

# DIAGNOSTIC EVALUATION ON THE INCORPORATION OF GENDER PERSPECTIVE AT THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF EVALUATORS OF MEXICO, CSO (ACEVAL)

**Executive Summary**



Mexico 2022

This study corresponds to the ***Diagnostic Evaluation on the Incorporation of Gender Perspective at the National Academy of Evaluators of Mexico, CSO (Aceval)***, considered by the EvalGender initiative, Mexico chapter (EvalGenderMx) as a necessary exercise to be conducted in Aceval to know the state of affairs on the incorporation of Gender perspective in both its organizational aspects and in the professional practice of its members.

EvalGenderMx proposed and conducted this research through the organized and voluntary work of its members.

The copyright of this document belongs to EvalGender, Mexico chapter. For references, cite Edelith Romero Monterde and Macarena Orozco Martínez as coordinators of study.

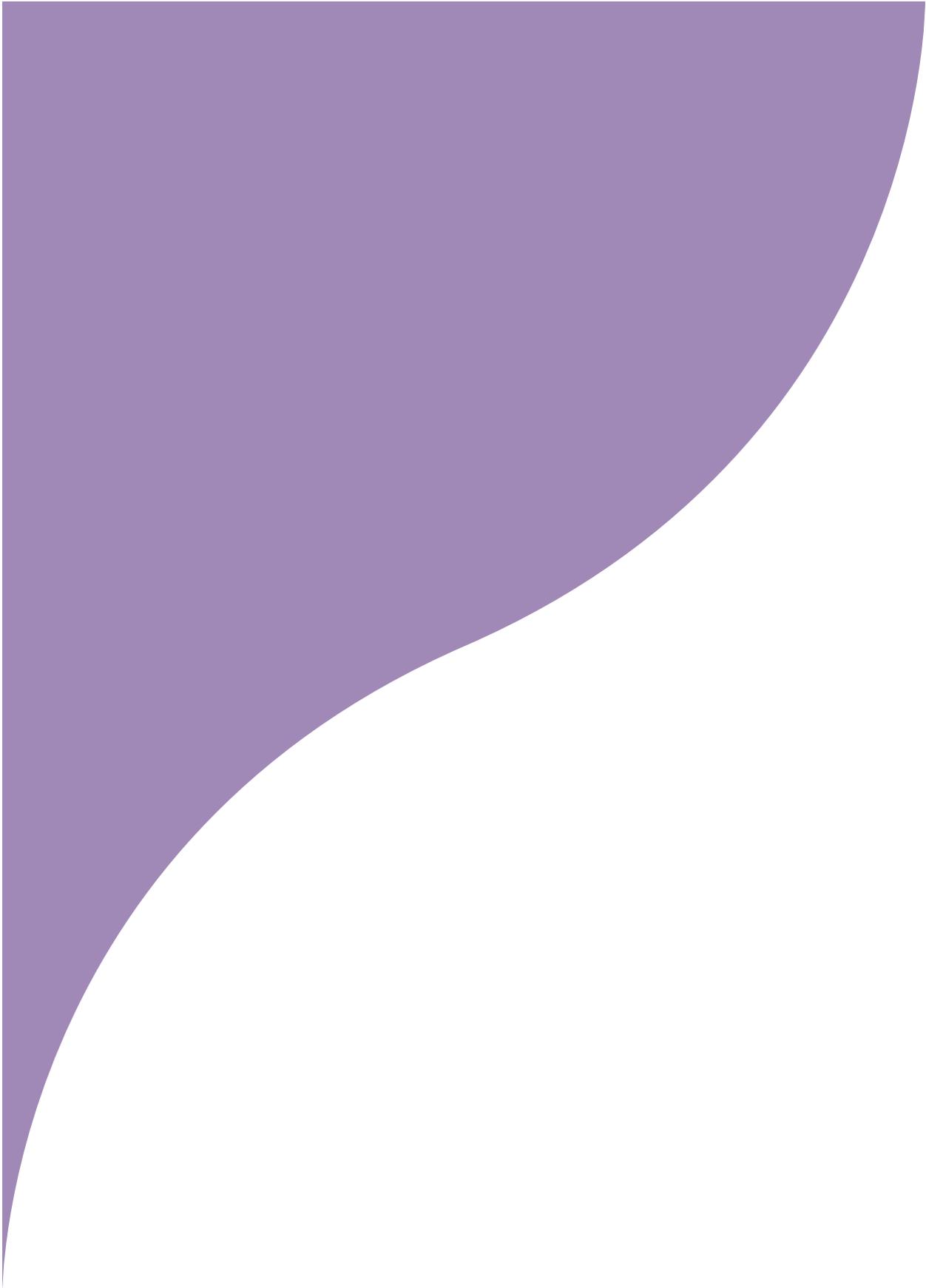
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Aceval's 2021-2023 Executive Committee; [Aceval.org](http://Aceval.org)

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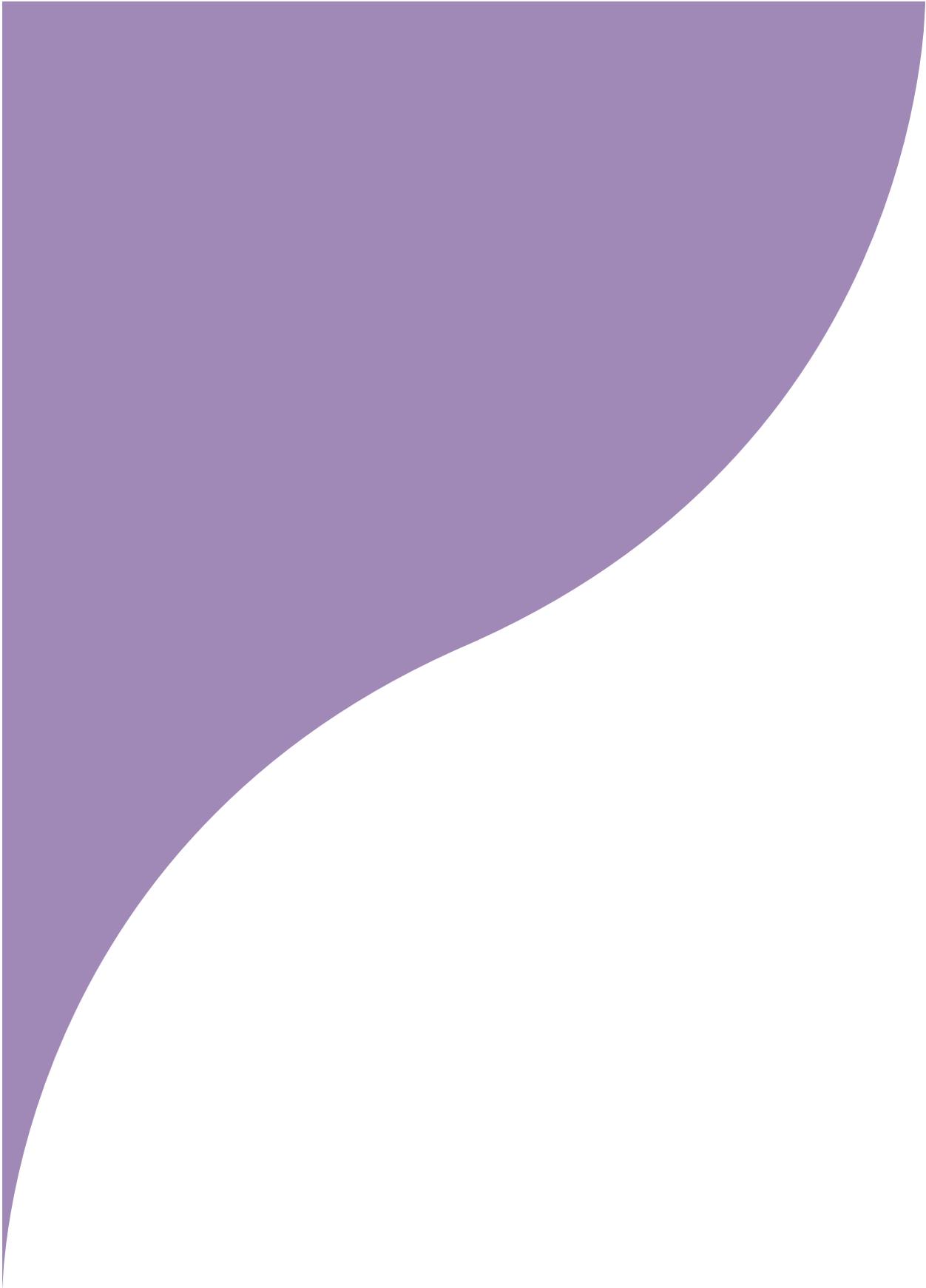
To the founders of Aceval for granting access to information on the constitution of Aceval, internal regulations, and management reports.

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# Introduction

The incursion of Gender perspective (hereinafter, GPE), whether as an analytical category, epistemological framework, or transversal axis, has been advancing to higher stages in different spheres and fields, and evaluation has not been the exception. However, despite its increasing enunciation and use, there are still challenges for its incorporation and effective application in this field.

In this sense, this study is an effort that seeks to contribute to the strengthening of the National Academy of Evaluators of Mexico (Aceval), and its community of evaluators, by tracing a route aimed at incorporating GEP in a solid and sustained manner, both in the organization and the professional skills and capacities of its members. This is done by analyzing how GEP is incorporated into its organizational structure and capabilities, as well as in the professionalization and evaluative practices of its members, detecting opportunities for improvement on this basis.

From the EvalGender initiative - Mexico chapter we depart from the premise that every intervention has a differentiated effect between women and men, which calls for evaluation to be thought of and practiced from a framework that recognizes and makes them visible in actions, projects, programs, and policies that are developed in different fields. We are convinced that the evaluation practice plays an important role in transforming reality and for this to happen, it is essential to look at gaps and inequalities based on gender.

Thus, the content of this first diagnostic effort comprises six chapters.

The first, "*Presentation of the evaluation*", describes the objectives and framework of the study, as well as the methodology used and its justification. Chapter 2, "*Background of Aceval*", narrates the organizational evolution to give an overview of its history up to the present moment, which allows contextualizing the object of study. Chapter 3, "*Critical overview of Aceval's regulations from a gender perspective*", presents the findings of the documentary review on the entire framework that regulates the organization.

Chapter 4, "*Normative foundations to promote the insertion of the gender perspective in the organizational structure of a VOPE*", provides both the legal and conceptual framework of GEP in dialogue with the field of evaluation, as a basis for the analysis of Aceval's Legal framework. In chapter 5, "*Results of the analysis by dimensions*", the findings of field work, surveys and interviews conducted are presented, which illustrates the state of the organization from the perspective of the five defined analytical dimensions. Chapter 6, "*SWOT Analysis and Action Route 2022-2023*" summarizes Aceval's main strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (by category of analysis), a series of work proposals for both Aceval and EvalGenderMx. and general conclusions of the study.

In these last three chapters, it has been found (among other things), that Aceval has established itself as a significant and representative VOPE of the community of professional evaluators in Mexico, that it has a formal regulatory framework, a clear mission, vision, and specific objectives; a good degree of growth,

and with a presence in almost the entire country. The organization is comprised of a diverse community in terms of academic training, professional experiences, and, of course, opinions. It is a community open to dialogue and participatory reflection on the issues that concern it, and also with human capital to influence multiple areas in various sectors.

Also, it has been found that, although Aceval expresses through different means that it is in favor of principles and values such as equality, respect, inclusion, non-discrimination, and others, it has a long way to go to materialize and amplify the scope of these in their daily collective and individual action. In this sense, it is considered that there must be commitments and specific definitions in documents, organizational procedures and concrete actions to consolidate an institutionalization and transversality of GEP in the dimensions analyzed: Organizational structure, Associates capabilities, Professionalization, Advocacy, and Activities of the organization.

For each of these dimensions, there are strengths and potential opportunities to take advantage of, among them, the genuine interest of the evaluation community in incorporating GEP in their professional practice; the desire to advance in a planned way; and, the impetus of volunteers to position themselves and Aceval at the forefront, both within Mexico, the Latin American and Caribbean region, and abroad. All these potentialities will contribute to solidly and comprehensively implementing the exercise of GEP in an organization/association of its type.

From the EvalGender initiative - Mexico chapter and Aceval, we hope that this exercise will unleash important changes in our community and inspire other VOPE to look at and rethink themselves from a gender perspective, and thus walk collectively towards a stronger evaluation community, more specialized and committed to feminist evaluative practice.

# 1. Presentation of the evaluation

From the organizational development approach, it has been possible to promote the analysis of organizations in terms of culture, change, development, communication, leadership, etc., which has allowed organizations to consolidate, evolve, and become more sustainable every day. In this sense, diagnosis, as a research process that analyzes/evaluates a problem to generate improvements, has played a fundamental role in the analysis of organizations (Proulx, 2014).

Now, this study is born from the idea that people who integrate organizations, transmit to organizational life, consciously or unconsciously, their practices, norms, roles, and gender stereotypes. We are convinced that evaluation practice plays an important role in transforming reality and, for this to happen, it is essential to look at the gaps and inequalities based on gender.

In this context, the general objective of the research is: *To contribute to the strengthening of Aceval through analyzing the current situation on the incorporation of GEP -as an epistemological approach- in its structure and organizational capacities, as well as in the professionalization and evaluative practices of its members. This, in order to detect opportunities for improvement that can consolidate the incorporation of GEP in both the organization and the professional skills of its members.*

The specific objectives of the study are:

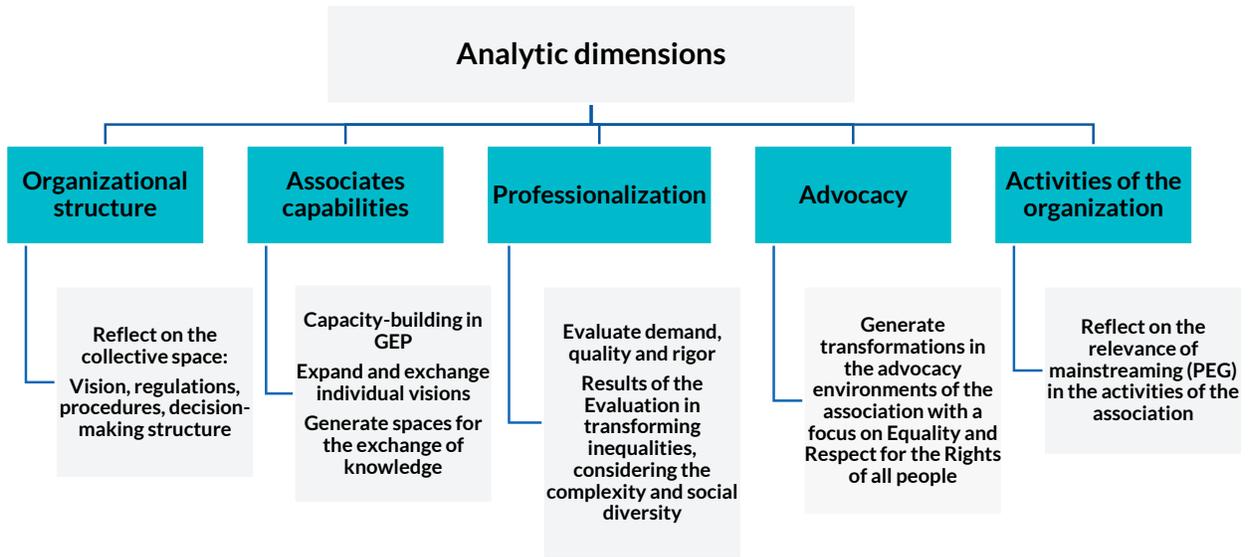
1. Identify and analyze the current situation of GEP -as an epistemological approach- in Aceval's organizational structure.
2. Identify and analyze the current situation of GEP among its members, in the dimension of their knowledge and training in terms of gender perspective, the professional/practical dimension within the field of evaluation (including honorary members), as well as the dimension of the subjective.
3. Detect thematic priorities and opportunities to improve the incorporation of GEP in the training and professionalization of its members and the organization as a whole.

To conduct the diagnostic evaluation, the "dimensions to promote change" proposed in the *"Guide to include a Gender+ perspective in the VOPE: innovating to improve institutional capacities"* (2015) are used as the axis of analysis, as shown in the Figure 1.

In this order of ideas, the following combination of methods and techniques is proposed, what Cowman (1993) calls: methodological triangulation, to comprehensively address the phenomenon under investigation (see Figure 2).

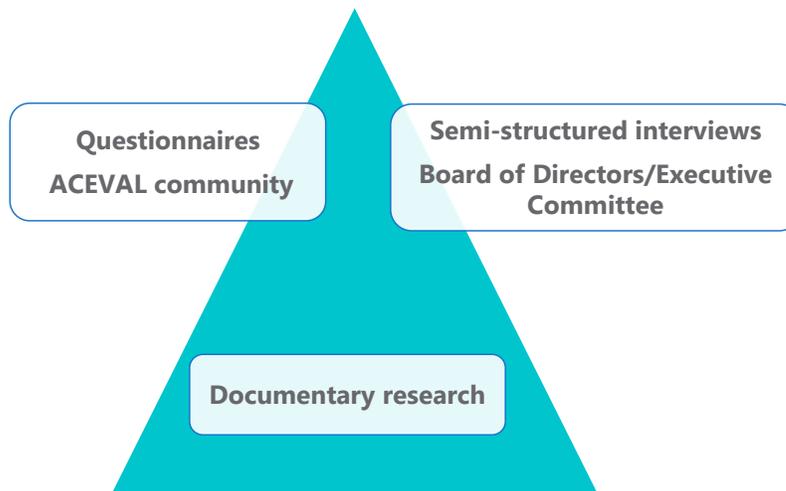
It should be noted that this research began towards the end of 2020, with the preparation of a first project protocol. Later, in 2021, the analysis of documentary information and fieldwork was done. As the last stage, at the end of 2022, this report was prepared, as well as the socialization and dissemination of the results and conclusions.

**FIGURE. 1. DIMENSIONS OF ANALYSIS**



Source: Prepared by authors based on Bustelo, M., Espinosa, J., Faúndez, A., Weinstein, M. (2015).

**FIGURE 2. METHODOLOGICAL TRIANGULATION**



Source: Prepared by authors.

## 2. Background of Aceval

The National Academy of Evaluators of Mexico, CSO. (Aceval) was founded in 2014 under the initiative of 10 graduates of the first generation of the Diploma in Public Policies and Evaluation of CIDE-CLEAR, with the main purpose of promoting a responsible, ethical, impartial, and objective practice of evaluations, through sound theoretical-practical methodologies with quality standards; as well as influencing a better allocation, distribution, and application of public resources to obtain results that benefit society. Since its inception, Aceval has had a defined mission and vision and is formally constituted. Within its organizational structure, it has had its decision-making instance, which, as of 2017, was opened so that members other than the founders could take part of the governing body through democratic processes. As of 2021, the organization had 101 members.

Inside the network, members are organized in working groups, in which adherence is voluntary. In the global report of management activities 2019-2021, nine initiatives are mentioned: EvalSDG; EvalYouth Mx; EvalGender Mx; EvalProject; EvalParlamentarians; EvalOSC; Innovation Group; EvalSubnational; and Financial Inclusion.

The following are observed as activities of Aceval:

1. Dissemination of relevant information about the world of evaluation on its website, Facebook page, Twitter account and a general WhatsApp chat.
2. Professionalization of the evaluation community through courses, workshops, webinars, and events on evaluation.
3. Liaison with actors in the evaluation environment in Mexico and Latin America (government, academic sector, independent and corporate evaluators).
4. Advocacy, making efforts to position the importance of evaluation and improve its practice.

Aceval is a network that has distinguished itself since its inception for working in an organized and planned manner. The strengthening of the VOPE has been taken care of from different angles, as can be seen in the diversification and perseverance of the activities that are realized. There is clarity in the catalytic elements of the VOPE and these have been taken advantage of by different administrations. The early opening of the representative bodies to the participation of those who make up the organization is a sign of a truly democratic exercise that is not concentrated exclusively on those who founded the VOPE. It should be noted that the efforts to consolidate Aceval as a prominent VOPE in Latin America were led by the leadership of two women in its first seven years, and that women have been predominant in the governing bodies, except for the composition of the current Executive Committee, in which only two out of six people are women. Aceval is currently headed by a man.

### 3. Critical overview of Aceval's regulations from a gender perspective

To assess Aceval's incorporation of gender and inclusion approaches in terms of recognition of diversity, openness, and transparency, a documentary review was conducted that included its mission and vision, objectives, the constitutive act of 2014, statutes of 2021, its internal regulations, and binding elements related to the formation of management bodies.

An analysis was then made on the existence/omission of the following elements: use of inclusive language; explicit use of terms such as inclusion, diversity, equal opportunities, equity, gender gaps; positionings aimed at avoiding the reproduction of inequalities/inequities and gender stereotypes; assertion of specific procedures of democratic participation in electoral representative and directive bodies; gender-parity composition of the Executive Committee; reference to inclusive spaces; promotion of responsible and diverse leadership; generation and systematization of information disaggregated by sex, federal entity, age, among others; recognition/respect for diversity or differences and, the existence of mechanism(s) to receive complaints/claims.

From this analysis it has been possible to observe the following:

- The organization and actions of the VOPE Aceval adhere to the institutional definitions and documents of a constitutive and normative nature (mission, vision, statutes, and regulations), and it is governed by democratic open and participatory processes.
- It has different mechanisms to disseminate information to its members both privately (only to the Aceval community), and with external actors.
- The VOPE has conducted itself in an open and plural manner towards its members.
- In the majority of its documents and dissemination mechanisms, it uses inclusive language.

However, gaps are identified in terms of:

- Making the use of inclusive language explicit.
- Concluding and socializing its code of conduct that, ideally, will contemplate both inclusive and respectful behaviors and attitudes, ensure the incorporation of GEP and prevent bullying, sexual harassment and other forms of gender-based violence, and include issues that ensure gender equality and opportunities, among others.

## 4. Normative foundations to promote the insertion of GEP in the organizational structure of a VOPE

GEP a concept coined during the United Nations Fourth World Conference of Women (Beijing, 1995). It refers to the fully “*incorporation of gender*” in all political, social, and economic activity, which allows valuing the different situations, conditions, and positions of women in society, in the labor market, in politics and other areas.

Likewise, the ILO and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) recognize that gender inequality has a direct impact on the loss of human development, such that the empowerment of women and overcoming the barriers that prevent their incorporation into the Decent Work is indispensable for the economic and social development of countries (ILO-AECID, s/f, pp.17-18). Hence, there has been an considerable increase in laws and public agendas (from international, national, and subnational spheres) aimed at defining and establishing channels to achieve equality between women and men. UN Women, as an international organization, sees gender-sensitive evaluation as a process and, at the same time, a means to improve gender equality and the empowerment of women (UN WOMEN, 2020).

Based on this understanding, it is considered that evaluation with a gender perspective can contribute considerably to consolidating

progress in gender equality and the empowerment of women by incorporating the gender dimension and women’s rights in the approaches, methods, processes, and use of evaluation. Although in Mexico the process of institutionalization and transversality of GEP in all types of organizations and associations remains a slow process, it can be confirmed that there is no “going back” on this issue, since a solid regulatory framework has been built and articulated to various international agendas and guidelines, both in terms of development and human rights.

Undoubtedly, the normative foundations, although necessary, are not sufficient to consolidate processes of institutionalization and transversality of GEP in the concrete and daily practices of organizations, and, in addition, contribute effectively to substantive equality, the eradication of gender-based violence, as well as effective access and exercise of human rights.

Therefore, for a VOPE such as Aceval, the analysis of the above is more than pertinent to the extent that evaluation is considered a process of generating useful knowledge to transform and improve not only public policies, programs, and projects, but the social reality as a whole, specifically of inequalities and violence.

## 5. Results of the analysis by dimensions (qualitative and quantitative fieldwork)

### Organizational structure

This category is analyzed from the point of view of the VOPE leaders who were interviewed. The analysis is complemented with some of the quantitative data obtained from the surveys and considered to be more substantive for the section.

Regarding whether ACEVAL's mission/vision incorporates GEP and is inclusive, among the interviewees there are some who consider that they are indeed inclusive, although not explicitly. There were also opinions from those who consider that they are not inclusive, and those who answered that a general principle of respect is sufficient.

There is an interesting line of debate here: the point of view of an interviewee is that *"the issue of GEP is not the subject of Aceval, it is because we are evaluators, and this is a substantive issue in another field"* (Interviewee 3). Another interviewee also comments: *"they should be more specific, for example, mentioning those gender aspects that are a transversal part of Aceval's sense of orientation"* (Interviewee 4).

(...) Although one of the principles is to generate social value, the subject is not recognized in the mission and vision, so it must be reviewed and incorporated. Beyond gender inequalities, other inequalities are not recognized either. Yes, it seems to me that they are inclusive, although they are not explicit. The evaluation is very limited to the governmental sphere and the improvement in decision-making; however, the subject of social value remains very ambig-

uous. It could be said that it is, but it should be more explicit (...) (Interviewee 6).

It can be seen that some opinions and positions do not coincide in Aceval concerning these issues. Therefore, it is convenient to reflect and discuss to consolidate more "institutional" agreements and that these, in addition to being agreed upon, should respond and attend to the interests of its members, while at the same time considering their diversity.

Regarding the existence of guidelines that regulate the organizational structure, such as a code of ethics, procedural protocols to address situations of gender-based violence or any situation of discrimination or exclusion, it is noted that, although the organization has statutes, internal regulations and a code of ethics that is "in progress", which include general values and principles, they do not explicitly address issues of equity, gender equality or other related issues specifically.

As for the composition by sex of Aceval's governing bodies, currently, the majority are men, including the president, after having had two female presidents during the first seven years. Therefore, it will be necessary to be aware of how the participation of women is taking place (and to reflect on the effects of the 2020-2021 pandemic on this), since it was commented that the openness to participate is the same for all, that proposing or being proposed to participate in said levels of the organizational structure is voluntary and there is transparency, as well as open dissemination of the calls for elections.

Concerning the participation of women in Aceval, it is also worth highlighting comments such as the following:

(...) In the workgroups, there is more or less a 50-50 [participation of men and women] if not that there are more women and the profiles of the women who are in Aceval are not found anywhere...

women participate in all of them [working groups] and men do not participate and do not have a benefit, women are more inclined to volunteer than men. The masculine gender participates for the recognition, the women commit themselves and believe more in the causes, I have and identify many colleagues who give priority to other things, men are less interested in volunteer work. (...), at some point, I asked what was needed to participate in EvalGender-Mx, and they told me that I had to be “deconstructed”, but to date, I have not managed to get someone to clarify the concept for me (...) (Interviewee1).

(...) My point of view is that: what are men needed for? Empirical evidence tells us that it works better with women, so why seek balance or parity as you say? There is always more voluntary work by women, there is always more commitment from women (...) (Interviewee 3).

In both narratives, the interviewees expressed that there is greater participation of women in voluntary work and that this is not casual, but causal, and it has to do with Mexico's gender culture. That is, with how women and men are constructed concerning the world and caring for others. The construction of the “self” in a patriarchal structure places men in a position of “care for themselves”, and women in a position of “care for other people”. This increases women's commitment and responsibility in evident contrast with those of men.

(...) There is currently no parity in the Executive Committee, we are 4 men and 2 women. It feels uncomfortable that there is no par-

ity and also the community did react in social media [Twitter], by almost saying that “Aceval is misogynist”. I did not react to such a tweet, but I don't know, one would have to think, why didn't women run for executive positions? I did not react to such a tweet, but I don't know, one would have to think, why didn't women run for executive positions? The criteria are inclusive, they are quite open, the criteria can be fulfilled by a young woman, a doctor, an older teacher, or someone of some ethnic origin... it is very open. There is no protocol, it is a show of hands, if there are no objections, the participation of people in the groups is promoted. For some people responsible for some Aceval groups, some females commented that they did not have time available, there is no criterion for women to participate more actively (...) (Interviewee 4).

For this reason, it is important to reflect that inclusion goes beyond women meeting some selection criteria; it is also necessary to create mechanisms that facilitate women's participation, considering that they are in a situation of inequality, if we think about gender roles. Women have tasks assigned to care and have to work double or triple shifts. By deciding to assume responsibilities such as taking part of the organization's Board of Directors, it would have important implications in their daily life, as this would mean an increase in professional and care work.

Regarding Aceval's decision-making structure, there is consensus that it is inclusive of the entire community, and that most decisions are consulted with the assembly and are democratic. However, decision-making within Aceval can be strengthened if participatory methodologies are incorporated to encourage the involvement of interested people, thus collecting the diversity of perspectives that help contribute to the fulfillment of the organization's mission and vision.

Regarding financial resources and budget planning in the VOPE:

(...) There are no criteria for the distribution of resources, it is done according to requests or activities and if the times allow. I think that criteria are needed to organize ourselves better. Regarding gender equity, the Executive Committee has always been respectful and has supported the issue, events have been organized, because, for example, the previous president has gone... how to say it? “all-out” on the subject (...) (Interviewee 1).

To respond to the need to promote a gender-sensitive VOPE, it is necessary to strengthen Aceval’s budget planning and allocate resources to generate capacities and reinforce professional competencies around GEP and other analytical approaches, which could help to generate knowledge and commitments in these issues among its members. These resources may consider training, awareness disclosure, and dissemination.

About the population that makes up Aceval, as well as those audiences to which its calls reach, the need to integrate its mechanisms for data integration and production is noted, for example, with databases containing disaggregated by information in which diversity is collected from an intersectional perspective, such as sex, gender, age, race, indigenous affiliation, speaker of an indigenous language, Afro-descendant, socioeconomic status, territoriality, etc. *“Intersectionality is an analytical tool to study, understand and respond to how gender intersects with other identities and how these intersections contribute to unique experiences of oppression and privilege”* (AWID, 2004). Knowing who makes up the evaluation community and who their audiences are, makes it possible to create inclusion mechanisms to reach more populations, attract more people at the subnational level —and therefore also promote new guidelines for the creation of collective knowledge—, and broaden the discussion within the scope of the evaluation on the population’s demands and needs.

To complement the analysis of the “organizational structure” dimension, the information obtained from the online questionnaire showed the following:

- As to whether the mission incorporates GEP, 31% said Yes, 36% said No, and the remaining 33% said they Did not know. Regarding whether the vision incorporated it, 24% said yes, 43% said no, and 33% said they did not know. In addition, the assessment of whether they incorporate GEP is not uniform, which indicates an area of opportunity to address.
- As for knowing if Aceval has a protocol that addresses problems such as bullying or sexual and/or workplace harassment, discrimination, or gender-based violence, 4% said yes, 30% said no and the remaining 66% said they did not know. This, on the one hand, confirms the absence of such a mechanism, and on the other, allows us to see that the majority ignores whether or not such a protocol exists.
- Regarding the existence of inclusive leadership in Aceval, 48% indicated that there is, while 17% said that there is not. About whether the requirements to enter Aceval generate restrictions for disadvantaged or special groups, 84% said no, while the rest said yes, stating that the cost of membership is a factor to consider.

## Associates Capabilities

In this dimension, what is analyzed is whether there are spaces for communication and dialogue in Aceval from the gender group, and between the groups, to address and deepen reflections and experiences with GEP issues, and how this has contributed to improving the capacities of its members, in terms of communication, dialogue, empathy, openness to new ideas, teamwork, solidarity, sorority, and community building.

In the results of the interviews, it is found that indeed, some activities have been generated, including conversations or webinars organized by the EvalGenderMx group. Also, the topic appears in the WhatsApp group, but rather occasionally. However, it is also noted that, in general, there has been little participation in this regard by members of the organization, or other working groups beyond EvalGenderMx as an organizer. Also, attitudes related to “gender” issues and activities seem to be more in the “politically correct” sphere and discourses, rather than in everyday events: *“it is interesting, but I am very busy.... it is interesting, but I have something urgent to attend to [and cannot attend]”*.

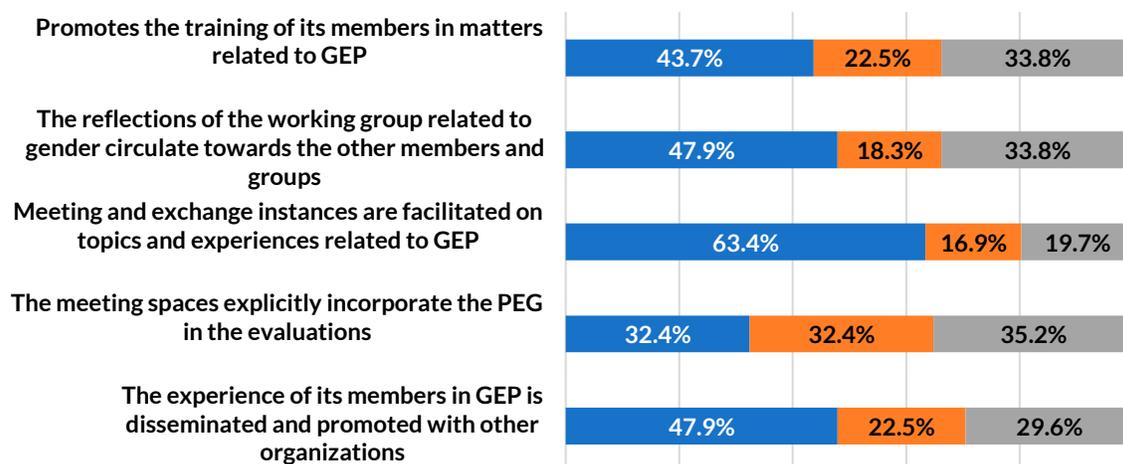
Regarding whether the working groups perform any activity to implement GEP in their work initiatives, the responses given by interviewees are clear, in the sense that they do not “explicitly” identify activities of this type, but rather consider that *“it depends on the will of the person who coordinates or leads the initiative”*.

The analysis of the information collected through the online survey reveals the following, regarding Associates capabilities dimension:

- The Aceval community was asked about whether efforts are being made to promote training in matters related to GEP and approaches; if the reflections of EvalGenderMx circulate towards the rest of the organization; if meeting and exchange instances are facilitated on themes and experiences related to GEP and gender approaches; and if this meeting spaces explicitly incorporate GEP in the evaluations. The answers to the above are presented in the following graph:

The graph shows that there is a considerable percentage of members (31%) who do not know whether or not activities are being done in this regard. The most recognized activity by the community is the facilitation of meeting and exchange instances on topics and experiences related to GEP; however, there is a lack of activities to explicitly incorporate this perspective in evaluations, to promote the experience with other organizations, as well as to train the community on GEP and promote reflections from EvalGenderMx towards the rest of the organization.

**GRAPHIC 1. CAPACITY BUILDING ON GEP**



Source: Prepared by authors.

## Professionalization

In this dimension, it is convenient to focus the analysis on the professionalization of the evaluators, since they are the ones who do them as well as the VOPE.

Interestingly, only one interviewee manifested having taken “*a couple of courses on GEP*” (outside of Aceval). About training and capacity-development activities organized by Aceval on the subject, most of the interviewees only identified “webinars and talks”, but in no case did they identify courses, workshops, or other types of institutionalized material that discloses concepts and information on the issue. In this order of ideas, it is pertinent to note that, although there is a consensus narrative around the relevance of education/training in GEP, it only refers to issues of equity, inclusion, diversity, plurality, and non-discrimination.

Based on the foregoing, it is considered that today, it is more than necessary to think about the professionalization of evaluation from a gender perspective, since it is already considered as something that must be transversal and institutional in policies, organizations, and public institutions. It is also an issue that also transcends the national sphere and its present in international agendas of development and human rights.

About whether Aceval has generated spaces for dialogue about the working conditions of evaluators, and, in particular, if they have been exposed to, or have suffered, situations of discrimination or violence based on gender, both in their workplace as evaluators, or within Aceval, the interviewees commented that the organization has not generated this type of dialogue, but at the same time, they have not suffered or identified gender-based discrimination or any type of violence in these terms.

In this sense, the people interviewed consider it important for Aceval to generate information and dialogue on these issues, since, as

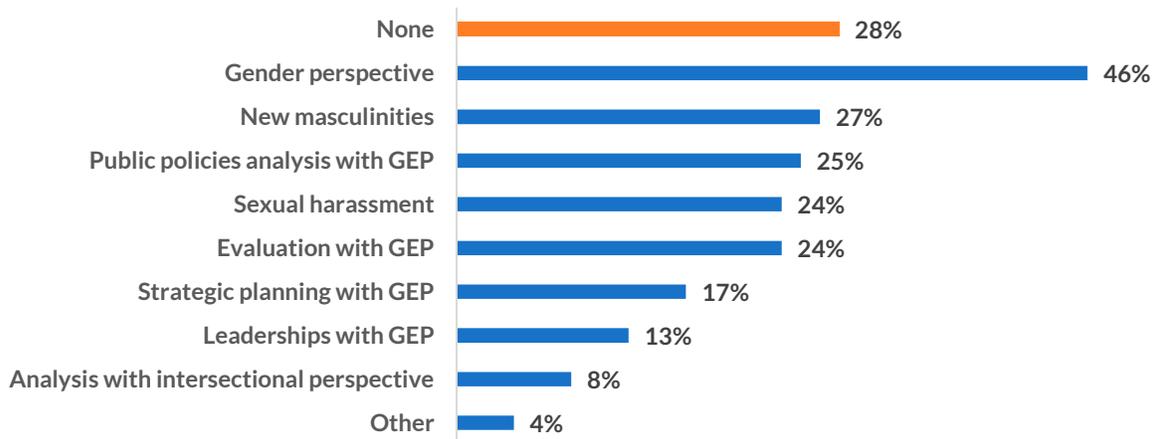
someone commented, “*this is particularly interesting given that Aceval is an association where there is a lot of female participation.*”

Derived from the quantitative exercise, the following was found about the professionalization dimension:

- Regarding the offer of knowledge in GEP, 75% of the participants consider that their knowledge to implement GEP in evaluations is at a low-medium level, which shows the potential for action on issues of professionalization of evaluation professionals in GEP, and in particular, that there are opportunities for the VOPE to offer training of this kind.
- Regarding those who have received training in GEP (72% of the total number of people surveyed), 46% indicated that they had received training in GEP in general; 27% in new masculinities; 25% in public policies analysis with a gender perspective; 24% in bullying and sexual harassment; 24% in evaluation with a gender perspective; 17% in strategic planning with a gender perspective; 13% in leadership with a gender perspective; 8% in analysis with an intersectional perspective and 4% in others<sup>1</sup>.
- Most people do not identify or consider that Aceval promotes spaces for knowledge about: i) protocols for the treatment in evaluation processes of victims of violence, ii) action protocols in sociocultural contexts of high social vulnerability, iii) the informed consent of people interviewed in evaluation processes, iv) spaces for debate or codes of ethical conduct for evaluators. Hence, it is important to point out that there is much to be done so that the evaluators not only get knowledge on GEP, but also information on action protocols in different contexts.

<sup>1</sup> The sum is not 100% because the people surveyed could indicate having received training in multiple topics.

**GRAPHIC 2. PEG TRAINING OR QUALIFICATION %**



Source: Prepared by authors.

**GRAPHIC 3. PROFESSIONALIZATION - ACEVAL**



Source: Prepared by authors.

## Advocacy

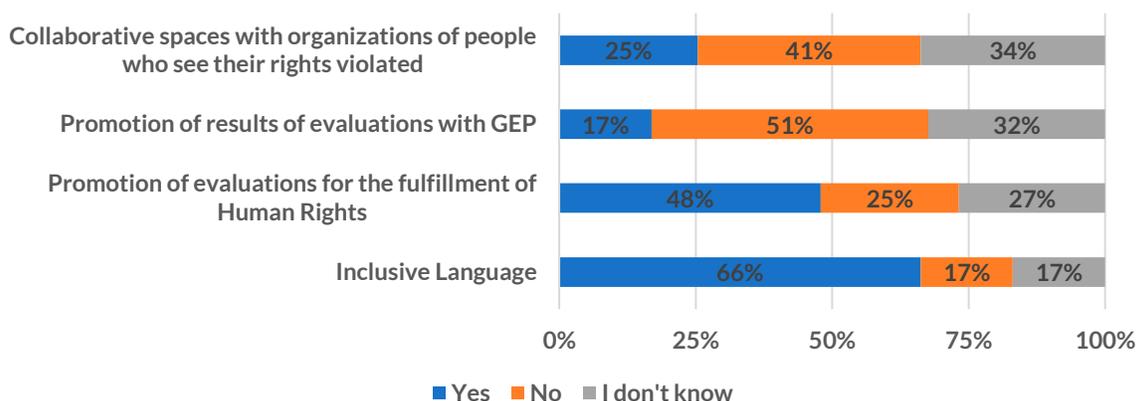
An important aspect to analyze in this dimension is the impact through the use of inclusive language in institutional communication and Aceval events. This is important, particularly considering that:

(...) The language we use represents the world we visualize and allows us to deconstruct realities. However, in the Executive Committee, some do not agree with its use [inclusive lan-

guage]. In social media, care is taken in the way in which the message is transmitted. Yes, it is necessary to have a communication guide that considers the type of language that should be used. A graphic identity manual is already being worked on with recommendations for the content shared on social media (...) (Interviewee 6).

About the issue of the use of inclusive language, the interviews show several interesting aspects. Although it is understood that language is a fundamental mechanism to achieve

GRAPHIC 4. ADVOCACY - ACEVAL



Source: Prepared by authors.

communication, dialogue, and understanding, today, instead of fulfilling these functions, the issue of “how to use” language is something that polarizes and confronts men and women. In the best of cases, ignorance, bewilderment, and doubt prevail. Perhaps, when seeking to avoid confrontation, it is best to say: “*I am not familiar with the subject, I do not know.*”

When asked about the incorporation and transversality of GEP in Aceval’s strategic agenda and planning, both at the level of the association and in the working groups, the interviewees expressed the following:

(...) There are no guidelines in the initiatives of the groups, regarding whether, when they make their work plan, it should also include a plan [for the incorporation and mainstreaming of GEP], but there is nothing that forces you to do so... should there be? Yes, it should, we should all commit ourselves to contribute to gender equality, to work with young people, with indigenous people. This should be guaranteed... what is not institutionalized is lost... it is important to generate the documents (...) (Interviewee 1).

The results of the quantitative exercise in the Advocacy dimension revealed the following:

- Regarding the impact of Aceval in different areas, most people identify that the VOPE

makes use of inclusive language in the issuance of its communications. However, people surveyed do not identify that the organization is focused on the promotion of evaluations aimed at the fulfillment of Human Rights, especially of women, indigenous peoples, Afro-descendants, children and adolescents, people with disabilities, LGBTI population, etc.

Likewise, they ignore or do not identify whether or not Aceval promotes collaborative spaces with organizations of people who see their rights violated, or even if it promotes the results of evaluations developed by its members that have integrated a Gender approach. This is important, because, although opportunities for professionalization are identified, advocacy mechanisms on gender perspective have yet to be found.

### Organization activities

As has been shown, in most of Aceval’s activities, especially those that are organized and promoted by the Executive Committee, principles such as inclusion, non-discrimination and/or exclusion, openness, and respect are usually promoted. However, when it comes to generat-

ing and systematizing information, for example, it seems that the need to attend diversity is neglected, as well as having information disaggregated by sex/gender, age, ethnic self-identity, place of residence or workplace, working conditions, or vulnerability, among other aspects.

Derived from the quantitative exercise concerning the Organization Activities dimension, the following was found:

- The interviewees identify that Aceval has promoted different training activities focused on influencing the evaluation culture, as well on gender perspective: 85% of people who answered the survey recognize that it carries out some type of activities related to GEP, such as talks with experts, webinars, or conversations.
- As it has been observed, interviewees consider that the inclusion of GEP in the field of evaluation is very important, as well as integrating it in the work of the VOPE. This extends to various areas including the systematization of information. Most of the respondents indicate that the generation and systematization of information disaggregat-

ed by sex/gender are very important in the activities implemented by Aceval, as well as other categories such as age, ethnic identity.

- Thus, it can be seen that in the VOPE Aceval, there is an important and representative community of evaluation professionals in Mexico. It is a community open to dialogue and reflection, participatory in the issues that concern it. Regarding the specific topic of the incorporation of the GEP in the organization, there are no consensuses nor agreements about how important it is to implement it in the organizational structure and institutionalize it.

Therefore, from the findings presented here, it can be deduced that it is necessary to raise the issue collectively and the implications of doing it or not, in matters that go beyond the organizational structure and have a direct impact on the evaluators and the practice of evaluation. evaluation in general, such as the construction of capabilities for equality, professionalization, and quality of evaluations, as well as the influencing the transformation of Aceval's environments.

## 6. SWOT Analysis and Action Route 2022-2023

### 1. SWOT VOPE-ACEVAL

Aceval's *Strengths-Weaknesses-Threats-Opportunities* (SWOT) exercise is presented for each of the dimensions of analysis and the VOPE's current organizational state. It encompasses the findings presented in previous chapters and is a result of the analysis made by those who implemented the diagnosis. It is not the result of an exercise agreed upon with the rest of Aceval's membership.

What the SWOT shows can be used for further studies and activities with a greater scope than this study. They will surely be of interest both to those who make up Aceval's community and to those in charge of the VOPE management.

1. Organizational structure of Aceval	
Strengths	Weaknesses
1.S.1. Aceval is formally constituted. Since its inception, it has had a defined mission, vision, and general and specific objectives. It also has constitutive statutes (2014) and an updated version of these (2021)	1.W.1. Aceval's vision does not incorporate inclusive language or one of its four specific objectives. There is no consensus on the usefulness of the use of inclusive language in the field of evaluation.
1.S.2. The sustained dynamism since the constitution of the VOPE has allowed the constant growth of Aceval's membership, whose composition between men and women is almost equal.	1.W.2 Membership is concentrated in Mexico City and three other states. The organization's scope in other states is limited.
1.S.3. There are regulated democratic mechanisms to participate in Aceval's representative bodies. There is "maximum publication" of the call for the electoral process, registration and promotion of candidates, elections, and communication of results.	1.W.3. It is not established that there must be an equal number of women and men in the representative body. In addition, there is not enough involvement of both women and men from the membership to ensure that the composition of the governing body is equal.
1.S.4. The regulation is updated (2021) and incorporates and manages inclusive language, including general values and principles.	1.W.4. The regulation does not specify mechanisms to prevent and deal with matters related to sexual harassment or discrimination. In addition, roles at the Executive Committee are weak in terms of GEP and do not prevent the reproduction of gender stereotypes or traditional social roles.

<p>1.S.5. The management of the directive bodies (Sept 2014-May 2021) has functioned in an organized manner (planning workshops, with work plans, management indicators). They have been accountable for the administration and use of resources through reports that include information on Aceval's membership disaggregated by sex, federal entity, professional field, as well as on the activities implemented and results achieved, among others.</p>	<p>1.W.5. There are no regulations indicating that each of the VOPE's elected administrations must reflect their management in specific work documents, within certain deadlines, or in specific accountability formats.</p>
<p>1.S.6. The organization has a code of ethics that is currently being formulated and disseminated</p>	<p>1.W.6. The network does not have a public code of ethics, and it is unknown whether it will incorporate criteria to promote and mainstream GEP in the organization, both at the collective and individual levels, as well as access to other rights and equal opportunities.</p>
<p>1.S.7. There is basic information on the people who make up the organization (with basic data such as gender, federal entity, age, and sector), and part of it is public on its website (Aceval.org). This information is of great interest to actors such as state and municipal governments interested in evaluation.</p>	<p>1.W.7. Although there is information on those who make up Aceval, the information is incomplete or outdated. There is no disaggregated database (either by sex, gender, age, race, indigenous affiliation, speaker of an indigenous language, disability, sexual diversity, Afro-descendant, territoriality) of its members, as well as of its audiences, to recognize or identify the diversity of identities that comprise it. Nor is there a document/procedure that indicates the information that must be collected to form the list of evaluators, the degree of disaggregation of the information, the period for updating it, or who bears this responsibility.</p>
<p>1.S.8. Aceval's communication through the different channels (web page, social media, group chat, and workgroups chats) incorporates inclusive language (written/visual) and is governed by general values and principles.</p>	<p>1.W.8. There is no comprehensive communication strategy for everyone in the channels that Aceval uses. In addition, the chat created for those who coordinate the workgroups is underused.</p>
<p>1.S.9. Seven out of 10 people who responded to the Online survey said they have volunteering experience. There is the active participation of Aceval members.</p>	<p>1.W.9. There is a lack of a volunteer management strategy that motivates the evaluation group.</p>
<p>1.S.10. Aceval is a free-access organization (except for the payment of membership fees, which is not onerous and discounts can be obtained in some cases). The regulation indicates that the interest in the subject of evaluation could be sufficient to determine the ingress of interested parties.</p>	<p>1.W.10. Membership fees could inhibit people's interest in being a member of the network, particularly those belonging to vulnerable groups. Exceptions are made for age groups but other variables are not considered.</p>
<p>1.S.11. Incubation of working groups in Aceval with diverse leadership styles.</p>	<p>1.W.11. There is no strategy for developing inter- and intra-initiative leadership. There is a lack of communication and dissemination between the different groups regarding their structure and activities, which could enhance their analysis and scope. This can only be known in Aceval's management reports.</p>

Threats	Opportunities
1.T.1 Gender stereotypes influence volunteer work, where there is greater dedication on the part of women who actively participate in fulfilling the tasks and responsibilities of volunteer work.	1.O.1. Given that Aceval's vision was set to be fulfilled by 2024, which is not far from happening, the VOPE can take the opportunity to rethink collectively with its members and update its vision, as well as other elements that reflect the VOPE as a whole.
<b>2. Associates Capabilities</b>	
Strengths	Weaknesses
2.S.1. There are nine current work initiatives within ACEVAL, proof that the VOPE encourages and supports inclusive leadership. Within the workgroups, there is freedom in the organization and ways of working	2.W.1. Not all workgroups remain active, do not have feedback, nor are active participation and teamwork encouraged.
2.S.2. There are groups of people who have different ideas about the use of evaluation and its impact to improve specific situations.	2.W.2. Lack of activities to promote the development of capacities and innovations that respond to ACEVAL's transversal values and principles.
2.S.3. About evaluation from a gender perspective, the most recognized activity by the Aceval community is the facilitation of meeting and exchange instances on topics and experiences related to GEP.	2.W.3. There is a lack of activities to explicitly incorporate GEP in evaluations; to promote the experience with other organizations, as well as to train the community on GEP matters and promote reflections from EvalGenderMx towards the network in general.
Threats	Opportunities
2.T.1. At the macro level, the rigorousness of the evaluation theory is limited to the mechanical aspect, that is, to budgetary findings and/or the public policy cycle. It does not analyze the social value of incorporating a GEP in them.	2.O.1. There is openness towards discussion and the creation of new learning in managing the gender perspective for the VOPE. There are working groups linked to global initiatives and agendas committed to the incorporation of GEP in the public and private sphere.
Strengths	Weaknesses
3.S.1. Aceval is an important and representative community of evaluation professionals in Mexico.	3.W.1. There has been an insufficient reflection on the current situation, the advances, and the challenges regarding the professionalization of evaluation.
3.S.2. It is a community open to dialogue and reflection, participatory in the issues that concern it.	3.W.2. There has been insufficient dialogue, reflection, and analysis on the relevance of incorporating gender, human rights, and intercultural approaches to evaluations.
3.S.3. There is a diverse community in terms of academic background, professional experiences, and of course opinions.	3.W.3 There has been insufficient dialogue and analysis on the quality of evaluations.
3.S.4. In Aceval there is a plural community that incorporates theoretical aspects of approaches and integrates them into their work as people who evaluate.	3.W.4. Lack of theoretical and practical education, training, and professionalization strategy to incorporate GEP both professionally and in personal life,

3.S.5. Aceval constantly organizes events that allow the integration and professionalization of its associates.	3.W.5. The communication of the events seems to have some deficiencies since some associates mentioned that ACEVAL had not organized those activities, or they did not know about them.
3.S.6. Aceval has members who are interested in incorporating GEP into their work.	3.W.6. Lack or little training in GEP of some members of the network part of the union.
<b>Threats</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
	3.O.1. Create synergies with other instances such as EvalGender+, IOCE, ReLAC, among others in GEP matters to positively influence the work of the ACEVAL evaluation community. Seek partnerships with the universities with which there are agreements, to professionalize their students and teachers in specialized GEP topics.
<b>4. Advocacy</b>	
<b>Strenght</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
4.S.1. Potential for impact in various dimensions, levels, sectors, and in practically all regions of the country. This can be done, for example, by giving talks or workshops in various universities on the incorporation of approaches such as GEP and Human Rights in Evaluation, as well as in governments at the subnational level, mainly at the municipal level.	4.W.1. Lack of reflection and analysis on objectives and routes for the impact of ACEVAL in social transformation.
	4.W.2. Lack of strategy and agreements regarding advocacy, as well as follow-up and documentation regarding the effects of ACEVAL in the field of evaluation, the conduct of evaluations, and the evaluation community.
	4.W.3. There is a lack of a strategy to monitor and evaluate the impact of evaluations on public policies, programs, and projects that are evaluated.
	4.W.4. Lack of promotion of collaborative spaces with organizations of people whose rights have been violated.
4.S.2. ACEVAL members have experience in volunteer work.	4.W.5. Low participation and intermittent commitment of the members to achieve goals.
<b>Threats</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
4.T.1 Scarce culture and appropriation of volunteering to generate changes in the country.	4.O.1. Promote greater participation of the members of ACEVAL and potential new members in terms of volunteer work to transform the very effect of the evaluation through the incorporation of GEP+.

5. Organization's Activities	
Strengths	Weaknesses
5.S.1. ACEVAL's voluntary activities in the first seven years have positioned it and earned it recognition as a relevant entity in the field of evaluation by institutions such as the National Council for Evaluation (CONEVAL) and UED- SHCP	5.W.1. Not every member of Aceval is aware of what a VOPE is: an organization where volunteer work defines their destiny. This is sometimes lost by the fact of paying an annual membership.
5.S.2. There is willingness and openness on the part of the Executive Committee to support and implement GEP in collective activities.	5.W.2. In particular, the 2019-2021 Executive Committee has not presented its 2021-2023 work plan seven months after taking office.
5.S.3. Most Aceval members recognize the need to incorporate GEP in the organization	5.W.3. Most of the activities carried out are not analyzed or implemented with GEP
5.S.4. Among the evaluation community, there are members with training and experience in GEP issues	5.W.4. In the activities that are generally carried out, data disaggregated by sex/gender, age, interculturality, or others are not generated.
5.S.5. In Aceval there is the EvalGenderMx initiative which has organized activities to involve and sensitize the union on GEP and Evaluation issues.	5.W.5. EvalGenderMx does not have a mapped-out path to develop activities/tools to incorporate PEG in the organization and professional practice
Threats	Opportunities
5.T.1. In Mexico, the implementation of the GEP in organizations and associations continues to be incipient	5.O.1. Public institutions of reference in evaluation and gender in Mexico, such as CONEVAL, UED-SHCP, and Inmujeres, have made significant efforts to incorporate GEP in the evaluation of their public policies and programs.
5.T.2. Evaluation is not as recognized and valued in the current federal public administration (2018-2024) as it had been in past administrations.	5.O.2. Aceval has the support of EvalGender+, EvalPartners, IOCE, and other high-level to promote the implementation of a GEP within the VOPE.
5.T.3. The extension of the Covid-19 pandemic, for more than a year, has affected the synergy of the Aceval community due to the suspension of face-to-face activities that nurture the interaction of volunteer work and the development of ideas.	5.O.3. The appearance of the Covid-19 pandemic gave the guidelines to introduce new forms of interaction within the activities, as well as to share ICTs among the evaluation community in Aceval and rethink the approaches and means of analysis.

## 2. Route of action to integrate GEP in Aceval

Based on the results of the SWOT analysis, an action plan proposal is presented, which Aceval could incorporate as a VOPE to mainstream GEP and, above all, address the weaknesses identified in the SWOT analysis.

The action plan presented is made up of two components. The first deals with the proposals for Aceval in general. The second focuses exclusively on EvalGenderMx.

### ***Proposed actions for Aceval in 2022-2023***

- Disseminate the results of this diagnostic evaluation with the Aceval community and generate spaces for reflection and feedback.
- Develop clear guidelines for the use of inclusive language in institutional communication.
- Formulate clear guidelines for the use of inclusive language in institutional communication.
- Generate spaces for discussion and design mechanisms so that Aceval's regulations, together with other constitutive and/or normative documents, are updated and incorporate the gender+ perspective, including guarantees that assure that the composition of the Board of Directors is equal between men and women.
- Based on an analysis of gender justice, it is necessary to consider mechanisms for access to justice and protocols to deal with situations of gender-based violence so that they can be resolved within the organization, as well as to specify commitments that must be fulfilled by those who take part of Aceval.
- Publish a code of ethics with general principles and values, as well as principles focused on non-discrimination, respect for diversity, among others that contribute in this regard. Make it known to the entire community.
- Strengthen decision-making within Aceval through the incorporation of participatory methodologies that encourage the involvement of interested people and thus collect the diversity of perspectives that contribute to the achievement of the organization's mission and vision.
- Publicize proposals, objectives, lines of work, and calls for participation, as well as the tasks in which each member can actively collaborate, and create more personally and professionally satisfying experiences that contribute to the permanence of its members and their sense of belonging.
- Develop strategies to strengthen leadership, for example, by creating communication spaces between workgroups and inter-groups to give feedback according to the actions and achievements obtained. Propose improvements and evaluate, within the teams, if it is necessary to make changes in leadership to avoid bottlenecks, lack of communication, conflicts, and disagreements within the groups and thus, avoiding the desertion and lack of commitment of those who participate.
- Consider, while planning Aceval's budget, the allocation of budgets for training and awareness activities, dissemination of knowledge, and strengthening of gender-sensitive theoretical and practical capacities, to generate greater awareness of inequalities and promote social changes through its work. within the field of evaluation and public policy.
- Consider the implementation of mechanisms or strategies that facilitate women's political and social participation, considering that they are in an unequal situation, if we think about gender roles, women have tasks assigned to care and that they perform double or triple working days.
- Generate own data integration and production mechanisms, for example, creating databases with disaggregated information in which diversity is collected, from an intersectional approach (sex, gender, age, race, indigenous affiliation, speaker of an indigenous language, Afro-descendant, socioeconomic status, territoriality, etc.). Knowing who makes up the

community of evaluators and who their audiences are, makes it possible to create inclusion mechanisms to reach more populations, attract more people at the subnational level and thereby promote new guidelines for the creation of collective knowledge, broadening the discussion within of the scope of the evaluation about what are the demands and needs of the population.

- Support the generation of agreements with Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) so that the Aceval community can access courses, workshops, seminars, and/or training courses on GEP.
- Create synergies with CONEVAL, the UED-SHCP, Inmujeres, and local governments to promote the implementation of evaluations from a gender perspective.

### ***Action Proposals for EvalGenderMx***

- Disseminate the results of this diagnostic evaluation with the Aceval community, systematize and incorporate the reflections generated and the feedback received.
- Elaborate a manual to implement the use of inclusive language in the institutional communication of Aceval.
- Develop and deliver training workshop(s) on the implementation of GEP in public policy issues, particularly in Terms of Reference (ToR) for the evaluation of programs, as well as in the development and evaluation reports.
- Prepare and present to the Aceval community and the different initiatives a work plan for the incorporation of GEP, with activities that may also involve the participation of the other workgroups. evaluation.
- Support the development of work plans and activities of other Aceval groups so that they incorporate GEP.
- Present and disseminate the activities implemented by EvalGenderMx participants who have a relationship and/or impact on vulnerable groups, for example, from sexually diversified communities.
- Prepare proposals to incorporate the GEP into Aceval's official and institutional documentation, for example, regulations, protocols, code of ethics, strategic agenda, budgeting, reports.
- Organize and support the presentation of evaluations developed by people from the Aceval community related to issues/programs/policies/projects with GEP or that involve groups or regions of the country in a situation of vulnerability.
- Implement activities such as talks or webinars that involve topics on GEP and the evaluation of policies, programs, and projects.
- Generate spaces for the exchange of experiences on working with a GEP as well as its usefulness in generating impact on the interest group with which someone has worked. This is to mainstream GEP.
- Develop activities to generate protocols for the care of victims of violence in evaluation processes.
- Generate and implement action protocols in diverse socio-cultural contexts and contexts of high social vulnerability, to avoid the second victimization of people.
- Develop protocols that guarantee informed consent in evaluation processes.

## General conclusions

In Aceval there is an important and representative community of evaluation professionals in Mexico. It is a community open to dialogue and participatory reflection on the issues that concern it, and with the potential to impact on multiple areas and in various sectors. It has a presence in practically the entire country.

Although the Mexican VOPE expresses, through different means, that it is in favor of principles and values such as equality, respect, inclusion, non-discrimination, and others related to these, it still has a long way to go to materialize and amplify the scope of these values. In their collective and individual performance, which is essential, since membership is expected to continue growing.

Regarding the specific topic of the incorporation of GEP in the organization, there are no consensuses and agreements regarding how important it is to implement and institutionalize it in aspects of the organizational structure such as regulations, operation, procedures, daily activities, planning of strategic agenda and budget. Both in the working groups and the association as a whole, GEP seems to be an issue that has not been discussed and reflected upon by its members.

In this regard, it is also found that there has not been a plan to incorporate GEP in the VOPE and that the actions carried out to impact its membership and the organization in this sense, such as talks, conferences, or webinars, have been insufficient, and are far from being mechanisms to formally influence professionalization in such matters.

From the findings of this study, it follows that it is necessary to raise the issue and the impact that doing so -or not-, would have on issues that go beyond the organizational structure and that have a direct impact on both the evaluators and the practice of evaluation, such as the construction of capacities for equality, professionalization and the quality of evaluations, as well as the impact to transform Aceval's environments. It has been shown that, if the need to incorporate gender and human rights perspectives is agreed upon, in addition to establishing general principles, it must be done through commitments and specific definitions in documents, establishing clear procedures and concrete actions.

Certainly, this diagnosis is a first approach that not only hopes to trigger actions that reverse what is indicated here in a gradual and consensual manner with the community but also to establish the bases to implement these and other approaches and generate new discussions about what is proposed here, both within Aceval and outside of our community.

We believe that the objectives of this diagnosis have been achieved, however, it remains to be seen how other points of view and other perspectives unfold that nourish and develop other horizons. Criticism and contributions to this approach are more than welcome, which will surely enable many more inquiries in the future.

This first approach raises concerns, worries, etc., but it also excites us because it brings us closer to a possible process of change that has the potential to generate learning, but it also ex-

cites us because it brings us closer to a possible process of change that has the potential to generate learning. For this to happen, the involvement of the Aceval community, as well as of the readers of this document, will allow these visions to be compared and contrasted in the light of other organizations, but also over time. We are sure we will be talking about it soon.

Until then.

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