams -in particular the Leading Programme Agency team (ILO)- note that it was difficult to address the implementation and development of the Joint Programme, its many actions, and activities, with small two-people-teams that already have an established institutional burden. *“The ILO two-people-team had to respond to the development of an entire component of the Joint Programme, in addition to its coordination.”*
207. Work networks expansion is another incentive for inter-agency. *“Definitely working inter-agency gives you more presence and gives you tools that not necessarily a single agency has, which has been very important (...) The introduction of three UN agencies gives you greater credibility and opens to more relationships. As the FAO, we have a number of relationships in the territories and the other agencies have others and working together opens up more relationships...”*



208. Inter-agency learning is another incentive and, as such, it would be desirable to systematize and disseminate the experience of the Joint Programme. *"From the ILO, we learned the capacity and speed with which it can make guidelines and protocols. It is not that we are not capable, but they are experts (...) From UN Women, the subject of communications and their ability to generate campaigns and communicate; it was very useful and very interesting for us in the development of agendas. And, from the FAO, the capacity and agility with which we move in the territories."*
209. The Programme PUNOs teams also point out that they have identified some actions that they could be carried out in the future with some of the other agencies (beyond the Program) which would reinforce its outcomes and outputs. For example, the FAO team refers that *"with UN Women, we are contemplating the possibility of working in production chains with a gender focus and with the ILO on labour rights in certain production chains."*
210. Adding new agencies to a Joint Program such as Closing Gaps should depend on an analysis of the experience developed and what is considered missing in the intervention and that could be enhanced with new competencies and/or alliances to address more effectively social vulnerability in women. Consulted on the issue, some members of the executing teams note that it would be important to join the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) for its competence in care and children. But they also point out that, in administrative issues, adding a fourth agency would pose greater complexity. In this regard, ORC representatives point out that a Joint Program *"is an administrative and programmatic challenge. For example, if a single agency leads a particular output, said output must only undergo supervision of that agency, but if it is led by three agencies, it must undergo three supervisions. This should be solved from the PRODOC, avoid including many formal authorization processes because it delays execution."* They are also opened to considering the complexities of Joint Programmes: *"If the reform seems to be not moving forward, then we should wonder whether a joint program is best or if it is advisable in these cases to rather think of each agency's autonomy."*
211. The incentives of other agencies to join a Programme such as Closing Gaps could be, in addition to those mentioned in the preceding paragraphs (network expansions and interlearning between agencies,) marketing of agencies and their competencies and capabilities within the UNS itself, sharing costs; and/or taking advantage of the experience of the ILO, UN WOMEN and the FAO gained while developing this Joint Programme.

### 3.5. Focus on impact and sustainability

**Question 19. Have capacities of relevant individuals and institutions in Mexico been built or strengthened to respond to the problem in the short and long term? What does this capacity-building reflect? Can these changes be causally linked to the interventions implemented under the Programme?**

212. As mentioned in the Effectiveness section of this Report, about half of the actors consulted through the *"Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme"* point out that, based on their participation in the Programme, they have strengthened the capacities of their institutions "Much" in terms of know-how on social protection and care; updated social protection and gender evaluations; and developed innovative tools to promote access to decent employment, social protection and care services.
213. The evaluation considers that most partner actors already had strengths, knowledge, experience in social protection and care, from which the Programme intervention built added value through the application of a new tool and/or a new practice. In some cases, it is possible to consider a causality between changes produced and some Programme action. For example, in the case of the care service pilot in Iztapalapa City Hall, it shows how interaction with the Programme and ILSB allows the City Hall to produce a new care service for a segment of the population (parents of children between 4 and 8 years old) who were not served by the care system that the Town Office had been operating since 2019. In other words, based on the diagnosis of gaps in care services implemented by ILSB and the Programme, the Town Hall comes to assist more segments of the population in need of care. Of course, it is possible to identify other factors that also explain such a change, such as the willingness of the partner actor to produce such changes and the fact that they already have effectively made progress (infrastructure and experienced human resources) in the field of care due to its interaction with other actors in the environment and with other experiences.

► **Table 7. Changes in care services before and after the care pilot with Closing Gaps Programme / in Iztapalapa Town Hall 2019-2022.**

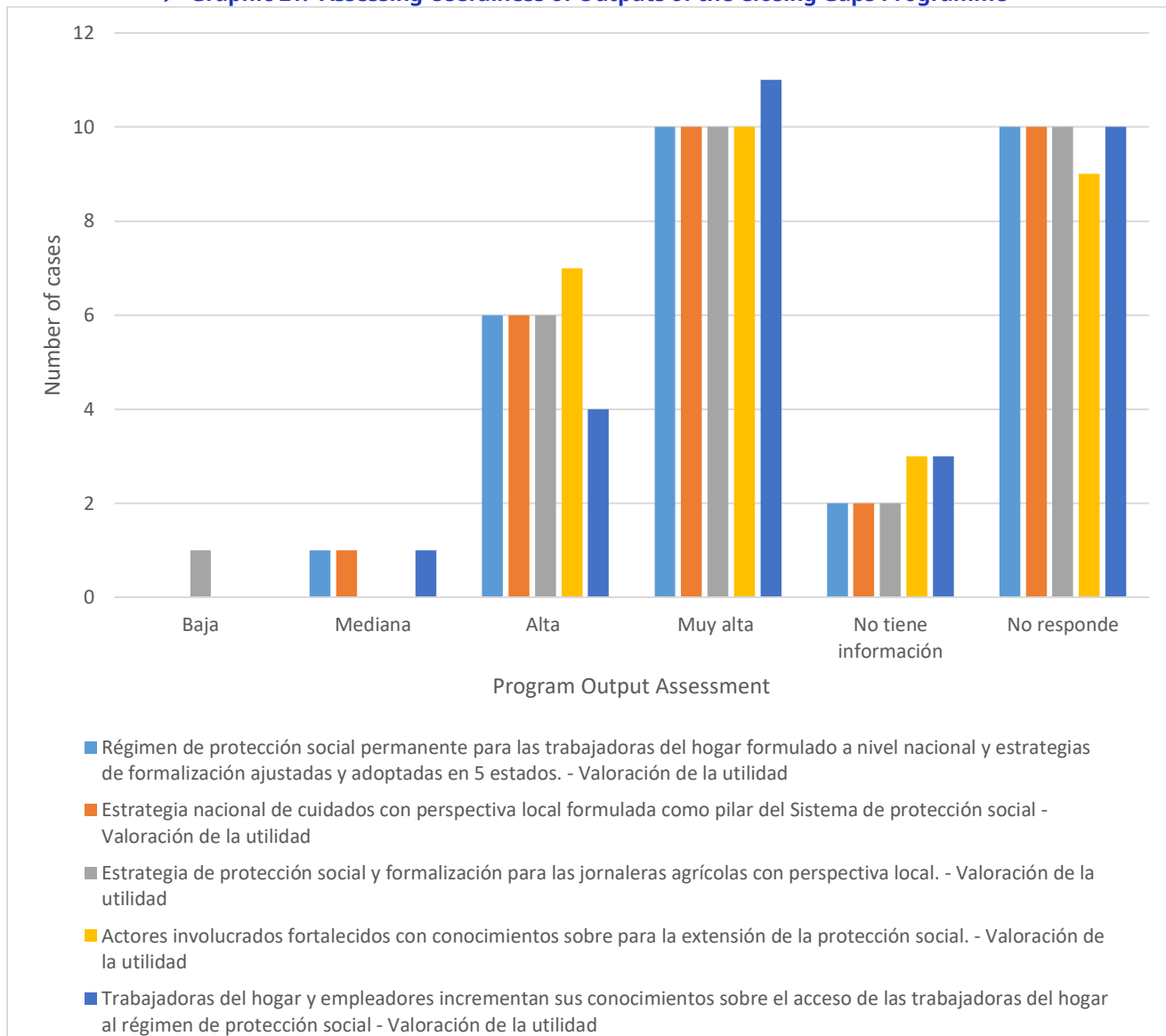
	Served care dependent population segments	Care Services
Before Closing Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Infants (0 to 5 years old)</li> <li>▪ Elderly and PWD caregivers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ CENDIS</li> <li>▪ Workshops for carers</li> </ul>
Pilot with Closing Gaps Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Infants (0 to 5 years old)</li> <li>▪ Elderly and PWD caregivers</li> <li>▪ Children between 5 to 8 years old</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ CENDIS</li> <li>▪ Workshops for carers</li> <li>▪ COLMENAS</li> </ul>

Source: Based on interview to head of service in the Iztapalapa Town Hall. Own Making.

**Question 20. To what extent has the Program favoured ownership of intervention by Mexico's main partners? How is the level of ownership linked to the level of participation of these actors during Programme implementation and to their perception of the usefulness of the outputs developed? Are national partners willing to keep the outcomes once the Programme is completed? Do they have a budget for this? Have they institutionalized any of the tools developed under the Programme?**

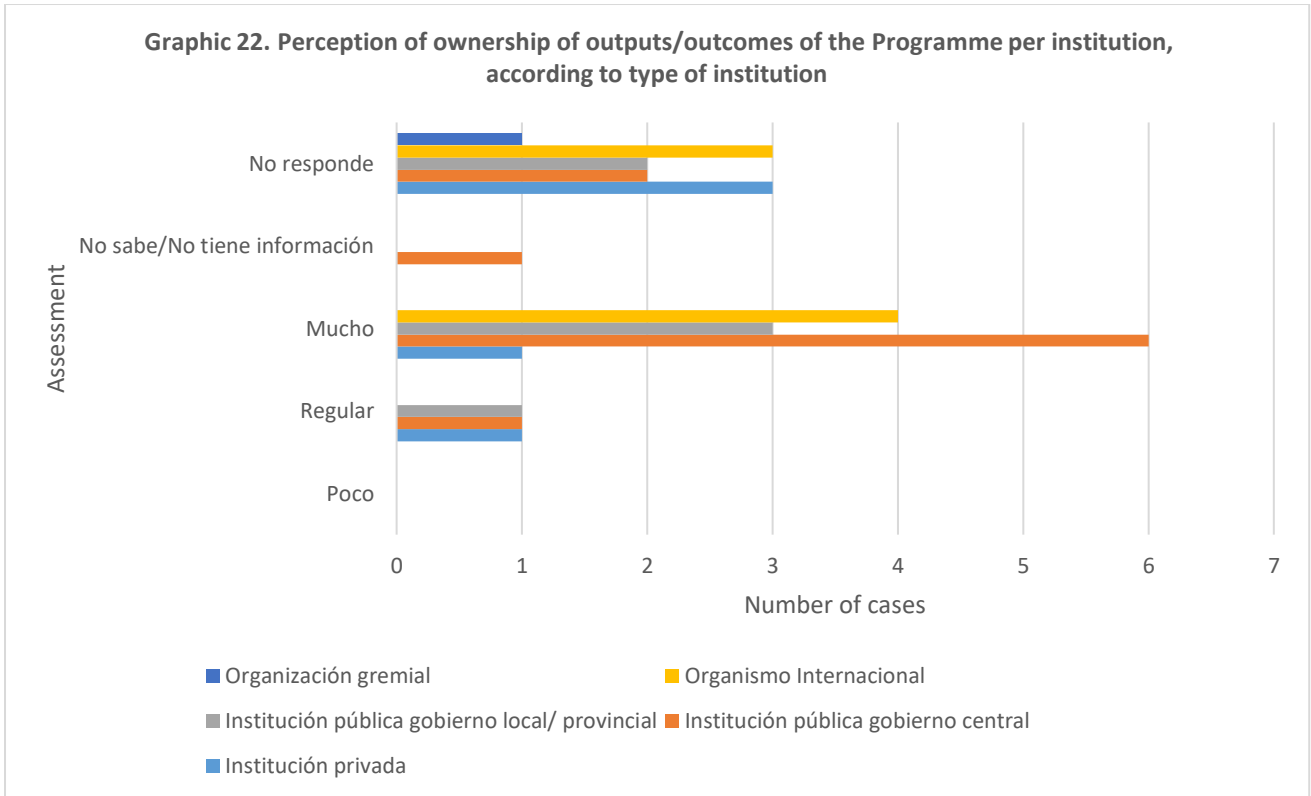
214. The degree of ownership of the intervention has been favoured by the Programme through the development of outputs, methodologies, and practices that have been perceived as “useful” by partner actors. According to the outcomes of the *“Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme,”* more than 50% of the representatives surveyed from central and local government public institutions and by the executing teams of PUNOs have a “High” or “Very High” rating of the usefulness of each of the Programme's outputs.

▶ **Graphic 21. Assessing Usefulness of Outputs of the Closing Gaps Programme**



Source: Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme.

215. Likewise, more than 50% of the actors surveyed consider that their institution has very much owned the outcomes achieved by the Programme. This percentage is higher when only public sector actors are considered (central government and local governments) with competencies in improving social protection for women and for programme target groups. It should be noted that those who consider that their institution has very “much” owned the outcomes of the Programme are basically the same as those who expressed a “High” or “Very high” evaluation of the outputs of the Programme.

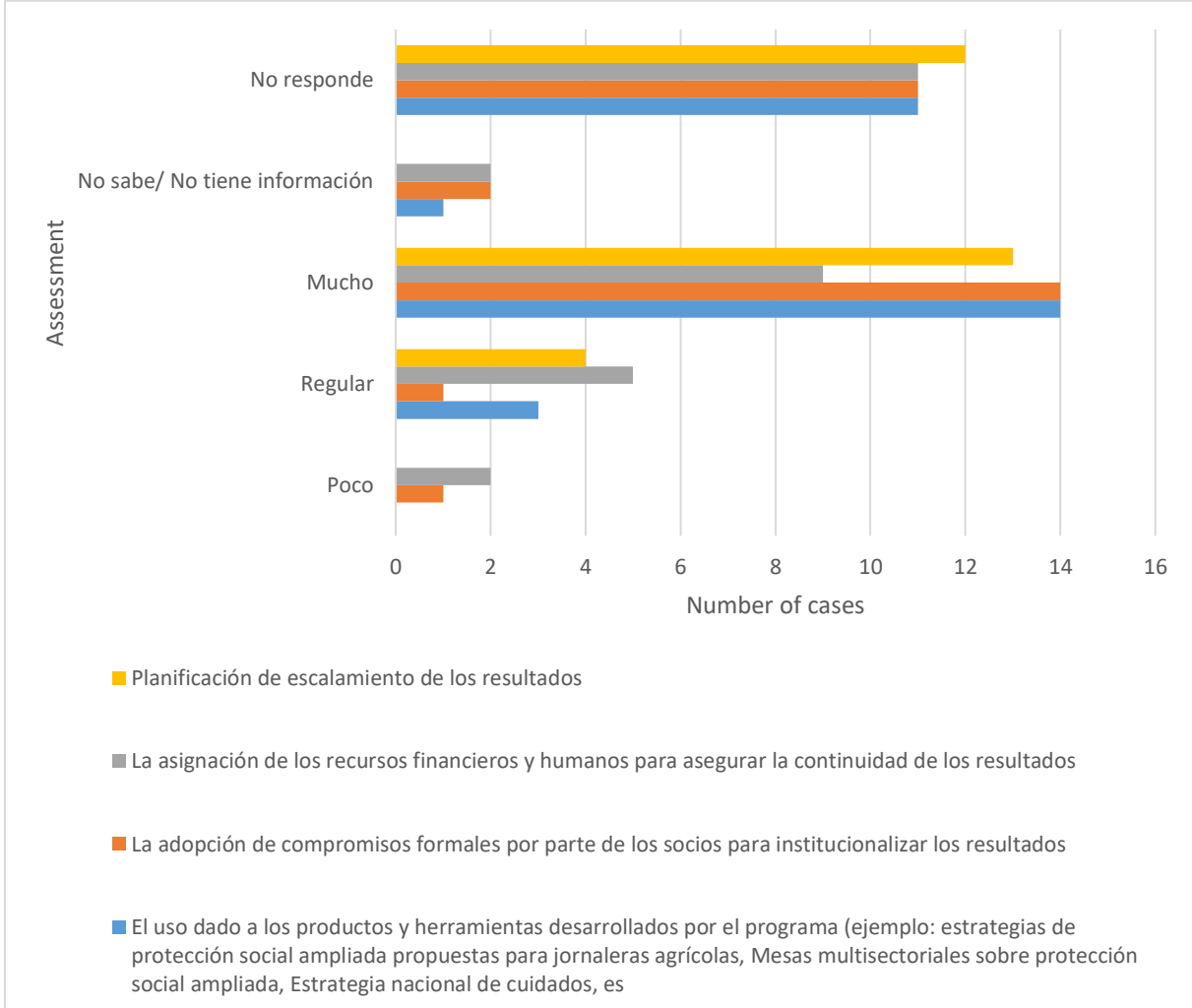


Source: Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme.

No response  
 Does not know/Not informed  
 Much  
 Regular  
 Little  
 Union Organization  
 International Organism  
 Public Institution local/provincial government  
 Public Institution central government  
 Private Institution

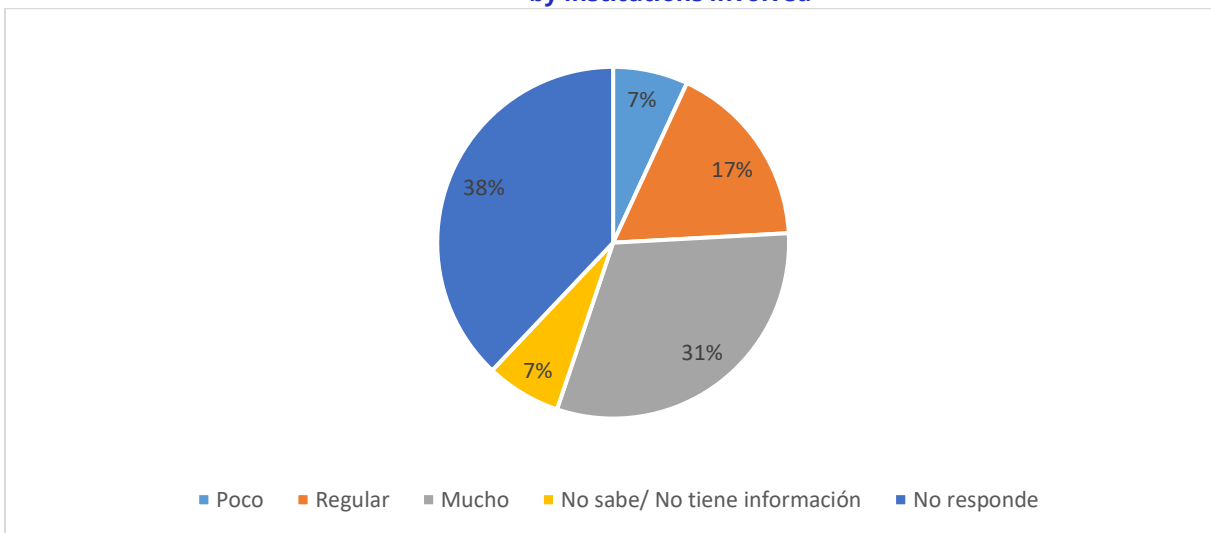
216. Between 45% and 50% of respondents say that ownership of Programme outcomes can be “Much” confirmed in: (a) formal commitments undertaken to institutionalize outcomes; (b) use given to outputs and tools developed by the Programme; and (c) planning to scale their application. By contrast, only 30% said that this ownership can be “Much” confirmed in the allocation of financial and human resources to ensure continuity of the outcomes. This is an indication that there is a willingness of the partners to maintain the outcomes and outputs, practices and methodologies developed with the Programme once completed, but there are certain budgetary restrictions to achieve the same.

▶ **Graphic 23. Perception of how to confirm ownership of the Programme outputs by institutions involved**



Source: Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme.

▶ **Graphic 24. Perception of allocation of financial and human resources to ensure continuity of outcomes by institutions involved**



Source: Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Programme.

217. As to the institutionalization of tools and practices related to outcomes and outputs, interviews conducted, and the survey applied to institutions that participated in the Programme reveal that this is taking place in more than one case. In terms of mechanism, the Inter-Agency Social Protection Board for women temporary agricultural workers in Jalisco is one of the closest to be institutionalized. In terms of practice and methodologies, those developed by the ICAT Programme to train and professionalize domestic work are another case of ownership whose continuity is very likely. While STPS -from the Work Dignification management- is willing to adopt the employer awareness strategy for compliance with domestic work regulations, through communication campaigns as such carried out by the Programme.

**Question 21. What are the main effects and impacts being achieved in terms of social protection, care systems, formality, employment, technical training in the Programme's target population?**

218. A first and main effect of the Programme is the visibility of social groups that are not "tracked or registered" by public policies and society in general, as well as social concepts and needs such as care or women's rights and needs. The women temporary agricultural workers component of the Programme succeeded in making women visible among the temporary workers group, identifying, and focusing their needs and interests in terms of social protection.

219. Another identified effect is the development of "referents" based on the instruments developed to achieve dialogue and the construction of protection policies. A special case in these terms is the Inter-Agency Boards for the Social Protection of women temporary agricultural workers in the states of Jalisco and Oaxaca, promoted by the Programme and which have become a referent for other states with presence of temporary agricultural workers.

220. In Jalisco, a Network of local promoters, made up of municipal agents, as well as community promoters -that in some cases are also women temporary agricultural workers- has also been revitalized under the Programme, with the aim of promoting social protection of women temporary agricultural workers. *"We have been able to learn about social protection, we were not aware of the needs of women temporary workers."* It is recognized that, to sustain and bring social protection strategies toward their effective implementation, participation of the workers themselves and their representative organization is also needed, which does not happen and needs to be worked on.

221. Another important impact of the Programme is having produced linkages and representativeness between unknown actors, as in the case of unions of domestic workers, to open opportunities for access to social protection at the local level. Representatives of the unions of domestic workers point out that *"from our participation in the Programme we were able to reach other states (Chiapas, Jalisco, Oaxaca,) and establish direct relations with the authorities of these states to improve assistance to our affiliates. We are now representative to these states, and we are going to formalize this connection through conventions."*

222. Also, with regard to domestic workers, one effect of the *"It's Only Fair"* campaign developed with the Programme has been convincing authorities with competencies in access to social protection (STSP, IMSS) of the potential and relevance of operating awareness strategies, cultural and behavioural change among employers to comply with the rules on domestic work.

223. In terms of the effect of care at the local level, in the case of the care pilot in Iztapalapa, it is having shown that new care services can be identified and created - through diagnoses of care gaps - to assist more segments of the care-dependent population, making better use of existing infrastructure and human resources, cost-effectively.

224. The evaluation considers that impacts will only be identified when the policies and regulations pursued are implemented and evaluated, which requires longer deadlines, building a larger social base that makes the agreements and policies pursued enforceable, as well as increased advocacy work to achieve its implementation.

**Question 22. To what extent have partners and stakeholders changed their policies or practices to improve gender equality and human rights? To what extent has the Programme contributed to the transformation of gender relations in access to social protection?**

225. The Programme has mainly focused on gender and social protection within a framework of dignity of work. In general, the Programme's counterpart institutions already had important precedents in implementing workplace policies and practices for gender equality and/or employment training, and their participation in the Programme enabled strengthening, expanding and/or improving.
226. The evaluation identifies that partner actors have evaluated what they are willing to change and/or improve in terms of practices and/or methodologies applied and revealed by the Programme in order to improve social protection for women from a gender approach.
227. In the case of ICAT, prior to its participation in the Programme, it already had gender specialists, a training program, and defined competency standards to professionalize domestic work. Their participation in the Programme allowed them to incorporate new topics such as occupational safety, updating of progress made on labour rights of domestic workers, and expanding care treatment beyond children and older adults, and enabling them to identify female trainers among domestic workers. The ICAT notes -with regard to the gender approach to professionalization of domestic work- that it considers it important to train and sensitize trainers responsible for training, considering that many trainers still transmit patterns of gender inequality; for example, *"they use non-inclusive language or address domestic workers in a paternalistic manner, as if they were girls."*
228. Meanwhile, STPS and its Labour Dignification Board already had gender specialists, and a course developed with the collaboration of the French Cooperation Agency, for the professionalization of domestic work. Their participation in the Programme enabled them to increase their knowledge of the potential of different strategies to promote and/or achieve compliance with the new domestic work regulations. On the one hand, STPS representatives point out that, starting with the "It's Only Fair" campaign, they have been able to see the potential of communication strategies in relation to employers' awareness objectives, and cultural and mindset change needed to contribute to access of domestic workers to social protection. Also, in view of policy options to comply with regulations for domestic work, STPS notes that they are able and willing to mirror and expand communication strategies for employer awareness. *"Mexico will go for a strategy of cultural and mindset change, for media and network communication campaigns to promote compliance with the new standards for domestic work (...). Our expectation is also to continue listening to the ILO on the development of guidelines for the inspection of domestic work, which is a complicated aspect as they are working spaces that are at the same time homes."*
229. Regarding domestic workers' organizations (SINACTRAHOC and CACEH,) their representatives emphasize that, from their work with the Programme, they were able to go and establish bases in other states of the Mexican Republic, with an important presence of domestic workers (Jalisco, Chiapas, Oaxaca, and Mexico,) which is key in the task of disseminating their labour rights and the new regulations governing their jobs. The new union affiliates in the new territories participate in the "School of Leadership Training and in the Rights of Domestic Workers," created by SINACTRAHO in the framework of the Programme's support, through which the practice of training in leadership and professionalization of domestic work promoted by the Programme is expanded. For these organizations, establishing bases in new territories has also been important to establish relations with the Governments of those states and for having direct dialogue with the teams and bodies that have competence to define improvements for the social protection of domestic workers (Secretariats of Women, Justice, Labour, and Employment Promotion.) They state that they will maintain this practice of direct dialogue with the parties responsible for social protection policies in those states and that all states have been receptive except Oaxaca, with which *"it has been more difficult to establish a successful approach."*
230. The evaluation considers that the main contribution of the Programme was to raise the issue of gender-based social protection, two aspects that public policies often do not see together. In addition, the Programme has raised the challenge of putting care at the centre of the social protection system. The theoretical and strategic approach has been powerful, the main challenge being its effective landing and operationalization through the implementation of public policies and mechanisms at the local and national levels. In this regard, having a Ministry of Finance and Public Credit aligned with a public investment for the care system at the centre of the national social protection system is still a challenge and a far-reaching political advocacy task.
231. Two years of intensive work, with or without a pandemic, seem short to transform the patterns and mentalities that underpin gender inequalities in women's access to social protection, as illustrated by the adjustments that

had to be made to the objectives of the media and networking campaign for the rights of domestic workers or the adjustments to the development of protocols for the inspection of domestic work. As to the first, the indicator and objective of the "It's Only Fair" campaign has changed from "affiliation of domestic workers to social security" to "number of employers with knowledge of the rights of domestic workers." In the case of protocols for the inspection of domestic work at the national and local levels, it went from searching for "implementation of domestic work inspection protocols" at the national level and in five states to "disseminating comparative experiences in domestic work inspection" and, at present, training of inspectors on international experiences.

232. Transformation of gender relations into social protection from driven public policies - not yet implemented - is a medium- and long-term change. Some actors and this evaluation believe that the Programme can be seen rather as learning for longer-term planning, because pushing public policies "*which ultimately, means building trust, building political will to make them a reality among different actors, is changing behaviours,*" which takes longer than scheduled in the Programme.

**Question 23. What is the likelihood that the outcomes will be maintained beyond the Programme? To what extent is the development and/or implementation of regulations and the design and/or implementation of national and sub-national public policies on social protection being impacted? What projects or initiatives could mobilize more resources and consolidate the outcomes achieved by the Programme? What factors could contribute to or limit sustainability?**

233. The evaluation considers that the likelihood of sustaining what the Programme has achieved is differentiated between outcomes and outputs, and they depend on the degree to which progress was made in the ownership of the outputs developed and the outcomes achieved and the decision-making power and permanence of the actors with whom they worked.

234. The level of ownership of outcomes and outputs has been given by the impact- and sustainability-oriented actions that were foreseen by the Programme, one of them was the work and coordination with the technical commands of partner institutions and the application of methodologies that have improved practices in managing these actors, such as the ILO courses developed with ICAT, or the FAO with SISEMH of the State of Jalisco in the establishment and development of the Inter-Agency Board for the Social Protection of women temporary agricultural workers. In these technical commands the level of ownership has been important, as evidenced by testimonies collected through the interviews carried out and through the outcomes of *the "Survey for Institutions Participating in the Closing Gaps Program."*

235. The actors interviewed point out that some outcomes and outputs developed by the Programme are based on sustainable mechanisms. One case is that of the Inter-Agency Board and the pacts on progress made in social protection for women temporary agricultural workers in the state of Jalisco. Workgroup sessions and pacts in favour of temporary agricultural workers are not new in the state of Jalisco, but none managed to survive over time, for lack of technical accompaniment and follow-up by a solvent body to secure them. The SISEMH, which today leads the Board, is an established mechanism for public policy and gender mainstreaming, already institutionalized in State administration, which ensures permanence and operation of the Board and compliance with the pacts reached in the area of social protection for women temporary agricultural workers.

236. Institutionalization of social protection policy for women temporary agricultural workers is a process that will take time, but in the short term it is already working through its incorporation into existing state programs (such as *Fuerza Mujer*, which promotes productive endeavours.) According to the testimony of government representatives of the state of Jalisco, all this translates into commitments of budgetary allocation. Priority programmes created in 2022, have the potential to integrate women temporary agricultural workers and their needs; some of these are "Responsible Jalisco" and "Dignification of workers in the agricultural sector," executed by the Secretariats of Economic Development and Agriculture, respectively.

237. As to outputs developed for social protection of domestic workers, representatives of the employers' association of domestic workers (*Hogar Justo Hogar*) and the STPS interviewed, in turn, point out that the media and network campaign developed by the Programme to change the mindset of a segment of employers of domestic workers has been successful, timely and relevant "*it is a strategy that we are going to bet on and continue in the future once the mandatory regime is approved.*"



238. In other cases, sustainability of the outputs and outcomes achieved is less likely to occur as in the case of the social protection strategy for women temporary agricultural workers developed with the Welfare and Women Secretariats in the state of Oaxaca, in which the high turnover of technical commands and staffing reduction are factors that limit the continuity of what was developed, especially in view of the political and administrative changes to take place due to the upcoming elections in Mexico. *“It is a challenge of institutional strengthening within the government of Oaxaca, which adds to the deficiencies of the political system itself, as this summer in Oaxaca all the officials, even the governor himself, will be changed.”* As it is, the evaluation considers that, in general, the Programme and its outputs are facing the difficulties experienced in most Latin American countries: the high employee turnover in state institutions at the different levels of administration and that in turn leads to the high turnover of technical personnel who were trained and qualified by the interventions.
239. As to the care pilot at the Iztapalapa City Hall developed by UN Women, collaborating actors such as ILSB, point out that, *“the middle and technical command staff who developed the experience are convinced of the outcomes of the pilot and the need for continuity; however, because of the short time allowed for the pilot to be launched, the Programme did not work as well as at the highest level of management of the City Hall, which is where sustainability, continuity of what was developed is defined.”* However, UN WOMEN notes that work was done from the beginning with the executive level of the Iztapalapa City Hall and with the labour Secretariats of Mexico City and Welfare of that time, where it was recognized that having Iztapalapa already a care system, it would be important to establish a pilot based on the gaps detected. In any case, the ILSB's view as an entity that developed the output allows stating that while the Programme developed an effective strategy to reach levels of ownership of the outcomes and outputs such as political dialogue with evidence, this ownership had to be secured in both the management and technical commands. In this regard, collaborating actors such as THP point out that the strategy to address the shortcomings of the political system is to *“work with those who remain in the territory, with organizations, communities so that it is they who negotiate with the new governments and new officials about what has already been done.”*
240. Partner actors with regulatory compliance powers such as STPS consider that, within the framework of labour reform in 2019, in which the rights of domestic workers are equated with the general labour regime *“the ILO has supported the dissemination of the new recognized rights of domestic workers”* and to that extent, it has influenced the possibility of applying regulations. As to actions aimed at ensuring compliance with the progress made in regulation on domestic work, actors such as the STPS and its Directorate of labour Dignification, consider that *“the Programme, through the ILO, has supported inspection of domestic work (...) We have evaluated much of the work on the experience in Latin America in labour inspection in workplaces that are at the same time, a home (...) In Mexico, we are going to go for raising employers' awareness, for giving them incentives to ensure compliance with regulations rather than going for labour inspections, since it is a complicated challenge.”*
241. IMSS, in turn, notes that it has developed with the ILO, within the framework of the Programme, guidelines on the rights of domestic workers and their social security affiliation in the native languages Nahuatl, Tzotzil and Mixteco, to contribute to the fulfilment of the progress made in domestic work regulation.
242. Union's representatives (SINACTRAHO) and other domestic worker organizations (CACECH) have pointed out the need to continue supporting the advocacy work they are doing to activate the reforms that have already been identified as necessary for the recently adopted regulation and to take into account those aspects that have not been taken up and that are essential to improve access of domestic workers to social protection (domestic workplace inspection, which has not been covered, nor access to the Housing Fund.)
243. As for women temporary agricultural workers, STPS considers that it is at its top, because it is a sector where there is a lot of child labour and international commitments are in place through trade agreements, and these women workers are also a big challenge because *“they are a population with very different demographic behaviours, not only regarding labour informality but there is also a lot of (spatial) mobility.”* With this workers' population, they consider that *“a government responsibility is to have a register of these workers to guarantee their access to social protection and compliance with their labour rights.”* IMSS, in turn, states that it is part of the Inter-Agency Boards for the social protection of women temporary agricultural workers in Jalisco and Oaxaca promoted by the Programme and that from these spaces it expects to play a role in improving the conditions of social protection for this population.
244. In the case of social protection strategies for women temporary agricultural workers, development of a temporary workers' register with a special emphasis on the visibility of women temporary workers and their household members, identifying those with vulnerabilities, could contribute to making progress in the

implementation of the defined strategies. In this effort, actors with competencies at the national level (STPS, IMSS) could be combined with those at the local level (states with presence of agricultural workers.)

245. In addition, the actors consulted refer the need to add new actors to implement the expanded social protection strategies for women temporary agricultural workers that have been developed by the states of Oaxaca and Jalisco. THP representative points out the importance of adding to these strategies representatives (with decision-making power) of the states where women temporary agricultural workers travel to migrate from Oaxaca to Jalisco. This, in turn, is tied to the need to address road infrastructure improvement that women temporary workers interviewed marked as one of their needs in their journeys, as well as the need for care infrastructure.

246. The other key initiative to develop to make progress in the implementation of these expanded social protection strategies for women temporary agricultural workers is the wide-ranging dissemination of the strategies themselves among women temporary workers. As women temporary agricultural workers themselves have expressed, it must be a widespread dissemination through networking, with promoters that are also women temporary workers and designed considering their native languages. Promoting union organizations of women temporary agricultural workers is one of the best ways to ensure the implementation and sustainability of the strategies developed.

## 4. Conclusions, lessons learned, best practices and recommendations

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### 4.1. Conclusions

It is a successful Programme, which is especially valuable because it has a complex design. The multidimensional problem addressed led to developing an integral look from the identification of connectors and cross-cutting lines of inter-agency and inter-component work, which were given by the social protection needs transversal to the two target groups (domestic workers and women temporary agricultural workers.) It was also the first time that a joint UNS programme had been developed in Mexico.

#### Relevance and validity of the design

1. The Programme was aligned with much of the relevant public policies to address the social protection gaps faced by women in Mexico: decent employment, gender equality, and care as a right. In particular, it aligned itself with the constitutional reforms that took place in Mexico in 2020, relating to labour and the right to care, as well as with the ratification of ILO Convention 189 on Domestic Workers. There is consensus among the actors consulted that, because of the issue addressed, it is a totally strategic Programme for public policy makers at all levels of government (national and sub-national.)
2. The Programme is relevant as it proposes to address the structural causes of social vulnerability of women and, specifically, of groups of vulnerable women (domestic workers and women temporary agricultural workers,) generally invisible to public policy, who have also been among the groups most affected in labour, economic and social terms by the COVID 19 pandemic. By proposing to place care at the centre of improvement of the social protection system, the Programme enhances the possibilities of effectively improving the situation of working women in Mexico and especially the most vulnerable.
3. The design of the Programme is appropriate and consistent as there is a relationship between objectives, outputs, and outcomes. Its diagnosis clearly identifies the causes of women's social vulnerability and the gender inequalities that underlie it. The strategies chosen had the potential to contribute to closing gaps in women's social protection in the medium and long term, while the Programme had a duration of only two years; the evaluation therefore considers that the deadlines for the achievement of some outcomes and outputs, particularly those involved in the process of public policy development, were not properly estimated. Much of the assumptions of Programme design and monitoring were adequate, but there were some that were not necessarily met (links between local and national to reach public policy at different levels of government; deadlines for the implementation of public policies.)
4. The design of the Programme is relevant as it defines an intervention to improve women's access to social protection and care with the participation of three specialized UNS agencies (ILO, UN Women and FAO.) The experience and expertise of each agency ensured the specialized treatment of the different causes of the problem addressed, although the evaluation considers that the distribution of agencies' work per components limited interactions between them to achieve cross-sectional and integrated views on the problem addressed, converging concepts, methodologies and operating joint and cross-cutting strategies.

#### Effectiveness

5. The Programme achieved a significant level of expected results. Policies and changes in regulations to improve women's access to social protection and care services were developed and proposed, pending implementation, as established in Outcome 1. The approved extended protection strategies for women temporary agricultural workers in the states of Jalisco and Oaxaca were worked on under a more realistic approach of graduality considering short, medium and long-term stages for their implementation. The challenge is to achieve linkages between locally-driven and national-driven policies.

6. As to Outcome 2, partner actors with the power to improve social protection and care recognize that the Project has strengthened their capacities to improve women's access to social protection and care services, as follows: (a) know-how on social protection and care; (b) updated diagnoses, innovative looks on social protection and gender; and (c) development of innovative tools to promote access to decent employment, social protection, and care services.
7. For women temporary agricultural workers, it has been possible to establish bases that will allow legitimizing and working at local levels to improve social protection for them (dialogue mechanisms in the process of institutionalization; strengthened actors and technical bodies.) However, some lines of work such as income generation and livelihood assurance, as well as strengthening the organization of women temporary agricultural workers need to be better integrated into the strategies achieved. In the case of domestic workers, the process for the approval of the compulsory scheme was technically accompanied, from the decisive support of the Programme to concretizing the pilot of the compulsory IMSS affiliation regime to its approval in the Senate of the Republic, including a study carried out by the ILO on gaps between Mexican regulations and the ILO Convention 189. There is, however, a long way to go in terms of effective compliance with the law that requires the affiliation of domestic workers to social security, which is driven by a change in mentality and employers' behaviour process.
8. At the local level, ad hoc strategies for social protection of domestic workers were not delivered (5 states with social protection strategies for domestic workers,) nor were labour inspection mechanisms established, as provided for in Outcome 1. Programme teams explain that this was due to the pandemic and the change of priorities that this meant to sub-national governments, coupled with the characteristics of the Mexican legal system that only allows labour inspection protocols to be worked on if there is a national standard that allows for it. Instead, inputs were prepared to build such strategies with a look to the future (diagnoses of barriers to access to social protection for domestic workers, comparative studies of domestic labour inspection). There is a willingness in State Labour Secretariats to work on domestic work inspection mechanisms; however, the approved mandatory affiliation regime for domestic workers does not provide for the inspection of domestic work. In the case of women temporary agricultural workers, the evaluation identified the need to expand efforts to achieve labour inspection mechanisms for them as part of a comprehensive and cross-sectional view of the Programme on the two target groups.
9. The "It's Only Fair" media and networking campaign for the rights of domestic workers was successfully developed by the Programme, which objective was to make these rights known to the targeted employers' segment to whom it was addressed, which are formal workers and considered "progressive." However, it is necessary to expand and adapt these campaigns to more segments of the heterogeneous universe of employers, especially to the majority (informal and without access to social security,) moreover, taking into account the negative impact of the pandemic on formal employment among employers of domestic workers. Greater incentives must also be identified and generated for compliance with regulations by these actors.
10. In the case of the care system, a pilot of care services with great replication and escalation potential was achieved at the municipal level as a cost-effective intervention. However, no work was done on the development of care service models for rural areas, no care pilot for rural municipalities or for women temporary agricultural workers. Then, the big challenge lies in scaling up from local to nationwide and in incorporating the needs of rural care and care services. With regard to the national care system, it has been proposed and its benefits and costs sustained but more work of political impact is required at the investment decision levels at the sub-national levels, before actors such as the Ministry of Finance and Public Credit.
11. The COVID 19 pandemic meant both an initial alteration in the planned programming and in the estimated timeframe for the achievement of outcomes, and an opportunity to position the idea and objectives sought by the Programme. In both cases, the Programme's response in terms of adjustment of programming and activities was appropriate, and the evaluation of the actors on the Programme's capacity to adapt and timely respond to the context of the pandemic is high. However, the need to consider the impact of the pandemic on target groups is identified, particularly on the digital and connectivity gap between rural and indigenous women predominant among women temporary agricultural workers and domestic workers.
12. A significant degree of gender mainstreaming was achieved in the design and implementation of the Programme, in its three components, which is mainly explained by the gender expertise and policies of each agency. In addition, the success of the Programme is recognized as having involved and worked with the gender mechanisms of the Mexican State at all levels of government, which enhanced the expertise of UNS agencies. However, the Programme did not consider indicators of effects and impacts of the transformation of gender

relations in social protection and care and in terms of access to social protection, or changes in the use of women's time and empowerment, which does not allow to know the impacts of the Programme in such aspects.

13. Consideration of other conditions in the reality of women to deal with the vulnerability affecting them -such as indigenous, rural, migrant and disability- has been differentiated according to components of the Programme. The women temporary agricultural workers component gave greater consideration to indigenous and rural conditions, noting that the ILO and IMSS have developed information material on the rights of domestic workers in native languages. With regard to persons with disability, PRODOC already pointed out that PWD was a vulnerable group of indirect influence and therefore did not identify a roadmap for the treatment of disability in the groups of workers served by the Programme.
14. The factors that explain achieving the outcomes of the Programme are mainly the following: (i) evidence-based strategy of political dialogue, which allows the participation of decisive actors in improving social protection of women and important levels of ownership of what was built from dialogue spaces; (ii) having taken advantage of the existing institutions at the different levels of government and/or in the territories such as work and promotion networks, mechanisms and bodies specialized in labour training; (iii) having added and/or supplemented what partner bodies of the central government or sub-national governments had already done and added value to these efforts; and (iv) expertise, experience, and working methodologies of UNS agencies involved.

## Management effectiveness

15. The governance structure worked effectively in terms of coordination for implementation (Coordinating Committee and Technical Group,) while the technical advisory mechanism (Advisory Committee or Advisory Group) worked limited mainly because of the pandemic. The evaluation identifies that joint strategies have been implemented among agencies (OIT, UN Women and FAO) in terms of social dialogue, media campaign for the rights of domestic workers, and monitoring and evaluation process. In turn, it considers that these joint strategies have been less visible in terms of gender, formalization of work/employment, labour inspection, and care strategy for the two target groups.
16. The Programme had a sufficiently integrated monitoring system that allowed the process indicators defined for the Programme to be followed; it had coordination spaces among the Programme's PUNOs; and created periodic reports on process indicators and their assumptions. Executing teams believe that all this contributed to transparency of management and to the development and timely adjustment of the programming.

## Efficiency.

17. More than half of the Programme's budget focused on Outcome 1, slightly more than one-third on Outcome 2, while nearly 10% on the communication plan that included media campaign for the rights of domestic workers. This allocation of resources according to Outcomes was strategic and consistent, as it prioritized building and implementing public social protection policies, which the diagnosis pointed out as the main cause of social protection gaps in women and to whose closing it was intended to contribute.
18. The inter-agency status of the Programme led the three agencies, each from its component, to develop actions toward gender-based social protection. The FAO broadened and applied the concept of expanded social protection for women temporary agricultural workers; the ILO strengthened its approach and methodology of support to domestic workers developed through its years of experience in the field; and UN Women managed to link, in the discourse and proposals that it promoted, the centrality of care in social protection systems.
19. The great challenge of inter-agency, from a Programme analysis, is to achieve joint and cross-cutting views and strategies on the same problem to be addressed. Other challenges include: (i) establishing progress indicators in inter-agency; (ii) having an internal and external communication strategy aimed at transmitting the Programme's joint character; and (iii) Identifying incentives for UNS agencies to participate in a joint Programme, such as expanding networks; inter-agency learning; sharing space and resources; and/or building on the experience of ILO, UN WOMEN and FAO in carrying out this Joint Programme.

## Impact and sustainability

20. There is evidence of the Programme's contribution to the development of policies and regulations that should allow in the future, as from implementation, to improve women, domestic workers, and women temporary

agricultural workers access to social protection and care services. This contribution was made in the form of inputs to nourish change processes initiated by the United Mexican States; in turn, the Programme has been an enabler of actions aimed at defining progress made in social protection of women.

21. One of the main effects of the Programme is that it gave visibility to domestic workers and women temporary agricultural workers in public policies; to their right to social protection and care from a gender perspective; and to key concepts such as extended social protection, protective structures, care as a right and services. A process of legitimizing social protection and care policies for the most vulnerable groups of women in Mexican society was also initiated; and a change in the discourse of certain “hard” actors (entrepreneurs, employers) is identified with regard to the rights of vulnerable working women and care work. In addition, these groups of workers have been linked and represented before sub-national government bodies, which opens up opportunities to improve social protection for these groups at the local level. Mechanisms for the social protection of women and care services have also been created (inter-agency workgroups, municipal and urban care service pilots) and contribution was made to the belief of a group of policy makers (STPS, IMSS) on the relevance of awareness-raising and cultural and mindset change strategies to operate social changes for the social protection of vulnerable women's groups.
22. The likelihood of sustaining the Programme's achievements is differentiated according to the outcomes and outputs developed. These depend on the degree of ownership achieved with respect to practices, outputs and outcomes and the decision-making power and permanence of the actors with whom they worked. The level of ownership has been given by the work and coordination with the technical commands of partner institutions and the application of methodologies that have improved management practices of these partner actors and that are intended to be immediately adopted. In other cases, sustainability of the achievements still requires strengthening the organization of target groups themselves. In the case of women temporary agricultural workers this is a line of work that must be addressed in any social protection strategy targeted to them; meanwhile, domestic workers have strengthened their union organization and trade union for decades, an effort that must continue to be supported by technical accompaniment and political advocacy. In all cases, it is necessary to build a broader social base to make the agreements and progress made by the Programme enforceable and to implement the strategies and policies that have been driven by the Program.
23. The Programme's contribution to substantial coverage of protection systems for all the poor (SDG Target 1.3,) implies processes with medium- and long-term roadmaps that could not be covered by the actions envisaged by the Programme in only two years of duration (as illustrated by the “*It's Only Fair*” campaign and the purpose to affiliate domestic workers to social security.) Therefore, it cannot be said yet that considerable coverage of services has been achieved, since the policies and services promoted by the Programme have not yet been implemented and in other cases have become small-scale pilots. Programme impacts will only be identified when the policies and regulations pursued are implemented and evaluated, which requires longer deadlines, building a larger social base that makes the agreements and policies pursued enforceable, as well as increased advocacy work to achieve their implementation.



## 4.2. Lessons Learned

### Closing Gaps: Making Social Protection Work for Women in Mexico

**Project Code/Code:** MEX/19/50/UND

**Name of evaluator:** Teodoro Sanz and Patricia Fuertes

**Date:** 01 May 2022

*The next lesson learned has been identified in the evaluation process. A more explanatory text of the lesson can be included in the full evaluation report.*

LEARNED LESSON ELEMENT	TEXT
<b>A brief description of the lesson learned</b> (relating to a specific action or task)	<b>LA.1</b> <i>Policy timeframes are different from programming timeframes.</i> Although actors who know public management processes were involved and estimates were made about the timing of implementing policies driven, with or without a pandemic, it is clear that implementing them depends on political decisions beyond programming. Development of public policies includes stages whose time limit cannot be determined a priori, since they depend on the degree to which they have been <i>legitimized</i> , which determines the time frames for their implementation and subsequent institutionalization. In turn, processes to legitimize public policies require sustained political accompaniment and advocacy and building a solid social base to make the policies pursued enforceable.
<b>Context and any related preconditions</b>	Legitimization processes of public policies are medium and long-term undertakings and require sustained political accompaniment and advocacy, and building a solid social base to make the policies pursued enforceable. In pursuing public policies, it is necessary to take into account that these are social processes, not just technical processes. It is a work that <i>"involves developing trust, building political will to make them a reality among the different actors, it is about changing behaviour."</i>
<b>Target Users / Beneficiaries</b>	Programme formulators, technical teams in charge of its implementation and actors involved in public policy development
<b>Challenges / Negative Lessons - Causal Factors</b>	Taking into account when designing interventions aimed at promoting public policies that programming must consider the level of legitimacy achieved by such policies and the time limits involved, a key element in this work will be to identify how to accelerate the processes of legitimation.
<b>Achievements / Positive Aspects - Causal Factors</b>	
<b>ILO administrative aspects</b> (staff, resources, design, implementation)	Lesson learned is linked to the Programme design process. It requires solid knowledge and experience from formulators not only of the technical stages of public policy development but also about <b>the social processes</b> that accompany and define them.



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LEARNED LESSON ELEMENT	TEXT
<b>A brief description of the lesson learned</b> (relating to a specific action or task)	<b>LA.2 Political dialogue supported in evidence as an effective strategy.</b> Programme development shows the benefits of political dialogue based on evidence to achieve ownership and sustainability of outcomes, and as a key element to legitimize the policies promoted.
<b>Context and any related preconditions</b>	<p>The context of expectations of change and reforms that Mexico experienced at the beginning of the Programme, with the advent of a new government that emphasized universal social protection and dignification of work, promoted the political will and willingness of the various social actors to engage in building spaces for dialogue on public policies that needed to be promoted.</p> <p>The context of the COVID 19 pandemic reinforced the preponderance of improving the conditions of access to social protection of the most vulnerable groups and conditioned the willingness of the actors to dialogue on social protection policies.</p> <p>The capacity of agencies to identify and exploit contexts and institutions enablers of social dialogue with evidence.</p>
<b>Target Users / Beneficiaries</b>	Programme formulators and technical team in charge of its implementation.
<b>Challenges / Negative Lessons - Causal Factors</b>	In the case of the Programme, the context was highly inviting to social dialogue on social protection policies because of the commitment of the Mexican State to move toward universal social protection. However, these are not usually common contexts, as dialogue spaces are generally built in less enabling contexts.
<b>Achievements / Positive Aspects - Causal Factors</b>	
<b>ILO administrative aspects</b> (staff, resources, design, implementation)	The lesson learned relates to the design and implementation processes of joint Programmes and the capacities developed around the implementation of the strategy of social dialogue with evidence. It is important to systematize how this strategy operates in different contexts (social dialogue enablers or non-enablers)





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LEARNED LESSON ELEMENT	TEXT
<b>A brief description of the lesson learned</b> (relating to a specific action or task)	<b>LA.3</b> <i>Inter-agency in an intervention needs to be built</i> , not a starting point but a point of arrival. Inter-agency needs to be built on the capacity of agencies to converge on concepts, approaches, working methodologies, strategies. It is necessary to establish an organization and working mechanisms that allow convergence and to establish appropriate indicators to measure and monitor their progress. A joint programme is one that gets to integrate looks, processes, and specialities into the joint and cross-sectional attention of a multidimensional problem, one that works as a “common front” and knows how to communicate it to the various actors.
<b>Context and any related preconditions</b>	Integration and convergence of approaches, methodologies, and strategies requires establishing an organization of the work of the agencies that promotes their interaction and work mechanisms that allow it. It also requires defining appropriate indicators to measure and monitor progress in inter-agency intervention.  <i>Work from joint strategies</i> in which agencies are integrated under the leadership of the specialized agency, as happened in the case of the media campaign for the rights of domestic workers
<b>Target Users / Beneficiaries</b>	Joint Programme formulators, technical team in charge of their implementation
<b>Challenges / Negative Lessons - Causal Factors</b>	Organization of agency work per component in an inter-agency programme, while responding to principles of expertise and mandates, derives in few interactions between agencies, which bears a cost in terms of the integrated and cross-sectional view required to address multidimensional problems in which the harmonious and integrated competition of various specialities is vital. The definition of <b>joint and cross-cutting strategies</b> otherwise results in interactions, synergies and, in the capacity to better tackle the problems addressed and target populations.  Coordinating is different from converging and integrating. The Programme had very good coordination but did not achieve joint and cross-cutting views on key aspects of rural care and labour inspection for both target groups.
<b>Achievements / Positive Aspects - Causal Factors</b>	
<b>ILO administrative aspects</b> (staff, resources, design, implementation)	The lesson learned is linked to the processes of Programme design and implementation and to ways of organizing the work of the specialized agencies in these programmes to improve the capacity to generate convergences and synergies.



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LEARNED LESSON ELEMENT	TEXT
<b>A brief description of the lesson learned</b> (relating to a specific action or task)	<b>LA.4 Ownership and sustainability of an intervention must be worked on taking into account the different levels of management and decision-making</b> in partner institutions with social protection responsibilities. While focusing on technical commands is key, it is also key to work on ownership of management at the highest level.
<b>Context and any related preconditions</b>	<p>The Programme, through UN WOMEN, has rightly identified the partner in experience, an organization such as ILSB, as a reference in the topic and agenda of care, and in accompanying local governments. It had a validated approach to care service development, which not only identifies existing care services and populations with care needs but also intersects them and determines <b>care deficits</b> in local management.</p> <p>The City Hall provided adequate infrastructure to create a cost-effective care service (experience then enables a space and training of two caregivers to operate an afternoon room -COLMENAS, to care for 4-to 6-year-old children not served by the local government.)</p>
<b>Target Users / Beneficiaries</b>	Technical team responsible for the implementation of the Programme.
<b>Challenges / Negative Lessons - Causal Factors</b>	<p>How to involve management of municipal governments in the development of best care practices <i>"the delegate (mayor) never attended the meetings in the framework of the development of the pilot."</i> Management levels have political agendas that do not necessarily match agendas such as care and gender equality; matching the political agenda and care agenda must be worked on.</p> <p>Other difficulties such as management resistance are to be dealt with when proposing them to recognize deficits or gaps in covering care needs in local population.</p>
<b>Achievements / Positive Aspects - Causal Factors</b>	
<b>ILO administrative aspects</b> (staff, resources, design, implementation)	The lesson learned relates to Programme implementation processes and how to identify partners, how to design an ownership strategy at the management levels of partner institutions.



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LEARNED LESSON ELEMENT	TEXT
<b>A brief description of the lesson learned</b> (relating to a specific action or task)	<b>LA.5 Working sustainability with those remaining in the territory.</b> Since political instability and high employee turnover in partner bodies are one of the characteristics of State management, it is necessary to design strategies to address this limitation to ensure the continuity of the outcomes achieved. Working directly with target group organizations, communities, and civil society is the best strategy for ensuring sustainability. In the case of the ILO, it should be done on a tripartite basis.
<b>Context and any related preconditions</b>	In the context of the Programme, a precondition is to identify the degree of institutional development of partner entities as well as the strengths and weaknesses of the organizations of target groups, in order to create a solid and sustainable social base to make policies, services and other products generated enforceable in the framework of and after the Programme has been completed.
<b>Target Users / Beneficiaries</b>	Technical team responsible for the implementation of the Programme.
<b>Challenges / Negative Lessons - Causal Factors</b>	Building a social base to make driven policies enforceable and/or outputs sustainable from an intervention requires an important level of organization of target groups and civil society, or otherwise, strengthening the same must be part of the intervention.
<b>Achievements / Positive Aspects - Causal Factors</b>	
<b>ILO administrative aspects</b> (staff, resources, design, implementation)	The lesson learned relates to the Programme implementation process and the need to have/ and develop institutional input diagnoses and not just a mapping of actors



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LEARNED LESSON ELEMENT	TEXT
<b>A brief description of the lesson learned</b> (relating to a specific action or task)	<b>LA.6</b> <i>Having a joint and explicit strategy to incorporate the gender approach across the components of an intervention contributes to better outcomes.</i> A joint gender strategy in the Programme would have enabled to tackle the needs common to both target groups (domestic workers and women temporary agricultural workers) in a cross-cutting manner in care issues and in the various policies and strategies developed and driven by the Programme, where rural care is a pending issue. Also, in labour inspection, it would have allowed it to be done with a gender approach and to be applied to women temporary agricultural workers as well. It would have also allowed that collaborating actors relied on specific guidance or training regarding the treatment of cross-cutting approaches such as gender and intersectionality within the framework of the Programme and its design.
<b>Context and any related preconditions</b>	All three agencies have approaches, guidelines, strategies, and gender expertise developed over decades
<b>Target Users / Beneficiaries</b>	Programme Formulators, Technical Team responsible for the design and implementation of the Programme.
<b>Challenges / Negative Lessons - Causal Factors</b>	The three agencies applied their gender expertise in the component assigned to each. Gender expertise of the three agencies would have achieved synergies if they had been integrated into a joint gender and cross-cutting strategy of the three components
<b>Achievements / Positive Aspects - Causal Factors</b>	
<b>ILO administrative aspects</b> (staff, resources, design, implementation)	The lesson learned relates to the Programme design and implementation processes and how agency work organizes in the development of intervention, it highlights the benefits/advantages of joint or interagency strategies versus the agency strategies that predominate in the development of joint programs.



## 4.3. Best emerging practice

### Closing Gaps: making Social Protection work for Women in Mexico

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**Date:** 01 May 2022

*The next Best Emerging Practice has been identified in the evaluation process. More content can be found in the full evaluation report.*

BEST PRACTICE COMPONENT	CONTENT
<b>Brief description of best practice</b> (relationship to project objective or specific outcome, background, purpose, etc.)	BP1. Diagnosis and mapping of care services and identifying gaps in care as an entry point for developing model/care services is a practice that allows building on what already exists and identifying new needs and/or segments of the population without care and/or new services and/or the need to improve existing services. In turn, it allows to take advantage of infrastructure such as human resources already developed by public actors. This was the case with the pilot care experience developed in the Iztapalapa City Hall.
<b>Relevant conditions and context: limitations or recommendations in terms of applicability and replicability</b>	Progress made in the Iztapalapa City Hall in establishing a care programme in 2019 ("Public Care System" aimed at supporting caregivers,) also had care services (Utopias and Early Childhood Development Centres-CENDI for the population between 0 and 3 years of age.) and more importantly, it had the infrastructure to care for them. The Programme's success in identifying and commissioning the development of the diagnosis and care pilot to a collaborative actor specializing in the development of care services from a gender perspective, such as ILSB. A methodology to diagnose care gaps that allows to capitalize on the progress made by the city hall in care and to create a new COLMENAS service for parents of children aged 4 to 8, starting from what already existed, and thus an effective cost service was achieved. It leverages existing infrastructure, trains, and prepares staff to assist this new segment of the population. The need to work in a sustained manner on political and budgetary commitment with management levels of the municipalities
<b>Establish a clear cause-effect relationship</b>	More segments of the population needing care served by the Iztapalapa City Hall with services appropriate to their needs based on the diagnosis and the pilot worked with the Programme and ILSB.
<b>Indicate measurable impact and intended beneficiaries</b>	Having reached a segment of the population with care needs that was not served. A group of caregivers was trained to assist this new segment
<b>Replication potential and by whom</b>	The potential for replication by other town halls, municipalities is high because it is a cost-effective, systematized experience
<b>Link up with the ILO's global objectives</b> (PTDPs, Country Programme Results or ILO Strategic Programme Framework)	
<b>Other relevant documents or comments</b>	

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BEST PRACTICE COMPONENT	CONTENT
<p><b>Brief description of best practice</b> (relationship to project objective or specific outcome, background, purpose, etc.)</p>	<p>BP2. Working with pilots and systematization, and dissemination of their outcomes along with the actors executing the experience, facilitate building referents, replication, and scaling. In the case of the Programme, supporting the IMSS domestic workers' affiliation pilot and the care services pilot at Iztapalapa City Hall allowed recommendations for the proposed mandatory regime to be developed in the first case, and in the second case, building reference for other municipalities and open possibilities to scale the implementation of care services</p>
<p><b>Relevant conditions and context: limitations or recommendations in terms of applicability and replicability</b></p>	<p>The commitment and involvement of partner actors in the development of pilots was decisive, mainly in response to a context that committed them from work and care reforms as a right, that took place in Mexico in 2019. Pilot development requires important inputs such as diagnosis of barriers to access and gaps in care services, in many cases, the budgetary constraints of public entities do not allow their delivery, which limits the design of public policies and services so they must be provided by a third party. Systematization and/or evaluation of outcomes contribute to improving the services or mechanisms developed, as well as legitimizing them</p>
<p><b>Establish a clear cause-effect relationship</b></p>	<p>Development of both pilots has preceded the gradual expansion of affiliations (pilot IMSS) and the validation of new service (Iztapalapa.)</p>
<p><b>Indicate measurable impact and intended beneficiaries</b></p>	<p>It will be necessary to define studies of impacts produced by access to social protection for women in the target groups of developed pilots</p>
<p><b>Replication potential and by whom</b></p>	<p>The document that systematizes the pilot (care in Iztapalapa City Hall) will be a support for other city halls/municipalities with potential to replicate.</p>
<p><b>Link up with the ILO's global objectives</b> (PTDPs, Country Programme Results or ILO Strategic Programme Framework)</p>	
<p><b>Other relevant documents or comments</b></p>	



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BEST PRACTICE COMPONENT	CONTENT
<p><b>Brief description of best practice</b> (relationship to project objective or specific outcome, background, purpose, etc.)</p>	<p>BP3. The use of existing institutions and the generation of added value from them enables them to be enhanced and results in cost-effective actions and sustainable outputs. The care pilot in Iztapalapa uses the progress made by the City Hall's care, as well as its infrastructure, to generate a cost-effective care service for a segment of the unattended population. The Social Protection Inter-Agency Cooperation Board for women temporary agricultural workers in Jalisco boosted the SISEMH in the development of work oriented to building a policy in the territory and became a reference point for other bodies within the government (the Secretariat of Labour, Secretariat of agricultural development) and for other states (Sinaloa, Chiapas, Nuevo Leon.)</p>
<p><b>Relevant conditions and context: limitations or recommendations in terms of applicability and replicability</b></p>	<p>The existence of an institutionalized mechanism for women to make progress, with technical capacities recognized by local actors such as SISEMH in the state of Jalisco. An enabling context for dialogue on social protection policies for vulnerable groups based on the work and care reforms as a right that took place in Mexico in 2019. The interest of formal employers of agricultural workers participating in the Board is both in the development of their corporate social responsibility actions and in a context of international trade agreements that prioritize the working conditions and human rights of workers in the sector. It is necessary to establish a strategy for the participation of non-formal enterprises at the workgroup session. It is necessary to have institutional diagnoses from start and not only with mapping of actors when creating dialogue mechanisms</p>
<p><b>Establish a clear cause-effect relationship</b></p>	<p>Development of the <i>"Intersectoral Dialogue Groupwork Session for the Social Protection of women temporary agricultural workers in Jalisco"</i> created under the Closing Gaps Programme 2020-2022, has enabled to gather a series of diverse actors from within and outside the territory, in a sustained manner, with the possibility of building public social protection policies for women agricultural workers in larger territories and from a local perspective.</p>
<p><b>Indicate measurable impact and intended beneficiaries</b></p>	<p>The impacts of sustained operation of the workgroup session should be measured when expanded social protection strategies for women temporary agricultural workers in Jalisco and Oaxaca are implemented and evaluated.</p>
<p><b>Replication potential and by whom</b></p>	<p>The potential for replication is high by the states that have presence of migrant agricultural workers, both in the expulsion and destination zones and those in transit. It is advisable and necessary that they have the technical support of UNS agencies. It will be important to systematize the development of the intersectoral groupwork sessions in Jalisco and Oaxaca to facilitate their replication.</p>
<p><b>Link up with the ILO's global objectives</b> (PTDPs, Country Programme Results or ILO Strategic Programme Framework)</p>	
<p><b>Other relevant documents or comments</b></p>	



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**Date:** 01 May 2022

*The next Best Emerging Practice has been identified in the evaluation process. More content can be found in the full evaluation report.*

BEST PRACTICE COMPONENT	CONTENT
<b>Brief description of best practice</b> (relationship to project objective or specific outcome, background, purpose, etc.)	BP4. Communication campaigns are key as part of comprehensive strategies aimed at achieving (in the medium and long term) cultural and behavioural changes in key actors in defining women's access to social protection (public policy makers, employers of domestic workers, employers of women temporary agricultural workers.) Following the "It's Only Fair" campaign, STPS is willing to adopt the employer awareness strategy for compliance with domestic work regulations, through communication campaigns.
<b>Relevant conditions and context: limitations or recommendations in terms of applicability and replicability</b>	A favourable context characterized by the commitment of the State of Mexico to making progress toward universal social protection since 2019, labour reform and ratification of the ILO Convention 189. The <i>It's Only Fair</i> campaign addressed a specific segment of employers (formal and social security affiliates.) Campaigns need to be expanded to other segments of employers (informal and non-social security) and who are the majority. Campaign costs should be analysed in greater detail for replicability purposes. UN WOMEN has networks, relations and facilities and expertise that have reduced the costs of the experience developed. The state often faces greater restrictions in these aspects.
<b>Establish a clear cause-effect relationship</b>	After the "It's Only Fair" campaign <b>developed by the Programme</b> , the STPS and the IMSS are willing to adopt the employer awareness strategy for compliance with domestic work regulations, through communication
<b>Indicate measurable impact and intended beneficiaries</b>	Knowledge of the formal and "progressive" employers' segment targeted to labour rights of domestic workers was improved.
<b>Replication potential and by whom</b>	It will depend on the capabilities of the Mexican state's partner actors, mainly budgetary and human resources
<b>Link up with the ILO's global objectives</b> (PTDPs, Country Programme Results or ILO Strategic Programme Framework)	
<b>Other relevant documents or comments</b>	



## 4.4. Recommendations<sup>39</sup>

**Recommendation 1:** Define impact and effect indicators on the effective access of vulnerable workers to social protection and services. In particular, in terms of “transforming gender relations into social protection;” women’s empowerment; and changes in women’s use of time.

Who is the target?	Prioritization level	Term	Level of resource involvement	Conclusion, lesson learned, or best practice to which it is related
UN Women, ILO and FAO focal points; Executive level of the ILO Office of the Andean Countries, Resident Coordinator	High priority	Short term	Medium resource involvement	Conclusion 12

**Recommendation 2:** Develop a rural care service pilot. Increased participation of UN Women in the Social Protection Inter-Agency Cooperation Board for women temporary agricultural workers in Jalisco is recommended to identify the possibility of creating a care service pilot in a rural municipality, as was done in the Iztapalapa City Hall.

Who is the target?	Prioritization level	Term	Level of resource involvement	Conclusion, lesson learned, or best practice to which it is related
UN Women, ILO, and FAO focal points; Executive level of the ILO Office of the Andean Countries, Resident Coordinator	High priority	Short term	Medium resource involvement	Conclusion 10 and strengthening best practices 2 and 3

**Recommendation 3:** Work on a line of employment and income generation and livelihood insurance, in the case of women temporary agricultural workers and in the framework of integrated rural development policies. The aim is to generate rural development opportunities in the areas of expulsion from which women temporary agricultural workers come, and to this end it will be essential to add new actors to the political dialogue mechanisms and as partners in the Programme, as is the case of the Secretariat of Agriculture and Rural Development.

Who is the target?	Prioritization level	Term	Level of resource involvement	Conclusion, lesson learned, or best practice to which it is related
UN Women, ILO and FAO focal points; Executive level of the ILO Office of the Andean Countries, Resident Coordinator	Medium priority	Short term	Medium resource involvement	Conclusions 7 and 22

**Recommendation 4:** Work on the gender-focused labour inspection line for the enforcement of labour rights of domestic workers and women temporary agricultural workers, identifying the real possibilities and resistance of the United Mexican States to develop the mechanisms and human resources necessary to extend labour inspection as a strategy for the fulfilment of the rights of these labour groups. Greater ILO

<sup>39</sup> All recommendations are directed toward possible new interventions that continue or complement that of the Joint Programme subject of evaluation.

participation in the Social Protection Inter-Agency Cooperation Board for women temporary agricultural workers in Jalisco is also recommended, in order to identify initiatives to have work inspection mechanisms of women temporary agricultural workers.

Who is the target?	Prioritization level	Term	Level of resource involvement	Conclusion, lesson learned, or best practice to which it is related
ILO and FAO focal points; management level of the ILO Office of the Andean Countries, Resident Coordinator	High priority	Short term	Medium resource involvement	Conclusions 4 and 8 Lessons Learned 5 and 6

**Recommendation 5:** Take into account the heterogeneity that characterizes employers (domestic workers and women temporary agricultural workers) in the social protection diagnoses and in terms of: (a) their conditions of employment, (b) formality/informality, and (c) access to social protection, in order to identify the roadmaps to be followed and the most appropriate strategies for these employers to promote social protection of women workers. Targeting changes in mindset or behaviour in employers requires identifying what is behind the behaviours sought to be changed and consider the timing of such impacts, hence, it is necessary to improve the diagnoses of employers and employer companies in the terms mentioned above.

Who is the target?	Prioritization level	Term	Level of resource involvement	Conclusion, lesson learned, or best practice to which it is related
UN Women, ILO and FAO focal points; management level of the ILO's Andean Countries Office, Resident Coordinator, workers' organizations and employers' organizations	High priority	Medium term	Medium resource involvement	Conclusion 23 Best Practice Reinforcement 1

**Recommendation 6:** Broaden reading of the impacts of the pandemic on vulnerable groups served. The pandemic increased the need for greater connectivity: new forms of work, relationship and communication are increasingly based on new information technologies; and access to connectivity and digitalisation are also imperative for social and economic inclusion. These connectivity and digitalisation gaps, which mainly affect rural and indigenous women, should be considered in the expanded social protection strategies that have been achieved in the development of the Programme.

Who is the target?	Prioritization level	Term	Level of resource involvement	Conclusion, lesson learned, or best practice to which it is related
UN Women, ILO and FAO focal points; Executive level of the ILO Office of the Andean Countries, Resident Coordinator	High priority	Short term	Medium resource involvement	Conclusion 11

**Recommendation 7:** Work on the links, local and nationwide, between local and national social protection

policies for women temporary agricultural workers. An advocacy strategy at the national government level is needed to make the group of women temporary agricultural workers and their problems visible to the national government, as has been achieved at the local level through the Programme. The problem of social vulnerability of men and women temporary agricultural workers is of scale, highly complex as it involves a population that continuously mobilize across the different territories, dispersed and predominantly incommunicado, which poses a series of challenges of assistance and design of services and resources and, without the assistance of the national government it will be difficult to attend these challenges adequately.

Who is the target?	Prioritization level	Term	Level of resource involvement	Conclusion, lesson learned, or best practice to which it is related
UN Women, ILO and FAO focal points; Executive level of the ILO Office of the Andean Countries, Resident Coordinator	Medium priority	Medium term	Medium resource involvement	Conclusion 5

**Recommendation 8:** Strengthening the inter-agentiality of joint programmes requires innovations in forms of organization, work and of communication that allow convergences, integration and transversality of the specialities and capacities of participating agencies. In addition, establishing inter-agency indicators in joint programme development could support the consolidation of this UNS work strategy. It is also recommended to have a joint communication strategy of the Programme aimed at the various partner actors, and in relation to joint and cross-cutting objectives, actions, and methodologies. This will allow partner actors to better exploit the presence of the three specialized agencies through the Programme.

Who is the target?	Prioritization level	Term	Level of resource involvement	Conclusion, lesson learned, or best practice to which it is related
UN Women, ILO and FAO focal points; Executive level of the ILO Office of the Andean Countries, Resident Coordinator	High priority	Short term	Medium resource involvement	Conclusions 15 and 19 Lessons Learned 3 and 6

Training on the financial execution of the Programme, provided by the FAO in April 2022