

# Improving working conditions in the cutflower industry



**A TRADE UNION**

**TRAINING MANUAL**



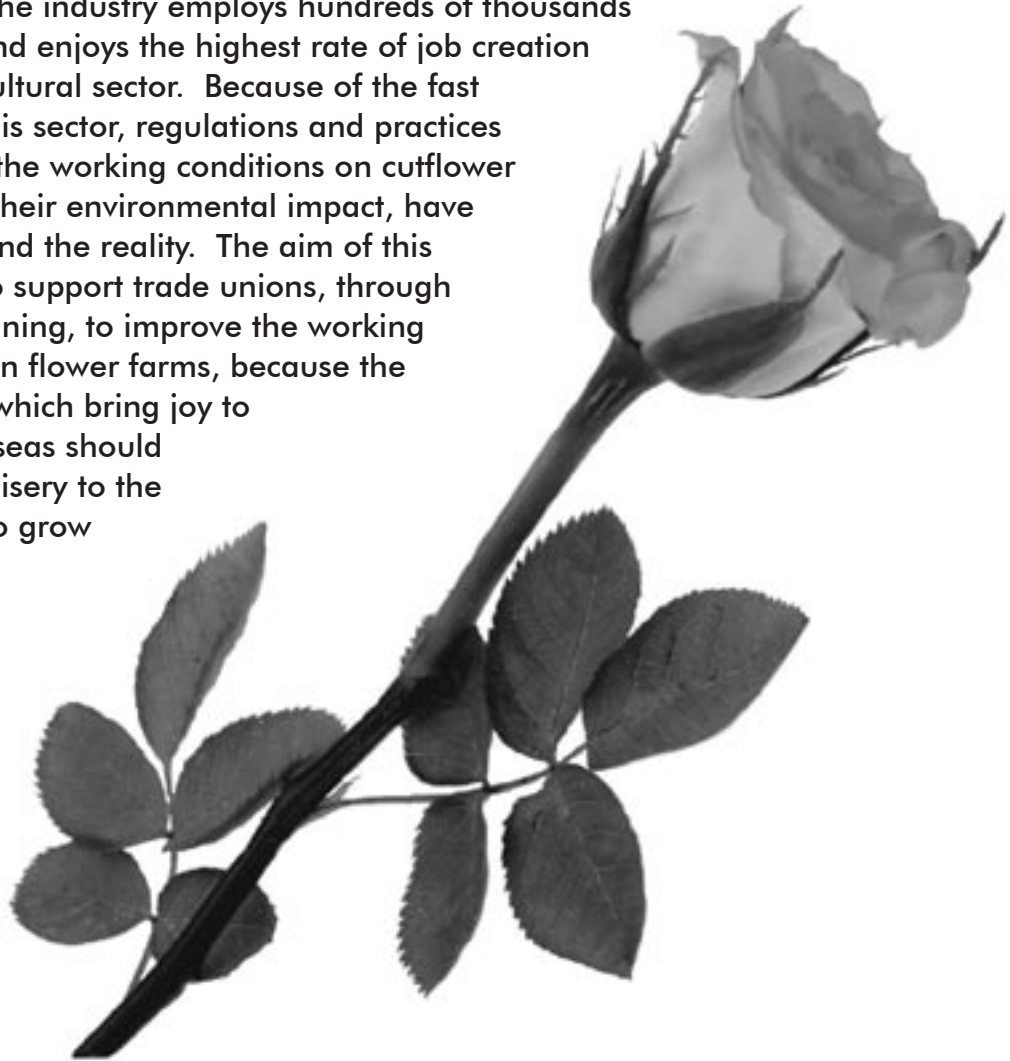
# **IMPROVING WORKING CONDITIONS IN THE CUTFLOWER INDUSTRY**



## **A Trade Union Training Manual**

**A joint project of  
IUF ▪ FIAN ▪ FES**

**C**ut flowers fetch high prices in developed countries, where their beauty is a symbol of joy and love. In East and Southern Africa, major cutflower producers, the industry employs hundreds of thousands of people and enjoys the highest rate of job creation in the agricultural sector. Because of the fast growth of this sector, regulations and practices concerning the working conditions on cutflower farms, and their environmental impact, have lagged behind the reality. The aim of this Manual is to support trade unions, through effective training, to improve the working conditions on flower farms, because the cut flowers which bring joy to buyers overseas should not mean misery to the workers who grow them.



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**International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant,  
Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF)**  
**Food First Information & Action Network (FIAN)**  
**Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES)**

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# FOREWORD

**T**he cutflower industry employs many thousands of workers globally. This sector, which began in the northern hemisphere, expanded rapidly at the end of the 20th century in the south until by 2000, one third of traded cut flowers was grown in the south (mainly East and Southern Africa, Colombia, Ecuador).

The industry has brought with it much controversy. It uses a lot of water in countries which are often prone to droughts, it is heavily pesticide dependent, it produces a lot of waste material and it encourages export production at the expense of food production for local consumption.

Often workers are denied even the basic right to join a trade union; bad working conditions are widespread.

The problems facing workers in the cutflower industry need strong and effective trade union action to resolve them. The IUF welcomes the support given by many organisations to assist trade unions to organise in the flower sector.

Codes of Conduct in the past have usually been little more than public relations scams developed by employers. The work to create the International Code of Conduct for the cutflower sector, which IUF embarked upon with affiliated trade unions and like-minded NGOs, aimed to challenge that and to get a real space to negotiate. It gave us the chance to go to the flower industry and say “if you want a code that has any sort of credibility then it has to be based on this code and this code has to lead to real freedom of association and the right to bargain”.

We have to be sure that codes are used properly and give us the necessary space to organise and to improve working conditions; that codes complement the negotiations for collective bargaining agreements at farm and national level and framework agreements at international level. We hope this manual will help us in the very challenging work that lies ahead.

*Ron Oswald*  
*General Secretary, IUF\**  
*Geneva*

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*\*IUF is the international trade union organisation representing workers in food, agriculture, hotels, restaurants, catering and tobacco. It has 336 affiliated trade unions in 120 countries.*

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**I**t took more than a year to bring this manual to fruition. Intensive research and consultations brought together stakeholders and trade union cutflower experts from the East African sub-region, IUF Africa Regional Office and the IUF Geneva Headquarters. Other expertise was made available by the human rights group, Food-First International Action Network (FIAN) of Germany, and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES).

Early ideas on the manual came from Günther Haustedt of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation. He has remained steadfast in facilitating the process, providing intellectual insights at every stage and sourcing other necessary professional input as needed. I remain beholden for his support. The initial content of the manual was the subject of workshops facilitated mainly by Hella-Karen Alikuru (Regional Coordinator, IUF Africa), Frank Brassel and Cruz Emilia Ronzel (both of FIAN), Peter Hurst and later Sue Longley (both of IUF Headquarters). Yaya Msangi (TPAWU), Sebastian Odanga (KPAWU), Beatrice Mandieka (KPAWU) and Amuko Omara (NUPAWU) - all from the education departments of their respective unions - were active throughout as editorial committee members. I am also grateful to the other participants of the manual development workshops and the organisations which availed support materials.

I have learned to become professionally dependent on my colleague Peta Meyer of Tara Consultants on everything that requires creativity. I admire the ease with which Peta is able to translate otherwise complex ideas into discernable illustrations and package everything so professionally. This time around, she also provided editorial services thus improving the quality and readability of the manual to a great measure. Thank you very much, Peta. Special thanks also go to the respective leaders of the partner organisations including the FES, IUF, FIAN, and the agricultural sector trade unions in East Africa (KPAWU, TPAWU and NUPAWU) for facilitating the process.

Without doubt, the contribution of the organisations and individuals mentioned is immeasurable, but I hasten to accept all errors and omissions as purely my own.

*Robert N. Chutha  
Pinnacle Development Consultants  
Nairobi*



# INTRODUCTION

## TRAINER'S NOTES

**T**his Manual on Improving the Working Conditions in the Cutflower Industry has been designed as a package comprising ten modules. The modules seek to explain and apply in a practical way the most important aspects of a socially and environmentally responsible production of cutflowers. The principles of the manual are set out in the International Code of Conduct (ICC) for the Production of Cutflowers and elaborated in the Guidelines for the Socially and Environmentally Responsible Production of Cutflowers (presented as an accompaniment to this manual).

### HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL

This manual can be used for specifically designed trade union courses on improving the working conditions in the cutflower farm. The different modules/sessions can, however, be extracted for use in any other trade union courses in which the module forms an important component of the course content.

An experienced trainer can easily extract handouts, group activities, case studies and illustrations from the manual for use as training materials and aids. The trainers is encouraged to use personal interpretations, experiences, examples, case studies, groups activities and the collective experience of participants to enhance understanding of the materials presented in this manual.



### TRAINING TARGET

This manual will be used to train all workers on the cutflower farm. The manual assumes that trade union trainers have attained at least secondary school level of education. The trainers will also need to be given instructions on the application of the manual. A full Training of Trainers (TOT) course is recommended for the intended users of this manual.

An ideal training course should have twenty participants. Training groups may be unisex or mixed. It is, however, important to note that **men tend to dominate** groups by talking more and listening less while **women tend to listen more but are often less confident**. Training must be provided equally to both male and female workers.

# MAKING A LESSON PLAN

A new trainer may find the following steps useful in planning and preparing a training session:

## STEP 1: PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

### ADULT LEARNING:

- The target participants are adults.
- Adults learn for different reasons from those of children.
- Adult learners have plenty of experience which they bring to the course.
- Adult learning is practice-oriented. It is also learner-centred.
- Adult trainers must not only know the subject matter but they must also know the learners.
- Women and men have different learning styles. Do not ignore the contributions of either group, but include both sexes in any discussion.



*Workers, whatever their education level, bring plenty of experience to the training sessions, and should be treated as partners in the training process.*

### THE LEARNING PLACE

- Training for improving the working conditions in the cutflower farms assumes that the Management will provide adequate training facilities.
- Training can also take place outside the formal setting – under a tree, in the fields and greenhouses, through posters, etc.
- Lack of a training centre, therefore, need not be a hindrance to training.

## SEATING ARRANGEMENTS

The seating arrangements should enhance maximum communication between the trainer and participants:

- A horse shoe arrangement is ideal for seminar/workshop training.
- A circle is good for meetings.
- Avoid classroom setting.

## TEACHING HINTS

For successful learning, the trainer has to do three things:

- Create a good learning atmosphere.
- Create a good working relationship.
- Constantly try to improve training techniques.

# STEP 2: SESSION PLANNING

Session planning is essential to successful training. It is a system of organising what is to be taught and how it will be taught in an interesting and enjoyable way. Session planning involves the following:

## AIMS

The trainer must have a good idea of what he/she wants participants to be able to do when the session is over.

## TOPIC TITLE

The topic title should capture the aim of the session.



## TIME

The trainer must organise the time available into the different components of the session. In sharing out the time, the trainer should consider:

- The nature of the component i.e. climate setting, lecture, group activity, individual assignment, etc.
- The relative importance of the component i.e. spend more time on those components which the participants must internalise.
- The difficulties involved in the delivery of the component.

## METHODS

- The method is the game plan the trainer follows in order to effectively deliver the session.
- It brings together all the different activities planned to take place during the session.
- Different methods have different impact on the participants' understanding of the session content:
  - ✓ A **lecturette** (informal lecture) may be necessary to introduce the subject.
  - ✓ **Discussions** bring out the experiences of participants.
  - ✓ **Group activities** are crucial in getting the involvement of participants but they are also time consuming.
- Methods and activities must not be used for the sake of it. They must have a purpose.
- Methods must also make learning effective and enjoyable or interesting.

## MATERIALS

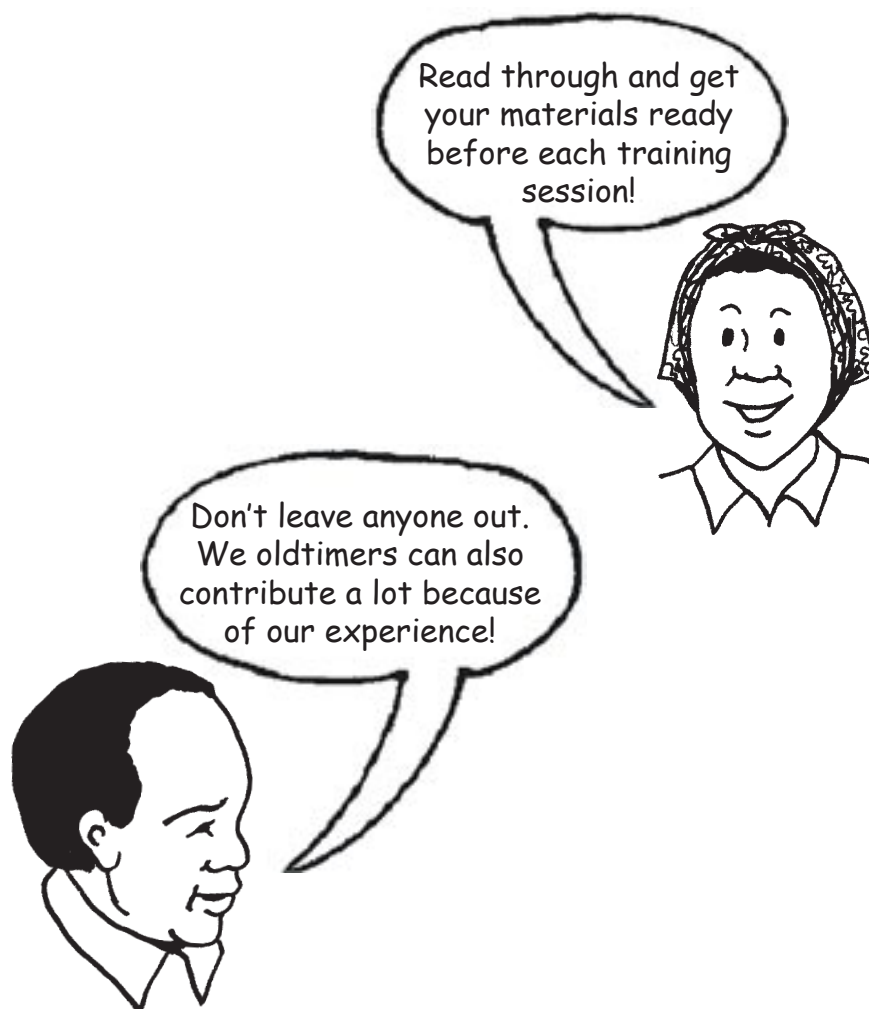
- The trainers may use different materials to facilitate training.
- Materials include handouts, blackboards, chalk, flipcharts, stationery, overhead projectors, videos, etc.
- Learning can, however, be effectively provided without using complicated materials. As a matter of fact, materials can become a hindrance if the trainer has not developed the ability to use the materials with ease.



## STEP 3: EVALUATION

The main purpose of training is to make improvements and introduce change. To ensure that the desired results have been achieved, an evaluation is necessary at the end of each session. In doing an evaluation, the following should be addressed:

- Evaluation should involve the participants and trainer.
- Evaluation should be broad. It should not only cover the level of understanding of the participants on the subject matter, but also the facilitation and training environment.
- Evaluation should be geared towards feedback so that delivery of future training can be improved.





*Cutflowers fetch high prices in developed countries, where their beauty is a symbol of joy and love. The ICC tries to make sure that workers in developing countries — where most of the world's cutflowers are grown — get to share some of this happiness through an improvement in their working and social conditions.*

# INTRODUCTORY MODULE

## THE CUTFLOWER INDUSTRY



### AIM

- To give important background information on ICC.
- To set the environment for the training programme by explaining the purpose and objectives of the cutflower industry.



### TIME

45 minutes

### METHOD

- Open discussions
- Lecturettes
- Exchange of experiences



### MATERIALS AND TRAINING AIDS

- The International Code of Conduct (Kiswahili and English versions) for the Production of Cutflowers
- Model Collective Bargaining Agreement for the farm or industry with ICC attachment
- Photographs
- Illustrations
- Stationery
- Blackboard or flipchart

### INTRODUCTION

- Growing of cutflowers in third world countries is a relatively new phenomenon. Most countries began growing flowers in 1990s.
- Before cutflowers started to be produced in developing countries, they were produced in the developed countries. Today, less and less flowers are grown in the developed countries.
- The market for the flowers, however, continue to be the developed countries where they fetch higher prices.
- Most activities in the cutflower farms are labour intensive. The farms employ several hundred thousands of workers, most of whom are women.
- Growth in the production of cutflowers implies a reduction in the amount of food grown and therefore, the health of citizens in the countries where the flowers grow could be affected.
- Production of cutflowers consumes a lot of water. This not only reduces the amount of fresh water that is available for consumption by people and animals, but could also lead to contamination of water sources.
- Because of their economic importance, growth of cutflowers is bound to continue. It is therefore an important issue to workers in the agricultural and plantation sectors.

### IMPORTANCE OF CUTFLOWERS TO THE ECONOMY

- Cutflowers generate some US\$ 35 billion per year in sales.<sup>1</sup>
- The cutflower sector is the most rapidly growing component of the economies of the third world. In some cases the sector has enjoyed 100% growth rate per year.
- The cutflower industry enjoys the highest rate of job creation in the agricultural sector.
- Cutflowers are an important foreign exchange earner in developing countries.

### SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF CUTFLOWERS

- Despite the huge number of people employed in the cutflower farms, there are serious labour issues affecting the workers.
- Workers in flower farms earn low wages. They live in congested and unsanitary houses near the flower farms.



- Workers in flower farms earn less than 3% of the market price of cutflowers. This means that for a good rose stem that sells for US\$1.50 in Western Europe, the worker who grew it will end up earning less than US\$ 0.05!
- The working conditions in the cutflower farms do not meet the minimum health, safety and environment standards recommended by the International Labour Organisation (ILO). Quite often, the standards do not meet the national legal requirements.
- The level of workers' organisation in cutflower farms is low.
- There is widespread casual employment.
- Workers' rights, especially those of women workers, are widely abused in the cutflower farms.
- As a result of intensive use of pesticides and chemicals in the flower farms, water bodies have become polluted. The same polluted water is used for domestic purposes which could lead to long term health problems in human beings and animals.
- Domestic animals are fed on flower cuttings that contain harmful chemical residues.

## THE MARKET

- Most of the cutflowers grown in developing countries are sold in developed countries as follows: Western Europe (42%), USA (20%), Japan (18%), others (20%).<sup>2</sup>
- One-third of the Western Europe market share is Germany.
- Most flowers are marketed through auctions in the Netherlands although there are some big buyers who import directly.
- The sales points consist of importers, wholesalers, supermarket outlets and florists.
- The European market relies increasingly on flowers produced in developing countries.
- The major inputs into the flower industry consist of imported material comprising green houses, planting seedlings, equipment, etc. Every indication is that a large portion of export revenue remains in the developed countries.
- There is stiff competition in the cutflower industry. Flowers grown under the ICC have a marketing advantage that attracts more and more buyers.

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<sup>2</sup> Based on 1998 consumer spending statistics

## THE INTERNATIONAL CODE OF CONDUCT (ICC)

- There are non-governmental organisations working to pressurise flower growers and government on the need to produce flowers in more humane and environmentally sustainable conditions.
- As a result of the activities of trade unions, NGOs and human rights organisations, some farms are waking up to their social and environmental responsibilities. Workers are being provided with protective equipment and conditions that are more tolerable.
- The campaign by the trade unions and international NGOs is based on the **International Code of Conduct (ICC)** for the production of cutflowers.
- The International Code of Conduct focuses on broad issues such as health, safety, and environment, labour, social justice, etc.
- The ICC is based on ILO conventions.
- The ICC is a voluntary agreement signed by owners of cutflower farms.
- The ICC expresses the social and environmental quality concerns of the consumers.

*A typical flower stall in a marketplace in Europe. European flower buyers are increasingly concerned about the working conditions on flower farms in developing countries.*



- The ICC calls for independent monitoring of implementation.
- The ICC critically hinges on the participation of trade unions, NGOs and workers in monitoring compliance with set standards.
- There are other codes of conduct existing in the industry — these other codes have been developed by governments, producer associations, market players and activists.
- The ICC sets the minimum standards of performance. Where national laws and industry practices offer higher performance standards than the ICC, the former should prevail.
- ICC is different from other codes of conduct in that whereas most codes of conduct are generated by the industry, ICC originates from external interested parties.

## **ELEMENTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL CODE OF CONDUCT**

The International Code of Conduct (ICC) provides a concise statement of minimum labour, human rights and environmental standards for the international cutflower industry. It is based on the principles of voluntarism in which companies wilfully accept to implement its content. The ICC deals with the following ten elements:

- Freedom of association and collective bargaining
- Equality of treatment
- Living wages
- Working hours
- Health and safety
- Pesticides and chemicals
- Security of employment
- Protection of the environment
- Child labour
- Forced labour



*The Flower Label Programme pilot project in Zimbabwe showed an improvement in working and housing conditions. At the same time workers had become more responsible and industrial relations had improved. So both management and workers have gained from the programme.*

## **EXPERIENCE WITH ICC IN ZIMBABWE**

One of the first countries to pilot the ICC was Zimbabwe in which the following facts are reported:

- Farms visited in October 1998 were initially found to be in very pathetic condition.
- A checklist of what was needed to be done to improve the situation was prepared and agreed with both the management of the farms and workers.
- A second visit was made to the farms in March 1999 and progress appraised.
- By the second visit, working hours had been reduced from the official 51 hours spread over 6 days per week to 48 hours.

- Casual labour was dramatically reduced and maternity leave extended to casual workers who previously never enjoyed the right.
- Workers had become more responsible and industrial relations had been enhanced.
- The housing conditions had improved.
- As a result, 11 farms were certified as being ICC compliant. Other farms that had not achieved much progress were placed under further observation.
- The Zimbabwe experience is proof that the ICC programme is on the right track. Both employers and workers have gained.





## **RIGHTS & FREEDOMS**

### **SESSION ONE:**

#### **RIGHTS & FREEDOMS IN THE CUTFLOWER INDUSTRY**

**To help the worker to understand the rights and freedoms he/she enjoys under the law**

### **SESSION TWO:**

#### **FREEDOM TO BARGAIN COLLECTIVELY**

**To help workers understand that among the rights and freedoms they enjoy under the law is the freedom to bargain collectively**

### **SESSION THREE:**

#### **RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS OF WOMEN WORKERS**

**To appreciate that women workers encounter special problems which need additional protection**





# MODULE

## SESSION ONE

# 1

### RIGHTS & FREEDOMS IN THE CUTFLOWER INDUSTRY



#### AIM

To help the worker to understand the rights and freedoms he/she enjoys under the law



#### TIME

60 minutes

#### METHOD

- Open discussions
- Lecturettes
- Group activity
- Exchange of experiences



#### MATERIALS AND TRAINING AIDS

- ILO conventions
- A copy of the Collective Bargaining Agreement for the farm or industry
- National labour laws
- The International Code of Conduct for the Production of Cutflowers
- Illustrations
- Stationery
- Blackboard or flipchart



## HOW TO START THE SESSION:

Begin by attempting to gauge the understanding of participants of the terms **freedom** and **rights**.

1. Ask them the question: What do you understand by the term *freedom*?  
Some of the answer may include:
  - ✓ The right to do what you want without being controlled or restricted by anyone
  - ✓ To move without restriction
  - ✓ The state of not being a prisoner etc.
2. What do you understand by the term *rights* in relation to work?  
Some of the answer may include:
  - ✓ Things that are allowed
  - ✓ Good and understandable reason
  - ✓ The freedoms and advantages that everyone should be allowed to enjoy



## THEN LEAD THE DISCUSSIONS AND ACTIVITIES AS FOLLOWS:

**Workers in the cutflower farms have their rights and freedoms:**

Workers in the cutflower farms enjoy certain rights. These rights are enshrined in the following instruments:

- Conventions and recommendations by the International Labour Organisation (ILO)
- National labour laws
- The trade union constitution
- The Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA)

In this topic, we shall discuss the components of our basic rights and freedoms. Our understanding of the rights and freedoms will help us to stand firm in defending our rights and freedoms as human beings, workers and individuals through our trade union.

In the case of legal problems regarding violation of rights and freedoms, it is necessary to seek professional support. The trade union can help in the case of a worker needing legal representation. Where necessary the union can bring in a legal expert.

## ENTITLEMENTS

Apart from wages, workers enjoy rights to certain entitlements. **(Trainer's Note:** Find out from the participants whether they are aware of these entitlements by asking the following leading questions):

- Are the workers provided with free housing? Or a housing allowance enough to rent adequate housing in the locality of the farm?
- Are the workers provided with basic amenities such as clean drinking water, toilets, social and recreational facilities, schools and medical services close to where they live?

## FREEDOM TO FORM AND JOIN TRADE UNIONS

The freedom of association is guaranteed by the following:

- ✓ ILO convention no. 87 on freedom of association and the right to organise
- ✓ The National Constitution
- ✓ The Trade Union laws
- ✓ Labour Charter

As a worker, you are free to join a trade union of your sector. Joining the trade union is strictly voluntary. No worker should be forced to join a trade union against his/her free will. By joining a union, you agree to:

- ✓ Abide by the rules and regulations governing the trade union.
- ✓ Pay the agreed dues to enable the running of the trade union's activities.
- ✓ Appoint the trade union to speak on your behalf on matters concerning terms and conditions of employment. This means that agreements reached by the employers and the trade union are binding on you.
- ✓ Elect leaders to represent you in the trade union.

## ACCESS TO ALL WORKPLACES BY TRADE UNION OFFICIALS

- Trade union officials are elected in accordance with freedom of association enjoyed by members.
- Trade union officials must be allowed time off with pay to attend to union activities including conferences, congresses, meetings, training, etc.

- Trade union officials must be allowed to visit all workplaces to carry out union activities and consult with workers.

### **PROTECTION OF THE TRADE UNION REPRESENTATIVE AGAINST DISCRIMINATION**

- Trade union officials enjoy all the basic rights and freedoms enjoyed by other workers.
- By recognising the trade union, the employer allows union officials unlimited space to carry out union activities.
- Trade union officials should not be subjected to any form of discrimination or victimisation.
- Employers are prohibited from engaging in anti-union activities including discrimination, threats and sabotage.

### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE WORKER**

- Carrying out the duties stipulated by his/her employment contract or otherwise lawfully assigned.
- Protecting the rights and freedoms provided.
- Contributing to strengthening the voice of workers through active involvement in trade union activities.
- Payment of trade union dues.
- Avoiding activities which could lead to curtailing of rights and freedoms.

As a worker, you are also free to withdraw from the trade union. You may, however, have to follow laid down regulations so as to withdraw from membership.

*Does your flower farm allow workers to meet regularly and give them a room in which to do so? Freedom of association and freedom to join a trade union are basic rights of all workers, no matter in which industry or in which country.*



# MODULE 1

## SESSION TWO

### RIGHT TO BARGAIN COLLECTIVELY



#### AIM

To help the worker to understand that among the rights and freedoms he/she enjoys under the law is the freedom to bargain collectively.



#### TIME

60 minutes

#### METHOD

- Open discussions
- Lecturettes
- Group activity
- Exchange of experiences



#### MATERIALS AND TRAINING AIDS

- ILO conventions
- A copy of the Collective Bargaining Agreement for the farm or industry
- National labour laws
- The International Code of Conduct for the Production of Cutflowers
- Illustrations
- Stationery
- Blackboard or flipchart

## **FREEDOM TO BARGAIN COLLECTIVELY**

The rights of collective bargaining are guaranteed by the following:

- ILO Convention No. 98
- The National Constitution
- National labour laws

## **WHAT IS A CBA?**

The CBA (*Collective Bargaining Agreement*) is a contract between the trade union and company (in which the union represents the workers):

- CBAs are designed to improve the terms and conditions of employment for workers and establishment of industrial peace.
- CBAs must not contradict the labour laws.
- CBA reflects the desires of the parties to the contract. As the desires often conflict, CBA is an outcome of a negotiation process.
- The CBA is a binding legal instrument which is widely used in resolving labour disputes relating to terms and conditions of employment.

## **A TYPICAL CBA**

A typical CBA negotiated between the company and trade union officials covers, in addition to wages, the following:

- Working hours and overtime
- Social issues eg. housing, transport, recreational facilities, etc
- Leave including annual, maternity, sick and compassionate
- Medical care and accident insurance
- Job security
- Fair play in accessing promotion and training opportunities
- Other issues

## **TYPES OF CBA**

There are two types of collective agreements:

- A new agreement where none existed.
- A renewed agreement where the life of an existing one has expired.

## THE CBA PROCESS

The CBA process differs from country to country. Following is a general description of the process:

The CBA process begins when the employer recognises the trade union as a properly constituted body and sole labour organisation representing the interests of the workers. The process involves the following steps:

- ✓ Both the trade union and employer express the desire to enter into common agreement in matters concerning terms and conditions of employment.
- ✓ The trade union formulates a memorandum containing their demand.
- ✓ The employer responds to the memorandum.
- ✓ Both parties hold meetings to negotiate their positions.
- ✓ When agreement is reached on all the points, authorised representatives of both parties sign the agreement.
- ✓ The employer side must lodge a copy of the signed agreement to the Minister in charge of labour within a stipulated period of time after it is signed.
- ✓ The Minister provides the Industrial Court with a copy of every CBA for registration.
- ✓ The CBA becomes legally binding only after it has been registered by the Industrial Court.



Don't forget!  
A Collective Bargaining Agreement is binding on both parties once signed. So think carefully before deciding what you want to bargain for - and elect union officials who will be effective in negotiating for you!



**CAUTION!**

Workers should realise that the CBA involves a lengthy negotiation process. There are many elements that together constitute the higher welfare of the worker. Workers, therefore, should not pressurise their trade union negotiators to go for a quick settlement on the basis of wage awards alone.





# MODULE 1

## SESSION THREE

### RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS OF WOMEN WORKERS



#### AIM

To appreciate that women workers in the cutflower farms encounter unique problems which need additional protection.



#### TIME

60 minutes



#### MATERIALS

- ILO conventions
- A copy of the Collective Bargaining Agreement for the farm or industry
- National labour laws
- Stationery
- Blackboard or flipchart

How can I look after my newborn baby properly with so little maternity leave?



#### GROUP COMPOSITION



Form three small discussion groups of approximately seven members each: Group one should comprise men only, group two women only and group three both men and women.



## HOW TO START THE SESSION:

Give the following instructions to group members:

1. Group members should appoint a leader and a reporter.
2. Groups should work on the discussion issues (see below) and report in plenary.
3. The various reports will then be discussed in plenary and the main points summarised.



## DISCUSSION ISSUES

Write this on the blackboard or flipchart for the groups to follow:

*Discuss in each group:*

- a) *The work performed by women and men in the flower farms*
- b) *The unique problems faced by women while performing their duties*
- c) *What should be done to overcome these problems*



## SUMMARISE AS FOLLOWS

- As each group gives their report, write down their main points on the blackboard or flipchart.
- The reports from the groups will include the following points:
  - ✓ The majority of workers in cutflower farms are women
  - ✓ Women often work in harvesting and grading sections of the flower farms
  - ✓ Very few women are employed in upper cadre jobs
  - ✓ Women in cutflower farms encounter problems relating to the duties assigned to them and their gender
  - ✓ Women should enjoy all the freedoms and rights enjoyed by men workers.
  - ✓ Women are often employed on seasonal and temporary contracts.



*The majority of workers on flower farms are women. Are their special needs considered and taken care of?*



### **THEN CARRY ON TO POINT OUT:**

There are also other freedoms and rights that are set to protect women workers. These include:

- **Maternity:**
  - ✓ Women should be entitled to a minimum of 12 weeks maternity leave with pay and medical benefit.
  - ✓ Women should also get time off to nurse young babies with pay.
  - ✓ Employers are prohibited from dismissing women while they are on maternity leave.
  - ✓ The special circumstances of pregnant and nursing women must be considered when arranging overtime.
  - ✓ Women should not be made to carry out work which can affect their health before and after maternity.
  - ✓ The ICC recommends that women casual workers enjoy the same maternity benefits as women on permanent contracts.

- **Night work:**  
Women should not work at night except:
  - ✓ Women in managerial positions
  - ✓ Health/welfare service workers
  - ✓ Unforeseen and exceptional situations
  - ✓ National emergencies
  
- **Ergonomic problems:**  
Assignment of women in manual lifting of heavy weights should be limited. The maximum weight assigned to a woman worker should be substantially less than that permitted for adult male workers. Similarly, work requiring long standing and is repetitive should be minimised.
  
- **Pregnancy tests:**  
Pregnancy and genetic tests are not allowed at the time of recruitment.
  
- **Sexual harassment:**  
Women must not be subjected to sexual harassment of any snature.  
*(Trainer's Note: This topic is covered separately in Module Two)*



*Women workers enjoy the same rights and freedoms as men. But until women are willing to speak up, and elect union officials who will represent their rights fairly, they will not get them.*

## **EQUALITY OF TREATMENT**

### **SESSION ONE: EQUALITY OF TREATMENT**

**To sensitise workers on their right to equal treatment and entitlements as workers irrespective of sex, religion, ethnic or other differences**

### **SESSION TWO: SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

**To initiate discussions on sexual harassment with the view to eliminating its practice in cutflower farms**



# MODULE 2

## SESSION ONE

### EQUALITY OF TREATMENT



#### AIM

To sensitise workers on their right to equal treatment and entitlements as workers irrespective of sex, religion, ethnic or other differences.



#### TIME

One and half hour distributed as follows:

- Opening and climate setting 10 mins
- Content 30 mins
- Case study 30 mins
- Processing of case studies 15 mins
- Closing comments 5 mins

#### METHOD

- Open discussions
- Lecturettes
- Case study
- Exchange of experiences



#### MATERIALS AND TRAINING AIDS

- ILO Conventions
- A copy of the Collective Bargaining Agreement for the farm or industry
- The International Code of Conduct for the Production of Cutflowers
- National Constitution and labour laws
- Illustrations
- Stationery
- Blackboard or flipchart





Begin by attempting to gauge the understanding of participants of the term **equal treatment**.

1. Ask them the question:

What do you understand by the term equal treatment?

The answer may include:

- ✓ Equal pay for equal or similar work
  - ✓ Equal enjoyment of rights, freedoms and privileges
  - ✓ Fair play for all
2. Discuss if incidents of unequal treatment exist on the farm.  
If they exist, ask whether the trade union is aware about their existence.



## **THEN LEAD THE DISCUSSIONS AND ACTIVITIES AS FOLLOWS:**

### **① EQUAL TREATMENT OF ALL WORKERS**

Equality of treatment and non-discrimination in the workplace are provided by:

- ILO Convention no. 100: Equal remuneration for men and women workers for work of equal value, and Convention no. 111: Equality of treatment and opportunities.
- ILO Recommendations no. 111: Principles to be observed in formulating national policies on prevention of discrimination in employment.
- National Constitution

The above provisions prevent discrimination on the basis of:

- Sex (whether man or woman)
- Age
- Ethnic origin
- Colour and creed
- Marital status
- Political opinion
- Religious beliefs
- Social background



## ② EQUAL ACCESS

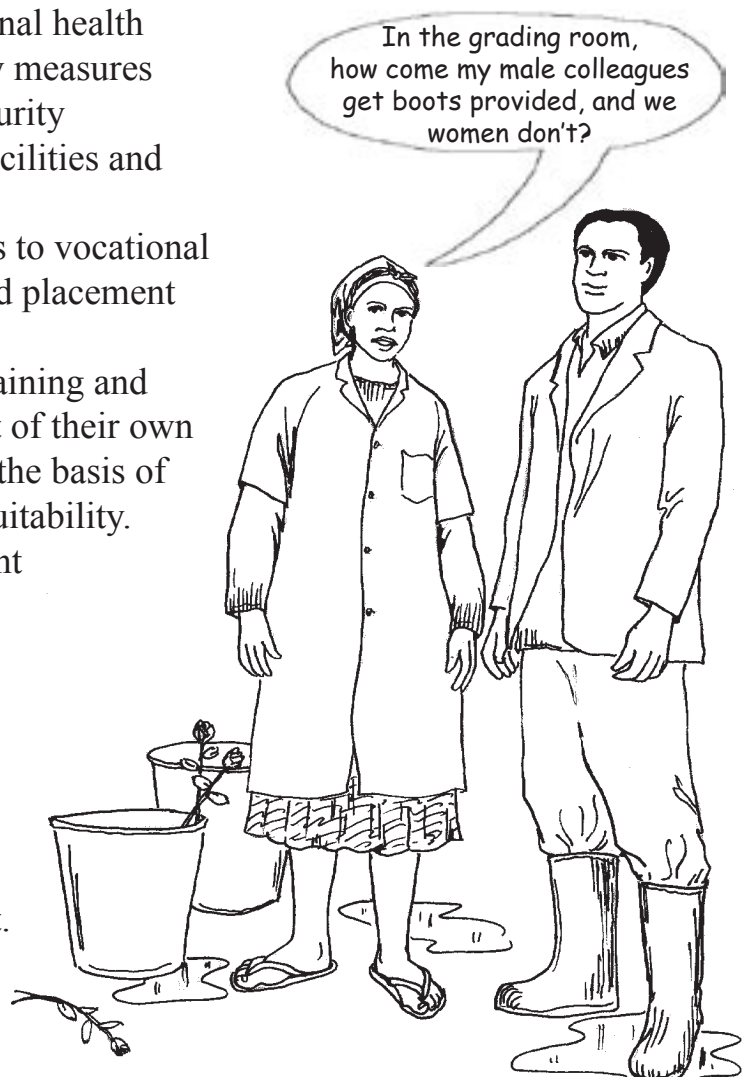
All workers are entitled to equal access to:

- Job recruitment, probation and confirmation
- Training opportunities
- Promotion and job advancement

## ③ EQUAL TREATMENT FOR WOMEN WORKERS

Women workers are entitled to equal access to employment opportunities and treatment as their male counterparts. These include:

- Equal remuneration (wage and benefits) for work of equal value.
- Equal working conditions, including:
  - ✓ Working hours
  - ✓ Rest periods
  - ✓ Annual holidays with pay
  - ✓ Occupational health and safety measures
  - ✓ Social security
  - ✓ Welfare facilities and benefits
- Equal access to vocational guidance and placement services.
- Access to training and employment of their own choice on the basis of individual suitability.
- Advancement according to individual character, experience, ability and diligence.
- Security of employment.



#### ④ ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICES

The field branch officials of the trade union should keep continuous watch over discriminatory practices. This should include:

- ✓ Receiving complaints on discriminatory practices
- ✓ Promoting public understanding



#### A CASE STUDY

A woman agronomist was working in the seed propagation department of Cuteflora Company Ltd. She was not a trade union member. Her male colleagues refused to give her field assignments where she could gain work experience and use her agronomic knowledge. Instead she was just kept at the office on routine paperwork.

Finally, after she complained on a number of occasions to the management, she was sent out on field assignments. Because of her limited work experience, she was kept on a lower salary grade than most of her colleagues who received promotions. She was also refused sponsorship for further training abroad (a MSc), although in terms of her qualifications and number of years' service, she should have been selected.

She eventually decided to leave the job and join another organisation.



#### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Did the employer in any way violate the rights of the woman worker? If yes, list them. If not, give reasons.
2. What options did the woman worker have to protect her rights?
3. What could the trade union have done to protect the rights of the woman worker? What were the limitations?
4. What do we learn from this case study?



## CONCLUSION

- All workers are entitled to equal opportunity and treatment at the workplace. Capability and experience should be the only considerations in rewarding workers.
- Though the majority of workers in the flower industry are women, they are often employed on casual terms. They therefore do not enjoy the same benefits eg. pension schemes and housing, that their male colleagues enjoy.
- Women rarely occupy management or decision-making positions in flower farms.
- Incidents of sexual harassment are known to occur in flower farms.
- It is therefore important to lay special emphasis on women workers when addressing the right to equal opportunity and treatment.
- Unequal opportunity and treatment is illegal and goes against the rights and freedom of the worker.
- The International Code of Conduct for the production of cut flowers is against practices of unequal opportunity and treatment.
- A cutflower farm practicing unequal opportunity and treatment cannot, therefore, be allowed to join the ICC implementation initiatives.
- Workers have a duty to report to trade union representatives in the event of occurrence of unequal opportunity and treatment Spractices.
- All workers are entitled to an environment free from physical harassment and mental torture, especially for women workers, is not allowed.



*The majority of flower farm workers are women. It is important therefore that women workers know their rights to equal opportunity and treatment.*

# MODULE

## SESSION TWO

# 2

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT



### AIM

To initiate discussions on sexual harassment with the view of eliminating its practice in cutflower farms.



### TIME

45 minutes

### METHOD

- Open discussions
- Exchange of experiences



### MATERIALS AND TRAINING AIDS

- ILO Conventions nos. 100 and 111
- A copy of the Collective Bargaining Agreement for the farm or industry
- The International Code of Conduct for the Production of Cutflowers
- National Constitution and labour laws
- Stationery

## CREATION OF AN ENVIRONMENT FREE FROM SEXUAL HARASSMENT

### DECLARATION:

*“Flower companies must put in place a policy, and measures to prevent and facilitate the reporting of cases of sexual harassment”<sup>1</sup>*

### WHAT IS SEXUAL HARASSMENT?

*(Trainer: Discuss with participants)*

It is repeated/unwanted verbal or physical advances of a sexual nature or meant to achieve a sexual outcome. It may be sexually explicit derogatory statements or sexually discriminative remarks by someone in the workplace.

There are two different ways<sup>2</sup> in which sexual harassment can present itself:

- a) **Quid pro quo** – this refers to sexual harassment that sets the granting of sexual favours as conditions for reward of job benefits. The offending person is usually someone in a position of influence or power over the harassed person’s employment or job benefits. The offending person may be the employer or the employer’s agent.
- b) **Hostile environment** – This refers to conduct of a sexual nature at the workplace that creates a hostile or unpleasant environment for the harassed worker.



<sup>1</sup> The declaration is adopted from the “National Code of Practice for Exporters”, Agricultural Ethics Assurance Association of Zimbabwe, 27 March 2001.

<sup>2</sup> Source: Supreme Court of the USA

## COMMON FORMS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Following are common forms of sexual harassment in the workplace:

**a) Verbal or spoken**

This occurs when dirty or obscene language is directed at a worker that has heavy sexual content. It may take the form of jokes, comments, abuse or name-calling. It is the most common form of sexual harassment. Other examples are:

- Persistent pestering
- Threat of non-renewal of employment contracts
- Promises of promotion
- Demotion threats
- Promises of light duty assignment
- Threats of heavy duty assignment

**b) Physical contact**

This form of sexual harassment occurs when the offender commits an act of physically contacting sexually sensitive body parts of the victim. It may be the case when the offender fondles or tickles the victim against her/his wishes. On cutflower farms, a common place would be the greenhouse.

**c) Visual exposure**

It occurs when the victim is exposed to pornographic materials (pictures, drawings, artefacts, etc) with the intention of sending a sexually oriented message against the victim's consent or expressed interest.

## HOW COMMON IS SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE FLOWER FARMS?

There are no statistics to prove the extent of sexual harassment on flower farms. Trade unions, however, have rated sexual harassment as a major concern. In a study<sup>3</sup> by an agricultural and plantation workers' union in Eastern Africa, 63% of the women interviewed reported that they had been subjected to one or more of the forms of sexual harassment. The harassment is also repeated very regularly. 64% of the victims reported that they had been harassed at least on a weekly basis.

### SEXUAL HARASSMENT VICTIMS

These include:

- a) Women working in low calibre jobs e.g. manual work
- b) Casual workers
- c) Migrant workers

### THE OFFENDERS

According to the sexual harassment study, the offenders (in order of intensity) include:

- a) Superintendents
- b) Field assistants
- c) Supervisors
- d) Fellow workers
- e) Clerks
- f) Managers

### WHEN DOES SEXUAL HARASSMENT TAKE PLACE?

- At the time of selection for employment or promotion
- During renewal of contracts
- During disciplinary processes
- At the time of granting vocational leave or leave of absence



- At work allocation
- During transportation of workers
- In isolated, crowded or dark workplaces e.g. in the greenhouse

## **EFFECTS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

The major effects of sexual harassment fall into three areas:

- a) **Effects on health:**
  - Emotional and psychological stress
  - The risk of contracting sexually transmitted diseases, including the fatal HIV/AIDS
  - The risk of physical injury
- b) **Socio-cultural effects:**
  - Undermining the dignity and reputation of the victim
  - Poor work relationships
  - Poor work morale and fear
  - Possible marital problems
- c) **Economic effects:**
  - Poor work performance
  - Possible loss of job
  - Loss of reputation of the company
  - Cost of legal proceedings against the offender

## **PROBLEMS RELATED TO REPORTING OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Cases of sexual harassment are rarely reported because of:

- a) Fear of repercussions.
- b) Social stigmatisation.
- c) The superior to whom the victim should report could also be an offender.
- d) Lack of a proper mechanism for reporting.
- e) Matters to do with sexuality are treated with absolute secrecy.

## RECOMMENDED ACTIONS TO STOP SEXUAL HARASSMENT PRACTICES

Sexual harassment goes against the principle of equality of treatment for all workers, and therefore the trade union should push for firm measures against the practice.



However, cutflower farms that employ:

- ✗ More women than men in low-calibre jobs
  - ✗ Few women at the supervisory level
  - ✗ Many casual workers who have no job security and are therefore vulnerable to exploitation
- ... will find it difficult to totally banish sexual harassment from the workplace.

**The following measures are recommended to address the problem of sexual harassment in the flower farms:**

- Companies should come up with a declaration that sexual harassment is strictly prohibited. They should further define the meaning of sexual harassment.
- A clear procedure for reporting sexual harassment cases should be put into place and a contact person designated.
- Establish women's committees and clearly define their roles.
- All workers should have an employment contract, thus giving job security and making them less vulnerable to sexual harassment.
- The employment contract should clearly spell out penalties for sexual harassment, and these should include sacking of the offender.
- A clear and transparent system for recruitment, promotion, payment of salaries etc must be put into place.
- The trade union and management should put in place an intensive awareness campaign against sexual harassment together with training programmes for workers to encourage openness on the subject.
- Establish a counselling and support programme for the victims.

## **WAGE ENTITLEMENT**

**To make participants understand their right to  
payment of wages**



# MODULE 3

## WAGE ENTITLEMENT



### AIM

To make participants understand their right to payment of wages



### TIME

60 minutes

### METHOD

- Lecturettes
- Guided discussions
- Group activity
- Exchange of experiences



### MATERIALS AND TRAINING AIDS

- ILO Convention no. 99: Minimum wage fixing for workers in the agricultural sector
- ILO Recommendation no.89: Guidelines for fixing minimum wages
- National labour laws relating to wages
- A copy of the Collective Bargaining Agreement for the farm or industry
- Stationery
- Blackboard or flipchart





## HOW TO START THE SESSION:

It is important to gauge the existing situation with regard to wages and mode of payment in the particular farm.

Start by asking the following questions:

- What is meant by the term “wage”?
- What is the minimum wage applicable in the industry?
- How much money is the lowest paid workers earning in the farm?
- What is the minimum negotiated salary?
- When are salaries paid in the farm?
- Do you sometimes experience delays in the payment of salaries?
- Do you have a copy of your employment contract? (*this question should be answered by as many participants as possible*)
- In what form are wages paid (cash, cheque or kind)?
- How is bonus structured? Who is entitled to bonus payments?  
Is the trade union involved in determining bonus payment?



## THEN LEAD THE DISCUSSIONS AND ACTIVITIES AS FOLLOWS:

### DEFINITION OF “WAGE”

Wage is a *right* entitled to a worker and not a privilege given by the employer. It is an exchange for labour.

The following legal instruments guarantee this right:

- ILO convention No. 99 – Minimum wage-fixing machinery
- Minimum wage legislation such as “The Regulation of Wages and Conditions of Employment Act”
- Collective Bargaining Agreement

Wage is paid for work or services that are done on the following basis:

- ✓ Hourly
- ✓ Daily
- ✓ Weekly
- ✓ Monthly
- ✓ Piecework, temporary and contract

## THE MINIMUM WAGE IN THE CUTFLOWER SECTOR



### GROUP EXERCISE

(Trainer's Note: Confirm the minimum wage applicable to the agricultural/plantation sector in your country. Then give the following group exercise).



### AIM

To be able to estimate the adequate wage for the cutflower industry to be included in the CBA.

### GROUP COMPOSITION

Form small discussion groups.



### INSTRUCTIONS

Give the following instructions to group members:

1. Group members should appoint a leader and a reporter.
2. Groups should discuss the issues given and report in plenary.
3. The various reports will then be discussed in plenary and the main points summarised.



### DISCUSSION ISSUES

Write the following on the blackboard or flipchart for groups to follow:

1. Discuss your various needs which must be fulfilled in order to enable you to continue working the farm.
2. Estimate how much money will be required to meet those needs.

## WHAT SHOULD THE MINIMUM WAGE ALLOW THE WORKER TO DO?

The minimum wage should be enough to meet the basic needs of the worker and his/her family.

Basic needs include:

- ✓ Food
- ✓ Shelter (where housing is not provided by the employer)
- ✓ Clothing for self and family
- ✓ Water and energy (for cooking and lighting)
- ✓ Medical services for self and family
- ✓ Education for own children
- ✓ Transport

- The wage should provide some extra for the worker to use as he or she would like (this is called discretionary income).
- The wage must at least meet the legal or industry minimum set standards. Normally, the applicable wage negotiated under the collective bargaining agreement is higher than the legal minimum.



## MODE OF WAGE PAYMENT

- Wages must be paid in cash. (Here, cash includes encashable instruments such as cheques. Where wages are paid by cheque, the bank clearance procedures should not inconvenience the worker in terms of costs and time of receiving payment.)
- Wages must be paid directly to the worker.
- Wages must be paid promptly i.e. at the completion of the work period or piecework or according to the contract.
- Wages must be paid in full. Except for legal deductions such as taxes, social security and hospital insurance fund, no other deductions can be imposed on wages without the express permission of the worker.
- Wages must be paid during working hours.



## EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT

- All workers must have a legally valid written contract.
- The contract safeguards the worker from loss of pay in case of illness, disability and accidents.
- The contract must be signed by both the worker and employer.
- In case of dissolution of the contract, the notice period and terms should be identical for the worker and employer.
- The worker must be provided with a copy of the employment contract.
- Contracts must be written in a language that the worker can easily understand.

*Wages are an exchange for labour performed. Wages must be paid in cash, in full, promptly, and directly to the worker.*





## **WORKING HOURS**

**To assist workers to understand the importance of maintaining a healthy balance between time spent at work and relaxation**



# MODULE 4

## WORKING HOURS



### AIM

To assist workers to understand the importance of maintaining a healthy balance between time spent at work and relaxation.



### TIME

60 minutes

### METHOD

- Lecturettes
- Guided discussions
- Group activity
- Case studies



### MATERIALS AND TRAINING AIDS

- ILO Conventions
- National laws relating to working time
- A copy of the Collective Bargaining Agreement for the farm or industry
- Records of production
- Illustrations
- Stationery
- Blackboard or flipchart



## HOW TO START THE SESSION:

Begin by establishing the existing situation with regard to the working week. The following questions could assist:

1. How many hours do you normally work in a day?
2. How many hours of overtime do you work in a normal week?
  - Does the employer force workers to work overtime?
  - At what rate are you paid overtime?
3. How does the bonus affect working hours and overtime?

Then proceed by giving the following group exercise:



### GROUP EXERCISE

#### AIM

To establish how far workers understand the issues relating to working hours and overtime.

#### GROUP COMPOSITION

Form small discussion groups. Participants should be divided randomly into groups of between 5 and 7.



#### INSTRUCTIONS

Give the following instructions to group members:

1. Group members should appoint a leader and a reporter.
2. Groups should discuss the issues given and report in plenary.
3. The various reports will then be discussed in plenary and the main points summarised.

### DISCUSSION ISSUES

In each small group:

1. Discuss the reasons in favour of and those against overtime.
2. Discuss under what conditions an employer can force a worker to work overtime.
3. At what rate should overtime work be paid?
4. Recommend maximum hours a worker should work overtime in a week.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

### **SESSION ONE:**

#### **HEALTH AND SAFETY: AN INTRODUCTION**

**To create awareness of OHS issues among workers in the cutflower industry**

### **SESSION TWO:**

#### **AMENITIES FOR A HEALTHY AND SAFE WORKPLACE**

**To create awareness of the basic OHS facilities necessary in the cutflower industry**

### **SESSION THREE:**

#### **TEMPERATURES**

**To sensitise workers on the effects of extreme temperatures on their health and safety**

### **SESSION FOUR:**

#### **OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY CONTROL MEASURES**

**To create awareness of the importance of putting into place adequate OHS control measures and procedures in cutflower farms**





# MODULE 5

## SESSION ONE

### HEALTH AND SAFETY: AN INTRODUCTION



#### AIM

To create awareness of OHS issues among workers in the cutflower industry.

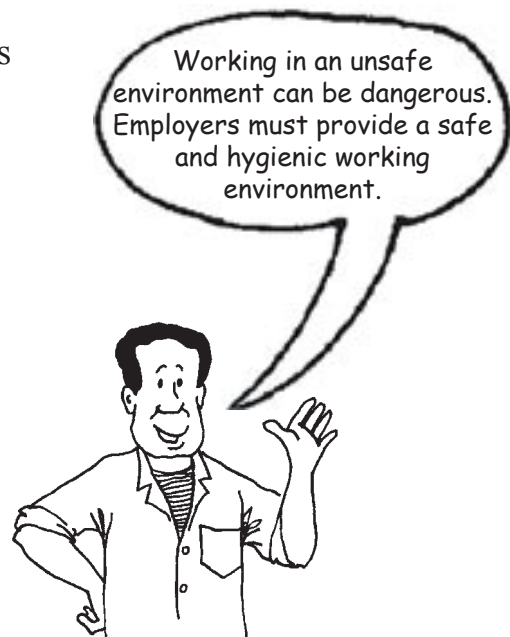


#### TIME

45 minutes

#### METHOD

- Open discussions
- Lecturettes
- Group work
- Demonstration visits
- Case study
- Exchange of experiences



#### MATERIALS AND TRAINING AIDS

- ILO convention no. 129: Maintenance of a system of labour inspection in agriculture
- A copy of the Collective Bargaining Agreement for the farm or industry
- The International Code of Conduct (ICC) for the Production of Cutflowers
- National health and safety laws and standards
- Illustrations
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and OHS equipment
- Stationery, chalk, felt pens
- Blackboard or flipchart
- Special OHS training material



## HOW TO START THE SESSION

1. The session may start by finding out from the participants the current occupational health and safety situation on the farm where they work.

Ask the following guiding questions:

- ✓ Are the workers aware of the existence of OHS committees on the farm? Do they take part in the activities of the committee?
- ✓ What are the OHS problems the participants are aware of on the farm?
- ✓ Are workers taken for medical examinations?
- ✓ Are workers protected from hazards?
- ✓ Has the company employed a fulltime safety officer?
- ✓ Have you seen a government OHS inspector in your workplace?

2. Then lead the discussions and activities as follows:

## THE HAZARDS FACED BY WORKERS IN THE CUTFLOWER INDUSTRY

**A hazard is something that can cause ill health, injury or death. The hazards faced by workers can be classified as follows:**

### MECHANICAL HAZARDS

These are caused by:

- Unguarded machinery moving parts
- Transport vehicles
- Sharp objects (knives, nails, de-thorning machines, sorting machines, etc)
- Pressure bursts/leakage

### PHYSICAL HAZARDS

These are caused by:

- Impulse noise
- Poor electrical installation
- Slippery floors
- Floors with debris

- Very low or very high temperatures
- Dust
- Poor lighting and
- Vibrations

## **ERGONOMIC HAZARDS**

*(Definition: Ergonomic hazards can give rise to damage of the body muscles and/or skeleton)*

These include:

- Manual handling of heavy loads
- Poor work posture
- Long hours of work — Note that there a direct relationship between long working hours and industrial accidents
- Repetitive and strenuous work
- Standing too long e.g. grading work

## **WORK ORGANISATION HAZARDS**

- Poor housekeeping
- Casual labour  
*(Trainer: emphasise that casualisation of labour is a major bottleneck to unionisation in the industry)*
- Night shifts
- Isolated work
- Working long hours without a break

## **BIOLOGICAL HAZARDS**

These are hazards resulting from contact with living organisms, which include:

- Bacteria
- Snakes
- Fungi
- Insect stings
- Attack by animals
- Viruses e.g.HIV/AIDS
- Plants e.g. thorns, pollen, etc.

## CHEMICAL HAZARDS

These include:

- Herbicides
- Insecticides
- Fungicides
- Growth regulators

*(Trainer's note: inform the participants that chemical hazards will be dealt with in more details in module six)*

## PSYCHO-SOCIO HAZARDS

These are hazards associated with:

- Low salaries
- Sexual harassment
- Denial of training opportunities and promotion
- Low esteem

### WHY ARE WORKERS UNWILLING TO TAKE ACTION DESPITE ALL THESE HAZARDS?



#### OPEN DISCUSSION

Ask participants the following questions and let them discuss the reasons under your guidance. Do not lecture the reasons listed below.

1. Why are workers unwilling to take action on Occupational Health and Safety even when they know the risks?  
*(Possible answers are:*
  - *Workers are unwilling to take individual action for fear of losing their jobs.*
  - *Women are not actively participating in trade union activities although they are exposed to the risks.*
  - *Ignorance.*
  - *Under-reporting.*
  - *Inadequate labour inspectors.*
  - *Corruption/conflict of interest.*
  - *Victimisation)*
2. Some workers resist safe practices in the workplace. What should be done in such cases?



## CONCLUSION

- There are many hazards facing workers in the cutflower industry.
- It is the duty of the company to provide safe and healthy workplaces.
- Workers have a duty to report cases of unsafe and unhygienic work environment to their trade union representatives.
- The company should provide workers with time off to attend OHS training.



*Among the common hazards on flower farms are those involving the use of chemicals and equipment: Are safety procedures, equipment maintenance and protective clothing adequate at your workplace?*



# MODULE 5

## SESSION TWO

### AMENITIES FOR A HEALTHY AND SAFE WORKPLACE



#### Aim

To create awareness of the basic OHS facilities necessary in the cutflower industry.



#### Time

45 minutes

#### Method

- Open discussions
- Lecturettes
- Group work
- Demonstration visits
- Case study
- Exchange of experiences

#### Materials and training aids



- ILO convention no. 110: Conditions of employment of plantation workers
- A copy of the Collective Bargaining Agreement for the farm or industry
- The International Code of Conduct (ICC) for the Production of Cutflowers
- National health and safety laws and standards
- Illustrations
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and OHS equipment
- Stationery
- Blackboard or flipchart



A healthy and safe working environment is supported by the provision of a certain standards of amenities. The amenities include clean drinking water, sanitary facilities, housing, education and medical facilities, and social and recreational facilities.

### **CLEAN DRINKING WATER**

- Large quantities of clean drinking water should be provided during working hours.
- The water should be safe from contamination by pesticides and other farm impurities.
- Workers are encouraged to take adequate drinking water at all times.
- At no time should workers drink water from the irrigation system or stored in pesticides containers.

*Are there enough toilet facilities for the workers,  
and are they separated for women and men?  
Are they close enough to working places?  
Are they supplied with toilet paper, soap  
and clean water?*





## TOILETS

- Toilets must be provided close to the workplace.
- The toilets should be separate for male and female workers and clearly marked “male” and “female”.
- The toilets should be clean.
- The toilets must provide necessary privacy i.e. with doors and solid walls.
- Toilet paper and washing water should be available.

## RESTROOMS AND CANTEENS

- Sufficient restrooms and canteens should also be provided.
- The restrooms/canteens should have cooking, eating and storage facilities for food and drinks.
- The restrooms/canteens should be strictly separated from the working area. A distance of at least 100 metres should be observed between restrooms and workplaces.

## SHOWERS

- Workers must be provided with showers to enable them to wash as soon as they stop working.
- Workers who come into contact with chemical pesticides should not wait until they take a shower at home.
- The shower cubicles should offer privacy.
- Showers should have adequate supply of clean water.
- Showers should be separate for male and female workers and clearly marked “male” and “female”.

## WASHING FACILITIES

- Working clothes must be washed at the workplace by the company and NEVER at home.
- For this reason, washing areas should be provided by the company.
- The washing facilities should have adequate clean water.
- The company should also provide washing detergents.

## PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

- The company must also provide workers with suitable and clean working clothes free of charge.
- Working clothes are to be washed by the company in order to avoid contamination.
- The company should also provide convenient changing rooms.
- Working clothes should NEVER be mixed with home clothes.
- PPE should NEVER be taken home.



### GROUP ACTIVITY

The trainer should display an assortment of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and go through an exercise of identifying the equipment and its use. A practical demonstration of wearing the PPE should be done in the session. In case there are no PPE to use in demonstration, use photographs to explain the PPE and their application.

*Work clothes should be washed at work, and home clothes at home. To avoid cross-contamination, never wash the two together.*



## HOUSING

- Flower companies should provide reasonable housing to their employees.
- The conventional house is described in ILO convention No. 110 as follows:
 

*“The structural standards and infrastructure must be such as to provide healthy and restful living conditions.”*
- If the company is unable to provide direct housing, it can give the workers housing allowance over and above the wages and salaries. Such allowances should be enough to rent a house of the same standards as those provided on the farm.
- Residences should be located at least 200 metres from the flower fields.
- The company should provide transportation free of charge to and from the residences for all workers needing transportation.
- Housing infrastructure must be provided. These include clean water, toilets and ventilation.

## MEDICAL FACILITIES

- Workers must be provided with free medical care and advice within the company premises.
- Regular medical examinations and check-up must be carried out by a qualified physician at the company’s expense.
- In carrying out the examinations, medical ethics must be strictly observed.
- Complete, continuously updated documentation and statistics are to be kept for sickness, accidents, near misses and absence due to work-related sicknesses.
- At least two persons must be trained at every site on first aid. First aid facilities must also be provided at every site.
- Appropriate medical attention and first aid must be assured for emergencies and accidents.

## EDUCATION FACILITIES

- Companies should take the responsibility for the provision of education for the children of workers registered with the company.
- Provision of day care facilities inside or outside the company premises is highly encouraged.
- Provision of educational facilities include availability of schools on the company premises or transportation to the nearest public schooling facilities

## SOCIAL AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

- The company should support and encourage social and cultural projects in cooperation with the neighboring communities.
- In supporting social and recreational facilities, the interest of women workers should be taken into special consideration.



## CONCLUSION

Cutflower farms need to be aware of their occupational health and safety obligations to the workers. Provision of amenities for a healthy and safe workplace is reflected in the presence of the following facilities:

- ✓ Clean water for drinking, washing and domestic use
- ✓ Sanitation
- ✓ Housing
- ✓ Medical
- ✓ Education, and
- ✓ Social and recreation

If the workers are aware of non-existence of these facilities, they should report to the union representatives.

# MODULE 5

## SESSION THREE

### TEMPERATURES



#### AIM

To sensitise workers on the effects of extreme temperatures on their health and safety.

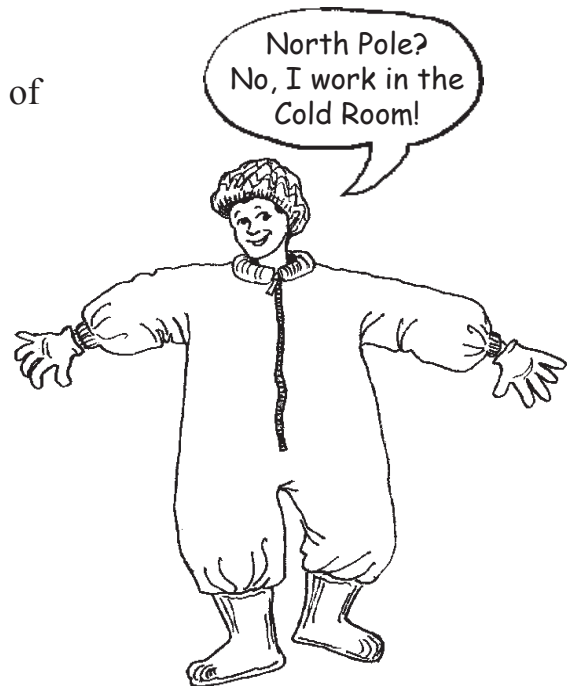


#### TIME

45 minutes

#### METHOD

- Open discussions
- Lecturettes
- Group work
- Demonstration visits
- Case study
- Exchange of experiences



#### MATERIALS AND TRAINING AIDS

- ILO conventions
- A copy of the Collective Bargaining Agreement for the farm or industry
- The International Code of Conduct (ICC) for the Production of Cutflowers
- National health and safety laws and standards
- Illustrations
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and OHS equipment
- Stationery
- Blackboard or flipchart



## TEMPERATURE

Workers in the cutflower farms work in extreme temperatures. There are those workers who work in very hot areas and there are those who work in areas with extremely low temperatures. The health and safety of a worker can be affected by either of the two situations.

## HOT TEMPERATURES

- Hot temperature condition is a real threat to the health and safety of workers.
- Temperature conditions refer not only to heat but also humidity. Humidity is the amount of moisture in the air.
- The higher the humidity, the more dangerous heat is to health.
- The effect of heat on the body is also determined by the workload.



### GROUP DISCUSSION: SOURCES OF HOT TEMPERATURES IN THE FLOWER FARM

Discuss in plenary the sources of high and humid temperatures in the flower farm.

Some of the sources include:

- ✓ Greenhouses (where, because of insulation, temperatures are artificially high and range from 30<sup>o</sup> C to 36<sup>o</sup>C). Irrigation and spraying increase humidity in the greenhouses.
- ✓ Direct sunlight, especially in tropical countries.
- ✓ Equipment that produces heat e.g. boilers, furnaces, ovens, engines, etc.



### EFFECTS OF HOT TEMPERATURE CONDITIONS

Hot temperatures induce sweat which has the following effects:

- Performance is reduced
- Opens the skin pores thus accelerating dermal entry of chemicals into the body
- Fatigue and exhaustion

- Loss of concentration
- Inadequate blood circulation
- Dizziness and heat collapse (fainting)
- Cramps due to loss of body salt
- Heart strain
- Breathing problems
- Heat stroke (untreated this can cause death)
- Damage to vital organs (including brain, liver, heart and kidneys) if the victim survives a heat stroke
- Impotence in men
- Dehydration

- Hot temperatures conditions are especially severe when one is wearing PPE.
- Hot temperature conditions are also more tormenting to women, as they tend to sweat less.



## **COPING WITH HIGH TEMPERATURES CONDITIONS:**

### **ACCLIMATISATION**

- Acclimatisation refers to a natural body process of adjusting to hot temperature conditions.
- When the body acclimatises, the heart rate slows down, internal body temperature declines and sweating increases.
- Acclimatisation is built over time. The person must work in high temperatures for at least two hours a day for four to six consecutive days.
- Acclimatisation decreases rapidly when one is away from hot working conditions for only a short period of time.

## **CONTROL MEASURES**

Depending on the nature of the job, the worker should use common sense. The following measures should be taken by the company to protect workers from hot temperature conditions:

- Insulate and isolate the source of the heat.
- Provide heat reflecting shields or watercooled heat-absorbing panels to screen off heat.
- Install shades and shelters in the fields.
- Install and maintain appropriate ventilation in constructions and all vehicles used to transport workers.
- The company should allow workers to take frequent pauses, drink plenty of water and take salt tablets if possible.
- Reduce exposure to heat e.g. by having several people take turns doing the same job where heat is intense.
- Wear clothes to protect from exposure to heat, BUT only as a temporary or last resort.
- Demand that employers provide large quantities of clean drinking water and first aid treatment in the field.



## COLD TEMPERATURES



### GROUP DISCUSSION: SOURCES OF COLD TEMPERATURES IN THE FLOWER FARM

Discuss in plenary the sources of cold temperatures on the flower farm. Some of the sources include:

- ✓ Cold rooms where temperatures range from 2°C to 4°C
- ✓ Transport vehicles
- ✓ Natural weather conditions i.e. during the cold season.



### EFFECTS OF COLD TEMPERATURES

Cold temperatures can lead to the following conditions:

- Pneumonia
- Asthma
- Impotence in men
- Swollen feet
- Numbness
- Feverishness in pregnant women

### COPING WITH COLD TEMPERATURES

The problem of cold temperatures may be addressed by:

- Provision of special coveralls (the eskimo type) and gumboots
- Job rotation
- Provision of hot beverages
- Provision of hand gloves
- Frequent breaks

### IDEAL TEMPERATURES FOR LIGHT AND HEAVY WORK

AT 30 – 60% HUMIDITY	TEMPERATURE
LIGHT, ACTIVE WORK	15.5 – 19.5°C
HEAVY WORK	13 – 18°C

Source: IUF Workers Training Material



## CONCLUSION

- Prolonged exposure to extreme temperatures (heat and cold) can be harmful to the health and safety of the workers.
- In identifying and solving the problem of extreme temperatures, it is necessary to involve the workers. They should be asked questions such as:
  - ✓ Do you find it hot/cold at work?
  - ✓ Is it always too hot/cold at a particular time of the day, week, month or throughout the year?
  - ✓ Are there any problems with the ventilating system?
  - ✓ Do you find it too hot when using protective clothing in the field or dressed as eskimos in the cold room?
  - ✓ Do you know the effects of extreme temperatures on your health?

# MODULE 5

## SESSION FOUR

### OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY CONTROL MEASURES



#### AIM

To create awareness of the importance of putting into place adequate OHS control measures and procedures in cutflower farms.

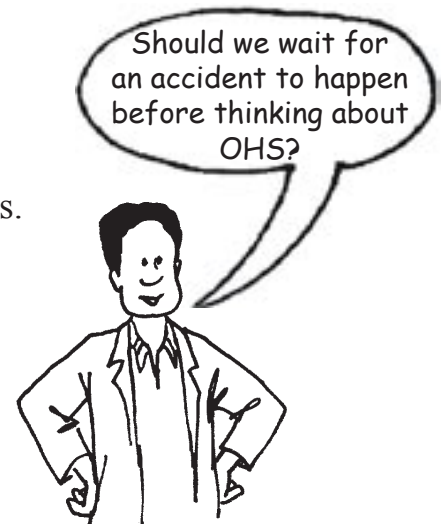


#### TIME

45 minutes

#### METHOD

- Open discussions
- Lecturettes
- Group work
- Demonstration visits
- Case study
- Exchange of experiences



#### MATERIALS AND TRAINING AIDS



- ILO convention nos. 155 and 161: Occupational safety and health — prevention of accidents
- A copy of the Collective Bargaining Agreement for the farm or industry
- The International Code of Conduct (ICC) for the Production of Cutflowers
- National health and safety laws and standards
- Illustrations
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and OHS equipment
- Stationery
- Blackboard or flipchart



## INTRODUCTION

The health and safety conditions of workers should be monitored regularly to ensure that they are kept to standards that enable the workers to lead a normal life.

## OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH, SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY

- The flower company together with the trade union shall establish a comprehensive occupational health, safety and environment policy.
- The policy must conform to ILO Convention nos. 155 and 161.
- The policy must also be consistent with internationally accepted health and safety standards.
- The policy must also be consistent with the national laws on occupational health and safety and environmental protection.
- The policy would give guidelines for the handling, storage, application and disposal of chemicals and their containers.
- The policy must express the company's commitment to the eradication of highly toxic chemical pesticides.
- The company's OHS policy should be translated into languages understood by the workers. It should also be accessible to all workers without any discrimination whatsoever.

## TRAINING

- Flower companies and trade unions must train workers and their representatives on health, safety and environmental matters.
- The company should also provide OHS information in a language simple enough to be understood by all workers.
- New employees, including temporary and subcontracted, must be given instructions on the risks at the workplace.

## WORK ORGANISATION

- All work on the flower farm should be organised in way that does not endanger the safety and health of any worker.
- High-risk areas must be specially indicated and supervised.  
**Trainer's note:** Discuss the high-risk areas in the farm. These may include:

- ✓ Spraying
- ✓ Storage
- ✓ Construction and maintenance
- ✓ Moving machine parts
- All accidents, including near misses, must be recorded in a **Risk Register.**

*It is part of OHS policy that proper records are kept of medical examinations for all workers. This is just as important as keeping records of any other part of the farm's operations.*



## HEALTH MONITORING

- All workers must be regularly examined for pesticides levels in their body.
- All workers must take such medical examinations at the beginning and end of their employment. The examination must include a **cholinesterase** test.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Cholinesterase is one of the natural chemical substances called neurotransmitters present in the body which keep our nervous system functioning in a healthy way. Organophosphorous (OP) pesticides reduce the body's natural production of this substance. The cholinesterase test measures the quantity of cholinesterase in a worker's body and if a reduction from a previously higher level is found, then pesticide exposure is the most probable cause. If the reduction is drastic, the body's health is affected.

- People working in the spraying, mixing, storing and handling must be medically examined every 3 months.
- Workers in cultivation, harvesting and finishing sections must take medical examinations once a year.
- Findings from the medical examination must be communicated to the worker concerned in a manner and language that he/she understands. The procedure for releasing the findings must also follow medical ethics.
- A complete documentary record of medical examinations must be kept.

### **MAINTENANCE OF PLANT AND EQUIPMENT**

- Spraying equipment must be suitable for the work posture.
- The spray equipment must also be properly calibrated.
- Equipment must receive regular maintenance
- The equipment must be tested and cleaned after every application.
- Plant and equipment comprising moving parts must be fitted with appropriate guards.

### **OHS COMMITTEES**

- The workers should form an independent Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Committee, whose members shall become part of the OHS Joint Committee.
- Membership of the OHS Joint Committee should comprise equal numbers of representatives from the management and the trade union.
- The Joint Committee may also co-opt government representatives involved in health, safety and environment and other specialists, including the improvement of working conditions educators.
- The committee's responsibility shall include, among others:
  - ✓ Receiving complaints on working conditions
  - ✓ Training and information dissemination
  - ✓ Development of OHS policy
  - ✓ Ensuring that workers and the company comply with the agreed OHS practices
  - ✓ Networking with other parties on OHS and other working conditions in the industry.



## CONCLUSION

- For occupational health and safety standards to be maintained on flower farms, they must be constantly monitored.
- Monitoring of OHS is a joint responsibility of the workers and the employers.
- At the bottom of maintenance of OHS standards is the need for doing things right.
- An OHS committee is an important organ for monitoring the health and safety of workers in cutflower farms.



*All workers on cutflower farms, not just sprayers and mixing personnel, must be monitored for health and safety.*



*Newspaper reports reflect the growing concern about pesticide use and finding healthier alternatives.*



## **CHEMICALS**

### **SESSION ONE:**

#### **UNDERSTANDING CHEMICAL PESTICIDES**

Basic knowledge of chemicals, especially pesticides, used in the cutflower industry

### **SESSION TWO:**

#### **PESTICIDE HAZARDS**

The inherent dangers related to the use of chemical pesticides

### **SESSION THREE:**

#### **PROTECTION AND CONTROL**

How to protect against chemical poisoning

### **SESSION FOUR:**

#### **FIRST AID**

Basic first aid information for all participants



# MODULE 6

## SESSION ONE

### UNDERSTANDING CHEMICAL PESTICIDES



#### AIM

To give participants basic knowledge of chemicals, especially pesticides, used in the cutflower industry.



#### TIME

60 minutes:

- |                               |            |
|-------------------------------|------------|
| ■ Opening and climate setting | 15 minutes |
| ■ Content                     | 45 minutes |

#### METHOD

- Open discussions
- Lecturettes
- Group work
- Demonstrations
- Case study
- Exchange of experiences



#### MATERIALS AND TRAINING AIDS

- ILO conventions nos. 13, 115, 136, 139 and 162: all dealing with protection of workers against specific risks, toxic and carcinogenic substances, ionising radiation etc.
- A copy of the Collective Bargaining Agreement for the farm or industry
- The International Code of Conduct for the Production of Cutflowers
- National environmental laws
- Illustrations
- Warning signs
- Specialised materials on chemicals
- Chemical containers
- Stationery
- Blackboard or flipchart

## HOW TO START THE SESSION:

1. The session may start by finding out from the participants whether they come into contact with pesticides in the normal course of their duties. This may be achieved as part of participants' introductions
2. Ask them to introduce themselves by stating:
  - ✓ Their full names
  - ✓ Where they work on the farm
  - ✓ Whether they come into contact with pesticides and how
  - ✓ Whether they know cases on the farm where workers have been poisoned by pesticides
3. Attract the attention of participants to the caution sign which should be displayed prominently in the training venue.
4. Then lead the discussions and activities as follows:

## INTRODUCTION

- There are millions and millions of cases of pesticide poisoning in the world every year. Many thousands of the people who are poisoned die or contract diseases that cannot be cured.
- Plantation workers are far more exposed to pesticides poisoning than other workers and the general public. Workers on cutflower farms are even more exposed to pesticides because of the intensive use of the products in the farm.
- Pesticides are made to kill insects, weeds and rodents. But they can also kill animals, human beings and other untargeted organisms.
- There is the tendency to use much more chemicals than necessary to control pests.
- Chemical pesticides are manufactured by powerful multinational companies. These companies are very aggressive in lobbying for and marketing their products.
- There are powerful lobby groups advocating for the controlled and safe use of chemical pesticides. It is, however, going to be a long time before the use of chemicals is absent from the farms.
- It is important that workers know that the dangers related to the use of pesticides. It is also important to know how cases of pesticide poisoning should be handled if they occur.



## WHAT ARE PESTICIDES?

### BACKGROUND

- During World War I and World War II, certain chemicals called “gases” were developed to kill enemy soldiers. In those days, governments paid the companies that manufactured the chemicals.
- After the wars, companies continued to make the chemicals in different forms for use in agriculture to kill pests that were destroying crops.
- Agricultural pests include weeds, insects, rodents, fungi, etc.
- Up to this day, chemicals are used to fight the same pests.
- Pesticides need not always be made of industrial chemicals. There are pesticides made from organic materials which have proved to be as effective as those made from chemicals.

### CLASSIFICATION OF PESTICIDES

There are very many pesticides in use today. Pesticides are classified according to their use or the pest they are meant to kill. There are three common types of chemical:

- |                       |                      |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| ■ <b>Herbicides</b>   | Used to kill weeds   |
| ■ <b>Insecticides</b> | Used to kill insects |
| ■ <b>Fungicides</b>   | Used to kill fungi   |

*Note that fertilisers, though not designed to kill pests, are also chemicals. Like all chemicals, they should be handled with care.*

## FORMS OF CHEMICALS PESTICIDES

Chemicals come in three main forms:

- **Solids** such as pastes, pellets, dust, and powder. Solid chemicals may be applied directly as solids. They can also be changed into other form (or reconstituted) depending on the intended use. Solids also include **fertilisers**.
- **Liquids** are the most common forms of chemicals in use. They are usually mixed with water and then sprayed.
- **Gases** are tiny particles resulting from pressure or heat on other forms of chemicals.

Chemicals can change from one form to another. They can also exist in one or more forms. For example:

- From liquid to vapour when spraying
- From solid to liquid when powder dissolves in water after mixing
- From solid to vapour through heating
- From solid to gas through burning



**WARNING!**  
**All forms of pesticides,**  
**without exception,**  
**are poisonous!**

## HOW PESTICIDES ENTER THE BODY

Chemical pesticides can enter the body through four main ways:

- ① **Through the skin** (also called *absorption*).  
 This is the most common entry point.
  - It happens when the worker mixes or sprays or come into contact with chemical pesticides without wearing protective clothing.
  - The pesticides enter the body through the pores that usually release sweat from the body. The chemicals, therefore, enter the body much faster when you are sweating.
  - Skin rashes, cuts and sores let pesticides into the body very fast and in large amounts. Piercing by thorns also lets pesticides into the body.

② **By swallowing** (also called *ingestion*)

Chemical pesticides can be swallowed into the body through:

- The food and drink taken into the fields and eaten there getting contaminated.
- The pesticides in the form of dust and vapour getting into the mouth and being swallowed with saliva.
- By incidents of storing pesticides in used containers of beverages (beer or soda bottles, etc).
- Pesticides on contaminated fingers or cigarettes which touch the lips can also be swallowed with saliva.
- Eating with hands which have not been properly washed after being exposed to pesticides.
- Deliberate swallowing as in the case of suicide attempts.
- Spraying chemicals near canteens.

③ **By breathing** (also called *inhalation*)

This occurs when the chemical pesticides are breathed into the body in the form of dust, fumes, gases or vapour.

④ **Through the eyes** (also called *ocular*)

This occurs mainly when the worker is mixing especially dust or vapour chemicals without wearing the face shield.



## WAYS IN WHICH THE WORKER IS EXPOSED TO CHEMICAL PESTICIDES

There are several ways in which the worker in the cutflower farm can be exposed to chemical pesticides. Some of the most common ones include:

- Mixing chemicals with bare hands.
- When spraying facing the wind direction.
- Sprayed chemicals drifting over people who are even far away from the spray area.
- Walking through freshly sprayed fields with exposed skin.
- Taking contaminated clothes home.
- Eating, drinking and smoking in the fields.
- Drinking contaminated water.
- Eating contaminated food.
- Using chemical containers for storing water and food.
- Deliberate treating of wounds using chemical pesticides.
- Smelling a contaminated flower.



### GROUP EXERCISE

#### MAPPING CHEMICAL RISKS ON THE FARM

#### INSTRUCTIONS

This exercise should be done in small groups. The groups should discuss all the questions if there is enough time available for the exercise. If the time is not enough, the questions may be shared evenly. Ensure that each question is answered. Groups may be selected at random.



#### TIME

20 minutes

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Which locations on the farm are workers exposed to risks of chemical poisoning? List the location in the order of risk intensity.
2. How are chemicals used in those locations?



3. What different ways are chemicals entering the body during work?
4. What actions do you recommend for the union or the health and safety committee to take in order to make the locations safer?

### **PROCESSING OF GROUP ACTIVITY**

Groups should present the output from the group exercise in turn in plenary. Other participants may make contributions and a consensus reached.



### **CONCLUSION**

- The use of chemical pesticides is, for now, part and parcel of the working environment on Cutflower farms.
- All workers on the cutflower farm are exposed to chemical pesticides either directly or indirectly. Some workers, because of the nature of their work, are more exposed than others.
- Pesticides are meant to kill the enemies of crops which include insects, weeds, fungi and rodents. Pesticides can also harm, or even kill, the workers who apply them.
- It is a basic duty of farm owners to make the working environment as safe as possible from chemical poisoning.
- It is the workers who suffer from chemical poisoning. It is their primary duty to do everything possible to avoid exposure to chemical poisoning. They also have an important duty to report to trade union representatives in the event of failure by management to provide protection against pesticide poisoning.
- Canteens must be located away from spraying places.



*Even in the grading room there is danger of contamination from pesticide residues. It is the right of every worker to be informed of the dangers and to protect him/herself from pesticide poisoning.*

# MODULE 6

## SESSION TWO

### PESTICIDE HAZARDS



#### AIM

To sensitise participants on the dangers related to the use of chemical pesticides.



#### TIME

One and a half hours distributed as follows:

- |   |            |
|---|------------|
| ■ Content                               | 30 minutes |
| ■ Group work                            | 30 minutes |
| ■ Processing of group work/case studies | 30 minutes |

#### METHOD

- Open discussions
- Lecturettes
- Group work
- Demonstrations
- Exchange of experiences



#### MATERIALS AND TRAINING AIDS

- ILO conventions nos. 13, 115, 136, 139 and 162: all dealing with protection of workers against specific risks, toxic and carcinogenic substances, ionising radiation etc.
- A copy of the Collective Bargaining Agreement for the farm or industry
- The International Code of Conduct for the Production of Cutflowers
- National environmental laws
- Illustrations
- Warning signs
- Specialised materials on chemicals
- Stationery
- Blackboard or flipchart

## INTRODUCTION

When we understand the hazards related to pesticide use, we can understand the importance of taking the right precautions against exposure to pesticides. We are also able to take timely and correct action in case of pesticide poisoning.

## THE EFFECTS OF PESTICIDES ON THE BODY

The effects of pesticides on the body generally depend on 7 factors:

- Toxicity of the chemical substance
- Quantities involved
- Duration of exposure
- Targeted organ
- State of health of the victim
- Route of entry
- Weather conditions

### ① Toxicity

Toxicity is the first measure of danger posed by a pesticide.

**Toxicity** is the ability of a chemical substance to cause harm or damage. Very toxic products are very dangerous. If they enter the body, they may cause extremely serious effects or even death.

### ② Quantity involved

The second measure of pesticide danger is **the amount** of pesticide that enters or comes into contact with the body. The larger the amount, the more severe the effects.

### ③ Duration of exposure

The third measure is the **length of time** the person is exposed to the pesticide. Exposure time is all the time between entry of the chemical substance into the body and receiving medical attention. The longer the time of exposure, the more severe the effects.

#### ④ Targeted organ

The pesticide may affect the **internal organs** of the body such as the brain, bones, blood, liver and eyes. Depending on the function of the organ, the following can happen:

- The organ may store the poison (also called the *toxin*) until it goes to another organ.
- The organ may neutralise the poison (e.g. the liver)
- The organ may remove the poison after it has been neutralised (e.g. the blood, bladder and kidneys)
- The organ may be unable to do any of the above and get destroyed by the poison.

The pesticide may have **local effects** on the parts of the body that come into direct contact with the pesticide. These include the skin, eyes, nose, and throat.

#### ⑤ State of health of the victim

A worker who was previously in poor health condition is likely to be more affected by chemical poisoning than a strong and healthy one.

#### ⑥ Route of entry

Pesticides enter the body through the skin, the lungs, the eyes and the mouth. The route of entry determines its effect. Entry through the skin for example, is different from entry through the eyes or swallowing.

#### ⑦ Weather conditions

When it is hot, body pores open wider and it is easier for the pesticide to enter the body through the skin. Similarly, windy conditions allow for increased effect of pesticide entry through breathing.



**EFFECT = TOXICITY + AMOUNT OF  
CONTAMINATION + TIME OF EXPOSURE +  
TARGETED ORGAN + STATE OF HEALTH OF  
THE VICTIM + ROUTE OF ENTRY + WEATHER  
CONDITIONS**

If a chemical is extremely toxic, but the amount of pesticide that enters the body is low and for a short time, it may have the same effect as a pesticide of low toxicity entering the body in large amounts over a long period of time. It is therefore a mistake to assume that one pesticide is less dangerous than another and therefore handle it less carefully.

## TYPES OF EFFECTS OF PESTICIDE POISONING

There are two types of chemical poisoning effects - Acute and Chronic.

### ① ACUTE EFFECTS

These are those effects which the victim feels relatively soon after being poisoned. There are three degrees of acute poisoning: mild, moderate and severe.



#### SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF MILD POISONING

- Headaches
- Dizziness
- General weakness
- Tiredness/Fatigue
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Diarrhoea
- Excessive sweating
- Blurry vision
- Chest pain
- Watery eyes and nose
- Salivation
- Muscle pains/cramps
- Skin rash
- Stomach ache



#### SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF MODERATE POISONING

- Unusual weakness
- Walking difficulties
- Talking difficulties
- Concentration difficulties
- Confusion
- Muscle twitching
- Small eye pupils



#### SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF SEVERE POISONING

- Unconsciousness
- Skin turns bluish colour
- Very tiny eye pupils
- Convulsions
- Breathing difficulties
- Frothing from nose and/or mouth
- Coma
- Involuntary urination and defecation
- Death



## CAUTION!

Mild poisoning symptoms can be accompanied, or quickly followed, by moderate symptoms e.g. dizziness plus talking difficulties. The worker can easily confuse mild symptoms for flu or the result of working in the sun. **Stop working immediately upon noticing any of the symptoms** and leave the work area.

## ② CHRONIC EFFECTS

These are effects seen or felt after repeated low exposure to pesticides. They may not appear until long after the exposure has ended, e.g. after the worker has retired. It is therefore difficult to connect the disease to pesticides or know when the poisoning happened. Some chronic effects are not curable.

## SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF CHRONIC POISONING

- Cancer
- Miscarriages
- Nausea
- Stillbirths
- Sterility and impotence in men
- Liver and bone damage
- Heart problems
- Brain damage
- Damage to the nervous system
- Asthma
- Emphysema

**NOTE: Some pesticides may have both acute and chronic poisoning effects.**

## CHEMICAL LABELLING

Chemical manufacturers are required by law to put a label on the containers of all chemicals including pesticides. The law further prohibits anybody from removing or interfering with the label in any way. The label should show, among other things:

- The active ingredient i.e. the chemical name.
- The classification of the chemical, especially if it is carcinogenic.
- Additional information on the safe use of the chemical.
- Danger signs indicating the level of toxicity (poison level) of the chemical.
- Shelf-life.

## PICTOGRAMS

Pictograms provide risk reduction information which covers the storage, use and disposal of pesticides. The pictograms are normally printed on the label.

Most countries of the world use the same pictograms. Some countries may, however, choose to use different pictures.



### **GROUP EXERCISE: READING THE PICTOGRAMS**

#### **INSTRUCTIONS**

Use the Pictograms poster that comes with this manual. Stick it on the wall so all participants can see it.

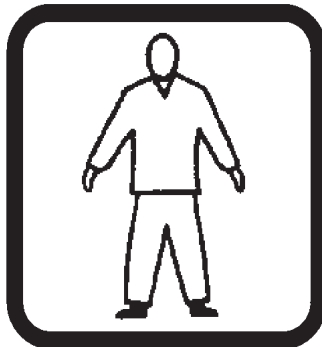
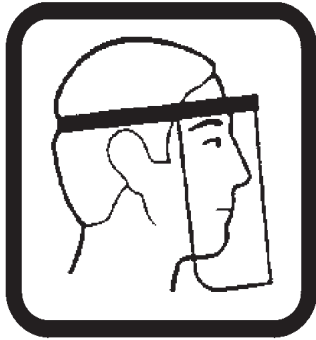
This exercise should be done in small groups and then in plenary. The groups should discuss each of the common pictograms and agree what each picture stands for. Each group should share their interpretation in plenary.

#### **TIME**

20 minutes



# PICTOGRAMS SEEN ON PESTICIDE LABELS





## CONCLUSION

Workers who come into contact with pesticides, whether they are mixers, sprayers, pickers, packers, storekeepers, etc should:

- Be trained on the dangers of pesticides.
- Be shown how to protect themselves as best as possible from being exposed to pesticides.
- Be given appropriate personal protective clothing.
- Be provided with adequate facilities to wash themselves and their clothes away from their homes.
- Have regular medical checkups to see if there are pesticides in their bodies.
- Be told what to do if they suspect that they have been poisoned.
- Have the necessary protection from the laws and the union to defend their rights to refuse to work with certain pesticides.
- Be provided with all information regarding chemicals before they use them.



# MODULE 6

## SESSION THREE

### PROTECTION AND CONTROL



#### AIM

To train participants on how to protect themselves against chemical poisoning.



#### TIME

60 minutes:

- |                      |            |
|----------------------|------------|
| ■ Content            | 30 minutes |
| ■ Group exercise     | 20 minutes |
| ■ Concluding remarks | 10 minutes |

#### METHOD

- Open discussions
- Lecturettes
- Group work
- Demonstrations
- Exchange of experiences



#### MATERIALS AND TRAINING AIDS

- ILO conventions Nos. 13, 115, 136, 139 and 162: all dealing with protection of workers against specific risks, toxic and carcinogenic substances, ionising radiation etc.
- A copy of the Collective Bargaining Agreement for the farm or industry
- The International Code of Conduct for the Production of Cutflowers
- National environmental laws
- Illustrations
- Specialised materials on chemicals
- Appropriate protective equipment
- Stationery
- Blackboard or flipchart

## INTRODUCTION

The employer is responsible for the protection of workers against chemical poisoning. However, chemical safety should be the concern of everyone working on the farm. Chemical safety should be approached with a view to eliminate or reduce one or more of the three main components of chemical hazards – toxicity, time of exposure and amount of chemicals.

## THREE WAYS OF PREVENTING OR CONTROLLING HAZARDS

### ① Eliminate use of dangerous chemicals altogether

This calls for elimination of all chemicals categorised as 1a and 1b in the World Health Organisation classification. It is the ideal way of preventing chemical poisoning.

### ② Use less and substitute

The second effective way to reduce chemical hazards is to use smaller amounts and less harmful substitutes. This means using minimum amount of chemicals necessary to do the job. It also means using less poisonous chemicals. This method has come to be known as Integrated Pesticides Management (IPM). IPM advocates for the use of pesticides only when it is absolutely necessary. It also advocates for the use of other methods of pest control.



### GROUP DISCUSSION

Discuss with participants the alternative ways of pest control. Some of the ways may include:

- Organic farming
- Rotating crops and increased crop varieties
- Introducing insects that are natural enemies of the pests (also called biological control).

### 3 Control

Where a chemical must be used, workers' exposure should then be reduced by putting in place effective control measures. These measures should include:

- Providing appropriate PPE
- Putting in place effective administration machinery
- Ensuring that plant and equipment being used are of the highest engineering standards.

## 13 WAYS TO REDUCE THE RISK OF EXPOSURE TO PESTICIDES:

1. Inform and train workers about the dangers and safe use of pesticides.
2. Reduce the amount and time of exposure/ rotate jobs.
3. Respect re-entry intervals.
4. Use appropriate protective equipment and clothing.
5. Wash with clean water and soap after working.
6. Wash any part of the body directly exposed to the pesticides.
7. Wash up before eating, drinking or going to the toilet.
8. Wash work clothes away from the home.
9. Store chemicals correctly.
10. Do not use old chemical containers for drinking or storing food or drink.
11. Properly dispose of all kinds of pesticides containers.
12. Trained first aiders, medical personnel and medical facilities should always be immediately available.
13. Observe strict personal habits while handling pesticides.

Wash your hands and face before eating, drinking, smoking or going to the toilet!



## 1. INFORM AND TRAIN WORKERS ABOUT THE DANGERS AND SAFE USE OF PESTICIDES

For all workers who come into contact with pesticides, provide training and information on the handling, use and their effects:

- Labels on chemical containers must never be removed.
- Labels and Manufacturers Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) must be provided to workers before use

## 2. REDUCE THE AMOUNT AND TIME OF EXPOSURE

- Do not spray pesticides for more than four hours.
- When the protective clothing is uncomfortable as a result of high temperatures or when exposure is frequent and high, rotate jobs.
- Avoid spraying when the temperatures are high.
- Avoid spraying when it is very windy.
- Use equipment that is in good mechanical and physical condition.
- Pregnant women and nursing mothers should never work with or be exposed to chemicals.
- Follow instructions on the label.

## 3. RESPECT RE-ENTRY INTERVALS

The amount of time people should stay away from fields or greenhouse after it has been sprayed with pesticide is called the re-entry interval. Re-entry interval is determined by the level of toxicity of the pesticide used. Very toxic chemicals, therefore, require longer re-entry intervals.

*(Trainer's note: Refer to the re-entry interval card and explain the colour coding for various levels of toxicity and re-entry requirements)*

- The re-entry interval must be displayed as soon as spraying has been completed.
- Never re-enter before the re-entry interval.
- At any rate, **never re-enter before the foliage has dried.**
- The supervisor is responsible for ensuring that re-entry time is observed.

Below is a picture of a typical re-entry interval notice seen on a greenhouse door.

*(Trainer's note: Discuss the following with participants)*

- What does the notice tell you?
- Is the information given **adequate**?
- Are there ways the notice could be **improved**?



#### **4. USE APPROPRIATE PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT AND CLOTHING**

*(Trainer's note: Refer to the various items of protective clothing)*

Protective clothing should include two sets of the following to ensure sufficient time for washing after each use:

Boots      Trousers      Long sleeved shirts      Rubber gloves  
Hats      Face masks      Overalls

##### **Protective equipment includes:**

Gloves      Respirators      Goggles      Water-tight suits  
Respirators must be changed as often as the instructions require, and not just when they turn colour.

#### **5. WASH WITH CLEAN WATER AND SOAP AFTER WORKING**

- The employer must provide proper washing and changing facilities close to the work place.
- The employer should also provide adequate water and soap every day.

#### **6. WASH ANY PART OF THE BODY DIRECTLY EXPOSED TO THE PESTICIDES**

- If a pesticide gets into the eyes, rinse them with clean water for 15 minutes. Remember to keep the eyelids open as you rinse the eyes.
- If a pesticide gets into the skin, wash the affected area with clean water and soap for 15 minutes.

#### **7. WASH UP BEFORE EATING, DRINKING, GOING TO THE TOILET OR SMOKING**

Always wash hands and face with soap and clean water before eating, drinking, going to the toilet or lighting up a cigarette.





*Protective clothing and equipment must be kept in good condition and washed before re-wearing. Find out and adhere to the recommended change interval for respirators/filters. Wash face and body thoroughly after every contact with chemicals, even if PPE is worn.*

## **8. WASH WORK CLOTHES AWAY FROM THE HOME**

- PPE should be washed by the company at designated company site only.
- Wash work clothes worn while working with pesticides before wearing them again.
- Never wash clothes worn while working with pesticides together with other clothes.

## **9. STORE CHEMICALS CORRECTLY**

- All chemicals must be stored in a securely locked place.
- Never store chemicals near food or animal feed.
- Never store chemicals in empty food or beverage containers.
- Follow manufacturers' instructions.

## **10. DO NOT RE-USE OLD CHEMICAL CONTAINERS**

- Never use old chemical containers for drinking or to store food and drink.

*(Trainer's note: Discuss the various possible wrong uses of used pesticide containers)*

## 11. PROPERLY DISPOSE OF ALL KINDS OF PESTICIDES CONTAINERS AND RESIDUES

- Destroy pesticide containers by crushing, burning or punching holes in them (take necessary precaution against uncontrolled fire or explosion while burning) OR
- Return the used pesticides containers to the retailer or distributor of the pesticides.

## 12. MEDICAL FACILITIES SHOULD ALWAYS BE IMMEDIATELY AVAILABLE

Well-trained first aiders and medical personnel should always be available in and out of the field.

## 13. OBSERVE STRICT PERSONAL HABITS WHILE HANDLING PESTICIDES

- Do not smoke, eat or drink while handling pesticides.
- Wear PPE throughout the time that you are in contact with pesticides.
- Be careful - read the label and follow instructions as provided.
- Be careful when removing PPE or working clothes to avoid contamination.

Remember - never wash and re-use old pesticide containers to store food or water. There is still poison inside!





## GROUP EXERCISE

### DRESSING AND UNDRESSING FOR THE JOB

#### Instructions:

The Trainer should select two participants to dress up for each of the following jobs:

- Sprayer
- Pickers
- Storekeeper
- Mixer
- Packer

One of the selected participant should dress as close as possible to the way it is done on the farm. Other participants will discuss in plenary whether the dressing is appropriate. They should suggest any missing items.

The second participant in the category should dress up appropriately for the larger group to appreciate how it is supposed to be done.

Follow the same procedure to demonstrate the safe and unsafe removal of PPE.

**Time:** 30 minutes



## CONCLUSION

- Employers are responsible for the protection of workers against pesticide poisoning.
- All pesticides used in cutflower farms are poisonous and can injure or kill human beings.
- If a pesticide can kill rodents, weeds or insects, it can also poison or kill animals and human beings.
- Workers should, therefore, take great care when handling, mixing or using pesticides in any way.
- Workers should also minimise their contact with pesticides.
- Workers and their unions should demand a safer working environment and strict controls on pesticides.



# MODULE 6

## SESSION FOUR

# 6

### FIRST AID

#### AIM

To give participants basic first aid information.

#### TIME

- |                        |            |
|------------------------|------------|
| ■ Content              | 30 minutes |
| ■ Practicing first aid | 30 minutes |
| ■ Closing comments     | 15 minutes |

#### METHOD

- Open discussions
- Lecturettes
- Group work
- Demonstrations
- Exchange of experiences

#### MATERIALS AND TRAINING AIDS

- ILO conventions nos. 13, 115, 136, 139 and 162: all dealing with protection of workers against specific risks, toxic and carcinogenic substances, ionising radiation etc.
- A copy of the Collective Bargaining Agreement for the farm or industry
- The International Code of Conduct for the Production of Cutflowers
- Specialised materials on First Aid
- First Aid kit
- Stationery
- Blackboard or flipchart



## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of first aid is to give a victim immediate help until more professional medical treatment and care is available. First aid must never be taken as a replacement for proper medication. As soon as pesticide poisoning occurs and first aid has been administered, apply the RUTH rule:

**R = RUSH**  
**U = URGENTLY**  
**T = TO**  
**H = HOSPITAL**



## TAKE CAUTION

Administering first aid for pesticide poisoning must be approached with a lot of care and caution because:

1. Different chemical substances used in making pesticides have different effects on the body. They therefore require different first aid. If the wrong first aid is applied, **it can result in more harm than if no first aid is applied at all.**
2. It is common, for example, to make victims vomit after pesticide poisoning. But if the pesticide contains petroleum products or if it is corrosive, oxidising, or flammable, vomiting would actually result in injury or death.
3. It can happen that enough chemicals enter the body through the skin so that the victim shows similar signs to poisoning by swallowing. Inducing vomiting in such cases would not help because there is no chemical in the victim's stomach to vomit.
4. In fact someone may show symptoms of pesticide poisoning without being poisoned at all. This can happen, for example, due to excess exposure to the sun or from drinking too much alcohol.

## COMMON EARLY SYMPTOMS OF CHEMICAL POISONING

- Fits ■ Vomiting ■ Dizziness ■ Diarrhoea ■ Headache
- Small pupils ■ Blurred vision ■ Muscle twitching ■ Unusual pulse rate ■ Difficulty in breathing ■ Loss of consciousness
- Chest or stomach pain ■ Burning pain of skin or eyes
- Frothing from the mouth or nose ■ Burning sensation in mouth and throat

→ Apply first aid and then

→ **R U T H**



## GENERAL FIRST AID MEASURES FOR SEVERE CHEMICAL POISONING

1. **BEFORE** administering first aid, remove the victim from the contamination area.
2. **THEN** look for the label or the chemical container.
3. **NEVER** wait to see if the victim gets better. Send for an ambulance or a doctor even as you administer first aid.
4. Establish if the victim has actually been poisoned. Ask the victim if he/she can speak. Ask those who witnessed the victim in the period immediately before the signs began to appear. Look for hints around.



*If you find someone who might be a victim of chemical poisoning, do not panic! Keep calm and remember the rules of first aid. Above all, do not fall into danger yourself e.g. if there are any spilled chemicals in the area, wear boots and gloves before removing the victim to a safer place.*

5. If the victim is breathing or conscious, give a lot of clean water to drink. **NEVER** give alcohol, milk or milk products or oil of any kind.
6. If the victim is not breathing, give artificial respiration.
7. If the victim is breathing but unconscious, make breathing easier by laying on his or her side. Loosen clothes (open belts, buttons etc.) and clear air passages (for example, remove vomit, false teeth and tongue from throat, etc.)
8. Put the victim under a shade and away from the sun.
9. Get the name of the **active ingredient of the chemical** to give to the doctor i.e. get the chemical's container with label.
10. While waiting for the doctor or on the way to the hospital, remove contaminated clothing and apply general cleanliness. Wash all contaminated body parts with clean water and soap.
11. All the time, try to calm the victim. Give reassurance that everything will be better once in hospital.



### **FIRST AID MEASURES FOR SKIN CONTAMINATION**

When a chemical pesticide has contaminated the skin but it has not caused severe poisoning effects, apply the following measures:  
*(Note: the measures should be applied in much the same order as listed)*

1. Take off all contaminated clothing and equipment.
2. Wash the affected area with soap and clean water for 15 minutes.
3. Do not apply oils, medicines, or any other liquid on the skin before consulting a doctor.
4. Arrange transport to the nearest medical facility for a doctor's examination.
5. Get the chemical name of the poison i.e. get the pesticide container with label, to give to the doctor.





## FIRST AID MEASURES FOR EYE CONTAMINATION

When a chemical pesticide has entered the victim's eye or eyes but it has not caused severe poisoning effects, apply the following measures: *(Note: the measures should be applied in much the same order as listed)*

1. Wash the eyes with lots of clean water for 15 minutes. Ensure that the eyelids remain open and that the water enters the eye. **Do not rub** the eyeball.
2. **Do not put drugs, oils, medicines, or any other liquid into the eye before consulting a doctor.**
3. Get the chemical name of the poison i.e. get the pesticide container with label, to give to a doctor.



**Get medical care as quickly as possible after poisoning occurs.**

*Different chemicals cause different symptoms of poisoning and need different medical treatment. In a case when chemical poisoning is suspected, bring the correct container with its label to the doctor. If in doubt, bring all the suspected containers. And make sure you transport them safely.*





## GROUP EXERCISE FIRST AID PRACTICE INSTRUCTIONS

The following incidents have occurred on the farm:

1. A sprayer was found in the greenhouse laying unconscious with a knapsack strapped firmly to his back. Close to his hand is a burnt out cigarette. Nobody saw what happened to the sprayer.
2. It is a sunny but windy day. The sprayers have been out in the open field for the last five hours. Suddenly one of the sprayers collapses and froth begin to come out from his mouth. His breathing becomes difficult and his skin turns bluish.
3. A woman in the grading area start to complain that she is feeling dizzy. She later develops a headache that gives way to nausea. Some of her colleagues know that she is seven months pregnant.

**Group composition:** Put the participants into three small groups. Select group members randomly. Allocate each group one of the above situations.



## DISCUSSION ISSUES

1. What measures should the group take in their particular circumstance?
2. The group should arrange the measures as a role play which should be replayed in plenary.
3. The plenary should process the role play and measures in turn.



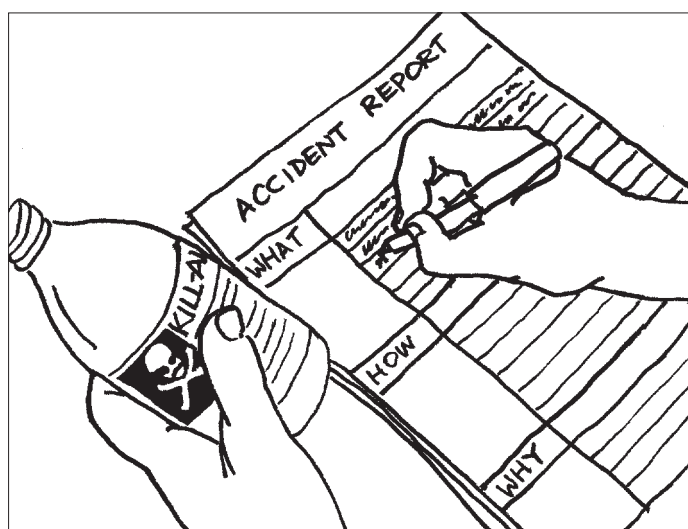
## TIME

30 minutes



## CONCLUSION

- The purpose of first aid is to give help to a victim as soon as poisoning occurs, while arrangements are being made for more professional medical treatment.
- First aid for chemical poisoning is more complex than other first aid treatment. Therefore the workers' committee should ask the farm management for **specialised** first aid courses.
- Workers should know the common early symptoms of pesticides poisoning before considering first aid.
- Workers should, therefore, be taught first aid especially if their duties expose them to hazards of pesticides.
- Appropriate medical facilities and personnel must also be available both in the field and within the farms to handle cases of chemical poisoning immediately they occur.
- After first aid, the second measure is RUTH (*Rush Urgently To Hospital*).
- The workers must also report all cases of chemical poisoning to trade union representatives.



*To prevent re-occurrence, each case of chemical poisoning must be reported and analysed to see what went wrong and how safety can be improved.*



## **PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT**

**To sensitise participants on sustainable environmental practices and their role in ensuring that flower companies make every effort to protect the environment**



# MODULE 7

## PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT



### AIM

To sensitise participants on sustainable environmental practices and their role in ensuring that flower companies make every effort to protect the environment.



### TIME

60 minutes



### METHOD

- Open discussions
- Lecturettes
- Group exercise
- Field investigation



### MATERIALS AND TRAINING AIDS

- ILO International Programme for the improvement of working conditions and the environment (PIACT)
- The International Code of Conduct for the Production of Cutflowers
- National Constitution
- National environmental protection laws
- Illustrations
- Stationery
- Blackboard or flipchart



## HOW TO START THE SESSION

1. The session may start by attempting to define the term **environment**.
2. Also ask whether the participants appreciate the linkages between the environment and their current and future wellbeing and that of future generations.
3. Ask them the question:  
What do you understand by the environment?  
The answers may include:  
✓ Everything that gives life to people, animals and plants.  
These include: ■ Air ■ Water ■ Land
4. Discuss the likely effects of the work done on the flower farms on the living environment.
5. Then lead the discussions and activities as follows:

## WHY CARE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT?

What is the importance of the environment? We should take care of the environment because it provides us with the essentials of life, such as:

- The air we breathe
- The water we use for drinking and washing
- The soils where we plant the food humans and animals eat
- Energy we need to do various things
- Amenities of value
- It moderates weather and climate

## ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION

When we pollute the environment, we reduce its capacity to provide the important requirements of life. We make it difficult for the environment to provide for us and for future generations.

## WATER CONSUMPTION AND DISPOSAL

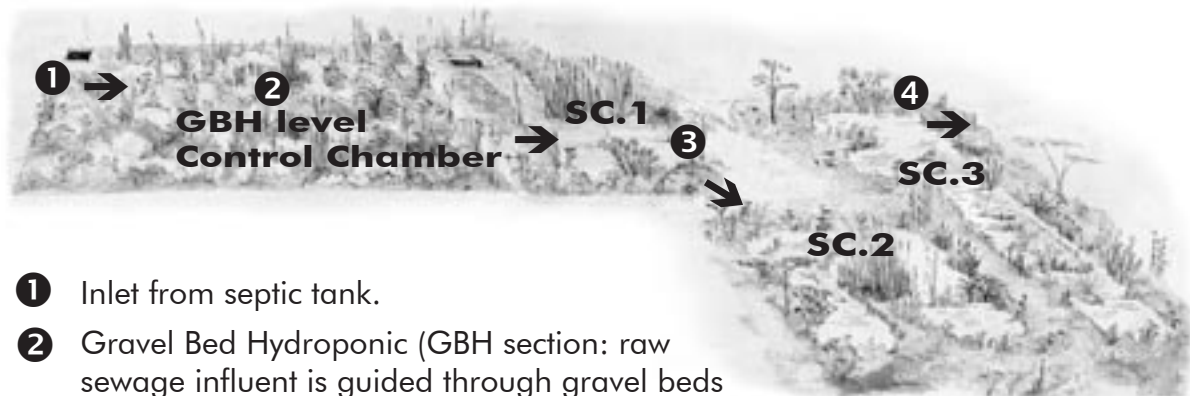
Cutflower farms consume large volumes of water. The same water goes back to the water sources (rivers and lakes) contaminated with human waste and chemical pollutants. This poses danger to aquatic life and to other people using the water for domestic purposes. It is also



one of the reasons why water sources are declining. It is important therefore that cutflower farms take care while consuming and disposing of water. Following are some actions which can contribute to water conservation:

1. Farms should use the minimum amount of water necessary for production processes.
2. Contaminated water must never be disposed directly into water sources. It should be treated as much as possible at the farm. Constructed Wetlands (*see illustration below*) are considered an effective way of naturally cleaning contaminated water. Soak pits are common but they are not a solution.

## HOW A CONSTRUCTED WETLAND WORKS



- ① Inlet from septic tank.
- ② Gravel Bed Hydroponic (GBH section: raw sewage influent is guided through gravel beds where anaerobic bacteria feed on and digest sewage.  
Water is then piped to:
- ③ Surface Cells (SC) 1, 2 & 3 - these are gravity-fed open ponds planted with a diverse variety of water plants that absorb biological and chemical pollutants as nutrients for growth. Air and sunlight also break down pollutants and birds, frogs, fish and other plants quickly colonise the ponds, completing the healthy eco-system.
- ④ Final discharge of cleaned water.

Constructed Wetlands are a safe and environmentally-healthy solution to the problem of contaminated water and human waste water on flower farms.

A Constructed Wetland treats wastewater without machinery, chemicals, electricity, fossil fuels or a large technical workforce. It outperforms conventional systems. In many cases, the water discharge is cleaner than the original water source e.g. rivers.

## WASTE MANAGEMENT ON FLOWER FARMS

Waste in flower farms include:

- Organic waste especially foliage.
- Chemical waste (pesticide and fertiliser residues).
- Empty pesticide and fertiliser containers.
- Waste paper, plastics, metal and wood.
- Used water, especially water that is contaminated with pesticides.
- Expired chemicals.

## MEASURES TO BE TAKEN

- The company must establish a proper system for separation and disposal of different types of waste.
- A trained supervisor must be given the duty of monitoring waste deposits and management.
- Organic waste should be composted and reused on the farm. Waste contaminated with pesticides **MUST NEVER** be fed to animals.

*(Trainer: Discuss the dangers of feeding pesticide-contaminated materials to animals. The reason is because the pesticide residues will later pass on through milk and meat to human beings).*

- Reuse of chemical containers for storing food and drinks is dangerous and must not be allowed to happen.
- Waste of all kinds must not be disposed of into soil, drains and watercourses.
- Paper, plastics, metal and wood waste should be separated and recycled.

## RESIDENTIAL AREAS

- Residential areas are those places where the workers and their families live.
- If something harmful get to the residential areas, the workers and their families suffer together.
- Residential areas must be protected from harmful effects.
- A safe distance of not less than 200 meters must be maintained between residential areas and working places.
- The company must support improvement of the living environment by planting trees, bushes and encouraging birds and wildlife within the farm.

*The small amounts of chemicals remaining inside used chemical containers are still dangerous and will eventually poison the soil and ground water. This affects the food we grow and the water we drink.*



## ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

The flower company should support the efforts of the community, local authorities and the government in environmental protection and infrastructure, including:

- Water supply
- Roads
- Afforestation
- Sewerage treatment
- Transportation
- Community facilities such as clinics, schools, water projects, sports etc.

## OBEYING THE LAW

Flower farms must strictly follow the environmental protection and other laws when:

- Expanding the farms
- Altering the building plans
- Utilising the water
- Disposing waste



## CONCLUSION

- As human being we all have a responsibility to respect and care for the environment because it sustains life – for ourselves and for future generations.
- Cutflower farms, because of their large reliance on natural resources such as soil and water, can pollute the environment if the activities on the farm are not carefully handled.
- The cutflower industry, therefore, has a major responsibility to minimise pollution and protect the environment.



# MODULE

# 8

## **SECURITY OF EMPLOYMENT**

**To inform workers of the benefits arising from  
secure employment terms**



# MODULE 8

# 8

## SECURITY OF EMPLOYMENT



### AIM

To inform workers of the benefits arising from secure employment terms.



### TIME

One hour distributed as follows:

- |                               |            |
|-------------------------------|------------|
| ■ Opening and climate setting | 5 minutes  |
| ■ Content                     | 20 minutes |
| ■ Group work/case study       | 20 minutes |
| ■ Processing of case studies  | 10 minutes |
| ■ Closing comments            | 5 minutes  |

As a contract worker, I never stayed long in one job and never learned anything...



### METHOD

- Open discussions
- Lecturettes
- Group exercise
- Exchange of experiences



### MATERIALS AND TRAINING AIDS

- ILO Convention no. 110 and Recommendation no. 110 covering employment on plantations, and Convention no. 158 on protection against termination of employment without valid reason
- A copy of the Collective Bargaining Agreement for the farm or industry
- The International Code of Conduct for the Production of Cutflowers
- National labour laws
- Illustrations
- Stationery
- Blackboard or flipchart



## HOW TO START THE SESSION

1. The session may start with plenary discussions on the term **security of employment**.  
Ask participants the question: What do you understand by the term secure? The answers may include:
  - ✓ Not likely to change
  - ✓ Dependable
  - ✓ Protected from attack
  - ✓ Tie firmly in a fixed position
  - ✓ To offer to give something of equal value in case of default e.g. secure a loan.
  
2. Ask the following questions:
  - Is it important to enjoy security of employment?  
(*Trainer's Note: Allow a few minutes for exchange of views.*)
  - How many casual labourers are employed on the farm?S
  - How many permanent workers have been prematurely retired (retrenched) and replaced by casuals?
  
3. Then lead the discussions and activities as follows:

## WHAT IS SECURITY OF EMPLOYMENT?

When there is security of employment, it means that:

- Work, which is by nature not seasonal or temporary, shall be done by workers on permanent contracts.
- Non-permanent workers should enjoy the same provisions as the permanent workers. These provisions also include freedom of association.
- A worker can be said to be enjoying security of employment when all her or his rights are protected from abuse by the employer.

**Security of employment is important to the workers because:**

- The worker is assured of a dependable source of income.
- It provides the worker with a sense of safety from economic problems.
- It enables the worker to plan for his or her retirement in a predictable manner.



- It gives the worker confidence.
- The worker is protected from arbitrary victimisation and loss of employment.
- The worker is allowed access to the benefits, rights and freedoms which go with the employment.
- It establishes common grounds for the worker and the employer to relate.

## PROTECTION OF SECURITY OF EMPLOYMENT

Security of employment is protected under the following instruments:

- ✓ ILO Convention no. 110 and Recommendation no. 110 covering employment on plantations, and Convention no. 158 on protection against termination of employment without valid reason.
- ✓ Labour laws
- ✓ The International Code of Conduct for the Production of Cutflowers
- ✓ Collective Bargaining Agreements
- ✓ Employment contracts



### CAUTION !

Starting from 1980s, many developing countries were forced to pass anti-labour laws while implementing the structural adjustment programs (SAPs). As a result, laws protecting security of employment suffered. The trainer should check and confirm the actual situation existing in the country.

## WHAT IS SEASONAL WORK?

This refers mainly to work that comes at a certain time of the year and then eases for the rest of the year. With the exception of peak demand for flowers during holidays, very few tasks can be termed as seasonal work in the cutflower sector.

## WHAT IS TEMPORARY WORK?

This is work that is performed as one task and ends when the task is complete e.g.

- Construction of greenhouses (excluding regular maintenance team)
- Laying of irrigation pipes



### GROUP EXERCISE

#### AIM

To discuss what is seasonal and temporary work in cutflower farms and what is not.

#### INSTRUCTIONS

Put participants into groups of 7 to 8 persons. The group may be randomly selected. Ask each group to reflect on the work done on their flower farm. They should then discuss the questions provided and report findings in plenary.

#### QUESTIONS

1. Which work can be categorised as seasonal?
2. Which work can be categorised as temporary?
3. Which work is not seasonal or temporary and yet is being performed by non-permanent workers?
4. Is child labour a threat to job security on this farm?



## CONCLUSION

- Security of employment is important not only to the workers but also to the employer. It can lead to increased productivity.
- It can be said that a worker who has served the required period of probation and has not been given permanent terms is being denied security of employment. Similarly, a worker who has performed non-seasonal or non-temporary work for a long period without being given permanent terms is also being denied security of employment.
- A flower farm which is sensitive to its social responsibilities should not rely on oppressive national laws to deny workers the security of employment.
- The International Code of Conduct for the Production of Cutflowers requires employers to provide security of employment for all workers who are entitled to it.
- A cutflower farm going against the requirement for providing security of employment, therefore, is not allowed to join the label programmes.
- Workers have a duty to report to trade union representatives in the event of prolonged denial of security of employment.

*Security of employment brings benefits to both workers and employers. When workers are happy and secure in their job, they are more productive.*





## **CHILD LABOUR**

**To enlist workers in the campaign against employment and exploitation of children in the cutflower industry**



# MODULE 9

## CHILD LABOUR NOT USED



### AIM

To enlist workers in the campaign against employment and exploitation of children in the cutflower industry.



### TIME

60 minutes

### METHOD

- Open discussions
- Lecturettes
- Exchange of experiences



### MATERIALS AND TRAINING AIDS

- ILO Conventions nos. 138 and 182 on minimum age for admission to employment
- A copy of the Collective Bargaining Agreement for the farm or industry
- The International Code of Conduct for the Production of Cutflowers
- Write-ups on the worst forms of child labour
- National labour laws
- Illustrations/posters
- Stationery
- Blackboard or flipchart



## HOW TO START THE SESSION

1. The session may start by discussing and reaching a consensus on the definition of a child.
2. Discuss the difference between child labour and child work.
3. Discuss also the reasons why children may be employed in the cutflower farms.
4. Try to establish the level of seriousness of the problem by asking the participants the following questions:
  - Are there children working on the farm?
  - If yes, in which task area or locations are children deployed?
5. Are the children working on the farm exposed to dangers?
6. Then lead the discussions and activities as follows:

## DEFINITION OF A CHILD

Who is a child? A child can be determined by using the following considerations:

- Age: Most societies consider persons below 15 years to be children. Those who have not attained 18 years are considered young persons.
- Childhood may also be socially determined i.e. by marriage and social behaviour.
- School attendance i.e. compulsory school-leaving age.
- Physical appearance.
- Identity documents.

## WHAT IS CHILD WORK?

This is work performed by a child as a part of growing up. It is work assigned to a child for the purposes of socialisation and training.

Wage payment is not a factor in child work. Child work also does not prevent the child from doing other things that are important to the child's development such as attending school, playing etc.

Examples of child work include fetching water, washing dishes, looking after animals, running errands etc.



## **WHAT IS CHILD LABOUR?**

Child labour engages the child to wage employment at an age when the child should be doing other things important to its growth and future. Child labour prevents a child from attending school, playing etc. Because of the stress involved, child labour can also affect the physical, mental and moral development of the victim.

## **PROTECTION OF CHILDREN**

Employers are prohibited from engaging children by the following instruments:

- ILO Convention nos. 138 and 182 on minimum age for admission to employment
- National laws
- The International Code of Conduct for the Production of Cutflowers



## LEGAL DEFINITION OF CHILD LABOUR

The law and international instruments consider age as the determinant of childhood in relation to employment.

### The law provides that:

- Persons below a certain age (15 years in some countries) are not allowed to be employed.
- Employers are also not allowed to engage persons who are below the compulsory school leaving age i.e. the age that a person must attain before being allowed to leave school. This applies even if the compulsory school leaving age is more than the minimum employment age.

## PROTECTION OF CHILD WORKERS

Where children are already engaged, the farm must put in place urgent arrangements to replace the children with adult workers. The farm is expected to provide assistance to enable the child to settle back into his or her childhood role. The farm, for example, should provide appropriate educational opportunities for replaced child workers.

## PROTECTION OF YOUNG WORKERS

- Young workers may refer to persons who are above 15 years (or compulsory school leaving age) but below 18 years.
- Young persons should not be given tasks that can endanger their:
  - Mental and physical health
  - Spiritual and moral values
  - Social development
- Young workers are entitled to all the rights enjoyed by other workers.



## GROUP EXERCISE

### AIM

To understand the causes and effects of engaging child workers.

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Why do employers engage child workers?
2. Why is the law against employment of child labour?
3. What are the affects of child labour practices on:
  - (a) The child worker
  - (b) The other workers
4. What should the workers do in the event that children are employed on the farm?



## CONCLUSION

- Employment of child labour is illegal and morally offensive. It causes undesirable effects on the child and other workers.
- The International Code of Conduct for the Production of Cutflowers is against the practice of child employment.
- A cutflower farm practicing child labour cannot, therefore, be allowed to join the label programmes.
- Workers have a duty to report to trade union representatives in the event of existence of child labour on the farm.



**MODULE**

**10**

## **FORCED LABOUR**

**To enable workers to understand and enjoy their right to protection against forced labour practices**



# MODULE 10

## FORCED LABOUR



### AIM

To enable workers to understand and enjoy their right to protection against forced labour practices.



### TIME

60 minutes

### METHOD

- Open discussions
- Case study
- Exchange of experiences



### MATERIALS AND TRAINING AIDS

- ILO Conventions nos. 29 and 105: Freedom from forced labour
- A copy of the Collective Bargaining Agreement for the farm or industry
- The International Code of Conduct for the Production of Cutflowers
- National labour laws
- Illustrations

You mean they can't *force* me to work extra as a punishment?





## HOW TO START THE SESSION

The session may start by attempting to gauge the understanding of participants of the term *forced labour*.

1. Ask them the question: What do you understand by the term forced labour? The answers may include:
  - Slavery
  - Forced prolonged overtime
  - Bonded or involuntary prison labour
2. Discuss if incidents of forced labour exist on the farm. If they exist, ask whether the trade union is aware about their existence.
3. Then lead the discussions and activities as follows:

## PROTECTION OF WORKERS AGAINST FORCED LABOUR

Workers are protected against forced labour by the following instruments:

- ILO Conventions nos. 29 and 105 on freedom from forced labour
- National constitutions and the Bill of Rights
- Labour laws
- The International Code of Conduct for the Production of Cutflowers

### Reflect on the rights and freedoms of workers in cutflower farms:

Briefly refer to Module One and the following rights enjoyed by workers in cutflower farms. These include:

- Freedom to be employed and leave employment.
- Freedom to form and join trade unions.
- Freedom to bargain collectively.
- Free access to all workplaces by union officials.
- Protection of the union representative against discrimination.
- Rights and freedoms of women workers.





## FORMS OF FORCED LABOUR

Forced labour includes:

- Slave labour.
- Bonded or involuntary labour.
- Extra work input under coercion by the employer.
- Prolonged overtime to which the worker has not freely consented.
- Work performed as a punishment.
- Work whose terms and conditions are not clearly defined in an employment contract.
- Cheap imported labour.
- Situation where the worker is forced to stay on after giving notice to terminate working.
- Work which is paid at a rate less than agreed in the employment contract or the collective bargain agreement.



## LODGING OF DEPOSITS

- Employers should not require workers to lodge deposits of money or other valuables as a guarantee or instrument for containing the workers.
- Workers should also not be forced to deposit their identity papers with the employers.





### CASE STUDY

A cutflower farm is located close to an international border. The majority of workers on the farm are recruited from among citizens of the host country. There is, however, the possibility of workers coming from across the border. The farm does not discourage the migrant workers because they are not so insistent on observation of labour laws and protection of workers' rights. The farm also imports workers from another continent to perform supervisory and managerial tasks. Because of the diversity of the workforce, the farm management has adopted the practice of asking workers to deposit their identity documents with the management for "safekeeping". Furthermore, the workers imported from the other continent are required to deposit money equivalent to the return air ticket and two months salary while workers from across the border are required to deposit two months salary.



### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In which ways does the practice amount to forced labour?
2. Which laws are being violated by this practice?
3. What do we learn from this case study?



### CONCLUSION

- Forced labour is illegal and goes against the rights and freedoms of the worker.
- The International Code of Conduct for the Production of Cutflowers is against practices of forced labour.
- A cutflower farm practicing forced labour cannot, therefore, be allowed to join the Label Programmes.
- Workers have a duty to report to trade union representatives in the event of occurrence of forced labour practices.



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