

# **SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE: THE CUT FLOWER INDUSTRY**

## **Case Study Northern Sierra of Ecuador**



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## **Executive Summary**

This study was carried out in the region north of Quito, where 60% of Ecuador's export-oriented flower production is located. The researchers interviewed 101 flower workers from 47 flower companies. About 80% of interviewed workers were under age 30.

In the flower industry, cultivation activities are done alone. There are generally only one or two people working in each section of the greenhouse. This makes workers an easy target for sexual harassment and abuse by coworkers and superiors. Sexual harassment is a control mechanism, in an industry where there is discrimination in hiring, job shifts, assigned tasks, etc.

- Over 55% of flower workers have suffered some kind of sexual harassment. This was higher for 20-24 year olds (71%).
- 18.81% of flower workers have been forced to have sex with a coworker or superior and 10% have been sexually attacked.

Ecuadorian law establishes that sexual harassment and abuse are crimes. In practice, very few cases are ever brought to justice. This study found that women flower workers have reported only 5% of sexual harassment incidents to superiors. Women fail to report incidents for several reasons. First, women are afraid to talk about the issue, because they are afraid that they will be blamed, embarrassed, or lose their jobs. Second, both men and women accept aggression against women as a normal cultural practice, whether or not it is desirable.

When cases are reported, companies and authorities do not take strict measures to punish the offenders or protect the victims. According to this survey, only 14% of cases resulted in sanctions.

## INTRODUCTION

Employer-employee relations in flower plantations develop in the context of a permanent and systematic violation of human, social, and labor rights. However, the daily challenges that flower workers face in the workplace and at home do not allow them to prioritize the problem of sexual harassment and sexual abuse. Because of the poverty suffered by the peasants and marginalized urban residents in Cayambe, Ecuador's main flower-growing region, they must prioritize job stability in order to be able to ensure their survival and the survival of their families. In the interest of keeping their jobs, they try to ignore recurrent problems such as exposure to toxic chemicals without sufficient protective equipment or training; late payments; unpaid overtime work; non-affiliation to social security; pressure to fulfill companies' excessively high production goals; and sexual harassment and abuse.

A woman, as an individual, can suffer any kind of violent action, or be the victim of a crime, just like a man. But women are also the victims of another series of crimes based on their condition as women. A series of social and cultural factors allow for such forms of aggression. Women may become victims of violence due to their comparative physical weakness, and their culturally assigned sexual role of docility and submission. Men then apply the power that they are given by the different sexual and social role that they are assigned; this is manifested in a variety of situations, including the workplace.

As a form of aggression against women, sexual harassment is not a new phenomenon. Both men and women have come to view this behavior as normal in Ecuador. This is one of the reasons why the problem has not been addressed.

In order to change the inequality and injustice that characterize interpersonal relationships, and allow for mutually respectful and equal male-female relations, we must fully understand the causes and details of the current situation, in the country in general, and in the flower industry in particular.

### **Fundamental concepts:**

It is crucial to understand the phenomenon of sexual harassment and abuse as part of the broader concept of sexual violence.

Sexual harassment is understood to be any act in which one or several power relations interact in a coercive situation to affect the body, integrity, sexual freedom, health, or life of a person.<sup>1</sup>

We will base this study on the fundamental concepts developed by CONAMU (National Ecuadorian Women's Council), and the study done by Tatiana Cordero and Gloria Maira on sexual harassment and abuse in Ecuadorian schools, which is one of the only studies done on sexual harassment in Ecuador.

**Sexual harassment:** In the workplace, there are power relationships between bosses, supervisors, professionals, and workers. Thus sexual harassment includes "any kind of sexual approach in the workplace or outside of it, in which one person takes advantage of their relationship of power or authority to suggest, offer, or demand sexual acts from the other person, using any form of coercion, intimidation, or violence."

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<sup>1</sup>Cordero Velásquez Tatiana, Op. Cit. P. 15.

**Sexual abuse:** A sexual approach to any person that uses force, deceit, coercion, or violence to intimidate, dominate, submit, or assault and hurt the person's body and integrity.

**Sexual violence:** "This is any act in which the person in power uses physical force, coercion, or psychological intimidation to force another person to participate in a sexual act against their will, or to participate in sexual interactions that lead to their victimization, in which the offender attempts to obtain gratification through unwanted touching, sexually charged interactions, oral, vaginal, or anal penetration, forced exposure to pornographic material, or exhibitionism."

We will base our study of sexual harassment in flower plantations on these concepts and the context of human, social, and labor relations in which the phenomenon of harassment has developed.

Currently, the law not only prohibits sexual relationships carried out under threat of job loss, but also includes deliberate or repeated behavior that is not welcomed by the worker, and related sexual behavior that is hostile, offensive, or demeaning for women.

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other sexual conduct of a verbal or physical nature should be punished when:

- 1) There is submission to this behavior under a term or condition related to employment.
- 2) A woman's submission to or refusal of such advances is used as a basis for making decisions in the workplace that affect her.
- 3) When certain behavior or an incident can interfere with a person's work, or create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

This definition is generally understood to prohibit two kinds of behavior:

- 1) Any attempt to use threats or job-related consequences to demand sexual cooperation.
- 2) Any sexual behavior that is unwelcome or offensive, even if the woman does not suffer any job-related consequence.

A woman should always have the right to reserve her sexual affections for the person she chooses, but there are situations in which she is at a particularly great risk for being the victim of sexual aggression.

### **Sexual harassment and abuse in the flower plantations**

Manifestations of sexual harassment and abuse in floriculture are made possible by working conditions in the industry, including: solitary work in the cultivation areas (in greenhouses or in the open air); long working hours that extend late into the night or into the early morning; and strong pressure to fulfill production goals.

Many women workers who have been the victims of sexual harassment are afraid to talk about these incidents. In the interviews, they did not want to talk openly about the harassment they had faced, so we had to look for other strategies to obtain the information. In all cases the women were reluctant to admit having been the victims of sexual harassment, and few recognized it as a violation of their rights.

### **Objectives of the study**

- To understand how working conditions and practices in the flower plantations allow for sexual abuse and harassment.
- To propose strategies to allow women workers to address the problem and improve their working conditions.

### **Hypotheses**

- Women flower workers experience sexual harassment and abuse.
- Sexual harassment and abuse are more commonly directed at younger workers and at workers in certain parts of the production process (cultivation and post-harvest areas).
- Workers who have worked at a plantation for a shorter period of time are more likely to be harassed because they have less working experience and are more vulnerable to labor and gender exploitation.

### **RELEVANT LAWS**

The idea that sexual harassment and abuse constitute violations of human rights arises from the movements for women's and children's rights. While it is insufficient to place this issue solely within this context, it is an important first step.

### **International laws and conventions**

#### **1. CEDAW**

When signing international agreements, the Ecuadorian state is obliged to confirm those fundamental principles within the national laws. One key instrument that addresses women's rights is the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which Ecuador ratified in 1981 (Official Registry 132). CEDAW analyzes violations of women's rights based on a broad definition of discrimination that identifies discriminatory practices that result from actions or omissions of the State, governmental institutions, social groups, or individuals.

This Convention defines discrimination against women as: "any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field" (Article 1).

This Convention does not specifically address sexual harassment or abuse, but Article 5a is particularly interesting when discussing this issue. This Article asks State parties to the Convention to take all appropriate measures "to modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women, with a view to achieving the elimination of prejudices and customary and all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority or the superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotyped roles for men and women."

The United Nations considers that “sexual harassment should be considered sexual violence against women.” It defines sexual violence to include “methods employed for the submission, the control of female sexuality through violence, fear and intimidation,” and sexual harassment as “a personal attack against a woman’s body and mind, which provokes fear and violates women’s right to physical integrity, education, and freedom of movement.”

Within this definition there are three important elements:

- The recognition of the community (which includes the workplace, schools, streets, neighborhood, etc) as “a place where female sexuality is restricted and regulated” and “a place that denies women their rights”.
- The State’s responsibility in terms of violence against women in the home, workplace, and other places.
- Compensation for damages suffered by women who have been the victims of violence, in compliance with CEDAW.

## **2. Interamerican Convention**

In Latin America, another important international instrument is the Interamerican Convention to Prevent, Sanction, and Eradicate Violence Against Women, Convention Belem do Pará from 1994, which was ratified by Ecuador in 1995 (Official Registry 717). This Convention incorporates the advancements made by previous conventions and the contributions made by the Relatoras Especiales.

Article 2b of this Convention specifically mentions sexual violence as violence “that occurs in the community and is perpetrated by any person, including, among others, rape, sexual abuse, torture, trafficking in persons, forced prostitution, kidnapping and sexual harassment in the workplace, as well as in educational institutions, health facilities or any other place.”

## **3. The Convention on the Rights of the Child**

The Convention on the Rights of the Child, which Ecuador ratified in 1990 (Official Registry 400) establishes that “in all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration” (Article 3). It also states that “no child shall be subjected to torture or not cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment” and that States Parties must “undertake to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse” (Article 34).

### **Ecuadorian law**

Within national law, the most relevant legal instruments addressing sexual harassment and abuse are the Constitution, the Special Law on Violence Against Women and the Family, the Criminal Code, the Labor Code, and the Code on Children and Adolescents.

#### **1. Constitution**

The Constitution was approved in 1998, and phrases relevant to the issue of sexual harassment appear in several different chapters and articles, which determine that such acts of violence violate the principles of equality, non-discrimination, freedom to exercise one’s rights, and the more specific right to the free and individual exercise of sexuality. The following are some of the most relevant articles.

Art 16: “The State’s highest priority should be to respect and enforce the human rights that this Constitution guarantees” (women’s rights are included within human rights).

Art. 17: “The State will guarantee all of its inhabitants, without any discrimination, the free exercise and enjoyment of the human rights established in this Constitution and in the declarations, pacts, conventions, and other international instrument currently in effect. It will adopt permanent and periodic measures, plans, and programs to ensure the effective enjoyment of these rights.”

Art. 23, part 3: “All persons will be considered equal and will enjoy the same rights, liberties, and opportunities, without discrimination based on birth, age, sex, ethnicity, color, social origin, language, religion, political affiliation, economic position, sexual orientation...or any other sort of difference.”

With regard to violence, Article 23 of the Constitution guarantees personal integrity: “Cruel punishment, torture, inhuman or degrading actions, physical, psychological, or sexual violence, moral coercion, and the undue application and usage of human genetic material are prohibited. The State will adopt necessary measures to prevent, eliminate, and punish, in particular, violence against children, adolescents, women, and the elderly.”

Regarding sexuality, Article 23 part 25 guarantees people “the right to make free and responsible decisions regarding their sexual life.”

## **2. Criminal regulations**

The Constitution and Criminal Code establish that sexual harassment and abuse are crimes, violate human rights, and are manifestations of sexual violence according to the definition of the Special Law on Violence Against Women and the Family.

The last reform of the Criminal Code, from July 1998, characterizes sexual harassment and abuse (following Article 511) in the following way: “He who solicits sexual favors for himself or another by taking advantage of a superior position in the workplace or similar situation with the express or tacit possibility of hurting the victim’s legitimate expectations within the context of that relationship, will be punished as responsible for sexual harassment with 6 months to 12 years in prison.”

Thus, this law defines sexual harassment in the workplace and the educational sphere as a crime, and punishes it with imprisonment.

The Special Law on Violence Against Women and the Family characterizes sexual violence as “all mistreatment that constitutes an imposition on a person’s exercise of their sexuality, and that uses physical force, intimidation, threats, or any other coercive means to force them to have sexual relations with the aggressor or a third party.” (Article 4c)

## **3. Code on Children and Adolescents**

Because flower plantations employ children and adolescents, despite the fact that hiring minors is prohibited in this sector, is important to note some elemental concepts of the Code on Children and Adolescents, which protect youth aged 0-18. Here we list the most relevant chapters and articles of this Code.

Art. 4.- Definition of boy, girl, and adolescent: A boy or girl is someone who is under age 12. An adolescent is someone of either sex between the ages of 12 and 18.

Art. 81.- Right to protection from labor exploitation: Boys, girls, and adolescents have the right to protection from the State, society, and family against labor and economic exploitation and any form of slavery, servitude, forced labor, or work that endangers their health or physical, spiritual, mental, or social development, or that could hinder their right to an education.

Art. 82.- Minimum working age: Establishes that 15 is the minimum age for any job, including domestic work, with the exceptions established in this Code and other laws and international instruments that Ecuador is party to.

Art. 83.- Eradication of child labor: The State and society should create and execute policies, plans, programs and protective measures to eradicate child labor by persons under age 15. Families should contribute to the achievement of this objective.

Art. 84.- Working hours and education: Working hours for adolescents will never exceed six hours per day and five days per week, and will be scheduled in a way that does not hinder their access to education.

Art. 87.- Prohibited forms of work: Adolescents are prohibited from working in the following areas:

1. In mines, trash dumps, slaughterhouses, quarries, and extractive industries.
2. In activities that involve the manipulation of explosive, mind-altering, or toxic materials, or other materials dangerous to their life, physical or mental development, or health.

The different articles that refer to child labor clearly indicate that children under age 18 should not be hired in sectors such as floriculture, which are categorized as the worst forms of child labor.

In the Code on Children and Adolescents there is also a chapter referring to mistreatment, which is already a crime but which is even worse when it affects children (ages 0-12) or adolescents (13-18). Title IV, Article 67 states that “mistreatment is any behavior, by action or omission, that causes or could cause damage to a child or adolescent’s physical, psychological, or sexual health or integrity, by any person, including their parents, other relatives, educators, and persons in charge of their care.”

Article 68 refers to the concept of sexual abuse: “Without altering that established by the Criminal Code on this issue, for the purposes of this Code ‘sexual abuse’ includes any physical contact or sexual proposition directed at a child or adolescent, even if they appear to consent, using seduction, blackmail, intimidation, deceit, threats, or other means.”

Any sexual harassment or abuse will be reported to the competent authority without affecting the administrative investigations and sanctions that also correspond to it.

In conclusion, sexual harassment and abuse are considered a crime, and are even more serious when they affect youth under age 18.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The Ecuadorian flower industry is concentrated in the area surrounding Quito. This study was conducted with flower workers from plantations north of Quito, in the towns of El Quinche, Pifo and Puenbo (Quito); Cangahua, Juan Montalvo and Otón (Cayambe); and Tabacundo (Pedro Moncayo). Sixty percent of Ecuador’s flower workers are employed at plantations in this region.

The researchers interviewed 101 flower workers from 47 flower companies. It was impossible to do interviews inside or near the plantations, because the workers were too afraid to talk about their jobs in general or sexual harassment in particular. Interviews were carried out after they left work, in places like parks, recreation areas, and bus stops.



The information obtained through this study reflects the conditions under which flower workers are employed in the region north of Quito. We included workers from numerous companies of different sizes and with varying levels of technology (Table 1). The sample size is thus representative of Ecuador's flower industry, since we suppose that other workers employed in the same flower company will be subject to the same social risks.

## VARIABLES

This study used three principle variables:

- ✓ Age of the workers
- ✓ Type of activity done by workers
- ✓ Number of years workers have been employed at a given plantation

Cut flower workers include peasant women from communities surrounding the flower plantations, as well as others who have migrated from the provinces of Imbabura, Cotopaxi, Tungurahua, Loja and Manabí. Few flower workers come from urban areas, and those that do are most likely to be found in administrative or supervisory roles.

### Age

This study involved interviews with 101 flower workers between the ages of 15 and 40. About 80% were under age 30; the average age of the interviewed workers was 24 (Table 2). Women begin working on flower plantations at an earlier age than men do.

Flower companies prefer to hire younger women because their physical condition makes them more productive. Younger women are also less likely to have children, and the company therefore avoids some of its labor and social responsibilities. Younger women also have less experience with organizing, and are less aware of their legal rights and more afraid to defend them.

### Type of activity done in the plantation

More than 63% of interviewed women flower workers are employed in cultivation and post-harvest processing (Table 4). An additional 13% work in cleaning in the production, post-harvest, cold storage, and office areas, 7% are supervisors, and 7% work in administration.

The cultivation activities are done alone. There are generally only one or two people working in each section of the greenhouse, and they rarely see other people. This makes them an easy target for sexual harassment and abuse by coworkers and superiors. "There are isolated and solitary areas where, if something happens, no one notices, and no one can help," commented one female worker.

Workers in the post-harvest area generally begin work at the same time each day, but the time they can leave work varies. During high production periods, they work more than 12 hours per day, arriving before sunrise and heading home after dark.

Supervisors often work longer hours than cultivation and post-harvest workers.

Most workers in the area of cultivation are between the ages of 20 and 30. Workers in the post-harvest area are younger; 66% are under age 24. Supervisors are generally between 25 and 35 years old (Table 7).

The women maintain that work in the flower plantations is very difficult. They must spend the entire day on their feet or bent over, without rest, and carry loads exceeding 50 kg (110 pounds).

### **Years worked in floriculture**

Labor flexibility, job rotation, and the seasonality of flower production limit the seniority of flower workers.

Twenty-nine percent of interviewed women had worked in floriculture for less than one year. About half had worked 1-3 years (Table 3). Thirty-one percent of women aged 15-19 had worked less than one year, which is understandable given their age, but it is significant that nearly 14% of women aged 20-24 had worked less than one year, and 48% of women aged 25-29 had worked for less than one year at the same plantation, which demonstrates the situation of job instability (Table 8).

Rotation and job instability make training processes and unionization attempts more difficult. Women who are married or have children are discriminated against, because employers prefer to avoid paying pregnancy and maternity benefits. Companies reduce the number of workers, or shorten their contracts, to prevent feelings of solidarity developing between them that could inspire collective actions. Subcontracted workers do not receive any protective equipment, and do not have access to transportation services, food, medical attention, or other basic services.

### **Demands and labor exploitation<sup>2</sup>**

Workers are pressured to finish a certain amount of work each day. Productivity levels are qualified with blue, green, yellow or red cards. Workers who finish their tasks in record time receive a green card and a bonus of \$10. Workers who fall behind are given a red card and their salaries are lowered. Supervisors tell the workers that the Labor Code allows them to lower wages when productivity is low; this is not only false, but also illegal.

The production goals are constantly revised to reflect the output of the “best worker”. One worker stated that when she started working in floriculture, she was responsible for 21 flowerbeds per day. Today, each worker must care for at least 48 flowerbeds per day.

The production goals assigned to workers are often unrealistic. In complicity with one worker who sets a new “record”, the company sets assigned goals that the other workers must complete. The workers feel that the companies constantly devalue and fail to recognize the work that they do, in order to justify the low wages.

The heavy workload causes illnesses, psychological pain, and stress.

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<sup>2</sup> Testimonies in focus group

## Pay

Workers in the areas of cultivation, cleaning, post-harvest, and supervisors earn US\$100-200 per month. Workers aspire to become supervisors, because they are hierarchically superior, and earn US\$15-20 more per month. Only administrative workers earn more than \$200. Workers in the area of cultivation earn the lowest salaries (an average of US\$140, and a maximum of \$192). Workers who clean the administrative, cultivation, and post-harvest areas earn US\$100-170 (Table 9).

The basic food basket cost \$287 in December 2004<sup>3</sup>. If at least two people from the same home hold jobs, the family income can reach an average of \$280, which barely covers the family's most basic needs. The situation becomes precarious in homes where only one person works, such as in female-headed households, where the salary is only 47% of the basic family food basket.

Although workers are unsatisfied with these low wages, which do not reflect the job description or workload, they end up accepting them rather than complaining and risking dismissal. This leads to permanent family, personal, and social conflicts, because their efforts are not adequately compensated, and they are not able to satisfy their families' basic needs.

## Overtime

Depending on the demand for flowers for export, overtime work may be obligatory or voluntary. In times of low production, workers generally do not work overtime, but occasionally there are opportunities to do so voluntarily on Saturdays and Sundays.

In the greenhouses, workers work until they finish a certain number of assigned tasks, and whether or not they stay late depends on how experienced and quick they are. If they must stay late to finish the assigned tasks, they are not paid overtime. Sometimes workers must enlist the help of their family members, including children and adolescents, to be able to finish their work.

The Labor Code establishes a 40-hour work week, which is divided as follows in the flower industry: 7 hours per day from Monday to Friday, 3 hours on Saturdays, and 2 hours on Sundays. Therefore workers do not have any days off, nor do they receive extra pay for the weekend work.

At the time of the survey, 40% of interviewed workers were being forced to work overtime, and an additional 38% of workers were working some overtime shifts through an agreement with their employer. Thirteen percent were sometimes forced to work overtime and sometimes had a choice, depending on the company's needs (Table 10).

During high production periods, when companies are producing flowers to sell for Valentine's Day, March 8, and Mother's Day, workers work more than 8 hours per day, 7 days per week. When the market demands more flowers, overtime work is obligatory.

## Salary differences

The interviewed workers agreed that all flower workers earn an average of \$150 per month, though some earn a little more due to the type of work they do, and whether or not they work overtime (Table 11).

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<sup>3</sup> INEC Survey on Living Conditions 2004.

Eight percent of interviewed workers think that some workers do have special privileges in terms of payment; for example, some women workers earn more because they “get along well with their supervisor”, work overtime “for convenience”, flirt, offer themselves up, or agree to go out with their bosses (Table 11).

Some ways of gaining favor translate into higher earnings, and it can be a strategy for obtaining certain benefits.

### **Gender and power relationships in the plantations**

Inside the farms, men and women do equal work and receive equal pay, but women feel they have some disadvantages because they do not receive consideration for their physical differences, or bonuses as a reward for their “delicacy and skill in handling flowers, or their punctuality in fulfilling their responsibilities”<sup>4</sup>. These women try to do the same amount of work that men do, in order to keep their jobs. They even try to hide their pregnancies. In some cases, female flower workers have returned to work only a week after giving birth.

*“We women don’t value ourselves, men and women do the same work, we women make ourselves strong and push ourselves to work harder than the men, we don’t realize the harm we are doing to ourselves because this effort must be continuous, and this work sucks away our life. After that we are left tired and sick. When I get home I can’t do any work there, or take care of my children.”*

*“When I started working at the farm I did 40-50 units of flowers per hour, so I had 220 by midday. I became sick from working so much, the company went bankrupt, I didn’t have social security coverage, and I couldn’t cure my illness. Even so, I went on to work at another plantation. They took us in the back of a pickup truck in the pouring rain. Because I asked for a tarp to cover us, they asked if I was pregnant and if that was why I was complaining. I told them I wasn’t, but that I was worried for my health just the same, because the cold and the bumping of the truck affected my leg, which I had hurt at work. The next day they fired me, for complaining.”*

Female flower workers are constantly struggling to maintain their jobs by demonstrating their capacity and productivity, and simultaneously fulfill their responsibilities in the home. They are burdened with heavy workloads that affect their physical and mental health both in the short term and in the long term. In this context a woman is more likely to accept conditions that hurt her personally than to risk affecting her family.

These concessions are often the result of women’s ignorance of their rights, or because they do not dare to complain.

### **Companies’ recognition of labor rights**

Laws promoting women’s rights guarantee six weeks of maternity leave (two weeks before giving birth, and four weeks after). Social Security covers 75% of their pay during this time, and the company should pay the remaining 25%, and give the woman

<sup>4</sup> This is what business owners say when they talk about women’s participation in the flower sector.

two hours per day to nurse her baby until he or she is six months old. The Labor Code also prohibits firing pregnant women.

Some companies comply with the law and respect these norms and rights, and others adjust the laws to suit them. Some companies will not hire blacklisted (workers are blacklisted for trying to unionize) or pregnant workers. Women must show a medical certificate proving that they are not pregnant. If a woman becomes pregnant after she has been hired, she must pay a substitute to work in her place during her maternity leave. As a result, women feel they must take a very short maternity leave and return to work. Other companies simply fire women workers who become pregnant.

Small, new, or subcontracting companies hire personnel for very short-term contracts. In this situation, neither the subcontractor nor the plantation takes responsibility for the pregnant worker. Because the worker has not made continuous payments to social security, she cannot use those services either.

One of the factors that lead to the exclusion of women workers is their participation in a union. Women who have joined a union are labeled as dangerous and problematic and are put on a blacklist that is circulated between the different flower companies to prevent hiring them anywhere in the region.

*“I had to work using a false name because I needed the job, and even so they found out and I had to go to a new plantation.”*

Testimony from a former union leader

## Promotions

There are limited opportunities for promotions at flower farms, generally only involving changes between jobs that require more or less physical exertion or skills.

Being promoted to supervisor depends on a worker’s knowledge of the production process, their ability to manage personnel, and their level of training. Many women workers would like to be supervisors because of the power relations that it implies.

The perception of whether or not workers must do something special to receive a promotion is proportionally divided between *yes*, *no*, and *no answer*. The third category is particularly telling; workers under age 19, supervisors, and workers with less experience are particularly reluctant to answer (Table 12). Silences are a way to communicate something that is not easy to express verbally, either because of fear, embarrassment, or pain.

The perception that it is necessary to do something special to be promoted is most common among workers between the ages of 25 and 29; 13% of workers in this category chose not to respond.

In terms of activities, post-harvest workers are most likely to believe that something special must be done to receive a promotion; this is probably because this is the area where most young women work, who are particularly vulnerable to harassment. Only one of the supervisors interviewed said it was not necessary to do something special to receive a promotion (40% said it *was* necessary, and the rest did not answer).

## Privileges

The perception that some women have certain privileges at the plantations is related to the previous topic.

Workers consider that “privileges” include promotions, job stability, and other benefits. Forty-six percent of interviewed women said that some women workers have privileges in the workplace (Table 13). The administrative workers and workers aged 20-25 were least likely to indicate that some workers had extra privileges.

The interviewed women considered that women who had relationships with their superiors did enjoy some privileges: *“I think she was with the supervisor, because he gave her a week off to go to a party, and didn’t take reduce her pay, she was paid the same as the rest of us. Normally they don’t want to give workers any time off. For example, I asked for time off because my husband was sick, but they told me he’d just have to get better.”*

## Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is behavior with a sexual connotation that makes another person feel uncomfortable or insecure; the offender is generally in a position of advantage, because he has a higher ranking or position, or is older.

The following are examples of abusive behavior.

- Insinuations with the eyes
- Whistles
- Obscene gestures
- Insults, calling women “crazy”, “whore”
- Constantly criticizing or making fun of someone
- Criticizing the work that has been done
- Putting oneself in a woman’s way or standing very close
- Purposefully running into or brushing into a woman
- Touching or pinching
- Pornographic jokes
- Forcibly touching in a sexual way
- Hugging against her will
- Grabbing her clothing or hair
- Kissing against her will
- Inviting her out
- Inviting her out with a promise of giving her a job or position
- Spreading rumors, stories, and gossip of a sexual nature

Women workers who are the victims of sexual harassment feel offended and hurt, but they do not know how to confront the situation. They don't talk about these incidents because they are unaware of their rights, because they have been threatened, because they feel embarrassed or guilty, or because they fear that no one will believe them.

In the workplace, where there is discrimination in terms of hiring, working hours, tasks, etc, sexual harassment is a mechanism of control.

Most women in different areas, particularly those related to production, have seen or have experienced some form of sexual harassment or abuse. The few women in the administrative areas say they have not experienced sexual harassment or abuse.

Sexual harassment does not only occur inside the workplace, it also occurs between workers and their superiors or coworkers in other social spaces, such as restaurants, dance halls, and karaoke bars. *“Subordinates and superiors are there, workers and supervisors; there they form couples, I don't know how far they go, but I do know that a man will do the impossible to conquer or seduce a woman.”*

## **SEXUAL ABUSE IN THE WORKPLACE**

In the workplace, any proposal, pressure, or verbal or physical act that offers a job, promotion, salary increase, easier workload, shorter workday, or simply respect for labor or maternity rights in exchange for sexual favors, constitutes abuse.

A worker is the victim of sexual abuse when she is:

- Asked/forced to sleep with a man who has a superior position in the plantation
- Asked/forced to sleep with a man who receives higher pay in the plantation
- Asked/forced to sleep with a coworker
- Sexually attacked

The women do not openly admit to the existence of sexual abuse in the workplace, but they do say that there are unsafe conditions in the plantations that facilitate abuse: “There are isolated and solitary areas where, if something happens, no one knows. If someone faints, or something happens to her, there is no one nearby to help.”

Twenty percent of women interviewed feel offended, ashamed, guilty, or nervous when they face abuse or harassment in the workplace. The 16% who did not want to answer the question likely also feel ashamed and nervous, which is why they are also uncomfortable discussing the issue.

The fact that society blames women themselves for being the victims of harassment, saying that they are “easy”, adds to women's unwillingness to discuss their experiences openly.

## SOCIAL ATTITUDES

Socio-cultural factors make it possible for sexual harassment and abuse to be completely ignored by most of society. There is implicit and explicit reticence to acknowledge the problem. This social attitude justifies these incidents and prevents the adoption of measures to resolve the problem in the different spheres where it exists: civil, social, labor, domestic.

The social attitude leads to a series of myths on the reasons for the mistreatment of women. It is called an isolated problem, supposedly limited to certain groups (the poor, for example), certain women (masochists, flirts, irresponsible women), certain men (machistas, alcoholics), and certain circumstances (family crisis, social isolation, strikes).

In the focus group the women told the story of a woman worker from the Ecuadorian coast who was raped. (There is a prejudice against coastal women, who tend to be more extroverted than women in the mountains, and are therefore labeled as “easy” women).

According to these women, *“she accused a coworker of raping her, we went to talk to him, he told us that she had asked him for \$2000 in exchange for not talking...we know him, she wanted to take advantage of him. A medical exam showed that she had not been raped.”*

This testimony shows that victims are not given the benefit of the doubt; rather, it is assumed that they are guilty or responsible.

The same women punish other women who are the victims of sexual harassment and abuse. This shows a discriminatory attitude that is found not only in men but also in women. Discrimination and violence against women are patterns of social and cultural behavior that influence both genders, but that end up legitimizing the behavior of the men and attacking women’s integrity.

### Myths and justification for sexual harassment and abuse

- She deserves it. She provokes the man through her gestures, behavior, and clothing.
- She likes it, that’s why she is still around.
- It only happens to a certain kind of woman.
- It happens to poor women who seek advantages or support.
- Young women believe anything they are told.
- The woman is inventing the story or exaggerating.
- She wasn’t raped, it was only an argument.
- Men will be men.
- He just reprimanded her because she didn’t finish her work.
- He was having a bad day.



- They are very rare incidents.

According to the information in the survey, many people believe that the women themselves are responsible for being the victims of harassment.

Women themselves criticize other women who are the victims of sexual harassment and abuse, showing the extent to which discrimination and *machismo* are entrenched in society. Women say, "If a woman flirts, the man abuses her...it all depends on the woman." The general attitude, even among the women themselves, is that when a woman is harassed, or even raped, it is not the man's fault; it is not because the man forced or pressured her, but rather because she "is not a decent woman". This indicates a lack of recognition that within sexual harassment there is a relationship of superiority between the offender and the victim, which is created by job position, age, experience, power, and/or money.

Women workers also stated that "the men who harass the young women lie to them and deceive them, but we don't say anything, to avoid problems." Evidently, women who are witnesses to sexual harassment prefer not to denounce these incidents, in order to not become involved and potentially lose their jobs. They gossip about incidents of harassment that affect their female coworkers, and often place the blame on the victim.

There is a space where solidarity among women is more common, and where such issues are discussed. This space is shared between older women and younger women; the older women feel responsible for protecting the younger women, given that the maternal role is very important in Andean societies. "Among friends we talk about it, and we give them advice; some of them listen, but when they lose their heads (they fall in love), forget it."

When we asked about men's behavior and reactions to sexual harassment, the interviewees reaffirmed the machista perspective of the culture and society. The men say that "the women made themselves available", "it all depends on the women", and "they have to know how to behave themselves."

Men think that the problem lies with the women. Harassment is considered to be a situation that women can take advantage of, to improve their situation. There are no specific norms that regulate male sexual behavior in the workplace. Labor and social sanctions exclusively affect women.

According to the women workers, most men prefer not to talk about the topic of sexual harassment. In a situation of abuse or harassment, very few men will defend their female coworkers' integrity (Table 20). Instead, these situations become the source of gossip and offensive jokes.

Most men are not interested in the situation of their female coworkers, and instead entertain themselves by talking about their problems.

In the workplace, women sometimes see each other as rivals, competing to keep their jobs. Other times they try to avoid problems in the company and gain the approval of their superiors by maintaining a complicit silence about abuses. Lack of self-esteem and gender solidarity also prevents women from defending their coworkers.

The continuous job rotation that characterizes work in the flower plantations also prevents women workers from getting to know each other and developing friendships. They do not feel part of a unified group of workers. The work in the plantations, which

is based on achieving production goals as quickly as possible, foments competition and rivalry between workers.

## **PREVALENCE OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Sixty-three percent of interviewed women workers know of, have seen, or have experienced sexual harassment in the flower industry (Table 14). It is surprising that while 83% of 25-29 year old women are aware of the problem of sexual harassment, it was still very difficult to get them to talk about it, probably because they were afraid of the repercussions.

On average, more than half (55.45%) of the women workers on flower plantations have suffered some form of sexual harassment. Workers aged 20-24 are the most common victims of such harassment (70.97%), followed by 30-34 year olds (66.67%) and 25-30 year olds (53%).

Women working in positions that require less skill and education like cultivation and post-harvest work were the most common victims of sexual harassment, while women in higher-skilled jobs (supervisors, administrators) experienced very little harassment (6.93%).

In terms of age, adolescents of 14-15 years of age are the most common victims of sexual harassment. The offenders may be superiors or older coworkers; some are married and some are single.

*“14-15 year olds are still girls, and the men screw one, screw another, several at a time...there are frequent sentimental conflicts, disappointments, and unwanted pregnancies; later, the men disappear, or forget, or simply don't want to support them.”*

Unwanted pregnancies are common among young (13-15 year old) flower workers. Their coworkers say this is because of their inexperience and lack of parental guidance. It is likely also because of their lack of knowledge about family planning and contraception.

Women over age 18 also have unwanted pregnancies. Their low self-esteem makes them think that if they give in to a superior's insinuations, they can keep their job or enjoy some privileges.

### **Forms of sexual harassment**

The most common forms of sexual harassment are whistles (88%), invitations to go out (79%), insinuating glances (71%), and pornographic jokes (64%).

There are also more explicit and more serious forms of sexual harassment, such as unwelcome touches (28%), hugging against the woman's will (47%), unwelcome kisses (29%), inviting a woman out with a promise to improve her job (25%), being invited out by a superior with a promise to improve her job (18%). About 19% of workers have been forced to sleep with a coworker or superior and almost 10% have been sexually attacked.

## SANCTIONS

Generally workers do not discuss the issue of sexual harassment. Women prefer to keep quiet; they say they “do not inform their superiors because they are more likely to believe the technician or supervisor than the worker”.

Flower companies do not have established procedures for receiving and responding to complaints regarding sexual harassment and abuse in the plantations.

Very few cases have been reported to the authorities, and of these few cases, even fewer have been acted upon.

According to the following testimony, it appears that the few successfully sanctioned cases were the ones reported to female supervisors or authorities:

*“The worker went into the warehouse. The supervisor found out and wanted to be with her, but she refused. After that the supervisor maneuvered to complicate her working situation. He made her feel bad, so that she would give in. He assigned her difficult and burdensome tasks, and said that if she didn’t finish her work, she couldn’t go home. She finally complained to the engineer (a woman), who found a psychiatrist. The psychiatrist asked each of us ‘How is the supervisor behaving?’ Two other workers complained, the engineer took some measures against the supervisor, and he left.”*

Workers are also afraid to file complaints because they are afraid of economic blackmail or other maneuvers, especially because the victims come from poor homes and need to keep their jobs to be able to survive. Sometimes women are afraid to talk about the incidents because their husbands will find out, and this may lead to family and marital problems.

Only 5% of workers reported incidents of harassment to their superiors. About 40% sought support from coworkers, family, or friends (Table 22).

Fifty-nine percent of women interviewed said that the offenders were not sanctioned in any way, while 26% did not know if the offender had been punished (Table 24). Only 14% of the reported cases were sanctioned.

These are some of the observations and expressions collected from workers in the interviews:

- Despite the problems in the workplace, nothing can be done for fear of being fired.
- Hopes that someday the problem of harassment by coworkers is resolved.
- “I don’t know what to do. I feel alone!”
- “There are always these kinds of jokes between men and women because we work together, but we are used to it.”
- “It would be important for us women to know our rights not just at work but also at home because we are often beaten by our husbands.”
- There should be an institution to protect women, especially against mistreatment and offenses.
- “When I started working they had already told me about how harassment happens in these companies so I think we should unite to complain.”
- “It is important to have trainings on illnesses like AIDS.”
- Some people, especially young girls and people who complain, are mistreated.
- There should be more respect for women and better treatment for everyone.
- Everything happens in the company, there are people who bother women in particular.

### **Other ideas to consider**

Sexual harassment and abuse are complex problems to discuss because they include psychological aspects (emotions), sociocultural aspects (gender roles, subordination, discrimination), and economic aspects (labor relations, salaries, etc). This became clear after investigating why sexual harassment and abuse, while evident, are not understood to be a violation of rights or a crime, but rather are assumed to be normal and even legitimate.

The socio-cultural context can explain some aspects of the victim-aggressor relationship. Drs. Lorente referred to an association between women’s social role and gender (masculine/feminine) because the gender differences lead to the acceptance of a submissive role for women in relation to men. Social norms favor and create an idea of men’s superiority and an expectation that women will be obedient. When these expectations are not met, it can lead to a situation of violence.

From a psychological point of view, “humans are bio-psycho-socio-cultural and economic beings, and the type of work that they do, does not allow them to relieve their fears, dreams, objectives, and distress; in large part the work is done alone, under constant pressure and stress. Under these conditions, a human being withdraws into himself and his social behavior changes; psychologically they become timid, untrusting, and nervous, with a desire to establish relationships of affection, consideration, and good treatment, which can lead us to think that women flower workers are very susceptible to being addressed with affection. Loneliness and distrust generate introspective and fearful behavior (they think that they are being monitored, controlled, and judged).”

## CONCLUSIONS

Having completed the study, we can conclude that the central hypothesis of the investigation was confirmed: Female flower workers do suffer sexual harassment and abuse, with appalling frequency.

Sexual harassment is not just a manifestation of sexual desire. Above all it is an expression of control or power over the victims, who are generally women.

Younger workers, workers in cultivation and post-harvest areas, and those with less than three years of experience working in the plantations are the most frequent targets of sexual harassment and abuse. These workers are most easily exploited because they are less likely to organize, and are unaware of their rights.

The companies' image and profits take precedence over the workers' rights. Working conditions and job instability in the flower industry foster competition and eliminate solidarity among coworkers.

Fewer and fewer contracts in floriculture establish a formal relationship between workers and companies. The worker commits to doing a certain job at a plantation, but the company does not have a direct relationship or obligation to the worker. The company therefore does very little if a case of sexual harassment is reported. As a result, the affected worker, feeling unprotected, keeps quiet in order to be able to keep her job.

The issue of sexual harassment and abuse has been given little importance in the labor sphere. Cultural stereotypes and prejudices prevent people from considering such incidents to be crimes. Since women confront and put up with similar aggressions in the home, sexual harassment and abuse in the workplace is not considered a unique situation.

The women respond to the aggression with silence. Silence before the aggressor; silence before others; and total silence before the administrators of justice (judges or labor inspectors). Women feel guilty when they are the victims of harassment. They are taught to believe that they are responsible for what happens to them because they must have done or said something to provoke it. They remain silent because they are afraid or ashamed. They are afraid that there will be a scandal, or that they will lose their job. The internalized anger and pain can then cause physical, spiritual, and psychological illnesses.

“We women don’t like to be harassed. The fact that we don’t file complaints about these incidents doesn’t mean that we like to be harassed.” But the women do not know where to turn for help, who they can trust to listen to them, or where to file formal complaints.

### **Final observations on the surveys**

These are some of the reactions of the interviewed women at the end of the survey.

- Hope that the situation of abuse and harassment will change.
- Felt uncomfortable at first talking about these problems.
- Admits that there is harassment by bosses because they invited her to go out in exchange for not making her work on Saturdays and not work obligatory overtime.
- There is harassment in the workplace but they don’t complain because they won’t gain anything by it, it will only lead to rumors and gossip.
- The survey should be clearer and broader to address more of the situation and stop the disintegration of many families.
- Sexual harassment always happens in the workplace, to most women, but they don’t want to talk about it.
- It is important to do something, so that women workers have someone to turn to.
- This kind of study is important to learn about the problems in the flower industry.
- There should be an office here in charge of investigating the abuse of children and wives.
- The harassment happens during the workday, during the rest periods.
- The bosses abuse us; there are no regulations.
- Bosses abuse workers and there is a high risk of illnesses.
- Workers are afraid to report incidents because they fear losing their jobs.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **For flower workers**

If the workers themselves do not recognize their own rights—including human, gender, labor, social, cultural, political, and economic rights—it will be almost impossible to address the problem of sexual harassment and abuse. Therefore we must begin a process of reflection on the causes and consequences of this problem on the lives of women workers and future generations. The women themselves expressed the need for education and training on different issues, including:

- Self-esteem
- Ways to avoid domestic violence and abuse
- Information and training for women workers on the topics of human rights, labor rights, and reproductive rights
- Strengthen social participation
- Information and support to file complaints

### **For companies**

Sexual harassment and abuse should be recognized as violations of fundamental labor and social rights. Companies must ensure that they are complying with the laws and guaranteeing that the rights that protect women from any form of harassment or abuse are being respected. They should develop internal processes for receiving workers' complaints, investigating the incidents, and sanctioning the offenders. Furthermore, they should support attempts to gather information and conduct trainings and educational programs.

### **For local and national authorities**

Guaranteeing citizens' rights is not only dependent on information and laws, but also on compliance and enforcement mechanisms. Therefore, local authorities such as municipal governments and local legislatures must demand application of the law and create the mechanisms to enforce it. The national government also has institutions that can demand compliance with the law, including the Comisarías de la Mujer and labor inspectorates. Women's organizations and labor organizations should pressure the government to ensure that the legal system functions and responds to complaints regarding violations of citizens' rights.

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The International Labor Rights Fund is a non-profit advocacy organization based in Washington DC, founded in 1986. ILRF promotes enforcement of labor rights internationally through public education and mobilization, research, litigation, legislation, and collaboration with labor, government and business groups.



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## APPENDIX

Table No 1

## Women interviewed, by place of employment

Workplace/Company	No of interviews	Workplace/Company	No of interviews
Agro Planta	2	Florespa	2
Bella Flor	4	Florexpo Anchola	1
Cananvalle	2	Flori Campo	2
Claveles de la Montaña	2	Gerflores	2
Denmar SA	4	Hoja verde	3
Difiori	2	INROSE	2
Ecuaclevel	1	Latín Flor	1
Ecuarosas	2	Mallmaison	1
Emiliana	1	María Bonita	2
Falcon Faros	4	Mistikflower	3
Fieldrems	1	Molinos la Flor	2
Finca Maria Bonita	1	Niña María	3
Florentina	1	Paraíso	1
Flaris	5	Rosa Prima	3
Flor Eloy	3	Rosadex	1
Flor Mare	1	RosaMon	1
Flor Mary	2	Rosas del Ecuador	4
Floral Word	1	Rosinvar	1
Floral World	1	Santa Fe	2
Floreal	3	Sargazos	10
Florequisa	1	Tecno Flor	5
Flores del Río	1	Terrafrut	4
Total surveys		101	
Total companies		47	

**Table No. 2****Age of interviewed women workers**

Age	No.	%
15-19 years	20	19.80
20-24 years	31	30.69
25-29 years	32	31.68
30-34 years	6	5.94
35-40 years	8	7.92
40+ years	1	1
No answer	3	2.97
<b>Total</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>100</b>
Average age	24.5 años	
Median age	24 años	
Minimum age	16 años	
Maximum age	40 años	

**Table No. 3****Women surveyed according to years worked in flower industry**

Years worked in flowers	No.	%
Less than 1 yr	29	28.71
1-3 years	47	46.53
4-6 years	19	18.81
7-10 years	2	1.98
Over 10 years	4	3.96
<b>Total</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table No. 4****Women by Activity**

Activity	No.
Cultivation	47
Post-harvest	27
Cleaning	13
Supervision	7
Administration	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>101</b>

**Table No. 5**

% of women by age, according to time worked in flower industry.

	Less than 1 year	1-3 years	4-6 years	7-10 years	10+ years	Total
15 - 19 yrs old	52.94	41.18	5.88			100
20 - 24 yrs old	11.43	65.71	17.14	5.71		100
25 -29 yrs old	45.16	29.03	25.81			100
30 - 34 yrs old		33.33	33.33		33.33	100
35 - 39 yrs old	25.00	62.50	12.50			100
40 + yrs old					100.00	100
Don't know/no answer		33.33	33.33		33.33	100
Total	28.71	46.53	18.81	1.98	3.96	100

% of women by years worked in flowers, according to age

Age	Less than 1 year	1-3 years	4-6 years	7-10 years	10+ years	Total
15 - 19 yrs old	31.03	14.89	5.26			16.83
20 - 24 yrs old	13.79	48.94	31.58	100		34.65
25 -29 yrs old	48.28	19.15	42.11			30.69
30 - 34 yrs old		4.26	10.53		50.00	5.94
35 - 39 yrs old	6.90	10.64	5.26			7.92
40 + yrs old					25.00	0.99
Don't know/no answer		2.13	5.26		25.00	2.97
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

**Table No 6**  
**Tasks performed in the flower industry**

<p><b>Administrative activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Passing messages</li> <li>◦ Cleaning offices</li> <li>◦ Secretarial work</li> <li>◦ Helping with control data</li> <li>◦ Nurse work, caring for health of workers</li> <li>◦ Reception work</li> </ul>	<p><b>Cleaning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Cleaning cold storage rooms</li> <li>◦ Cleaning greenhouses</li> <li>◦ Sweeping and throwing out trash</li> <li>◦ Cleaning workers' bathrooms</li> <li>◦ Cleaning offices</li> </ul>
<p><b>Cultivation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Weeding paths</li> <li>◦ Constructing flowerbeds</li> <li>◦ Applying fertilizer</li> <li>◦ Planting</li> <li>◦ Working in the flowerbeds</li> <li>◦ Manually removing plagues and pests</li> <li>◦ Weeding, cutting</li> <li>◦ Irrigation</li> <li>◦ Harvesting flowers</li> <li>◦ Raising flowerbeds</li> <li>◦ Pruning</li> <li>◦ Carrying organic waste</li> <li>◦ Repairing the infrastructure</li> </ul>	<p><b>Post-harvest</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Arranging stems</li> <li>◦ Cleaning the post-harvest area</li> <li>◦ Classifying, cutting, and packaging flowers</li> <li>◦ Collecting trash</li> <li>◦ Carrying flowers to the cold storage rooms</li> </ul> <p><b>Supervisors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Quality control</li> <li>◦ Collecting data: dates, output, codes</li> <li>◦ Following the productive process</li> <li>◦ Following the transportation process</li> <li>◦ Coordinating with technicians</li> <li>◦ Organizing the weekly workplan</li> </ul>







<b>Table No. 9</b>			
<b>Pay by activity</b>			
Activity	Pay		
	Average wage	Minimum wage	Maximum wage
Total	147.64	100	330
Cultivation	139.70	100	192
Cleaning	145.62	100	170
Post-harvest	143.15	120	200
Supervisors	162.43	120	200
Administration	193.00	120	330

**Table No. 10**  
**Number of workers by type of activity.**  
**according to how they work their overtime hours**

Type of activity	Type of overtime					Total
	Forced/obligatory	By shifts	By shifts and obligatory	By shifts and voluntary	Voluntary	
Administration	28.57	14.29	14.29		42.86	100
Cultivation	46.81	34.04	12.77	2.13	4.26	100
Cleaning	30.77	53.85	15.38	0.00	0.00	100
Post-harvest	29.63	44.44	14.81	3.70	7.41	100
Supervisors	57.14	14.29	0.00	0.00	28.57	100
Total	39.60	36.63	12.87	1.98	8.91	100

**Table No. 11****Perception of reasons for salary variations**

Reasons	No	%
Activity	23	22.77
Agreement	1	0.99
Spoiled, privileged, flirt	8	7.92
Experience	1	0.99
Overtime	16	15.84
There are no privileges	2	1.98
Years working there	16	15.84
Quality of work	5	4.95
No answer	29	28.71
Total	101	100

**Table No. 12****Necessary to do something special to be promoted.**

By age group.

Age group	Yes	no	Don't know/no answer	Total
15 - 19 yrs	35.29	17.65	47.06	100
20 - 24 yrs	25.71	40.00	34.29	100
25 -29 yrs	48.39	38.71	12.90	100
30 - 34 yrs	50.00	16.67	33.33	100
35 - 39 yrs	50.00	12.50	37.50	100
40 + yrs		100.00	0.00	100
Don't know/no answer		66.67	33.33	100
Total	36.63	33.66	29.70	100

**Necessary to do something special to be promoted.**

By activity.

Activity	Yes	no	Don't know/no answer	Total
Administration	0.00	100.00	0.00	100
Cultivation	36.17	34.04	29.79	100
Cleaning	38.46	30.77	30.77	100
Post-harvest	44.44	22.22	33.33	100
Supervisors	42.86	14.29	42.86	100
Total	36.63	33.66	29.70	100

**Necessary to do something special to be promoted.**

By yrs worked in the company.

Time working	Yes	No	Don't know/no answer	Total
Less than 1 year	44.83	31.03	24.14	100

1-3 years	36.17	25.53	38.30	100
4-6 years	26.32	47.37	26.32	100
7-10 years	50.00	50.00	0.00	100
More than 10 yrs	25.00	75.00	0.00	100
Total	36.63	33.66	29.70	100

**Table No. 13**

% of workers who think that some women have privileges in the workplace.  
According to age.

Age group	Yes	No	Don't know/no answer	Total
15 - 19 yrs	52.94	17.65	29.41	100
20 - 24 yrs	25.71	34.29	40.00	100
25 -29 yrs	64.52	12.90	22.58	100
30 - 34 yrs	66.67	0.00	33.33	100
35 - 39 yrs	25.00	12.50	62.50	100
40 + yrs	50.00	50.00		100
Don't know/no answer	50.00	50.00		100
Total	45.54	21.78	32.67	100

% of workers who think that some women have privileges in the workplace.

According to activity

Activity	Yes	No	Don't know/no answer	Total
Administration	28.57	71.43		100
Cultivation	40.43	23.40	36.17	100
Cleaning	69.23	7.69	23.08	100
Post-harvest	44.44	18.52	37.04	100
Supervisors	57.14	0.00	42.86	100
Total general	45.54	21.78	32.67	100

% of workers who think that some women have privileges in the workplace.  
According to time at the company

Time working	Yes	No	Don't know/no answer	Total
Less than 1 year	65.52	10.34	24.14	100
1-3 years	38.30	27.66	34.04	100
4-6 years	31.58	15.79	52.63	100
7-10 years	50.00	50.00		100
More than 10 yrs	50.00	50.00		100
Total general	45.54	21.78	32.67	100.00

**Table No. 14**

% of workers by age:  
whether or not they know what sexual harassment in the workplace is.

Age group	Yes	Yes. some	no	Don't know/no answer	Total
15 - 19 yrs	58.82	5.88	23.53	11.76	100
20 - 24 yrs	42.86	5.71	40.00	11.43	100
25 -29 yrs	80.65		12.90	6.45	100
30 - 34 yrs	50.00		50.00		100
35 - 39 yrs	37.50		50.00	12.50	100
40 + yrs	100.00				100
Don't know/no answer	100.00				100
Total	59.41	2.97	28.71	8.91	100

% of workers by activity:  
whether or not they know what sexual harassment in the workplace is.

Activity	Yes	Yes. some	no	Don't know/no answer	Total
Administration	42.86	14.29	42.86		100
Cultivation	63.64		36.36		100
Cleaning	76.92		23.08		100
Post-harvest	55.56	3.70	18.52	22.22	100
Supervisors	66.67		33.33		100

Totales	61.86	2.06	29.90	6.19	100
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% of workers by years of work:  
whether or not they know what sexual harassment in the workplace is.

Time working (ranges)	Yes	Yes. some	no	Don't know/no answer	Total
Less than 1 year	72.41		20.69	6.90	100
1-3 years	53.19	6.38	31.91	8.51	100
4-6 years	52.63		31.58	15.79	100
7-10 years			100.00		100
More than 10 yrs	100.00				100
Total	59.41	2.97	28.71	8.91	100

Table No. 15

## Type of harassment experienced in the workplace. According to age group.

Age group	Total	Victim of harassment	Visual insinuations	Whistles	Obscene gestures	Pomographic jokes	Asked out	Asked out with promise to improve job	Asked out by superior with promise to improve job	Asked out by someone who is higher paid
15 - 19 yrs	19.8	40	55	75	30	45	70	20	5	10
20 - 24 yrs	30.69	70.97	80.65	93.23	58.06	80.65	93.55	19.35	12.9	12.9
25 -29 yrs	31.68	53.13	78.13	84.38	62.5	62.5	71.88	37.5	25	21.88
30 - 34 yrs	5.94	66.67	66.67	100	66.67	100	83.33		50	16.67
35 - 39 yrs	7.92	25	37.5	62.5	12.5	12.5	62.5	37.5	25	25
40 + yrs	0.99	100	100	100	100	100	100			
Don't know/no answer	2.97	66.67	100	100	66.67	100	100			
Total	100	55.45	71.29	88.12	51.49	64.36	79.21	24.75	17.82	15.84

Table No. 16

## Type of harassment experienced in the workplace. According to activity.

Activity	Total	Victim of harassment	Visual insinuations	Whistles	Obscene gestures	Pomographic jokes	Asked out	Asked out with promise to improve job	Asked out by superior with promise to improve job	Asked out by someone who is higher paid
Administration	6.93	57.14	85.71	85.71	57.14	85.71	57.14			
Cleaning	12.87	76.92	84.62	100	61.54	61.54	92.31	30.77	15.38	15.38
Supervisors	6.93	42.86	100	100	42.86	42.86	85.71	42.86	14.29	14.29
Post-harvest	26.73	40.74	62.96	81.48	33.33	59.26	77.78	22.22	7.41	11.11
Cultivation	46.53	59.57	65.96	87.23	59.57	68.09	78.72	25.53	27.66	21.28
Total	100	55.45	71.29	88.12	51.49	64.36	79.21	24.75	17.82	15.84



Table No. 17

## Type of harassment experienced in the workplace. According to years worked.

Years worked	Total	Victim of harassment	Visual insinuations	Whistles	Obscene gestures	Pomographic jokes	Asked out	Asked out with promise to improve job	Asked out by superior with promise to improve job	Asked out by someone who is higher paid
Less than 1 year	28.71	51.72	82.76	89.66	51.72	51.72	79.31	34.48	34.48	27.59
1-3 years	46.53	57.45	61.7	87.23	42.55	68.09	80.85	21.28	12.77	14.89
4-6 years	18.81	42.11	63.16	78.95	52.63	57.89	68.42	26.32	5.26	5.26
7-10 years	1.98	100	100	100	100	100	100			
More than 10 yrs	3.98	100	100	100	100	100	100		25	
Total	100	55.45	70.3	87.13	50.5	63.37	79.21	24.75	17.82	15.84



**Table No. 18****Type of harassment experienced in the workplace. According to age group.**

Age group	Total	Touched by force	Hugged against her will	Kissed against her will	Invited out by superior with promise to improve job	Asked/forced to sleep with a coworker	Sexually attacked
15 - 19 yrs	19.8	15	40	15	5	10	5
20 - 24 yrs	30.69	38.71	61.29	32.26	12.9	9.68	9.68
25 -29 yrs	31.68	28.13	40.63	31.25	25	25	9.38
30 - 34 yrs	5.94	33.33	100	83.33	50	50	16.67
35 - 39 yrs	7.92	37.5	25	25	25	37.5	25
40 + yrs	0.99						
Don't know/no answer	2.97						
Total	100	28.71	47.52	29.7	17.82	18.81	9.9

**Type of harassment experienced in the workplace. According to activity.**

Activity	Total	Touched by force	Hugged against her will	Kissed against her will	Invited out by superior with promise to improve job	Asked/forced to sleep with a coworker	Sexually attacked
Administration	6.93	28.57	14.29	14.29			
Cleaning	12.87	53.85	61.54	23.08	15.38	15.38	15.38
Supervisors	6.93	14.29	28.57	42.86	14.29	28.57	14.29
Post-harvest	26.73	22.22	48.15	22.22	7.41	7.41	3.7
Cultivation	46.53	27.66	51.06	36.17	27.66	27.66	12.77
Total	100	28.71	47.52	29.7	17.82	18.81	9.9

**Type of harassment experienced in the workplace. According to years worked.**

Years worked	Total	Touched by force	Hugged against her will	Kissed against her will	Invited out by superior with promise to improve job	Asked/forced to sleep with a coworker	Sexually attacked
Less than 1 year	28.71	24.14	51.72	31.03	34.48	27.59	10.34
1-3 years	46.53	23.4	38.3	23.4	12.77	14.89	6.38
4-6 years	18.81	36.84	57.89	31.58	5.26	15.79	15.79
7-10 years	1.98	100	100	100			
More than 10 yrs	3.98	50	50	50	25	25	25
Total	100	28.71	47.52	29.7	17.82	18.81	9.9

**Table No. 19****Women workers' reactions to situations of abuse or harassment**

Reaction	Total	%
Ashamed	11	10.89
Uncomfortable	28	27.72
Nervous	12	11.88
None	13	12.87
Offended	21	20.79
No answer	16	15.84
Total	101	100

**Table No. 20****Male workers' reactions to situations of abuse or harassment that affected their female coworkers**

Men's reactions	No.	%
Led to jokes and gossip	9	8.91
Led to jokes	20	19.8
Led to gossip	15	14.9
Didn't care	14	13.9
Didn't care, led to jokes	6	5.94
Didn't care, led to gossip	Q	5.94
Offended but didn't say anything	5	4.95
Offended and complained	4	3.96
No answer	22	21.8
Total	101	100

**Table No. 21****Women's reactions to sexual harassment or abuse in the workplace**

	No.	%
Led to jokes	1	0.99
Happy	1	0.99
Caused gossip	42	41.58
Didn't care	12	11.88
Offended but didn't say anything	21	20.79
Offende, didn't say anything, led to gossip	2	1.98
No answer	22	21.78
<b>Total</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table No. 22****Who workers told about harassment incidents**

.	No.	%
Told a superior	4	3.96
Told coworkers and superiors	1	0.99
Told someone outside of the plantation	6	5.94
Told a family member	9	8.91
Told a family member and coworkers	7	6.93
Female coworkers	23	22.77
Male coworkers	7	6.93
Didn't tell anyone	14	13.86
Didn't think it was important	9	8.91
No answer	21	20.79
<b>Total</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table No. 23****% of workers by activity:****Whether or not they know the company representatives**

Type of activity	Yes	No	Don't know	Total
Administrative	42.86	42.86	14.29	100
Cultivation	23.40	65.96	10.64	100
Cleaning	46.15	46.15	7.69	100
Post-harvest	11.11	70.37	18.52	100
Supervisors	28.57	71.43	0.00	100
Total	24.75	63.37	11.88	100

**Table No. 24****Number and percentage of cases of harassment  
that were sanctioned**

Sanctioned?	No.	%
No	43	58.9
Don't know	19	26.03
Yes	11	13.9
No answer	28	
Total	101	100

**Table No. 25****Type of sanction applied in case of sexual harassment  
or abuse in the workplace**

Sanction	No.	%
Written warning	3	4.11
Verbal warning	8	10.96
Verbal and written warning	1	1.37
Fine	4	5.48
None	8	10.96
Other	2	2.74
Left the job	1	1.37
Don't know	1	1.37
No answer	45	61.64
Total	73	100

