

Breaking the Cycle: How Workers Rights Watch Transformed Labor Conditions Across The Horticultural Sector.



In the last couple of years, workplace violations in the farms we have directly engaged more than 50,000 + workers participating horticultural farms violations dropped by 43%, while worker satisfaction scores increased from 1.7 to 3.2 out of 5. These remarkable changes didn't happen overnight, they were the result of a comprehensive approach to Worker Rights education and employer accountability that has redefined labor relations across the horticultural sector.

Voices from the participants from various farms

"Before the training, I didn't even know that when my manager was constantly asking me out even after I told him no, was actually sexual harassment," shares a worker from one of the farms. "Now I speak up when something isn't safe, and management actually listens. The whole atmosphere has changed."

Farm general manager, from one of the farms, echoes this sentiment: "Initially, I was skeptical about these trainings on gender issues. But they opened my eyes to how simple changes could

prevent costly violations and actually boost productivity. Our turnover rate has dropped 40% since implementing the recommendations."

One of the results has been willingness to integrate gender transformative approaches in the farms where workers have given case studies on how they have received cases and how they have handled, their farms thus encouraging the gender committees and sending a signal to the perpetrators.

Supervisors have opened up challenging the managers and calling them to stop who are engaging in sexual affair with workers under them.

In one of the farms a gender committee confirmed that the workers are speaking up on the issue, we are no longer being forced to work through threats, coercion and violence because we understand our rights

One of the gender committees confirmed that in their farm, they now they demand their space to breathe, create and to rise.

Through capacity building a shop steward in a flower farm said that the farms are now aware that the workers are not angry but awake and they no longer need pity but power, workplace violations are now history for workers are resilient for silence is not awkwardness anymore but is a kind that breakthrough polished frameworks.

Our Solution: Comprehensive Rights Education and Accountability

Workers' Rights Watch developed an integrated approach that addresses both sides of the employment equation. Rather than simply identifying violations, we created a sustainable system that educates workers about their rights while providing employers with practical tools to maintain compliant, productive workplaces.

Our three-pillar solution includes immediate intervention through rights awareness sessions, ongoing support from Donors and partner organizations like Women Win, Anti-slavery International, Women Working Worldwide, Hivos, Equality Now, Femnet, Certification bodies like KFC, MPS, Fairtrade, ,Rainforest Alliance, and Ethical Training Initiatives (ETI), and local organizations like WEL, SIF-card - Community Initiative for change and development),Ufadhili trust ,Haki Mashinani ,CREAW, FSI and systemic change through policy advocacy and employer partnerships.

How It Works: A Multi-Layered Implementation Strategy



The program operates through intensive on-site workshops conducted in a language familiar to all the workers, covering everything from wage and hour laws, marriage law, mental health, menstrual and reproductive health, safety regulations and collective bargaining Agreement rights.

Simultaneously, we work with management teams to observe and advice on audit compliance processes, help in developing internal reporting systems and create social impact assessment tools that would help in addressing workers concerns. We do follow-up sessions ensuring both workers and employers stay informed about evolving regulations and best practices.

Strategic Partnerships Amplifying Impact

The initiative's success stems from collaborative relationships with key stakeholders. The Farms unions provide expertise in collective bargaining agreement and worker organizing, while state labor department's offer regulatory guidance and enforcement support when needed.

Health officers partner with us to address issues by educating workers on occupational health issues, hygiene and reproductive health, Legal aid officers help educate the workers on their rights in accordance with the Kenyan law. They also help teach the workers about the laws especially in issues that may affect their day-to-day life such as marriage, succession, divorce, succession, how to write a will, matrimonial property.

Measurable Impact Across Multiple Dimensions

The program's reach extends far beyond compliance metrics. Over 50,000 agricultural workers have completed rights training and awareness forums, with 89% reporting increased confidence in addressing workplace issues. Sexual Harassment complaints decreased by 35% in participating farms.

The economic benefits surprise many skeptics. Participating employers report an average reduction in recruitment and training costs due to improved retention. Worker productivity increased as job satisfaction improved and workplace conflicts decreased.

Conclusion: Building Sustainable Change in Horticulture Labor

This case study demonstrates that protecting worker rights isn't just morally imperative—it's economically smart. When workers understand their rights and employers have gender integrated tools to respect them, everyone benefits through having a safe working environment, reduced turnover, higher productivity, access to markets, stronger workplace relationships, and consumer confidence.

The success of Workers Rights Watch's approach lies in its recognition that sustainable change requires addressing root causes rather than just symptoms. By educating workers, supporting employers, and advocating for systemic improvements, we've created a model that other organizations can adapt and scale.

As we expand to new regions and industries, the lessons learned in horticultural settings provide a roadmap for transforming labor relations across sectors. The path forward requires continued collaboration between workers, employers, advocates, and policymakers, but the results prove that meaningful change is both possible and profitable.

The over 50 farms that participated in our various programs are just the beginning. With sustained effort and expanded partnerships, we can scale up and ensure that more workers have the knowledge, tools, and support needed to advocate for safe, fair, and dignified working conditions.