

# MMFLOWERS

## BUILDING RESILIENCE IN FLOWER SUPPLY CHAINS

BP4GG VSCF DfID/FCDO funded project

### A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

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For workers' rights. For better business.



# Background

- **Retailers in the UK and Europe reduced their flower orders** to prioritise essential goods. Orders dropped up to **50-60%**
- **Flights were grounded.** Transport across borders and between counties curtailed. Freight increased in cost. Flowers were destroyed. Curfews imposed.
- **90% of all flower workers across East Africa have been affected** through reduced pay, unpaid leave or loss of jobs.
- **Kenya** estimated **50% of workforce** laid off. Approx. 127 flower farms, 150,000 direct workers, 2 million indirect. Industry 3<sup>rd</sup> largest foreign exchange earner.
- **Women are bearing the brunt of the crisis.** Make up 60-75% of workforce.

For this project, **a partnership** came together to build on existing work and relationships.

This consortium represents the **entire supply chain**, from suppliers to retailers, to NGOs and certification bodies, as well as education and industry forums.

**Long-term outcome:** Flower farm workers are protected, and the flower industry is fairer and more resilient.

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# Gender Perspective

## Work Situation

- Women are disproportionately affected as they make up the majority of flower workers - 60-75 percent.
- Work predominantly at start of supply chain – harvesting, preparation, packing – under valued.
- Women’s voices still not heard - need to improve women’s voice in CBAs and negotiations.
- Increase in sexual harassment and discrimination in the workplace.

## Wider Situation

- Many are sole household heads and have dependents – children, parents, wider family.
- Schools closed so had to stay home no work. Subsequent rise in food costs and now school fees on reduced wages.
- Access to food affected by COVID – transport and markets closed.
- Transport costs up by 100%.
- Energy costs doubled in price gas/charcoal and well as water so impact on hygiene re COVID-19.
- Rise in incidences of teenagers being ‘groomed’ and also accused of being ‘out of control’.
- Increase in FGM.
- Reported to be a rise in gender-based violence as a result of curfews and lockdowns.



# Gender Interventions

## Training

- Development of a workers rights training to support gender equality in the workplace (to include COVID-19 stigma awareness).
- Training of Trainers – through Gender Committees, Worker Welfare Committees, Fairtrade Committees, Unions and Local NGOs.
- Physical copy as well as an on-line resource.

## Income Generation

- Research into income generation - opportunities and market.
- Identification of 100 'vulnerable workers' – reduced hours and/or women, youth, disabled.
- Skills development: different structures (sole trader, cooperatives etc.), financial literacy, business planning, etc.
- Possibly linked to farm diversification for 4 farms – e.g. herb growing and soap making.

