Certification process of international standards in the Kenyan cut flower industry

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Abstract

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This thesis examines if auditors, managers and workers see certification and auditing as tools to improve working conditions in the Kenyan cut flower industry. It scrutinizes if mentioned stakeholders think that certification has been effective, since the state of working conditions of the industry were brought to attention in 2002 by academics and non-governmental organizations. The study further examines what different stakeholders see as challenges with the certification process as well as with the auditing process.

The theoretical framework for the study consists of several theories from previous studies, including Gereffi’s buyer-driven value chain and Barrientos and Smith’s distinction between outcome standards and process rights. The study is partly a literature review but focus of the study is on the findings from ten semi-structured interviews.

Among the stakeholder groups there was not one commonly expressed understanding on if certification and auditing had improved the working conditions. All three stakeholders emphasized some positive changes because of certification although they saw remaining challenges with for example freedom of association and increasing the level of wages to becoming living wages. The main findings in the study support Barrientos and Smith’s distinction and certification and auditing are argued not to be effective tools alone to reach improvements in the industry.

Key words: Cut flower, Certification, Labor rights, Kenya, Fairtrade, Audit, Living wages.
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This thesis is dedicated to my dad.

Christopher Riddselius
Stockholm, June 2011
### List of acronyms

CBA = Collective Bargaining Agreement  
CSR = Corporate Social Responsibility  
FFP = Fair Flowers Fair Plants  
FLO = Fairtrade Labelling Organization  
FLP = Flower Label Program  
FT = Fair Trade  
GVC = Global Value Chain  
KEWWO = Kenya Women Workers Organization  
KFC = Kenya Flower Council  
KHS = Kenya Shilling  
MPS = Milieu Programma Sierteelt  
NGO = Non Governmental Organization  
PPE = Personal Protective Equipment

When referring to interviews in the paper, the following abbreviations are used:

Auditor 1  
Auditor 2  
Auditor 3  
Manager 1  
Manager 2  
Manager 3  
Workers F1 = referring to group interview with “ordinary” workers at Farm 1  
Workers F1 SS = referring to group interview with shop steward workers at Farm 1  
Workers F2 = referring to group interview with “ordinary” workers at Farm 2  
Workers F2 SS = referring to group interview with shop steward workers at Farm 2
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1. INTRODUCTION

More and more attention has been brought to the impact consumption in high-income countries has on low-income countries, including social, economic and ecological impacts. One commodity, which is part of the globalized trade market between high-income countries and low-income countries, is cut flowers. Cut flowers are categorized as non-traditional crops since they are grown primarily for export potential and high cash value, rather than part of the customary consumption of the local population in the South. This can be compared to other supply chains of non-traditional goods, for example the supply chains of the production of garments, toys and electronics.

The non-traditional crops that are grown in African countries are mainly produced for export to the European Union. Kenya is one of the leading countries of exporting non-traditional crops. Africa as a continent has several beneficial advantages for production of cut flowers and Kenya has for a period over 20 years been a dominant actor and exporter of cut flowers to the European market. Between 50,000 and 100,000 people are employed in the sector. Out of these employees, sixty-five to seventy-five percent were female and in 2002 there were approximately 500 flower farms in Kenya.

It was in the mid-1990’s that dismal working conditions at many flower farms first were brought to light for stakeholders in importing high-income countries. Several studies were carried out in Kenya and they covered both social as well as environmental impacts of the production. Studies showed poor working conditions for the workers in the plantations and negative environmental impacts. The result for when these problems came to light is that, changes took place to a certain extent. Codes of conduct and standards were created to address the impacts. Some growers joined labels such as Fairtrade and Milieu Programma Sierteelt. This pressure partly came from stakeholders in high-income countries that had an interest to improve the working conditions for plantation workers at the bottom of the supply chain.

Although some improvements were made, studies show that there still remain serious problems in the cut flower industry in Kenya. A study from 2007 showed that the voluntary standards that were set up failed to protect workers adequately. There were still problems with absence of unions, confusion over which standards to adhere to and lack of independent auditing. Although standards have been implemented for a couple of years, little research has focused on what effect the private international standards have had on the working conditions. Most of the studies have focused in particular on the state of the working

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2 Ibid
3 IUCN NL and Both Ends (2007), Trade matters! The flower industry in Kenya and Ethiopia.
4 Fairtrade Sweden (2010), Kenyanska rosor I skuggan av finanskrisen.
6 War on Want (2007), Growing Pains The human cost of cut flowers in British supermarkets.
7 Gårdman, K. (2008), Fairtrade and Human Rights in the Kenyan Cut Flower Industry, Lunds University.
conditions and not on the process of implementing the standards in a certification scheme, nor on the auditing routines.
2. OBJECTIVE AND STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

This section outlines the objective and statement of purpose for the thesis. It describes the empirical questions, motivates them and also qualifies the limitations of the study.

2.1. Purpose

The purpose of this study is to examine if auditors, managers and workers see certification and auditing as tools to improve working conditions in the Kenyan cut flower industry.

2.2. Research questions

In this thesis I will study the certification process of international standards in the Kenyan cut flower industry. This research will be done by looking into what three different stakeholders see as challenges with the process. I will study views of stakeholders in connection to two important certification standards: Fairtrade and Milieu Programma Sierteelt (MPS).

Three empirical questions will be examined in the study. These empirical questions will facilitate the planning of how to carry out my empirical study and to attain the purpose of the study:

- Do different stakeholders think that certification has been effective, since the state of the working conditions of the Kenyan cut flower industry were brought to attention in 2002 by academics and non-governmental organizations?
- What do different stakeholders see as challenges with the certification process?
- What do different stakeholders see as challenges with the auditing process?

The year 2002 is relevant to include in the empirical questions because of the significance that the year has had for the working conditions of the cut flower industry. An extensive academic research project started in 2002. Exploitation and dismal working conditions in the Kenyan cut flower industry were heavily campaigned against in 2002 and onwards by non-governmental organizations. The same year a collective bargaining agreement was signed that established minimum wages and conditions of employment for unionized workers on cut flower farms in Kenya. It is important to identify what the stakeholders see as challenges with the certification process, in general terms, and as the auditing process has been greatly criticized it is therefore relevant to ask the stakeholders about this.

I believe that the results of this study will show that, according to different stakeholders, certification has, to some extent, helped to improve the working conditions in the Kenyan cut flower industry but that there are still fundamental problems which needs to be addressed.

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9 ETI (2005), ETI Briefing, Addressing labour practices on Kenyan flower farms.
10 SASK (2004), Behind the Beauty of Flowers.
2.2. Limitations

This study will focus on the certification process for two international standards: Fairtrade and Milieu Programma Sierteelt (MPS). In connection to this, focus will be on the social aspects of the standards and not on environmental aspects. The study will include interviews with three stakeholder groups (auditors, managers and workers), however the author understands that there are also other stakeholders which would have been relevant to include, such as for example non-governmental organizations (NGO), trade union representatives, governmental representatives as well as representatives from multi-stakeholder initiatives. The three chosen stakeholders (auditors, managers and workers) are included since they are the most fundamental stakeholders and most strongly connected to the certification process. Another reason for the three chosen stakeholders was to limit the scope of the study. The study does not focus specifically on gender-related aspects in connection to it’s aim, since there have been considerably much research done on gender-related aspects in the Kenyan cut flower industry. However, the author is aware these aspects and they were taken into account when conducting the study (see section 5.5.). Another aspect, which was not brought up in the study, was the socio-economic impacts that the working conditions have on the workers lives. This was not in the scope for this study.
3. BACKGROUND

This section describes the cut flower trade, the Kenyan cut flower industry, the characteristics of the working conditions in the Kenyan cut flower industry and two different kinds of international certification standards that are used within the industry.

3.1. The Cut Flower Trade

Cut flowers are a big globalized industry and in the industry, the Netherlands is the largest exporter in the world as well as a large producer.\textsuperscript{11} However, because of factors such as cheap labor costs and the availability of land, production of flowers has moved from high-income countries to low-income countries, especially countries in Africa and Latin America. These countries also have a climate suitable for growing flowers\textsuperscript{12}.

Fifty percent of the cut flowers in the world are consumed in the EU. Seventy-eight percent of the import of cut flowers in Europe consists of import from other EU countries. The Netherlands is the biggest export country in EU and also the largest producer. Cut flowers are either sold directly to wholesalers or through auctions in the Netherlands. Approximately sixty percent of all the cut flowers in the world are sold through the auctions in the Netherlands.\textsuperscript{13}

3.2. The Kenyan Cut Flower Industry

Kenya’s cut flower industry is the largest and oldest in Africa. The expansion from a small-scale industry in the 1950s/1960s has been supported by the demand from affluent consumers in European countries, Kenya’s preferential trade status with the European markets together with the government’s hands-off approach. The story of the industry is considered an economic success story and in 2001 cut flowers were Kenya’s second largest source of foreign exchange in agriculture\textsuperscript{14}.

Kenya is currently the largest exporter of cut flowers to the European Union, covering thirty-five percent of the flower sales on the European market. The import of cut flowers produced outside of Europe is followed by Columbia with seventeen percent and Israel sixteen percent. The largest European markets for Kenyan production are United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Germany, France and Switzerland.\textsuperscript{15}

At present there are about 500 cut flower producers in Kenya. Approximately 25 of the

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{ETI} ETI (2008), \textit{ETI Media briefing for Valentine’s Day: Workers’ conditions in the cut flower industry}, 6\textsuperscript{th} February 2008.
\bibitem{CBI} CBI Market Survey, The Cut Flowers and Foliage Market in the EU, October 2006.
\bibitem{KFC} Kenya Flower Council, \url{http://www.kenyaflowercouncil.org/marketdata.php} Accessed: 2011-05-17
\end{thebibliography}
largest producers account for over sixty percent of the total exports.\textsuperscript{16} Kenya has some of the largest flower farms in the world with about 10 000 workers in total at one of the farms\textsuperscript{17}. The workforce in the Kenyan cut flower industry mainly consists of women, who are approximately sixty-five to seventy-five percent of the sector’s workforce\textsuperscript{18}. In total the industry provides jobs for 50,000 – 100,000 people. The variation in figures is partly caused by peaks of employment with concentration around Mother’s Day and Valentine’s Day, which characterize the production and is thirty percent of the yearly production.\textsuperscript{19}

The majority of the cut flower production is located to the area around Lake Naivasha in the Rift Valley. The lake provides water for the farms and the soil is fertile. The social environment in the area is much affected by the industry and there are also a high number of migrant workers.\textsuperscript{20}

3.3. Working conditions in the Kenyan cut flower industry

It was in the early 1990s that problems of exploitation and abuse of human rights in the cut flower industry was highlighted for the first time. This was done by national and international trade unions and NGO’s. The aim of the campaign work was to raise awareness among consumers in market countries. The campaigning resulted in several networks with interested organizations and in 2002 two conferences were organized on ‘Corporate Responsibility and Workers Rights’ and ‘Human Rights and Development of International Obligations for Corporations’. The conferences were organized by a coalition of NGO’s and it was at these conferences that gross ethics violations in Kenya’s flower industry first were identified.\textsuperscript{21}

Sixty-five percent of the workforce in the Kenyan cut flower industry are seasonally employed or temporarily employed, which means that they do not have access to the benefits of permanent employees. The working hours are usually from seven in the morning until six o’clock in the evening. During peak periods the workers have to work until eleven o’clock in the evening to reach the quantity goals. These goals are often so high that workers are forced to work unpaid overtime.\textsuperscript{22}

In Kenya the minimum monthly wage for a general cut flower worker is Kenyan shilling

\textsuperscript{17} ILRF (2003), Codes of Conduct in the Cut-Flower Industry. International Labor Rights Fund, September 2003.
\textsuperscript{19} Fairtrade Sweden (2010), Kenyanska rosor I skuggan av finanskrisen.
\textsuperscript{20} Fairtrade Sweden (2010), Kenyanska rosor I skuggan av finanskrisen.
(KSH) 5 858 and a living wage is estimated to be KSH 23 670\textsuperscript{23}. Which is equivalent to a salary of approximately 32 Euro respectively 190 Euro\textsuperscript{24}. A living wage is a wage for workers to live off of, a wage that “enables workers and their dependents to meet their needs for nutritious food and clean water, shelter, clothes, education, health care and transport, as well as allowing for a discretionary income.”\textsuperscript{25} The salaries in the Kenyan cut flower industry are usually above minimum wage levels but are not enough for support the workers and their families. The level of the salaries varies between KSH 2 880 and KSH 6 600\textsuperscript{26}.

As for freedom of association, casual workers are not allowed to join unions and that is the reason for the low level of unionization in the Kenyan cut flower industry. It is also common that workers who unionize are dismissed. Less than ten percent of the workers at Kenyan cut flower farms belong to a union. In February 2002 a collective bargaining agreement was signed between the Flower Growers’ Group of the Agricultural Employers’ Association and the Kenya Plantation and Agricultural Workers’ Union (KPAWU). The agreement established minimum wages and conditions of employment for unionized workers at commercial cut flower farms. In 2003 the KPAWU had approximately 6000 members.\textsuperscript{27} At some of the flower farms in Kenya workers are not allowed to decide which union that they wish to join. Instead of independent unions, there are sometimes so called “workers committees” which often are controlled by the employer.\textsuperscript{28} In 2007 several of the labor laws were revised, including the Employment Act\textsuperscript{29}.

### 3.4. Fairtrade standards

Fairtrade Labelling Organizations (FLO) is the organization, which coordinates Fairtrade labelling. FLO has two different Fairtrade standards: one for small producers and one for hired labor on plantations and in factories. The last one is the applicable standard for the flower industry. FLO has two sets of standards: minimum and progress requirements. In order to be certified producers must meet the minimum requirements. The progress requirements are requirements that encourage the producers to continuously improve their production.\textsuperscript{30}

The standards are based on internationally recognized conventions and standards, for example from the United Nations (UN) or International Labour Organization (ILO). According to the standards the producers must also follow national legislation in the production country and the applicable collective bargain agreement (CBA).\textsuperscript{31} The Fairtrade standard for hired labor has three categories: social, economic and environmental. This study

\textsuperscript{23} Opondo, M. (2009), Living wages in Africa: Experiences from the Cut Flower and Garment Industry in Kenya, BDS Workshop presentation.

\textsuperscript{24} Calculated on the rate of 2011-05-31 http://www.oanda.com

\textsuperscript{25} Labour behind the label (2007), Let’s clean up fashion. p. 7

\textsuperscript{26} Fair Trade Center (2007), Snittblommor. En rapport av Fair Trade Center från 2007.

\textsuperscript{27} SASK (2004), Behind the Beauty of Flowers.


\textsuperscript{29} Kenyan Employment Act (2007)


\textsuperscript{31} Ibid.
is mainly focused on the social part of the standard. There are also sector specific standards for different Fairtrade products and one specific for flowers and plants. Producers need to follow both the generic standard as well as the sector specific standard for flowers and plants and compliance with the standard is audited annually by FLO’s auditing body FLO-CERT.32

The generic Fairtrade standard stipulates requirements on freedom from discrimination, freedom of labor, freedom of association and collective bargaining, conditions of employment and occupational health and safety. The standard requires for example that workers have the right to establish or join a workers’ organization, and discrimination of workers or union representatives is not allowed. It further requires that workers should be trained in health and safety practices, the producer should provide personal protective equipment, spraying with chemicals should be done safely, specified re-entry regulations after spraying should be followed and class 1 chemicals are prohibited.33 The sector specific standard for flowers and plants has for example a progress requirement that stipulates that the employer should provide housing and free transportation for their employees34.

Part of the money that the producers receive for selling their products is the Fairtrade Premium. It is intended to be used for socio-economic infrastructure for the workers, their families and the community. A joint body that consists of democratically elected workers’ representatives and management representatives decide what the premium money should be used for. The money cannot be used to cover the running costs in the company.35

3.5. Fairtrade auditing

FLO-CERT is an autonomous company from FLO, which is responsible for auditing and certification procedures of the producers. FLO-CERT’s auditors check compliance with the Fairtrade standards through inspections, which are called audits.36 FLO-CERT has 120 qualified, locally based auditors. An initial physical audit is a requirement for a producer to be certified.37

The time frame for the audit varies, depending on the size of the producer and its complexity and the number of certified products that the producer is seeking to sell. Prior to the audit the auditor sends an agenda for the audit, the list of interviews that need to take place, the structure of the audit and information about which documents the producer needs to prepare and have ready before the audit.

The audit starts with an opening meeting, followed by a review of relevant documents and interviews with different people. A physical inspection is carried out and the audit ends with a closing meeting. Relevant documents can for example be Fairtrade sales and Premium administration, labor documents and policies related to occupational health and safety. The

information identified in the documents will be crosschecked during the interviews. The interviews are done with different people, for example members of the executive committee and workers. During the site visit the auditor is accompanied by an appointed responsible person, which is chosen by the producer, who can answer questions or give explanations to the auditor, if needed. In the closing meeting strengths and weaknesses are put forward by the auditor and possible non-conformities are detected and explained with the Fairtrade standards. 38

After an audit has been carried out, the audit report is sent to FLO-CERT for evaluation. A specialized certifier decides if to certify the producer, under supervision of an independent certification committee. 39 If there are non-conformities identified at the audits the producer is given time to suggest measures and then selected FLO-CERT staff members examines and evaluates the corrective measures that have been done 40. When producers have received their initial Fairtrade certification, FLO-CERT does an annual on-site inspection to check that producers comply with the Fairtrade standards and that the Fairtrade premium is used and handled properly 41.

3.6. Milieu Programma Sierteelt certifications

Milieu Programma Sierteelt (MPS) is an international certification organization, which focuses on corporate social responsibility and sustainable production in the international horticulture sector 42. MPS has different kinds of certification standards for growers and one specifically focusing in social issues, MPS-Socially Qualified (MPS-SQ). Since MPS-SQ is a standard, which focus on social issues in production, it is relevant to include in this study. The before-mentioned certification standard can be used to supply for the consumer label Fair Flowers Fair Plants (FFP). It is based on universal human rights, on codes of conduct of local representative organizations and ILO agreements. The standard requirements in MPS-SQ are similar to the requirements in the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) label. 43

3.7. Milieu Programma Sierteelt auditing

MPS-ECAS is an autonomous company, which is responsible for certification procedures for MPS. The audits that are carried out regarding the fulfillment of MPS-SQ, are done by auditors from MPS-ECAS, other certification bodies or individual auditors. The auditor must fulfill certain requirements, which includes for example documented experience of previous audits. 44

The audits of MPS-SQ are carried out in cycles of three years. The first year is the

43 Ibid.
44 Milieu Programma Sierteelt (2009) Certificationscheme MPS-SQ.
certification audits, the second and third year are follow-up audits. The certificate is renewed every third year after a recommencing audit. The frequency for the audit is set every twelve months. During the auditing process representatives from human rights organizations or unions are have the right to join. A maximum of two representatives can be present, one from a local NGO and one from a labor union. Preferably one must be a woman of these two.45

MPS-ECAS investigates and decides whether the certification applicant satisfies the requirements in the standard. If national law is more stringent on any issue, the national law must be obeyed. In the follow-up audits the auditor investigates non-compliances since the last audit and if they have been addressed in a satisfying way, the use of MPS-SQ logo and the requirements. MPS-ECAS distinguishes between obligatory requirements and remaining requirements. The obligatory requirements have to be checked every audit and the other ones have to be checked during follow-up audits.46

The audits include interviews with the management and/or employees of the company of the applicant, observations made at the company sites and the assessment of records and administrative data. All documentation should be available for the auditors, for example personal files and salary administration. Interviews should include representatives from the producer’s Health and Safety Committee, Human Resource Department and Sprayers and Workers Committee. The auditors also interview employees and will include a representative sample of a producer’s all group of employees, functions and activities. The number interviews with employees vary depending on the size of the producer. If a producer has more than 100 employees, interviews should be done with at least five percent of these employees.47

45 Milieu Programma Sierteelt (2009) Certificationscheme MPS-SQ.
46 Ibid.
47 Ibid.
4. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This section consists of two parts. I will first outline the most relevant research that has been carried out in the field of value chain approaches. The next section focuses on major previous research and more specifically on working conditions that has been carried out in the last decade on the topic of cut flowers in Kenya. This research in total is of importance for the framework of this study.

4.1. Development of demand of social standards

Gereffi defines global commodity chains as “rooted in production systems that give rise to particular pattern of coordinated trade”. Looking at global value chains is important to understand the chains sources of change and stability. By using this approach the perspective is widened to include an organizational scope as well as a geographical spread of transnational production arrangements. The organizational scope includes the linkages between different economic agents, such as factories, raw material supplies, retailers and traders. 48

Gereffi differentiates between two kinds of value chains: producer- and buyer-driven value chains. Producer-driven value chains can often be identified in sectors with technological and capital-dependant industries and chain governance is usually operated by companies that control production and technology services. Buyer-driven chains are usually more labor-intensive sectors, such as the cut flower value chains. These chains are often driven by large retailers with characteristics such as product design, advanced supply management systems, product design and advertising. Production in buyer-driven chains is often outsourced and brand name companies as well as retailers play a crucial role in defining what should be produced. 49

In global value chains (GVCs), in particular led by branded retailers and manufacturers, a shift towards buyer drivenness has been significant. 50 This move can be identified through a change from direct control to more indirect control mechanisms of governance. This framework of control at a distance includes an explicit role for quality and an increasing importance of standards and auditing methods and technologies. 51 This shift is also related to a change of an economy of quantities to an economy of qualities, with quality as an important part of economic competition 52. Evidently in this kind of economy private social standards and their ability of differentiating products becomes more and more important 53.


49 Ibid.


In GVCs this is connected to the extension of governance to include aspects such as environmental standards, management standards and social standards that are observed by suppliers. This change into an economy of qualities and the inclusion of social standards will be discussed further in the relation to the certification process in Kenyan cut flower industry.

For the cut flower industry there are structural changes in distribution that are carried out. This shows through increasing numbers of supermarkets sourcing directly from suppliers in low-income countries, which cuts out the Dutch auctions as well as wholesalers. These structural changes are strongly connected to the shift towards buyer drivenness referred to earlier. Consumers in the EU are interested in a wider variety and are increasingly demanding social and environmental aspects to be considered in production. These factors are leading to a large number of environmental and social standards in the cut flower industry. Producers that are part of value chains which are driven by large retailers, are required to adapt to environmental and social standards and it is common to adhere to several different environmental and social standards. In cut flower export production there are at least 16 different environmental and social standards, both on the national and international level.

4.2. Critique on social standards
Social standards have received criticism for several things. One of them is for being limited to export industries. Another is for being weak in content, especially in aspects such as gender-sensitivity and workers’ rights to organize and bargain collectively.

Criticism has also been given on how the social standards are monitored by companies and the social auditing industry. Barrientos and Smith emphasize how auditors tend to rely to a high degree on information from management without considering information from the workers or the organizations that represent them. The critique stressed that focus has instead been on visible aspects of standards. These aspects could for example be working hours or health and safety-related issues, rather than more rooted issues such as discrimination. This is strongly linked to what Barrientos and Smith call outcome standards and process rights. Process rights are, for example, no discrimination and freedom of association and principles of social justice that allow workers to claim their rights. These kinds of rights further enable workers the possibility to negotiate other entitlements and conditions related to employment, for example minimum wages, working hours, health and safety issues, health insurance and

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56 Ibid.
57 Collinson C. (2001), *The Business cost of Ethical Supply Chain Management: Kenya Flower Industry Case Study*, Natural Resources Institute (NRI)
59 Ibid.
Pensions. These entitlements are labeled outcome standards. Riisgaard also connects this critique with how it is related to auditing methods and the reflection of a dominating technical compliance perspective. Riisgaard emphasizes that monitoring of private social standards most often has been done through self-assessment or checklist auditing. Barrientos and Smith put emphasis on how technical social auditing have identified outcome standards but has been less capable of identifying process rights. This division between process rights and outcome standards as well mentioned critique on auditing methods, will be highlighted and discussed later on in this study.

According to Redfern and Snedker certification in general is too costly, especially for small-scale producers. Dolan, Opondo and Smith stress that some growers express an unfair imposition in the time and cost that they put in an ongoing monitoring and implementation process of certification standards. Dolan, Opondo and Smith stated that, “the motivation for adopting codes was to satisfy the requirements of the Northern market rather than to effect substantive changes in employment practices and working conditions.” Other scholars, such as for example Gårdman, also share this opinion. Goodman is more positive and describes this link as a “creation of a transnational moral economy” through the re-connection between consumers and producers on an economic, political and physiological level. These issues will later be discussed in connection to this study.

4.3. Working conditions

Much research has been done on the working conditions in the Kenyan cut flower industry.

In 2002 the multi-stakeholder initiative Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) member Women Working Worldwide circulated a report that emphasized violations of workers’ rights on Kenyan flower farms to ETI company members in Europe. This resulted in a visit to Kenya and the members were faced with different problems regarding how codes of conduct were implemented in the flower industry. The study showed that there were violations of workers’ rights and also problems with social auditing. As a consequence of this platforms were

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66 Ibid. p. 66
69 Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) is an alliance of trade union organizations, companies and non-governmental organizations (NGO).
70 ETI (2005), ETI Briefing: Addressing labour practices on Kenyan flower farms.
established in 2003 for ongoing dialogues for concerned stakeholders in Kenya and in the UK. In Kenya NGOs, the industry and government representatives formed the local multi-stakeholder initiative Horticultural Ethical Business Initiative (HEBI) and in the UK the ETI Flower Forum was established. A new code of conduct was tested in 2003 and also in 2004, but progress was slow. Overall, according to ETI, the work led to some improvements in the working conditions for workers on Kenya flower farms. In 2005 the ETI Flower Forum was closed even though dialogue continued.71

At the same time as work was being done by the ETI and Kenyan NGO, an extensive research project was carried out by the Institute of Development Studies in the United Kingdom by scholars Dolan, Opondo and Smith. It was carried out between 2002 and 200472. This research has become a project with significant importance in this field of work and is often referred to by other researchers.

Dolan, Opondo and Smith’s work focused on gender issues related to the cut flower industry.73 The researchers used criteria from social and environmental code of conducts to demonstrate the extent to which women’s priority issues were integrated and also to assess how women are affected by the industry.74 The research emphasizes improvements of the working conditions because of standards. However, the study showed that workers were affected depending on what employment contracts they had, where permanent workers experienced more security compared to seasonal and casual workers. A significant number of workers had a non-permanent status and the majority of those workers were women. Other identified problems that were identified concerned employment insecurity, overtime, sexual harassment, trade union representation, complaints procedures, communication, wages, opportunities for promotion, health and safety, pregnancy and maternity leave, transport to and from plantations and lack of awareness of rights and codes.75 Some aspects relating to previously identified problems will be highlighted in this study.

Three years later, in 2006, the Kenyan NGO, Kenya Women Workers Organization (KEWWO), published a new report that analyzed how the growth of the horticulture and floriculture industry had an impact on the workers in respect to their working conditions. The research gave several findings: poor sanitation standard, less than fifty percent of workers organized in the union, working hours that exceeded ten hours per day during peak seasons, the wage level did not reach the level for a living wage in Kenya as well as other identified problems with occupational health and safety, for example with protective clothing and medical examinations.76

71 ETI (2005), ETI Briefing: Addressing labour practices on Kenyan flower farms.
73 Ibid.
74 Ibid.
75 Ibid.
In an ETI media briefing for Valentine’s Day 2008 ETI announced there was still discrimination against women workers, that wages were low, temporary contracts was common, dismal health and safety and low levels of union representation at Kenya flower farms.\(^77\) The same year (2008) KEWWO published a new report on the working conditions in the Kenyan cut flower industry, which identified that the main problems in terms of working conditions were low wages, violation of rights and overtime work. Seventy-three percent of the women were not entitled to maternity leave and inequality by gender was reported as a problem by a majority of the workers, meaning that men were preferred for employment and promotion. More than half of the interviewed workers were unionized but the study showed that ninety-nine percent of them were under fear of losing their employment and seventy-five percent of them had no knowledge about work place codes.\(^78\) The majority of the workers that were interviewed earned between KSH 2 000 and 3 000.\(^79\)

Gårdman’s study from 2008 distinguished what impact Fairtrade had on human rights and labor development in the Kenyan cut flower industry. Gårdman also compared the working conditions between Fairtrade and non-Fairtrade farms and concluded that Fairtrade farms had superior conditions in certain areas, while systematic labor rights-related changes were more difficult to change. Gårdman made several findings in her study: low remuneration both at Fairtrade as well as non-Fairtrade farms, lack of proper protective equipment (PPE) and faulty obedience in connection to the regulations on re-entry after spraying.\(^80\) Unionization was seen as stronger at non-Fairtrade farms. Gårdman emphasizes that the reason for this could possibly be a “closer and comparably more transparent relationship with the union”\(^81\) The study also showed that the level of knowledge amongst the workers about their rights was higher at Fairtrade certified farms than at non-Fairtrade certified farms. Gårdman concludes that Fairtrade has led to some development and improvements in sustainable labor and human rights development, however those improvements have not been reached solely because of Fairtrade.\(^82\) Gårdman’s conclusions will be discussed later on in this study in connection to the certification process in the Kenyan cut flower industry.


\(^78\) Kenya Women Workers Organization (2008), *The working conditions in the floriculture industry in Kenya*

\(^79\) Kenya Women Workers Organization (2008), *The working conditions in the floriculture industry in Kenya*


\(^81\) Ibid. p. 43

\(^82\) Ibid.
5. RESEARCH DESIGN

This section presents the motivation of the study, the methods that will be used in order to process the data generated, describes how the research will be carried out and also emphasizes critique on the methods.

5.1. Motive for study

This research is important to carry out to put emphasis on what stakeholders in the cut flower industry in Kenya see as challenges to improve the working conditions in the industry and if they see certification and auditing as tools to reach this goal. Although previous research has been done on the cut flower industry in Kenya, most of it has been focusing on the actual working conditions and not to a great extent on the certification process. That research has also shown that even though some improvements have been made in some areas (i.e. in terms of working conditions at flower plantations), there are still problems remaining in the cut flower production in Kenya. There has not been done a comparative study of this kind including workers, managers as well as auditors. Another reason to carry it out specifically in Kenya is because of the extensive amount of certified farms in the country and the long history of flower production that Kenya has. It is especially important to study the credibility of certified plantations because of the increasing market demand of certified goods in high-income countries. This is also connected to the consumer power and pressure from stakeholders in high-income countries.

The reason why I wanted to interview workers is that if I, for example, would have interviewed only managers and auditors, there would have been a possibility that the information I obtained could have been biased. Since the information about certification and working conditions concerns workers at one end of the supply chain there is a risk that if I did not use them as primary sources, the information could always be biased. There is also a risk that the information from the workers could be biased and that is also the reason why I decided to compare the information given from three stakeholders. Previous research shows that there have been problems with how social auditing has been carried out. By getting viewpoints from three distinct stakeholder groups I create a robust and detailed picture by reaching the aim of the study from different angles. This decreases the chances that any one person’s (or group’s) biases will negatively impact the study as whole.

5.2. Research method

This study has a Southern, producer perspective, rather than a Northern, consumer perspective. To distinguish how the actual activities of certification of the cut flower industry are taking place it was essential to conduct the research in the producing countries. Because the importance of Kenya as a cut flower producing country, all the interviews were conducted in Kenya. Interviews were conducted during April and May 2009.

83 ETI (2005), ETI Briefing, Addressing labour practices on Kenyan flower farms.
To answer the empirical questions, I have interviewed workers, managers and auditors in the Kenyan flower industry. I chose to focus on these three groups to interview in order to get a comprehensive understanding of the certification process of the cut flower industry and also to get comparable results. The term “worker” in the study refers to general workers or shop steward representatives, whilst the term “manager” refers to farm owners or certification managers at farms. “Auditors” is another term used throughout the study and refers to individuals working for certification bodies who have been doing audits or controls of the working conditions at flower farms. All these three groups play a crucial part in the certification process. Because the potential risk for reprisal against the interviewees I have chosen to keep all their names coded.

All of the interviews were carried out, in the capital Nairobi and its surroundings. Interviews were done with three auditors, three managers and four groups of workers. The auditors both do audits for MPS as well as for Fairtrade. The managers were from three different companies, of which all were certified either through MPS or Fair Trade. The workers were from two different farms. For each farm interviews were done with both shop stewards and “ordinary” workers.

5.3. Selection process and motive for research design method

Non-governmental organizations (NGO’s) and trade unions, together with other local contacts helped me to get hold of interviewees. The different stakeholders that helped me to get hold of interviewees could have influenced the selection of interviewees, for example the interviewees selected by the union could have been representatives who were more positive towards the union, whilst the representatives chosen by the NGO’s could have had a more positive perception of the NGO’s. I chose interviewees from or in connection to farms that are certified either by MPS and/or Fairtrade. These two standards were chosen since they are two main international standards. There are also local based standards (such as Kenya Flower Council standard) and multi-stakeholder standards (such as for example the standard of Ethical Trading Initiative). The list of certified farms was maintained through the MPS website and the address list of Fairtrade farms was given by the Swedish Fairtrade organization. Certified Fairtrade companies are also listed on the FLO website84.

In dialogue with my contacts both in Kenya and in Europe, we agreed on which of the farms I would select. The ones that were selected were both geographically accessible and also farms where my contacts could easily get hold of respondents or where there was some union representation. For one of the farms I did interviews with the both the managers and the corresponding workers and shop stewards at the same farm. The auditors were linked up to me once I was in place in Kenya. I made sure that the auditors had done audits at flower farms, since the auditors usually do audits for different kinds of industries. At the end of each interview I asked the respondent if he/she could recommend me to interview someone else about the certification process. In this way the interview process became a bit of a “snowball effect” since each of the interviewees linked me up to new possible participants in

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the study. I collected the contact information that I was given and I contacted this person shortly afterward. Sometimes the interviewee referred me to someone that I had not yet interviewed and sometimes to someone that I had already interviewed. In this way I was mapping possible interviewees throughout the research period, however it would have been easier to have done this before going into the field since that would have saved me some time.

5.4. Practical execution of the interviews

The interviews were carried out in slight different ways but the aim of the interviews was that they would be done in a similar way with the different interviewees. The distinction was done between interviews made with workers compare to the interviews made with the rest of the respondents. The interviews with the workers were group interviews, whilst the interviews with the other respondents were individual interviews. In total it was four group interviews with workers and shop steward workers. In the group interviews there were from three to four interviewees. To get a good representation there were at least two female workers and one male worker in every group interview. This was to related to the fact that that the workforce in Kenyan consists to sixty-five to seventy-five percent of females.\(^{85}\)

The interviewees in the group interviews were chosen by Kenyan non-governmental organizations and Kenyan trade unions. The interviews with workers were conducted in groups because of several reasons. I understand that there can negative aspects to this, such as group thinking and some people talking too much while others are silent. However, I think the benefits compensated for that since interviewing the workers in groups was positive in the way that they could help each other with faulty memories and make each other feel comfortable on different topics. Another reason for conducting group interviews was because of language, which I will discuss more in section 5.5. In the interviews with workers I also had a limited amount of time since the workers were off-duty, compare to the interviews with managers and auditors, which were carried out during their working hours.

Before the interviews were performed, interviewees were asked if they agreed that the interviews were recorded. There were also some practical differences between the interviews done with the workers and the rest of the interviews. Because of historical reasons of the cut flower industry and how it has been scrutinized for its working conditions, it was of great importance that the interviews with the workers were organized in a safe place. Therefore all the interviews with the workers were arranged and carried out outside the workplace. That was not the case for the interviews either with the managers or with the auditors. The opportunity that I would have to be able to carry out interviews with the workers during working hours was fairly remote. Therefore, I aimed to carry out interviews when the workers were off duty. It is of importance to build trust in interviews, in particular when doing interviews with people from a different culture.\(^{86}\) This was in mind throughout the interviews since the topic was sometimes controversial and sensitive and especially for the workers there is a risk that they would face reprisals.

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The interviews were carried out in English and the interview questions were in English. In one case at one of the group interviews with workers one of the interviewees did not speak English at all but in those cases some of their fellow Kenyan workers translated from Swahili into English and the other way round, so that I could understand the answers in the interview. After the interviews were finished the workers were given a small compensation. Anonymity was given to all interviewees.

According to the scientist Kvale the interview inquiry can be divided in seven steps. The seven steps are thematizing, designing, interviewing, transcribing, analyzing, verifying and reporting. Kvale’s division was followed in developing with this study. There was a sequence of themes that were covered with the intention of including the research questions of this study. Before the interviews were carried out they were well planned, according to the prepared interview questions.

There was a large amount of prepared questions and the questions were divided into two question schemes. The interviews were semi-structured with qualitative characteristics. One of the schemes was specifically addressed towards workers and was more general concerning working conditions (since in some cases some of the workers did not know that their workplace was certified through a certification standard). The other scheme of interview questions concerns the certification process. (See appendix 1 and 2.) The workers were interviewed with both the schemes as a basis.

Thought was also given to recognize the differences between the interviewees and the researcher. Both the schemes in the study had open-ended questions so that the investigator could follow up with added questions, as there were interesting questions that could not have been anticipated. The questions were phrased depending on the various certification situations at respective farm and the information I had from the literature review. The answers the interviewees responded with led to follow-up questions and there was also a high degree of probing, in other words problematizing and questioning the interviewee to rephrase and explain more on something he/she had just said. Yet at the same time there was openness for changing the questions, their form and sequence to follow up answers by the interviewees. The subject was briefed of the study’s purpose before the interview and there was also a briefing after the interview.

It is also vital that formulating and conducting the interview questions is done with the greatest accuracy and care. Therefore I tried to formulate the questions in the interviews in a way that made the interviewees describe their answers and that helped to induce descriptive answers. The actual research questions in this study were never put directly to the interviewees, instead the interview guide included other questions that were asked in the interviews and that are reformulations of the research questions and that give the same kind

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87 Kvale, S. (2007), Doing Interviews, Wiltshire, SAGE Publications Ltd
88 Ibid.
of answers as to the actual research questions. Kvale describes this as a roundabout approach and the questions as indirect questions.\(^92\)

The collected data obtained from the interviews was compared, analyzed and presented in the study results. From the beginning of the interview inquiry the analysis of data was given thought. The modes of analysis were taken into account during the interviewing as well as during the transcription. In analyzing the material, possible differences in what the interviewees put forward was taken into account and made part of the research, instead of disregard those aspects.\(^93\) Woodhouse emphasizes that when collecting data from people, a key question is how the diversity of views is managed and generated to an understandable amount of data.\(^94\)

**5.5. Method critique**

There are several aspects of the methods used in this study that can be criticized and things that could have been done in a different way in order to reach the goal of the study. The importance is however to be transparent with the methods used and to discuss the difficulties and challenges. This is what I aim to do in this section.

The main weakness of this study was the challenge of obtaining a good representation of interviewees who could discuss and share information on the topic of certification in the cut flower industry. Some interviewees and local contacts were more willing to help than others and the corresponding amount of workers could have added up to three interview groups of workers at the same farms as the managers, instead of four interview groups from two farms. Another problematic aspect of the selection process of interviewees was that it was at different points difficult to get hold of people. The time span of when an interviewee agreed to do an interview, without deciding a date for an interview and when the actual interview took place was for certain interviews, long. To some extent this made it difficult to plan for other interviews, as it was stressful to not always know if I would be able to get hold of interviewees during my limited time in Kenya. It was also difficult to book interviews in Sweden since I did not know exactly who I would interview until I was in Kenya. Once in Kenya it became easier to contact interviewees, to send e-mails to locals and to book interviews.

One possible reason why some people were less willing to participate in the study could have been the sensitivity of the subject and because fear of reprisals. The cut flower industry in Kenya has been studied and the condition of the industry has been brought forward in academic writing as well as in international media. Focus for the attention has been on the dismal working conditions in the flower industry. This was handled in the way that my contacts at NGO’s and trade unions helped to get hold of interviewees who were willing to participate in the study, who felt comfortable and who would be representative for each farm.

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All the interviewees remain anonymous in the final report and any information that could link the reader to the correspondent was taken out from the final thesis. In general, to confront the different stakeholders with their different answers would have been interesting but because of reasons of anonymity of the interviewees in the final thesis and for the researcher not wanting to influence the answers from the stakeholder during the course of the interview, this was not done.

The positionality of the researcher has a significant importance for the research method, such as for example race, gender and class. Through a postmodern approach the researcher’s own subjective views and opinions influence every part of the study. I have myself chosen the research questions, interview questions and the structure of the thesis. In the interviews I have been the sender. According to Skelton it is positive that the researcher has doubts about the research, because of its complexity and possible contradictions. The positionality of the researcher was taken into account throughout the work with the thesis, in designing the study, in designing the research questions and interview questions. There was also a will for me to be humble and open-minded and with great care not ask any type of questions with prejudgment in connection to for example race, gender and class. However, I understood that positionality could not have been foreseen in the interviews but must be considered throughout the work, especially when analyzing the empirical data, writing the analysis and making the conclusions of this study. One of the consequences of the researcher’s positionality is that the answers could have been different if the position of the researcher would have been different, in terms of race, gender and class. For example, in terms of gender-related topics it is possible that the answers from workers’ interviews in a similar interview would have been different if the researcher had been female. This is because some of the labor rights issues are gender-sensitive topics that for females can be easier to talk freely about with another female.

The interview questions could be interpreted in many ways and for some questions it could have been possible that the interviewees gave the answers that they thought I wanted to hear and not their actual opinions. There could also have been situations where the interviewees interpreted the questions in a different way from how I meant to ask them, a distinction between sender and receiver. One reason for this could also have been that the questions were open-ended and there was a big acceptance for a larger interpretation. The language difference can also have been a possible barrier for not giving out the “correct” information. The interviews were carried out in English and although English is an official language in Kenya it might have been that all the interviewees did not understand all the English phrases (especially not in the workers’ group interviews) and that some of terminology was difficult. To overcome these possible problems time was given for the interviewees to talk freely from the questions and there was also a lot of probing done by the researcher. If there was any doubt that any interview question was misunderstood (also language-wise), the question was reformulated and asked again. The overall aim with the interviews was to make the interviewees feel as comfortable as possible.

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96 Ibid.
6. THREE STAKEHOLDERS OPINIONS ON THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS IN THE KENYAN CUT FLOWER INDUSTRY

This section is the empirical part of the study. It outlines the opinions of the certification process in the Kenyan cut flower industry according to the three stakeholders: auditors, managers and workers. Before the opinions of the stakeholders are put forward there is a chapter, which describes fundamental definitions.

6.1. Description of fundamental definitions in empirical part

The below-mentioned descriptions are, where other references are given, defined by the author in order to simplify for the reader.

**Auditors**
Auditors conduct audit at cut flower farms. They work on behalf of a certification body. The audits are a type of control routines that are carried out to safeguard that the requirements in the standards that growers are certified by, are being followed. The auditors mentioned in this text should not be mix up with economic auditors or accountants.

**Certification body**
The institution or company referred to, as “certification body” owns the standards and decides the requirements of what the standards should include.

**Certification process**
When referring to the certification process in this thesis, it means the process from when a producer and a certification body signs a contract for certification and onwards. In the contract it is stated that the producers must follow the requirements in the standards in order to get their certification certificate.

**Fairtrade**
Fairtrade is an international certification standard. (See also 3.4 and 3.5.)

**Living wage**
Living wage is a wage for workers to live off of, a wage that “enables workers and their dependents to meet their needs for nutritious food and clean water, shelter, clothes, education, health care and transport, as well as allowing for a discretionary income.”

A living wage is often higher than a minimum wage. In Kenya the minimum wage for a general cut flower worker is KSH 5 858 and a living wage is estimated to be KSH 23 670.

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98 Opondo, M. (2009), Living wages in Africa: Experiences from the Cut Flower and Garment Industry in Kenya, BDS Workshop presentation, [http://bdsnetwork.cbs.dk/Latest%20BDS/Living_wages_in_Africa_1.ppt](http://bdsnetwork.cbs.dk/Latest%20BDS/Living_wages_in_Africa_1.ppt)
Managers
The general definition of managers referred to in this text are managers working at the flower farms. Their role at the farm is to work with the certification standards and the requirements within the standards. This is expressed through supervision of the workers in the workers’ daily work and also to be in contact with the auditors who visit the farm from time to time. The managers are not owners of the farm. There are also other types of managers at the flower farms, for example human resource managers, but they are not referred to in this paper.

Milieu Programma Sierteelt (MPS)
Milieu Programma Sierteelt is an international certification standard. (See also 3.6. and 3.7.)

Over certification and over auditing
Over certification, which is connected to over auditing, is referring to the opinion address by some stakeholders that there are many certification standards. In connection to this some stakeholders consider that this results in many audits.

Personal protective equipment (PPE)
Personal protective equipment can for example be dustcoats, protective gloves, goggles, gumboots and masks. They are primarily used by employees at flower farms.

Premium
Premium money is an amount of money, which is collected separately within the Fairtrade certification system. The money is not intended to go directly into the workers’ pockets but is intended for the community and the livelihoods for the workers. (See also 3.4. and 3.5.)

Shop stewards
Shop stewards are workers at the flower farms and their position is subordinated to the managers. They are members and representatives of the union. The shop stewards are chosen by the unionized workers, to negotiate with the management for improvements of the working conditions. In connection to the certification process it is possible that the auditors interview them during the audit.

Workers
Workers are the employees at the flowers farms and their position is subordinated to the managers. In connection to the certification process the auditors interview them during the audits.

Workers interviews
The workers interviews are the interviews that are done with the workers during the audits. The auditors conduct the interviews.
6.2. Point of view from auditors

This chapter will focus on the point of view from certification bodies and auditors. One representative from a certification body was interviewed and three auditors who have made audits at Kenyan flower farms from two different standards, the Fair Trade Standard and the MPS Standard.

Effectiveness of certification

All three interviewed auditors put emphasis on the relationship between the so-called North and South and how market demand has affected the condition of the cut flower industry in Kenya. Auditor 1 said that many producers joined different standard initiatives because of customer demand and another reason was that “farms want to be seen as doing the right things”. Auditor 1 argued that the world of today is driven by consuming North [the Western world] and that this part of the world put demand on environmental and social accountability. It can for example be how workers are treated, how safe a product is or safety issues about what kind of content a product has.

“Today people want to know what they are consuming”, said Auditor 1.

Also Auditor 2 referred to an increasing transparency in the industry and a willingness not to be exposed to the world and to get negative publicity. Auditor 2 emphasized that this creates a fear amongst the producers.

“The producers can no longer hide what they are doing”, said Auditor 2.

Auditor 3 was more doubtful about the changes since 2002 and stressed that it was difficult to answer that kind of question. Auditor 3 saw the main reason why the industry applied to be certified was because of market interest, rather than to please the civil society. Auditor 3 also pointed out that the industry is more likely to bring changes because of certification rather than because of pressure from civil society and also emphasized the fact that applying to standards is completely voluntarily compared to the labor laws which the producers are obliged to follow. Auditor 3 emphasized that the certification process together with the union have played a much bigger role than civil society to improve the working conditions in the Kenyan cut flower industry. Auditor 3 argued that the civil society only brought awareness.

The auditors pointed out different things as positive effects of the certification. Auditor 1 said that certification “has had its roles” and that standard initiatives have done some “good work” especially for workers’ welfare. Auditor 1 said that Fairtrade Labelling Organization (FLO) came in at a critical stage when the world was “warming up” to Fairtrade and therefore Fairtrade has formed a very captive audience. Auditor 1 continued and emphasized that the consumers were very keen on Fairtrade because of the issue of paying a premium and the exporters were also very keen to open their markets. According to Auditor 2 the main changes that certification has brought is environmental management issues, careful water usage, careful use of chemicals as well as environmental safety and workers safety.
Auditor 3 described the positive effects of the certification at a workers level as well as a producers level. Auditor 3 stressed that the most important aspect that certification has brought for the workers is freedom of association together with empowerment (for example training and capacity building) for the workers.

“It is amazing to see positive changes and that workers are more confident today than in 2002”, said Auditor 3.

Auditor 3 also said that with time the communication between workers and management would change for them to work towards a “common mission” and according to Auditor 3 it takes approximately three years to see changes.

At the producers level, Auditor 3 said that many producers take the certification as a management tool in terms of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), which brings more awareness about their obligations, about workers rights, and the community in which they live in.

**Challenges with certification**

Two of the auditors put emphasis specifically on Kenyan labor laws in the interviews, although they had different views on the laws in connection to certification. Auditor 3 emphasized that many of the requirements in the standards are a bit adaptable. Auditor 3 described it as if many of the requirements are already in the national labor laws and that the producers are obliged to enforce what is in the law. Auditor 3 stressed that there is a conflict between the laws and certification and if Kenya would implement the law fully there would be no need for certification.

Auditor 1 on the other hand, thought that auditors are in a very difficult position. Auditor 1 emphasized that as an auditor one must interpret the law because all standard requirements must meet the local laws or standards, which ever is most stringent and is best for the worker. So you can regulate or enforce that, but not the aspects that you do not know.

“The only thing you can hope is that the standard is better than the law because where the standard is worse than the law you don’t know and if you are the auditor and you don’t know then the certifying organization does not know so they end up certifying a firm or company blindly”, said Auditor 1.

Auditor 3 also saw accountability as one of the biggest challenges with the certification process. Auditor 3 said that with the Fairtrade standard comes the premium and joint body. With the joint body comes a lot of accountability for the workers. Auditor 3 underlined that initially the workers might not understand their role.

“Sometimes they don’t realize it’s public money and they are used to manage KSH 4 000 - not millions”, said auditor 3.
Another aspect which Auditor 3 put emphasize on is that the money is not intended to increase the workers salary directly but the community as a whole.

“That can be problematic in particular in Naivasha where there are many migrant workers who come from different provinces”, said Auditor 3.

According to the Fairtrade standard the money should benefit the community around the farm. This was also brought up by Auditor 1 who thought that there are workers who expect they will get lots of money from the premium. Auditor 1 expressed that if people are not properly educated they would feel cheated. Auditor 1 continued and said that sometimes say they think it is the management who has diverted them and emphasized that the communication must be very clear as to what the premium money is for. Auditor 1 said that this is also an issue of trust between the management and the workers and that the managers much accept a shift of responsibility for the workers. Auditor 1 stressed that there are managers who exist who do not want the workers to handle to the premium money and that is a challenge for the auditor and certification body to handle.

The same auditor also said that sometimes the certification bodies want more producers to join the standards and stressed that it happens that certification relax the requirements.

For many of the producers it is a matter of CSR whilst for the workers it is more a matter of transparency. Auditor 2 expressed the view that the most beneficial group, are the workers since producers need to perform according to local and international requirements if they want to adhere to the certification standards.

Auditor 2 emphasized challenges on a producers level and from a management perspective, especially regarding the value addition that Auditor 2 stressed is brought by the certification. Auditor 2 said that when producers are benchmarked through certification they have more access to a certain market since the different standards have strong market value. But Auditor 2 argued that producers who are not certified sometimes do not see the value addition.

Both Auditor 1 and Auditor 3 brought up wages and freedom of association as key issues in the challenges in the certification process. Auditor 3 said that in terms of salary increments the Fairtrade standard does not say how much the salary should be only that there should be an annual increment.

From the certification body’s point of view a major challenge is living wage for the workers. Auditor 1 said that “all the certification bodies” talk about living wage but Auditor 1 said that Auditor 1 had not seen certification bodies seriously studying what a living wage could be. Auditor 1 emphasized that there was a time when some people tried to calculate a living wage in Kenya and that it was led by the non-governmental organizations. It was calculated to around KSH 18 300 but said that workers do not understand that they are still earning KSH 4 000 and stressed that this is something that a standard needs to include. Auditor 1 continued and said that as a standard you must quantify the living wage and enforce the living wage and that this is a big challenge for certification bodies.
Auditor 1 also underlined another big challenge: freedom of association. Auditor 1 said that it would continue to be difficult to implement for many producers, especially if a farm management is not involved in and positive about the process. Auditor 1 said that sometimes the management fears the union and mystifies it.

“The workers can in some cases fear to be sacked if they join the union”, said Auditor 1.

Auditor 3 stressed that implementing freedom of association is quite a process in mind and a change of attitude for the management. Auditor 3 also wished that where there is no union in place the management should negotiate with the workers directly about the salary. Instead, in that situation there is a workers committee.

Auditor 1 also brought up other challenges with the certification: the cost in terms of money for producers, cost in terms of time for producers and how the industry is “over audited”. Auditor 1 also emphasized that some of the standards are very expensive and it calls for a well-established business, to go into schools, canteens, health care etc. Auditor 1 also said that for a business which is starting it may find it very difficult, and it all cost money, for example if someone who wants to join FLO that producer has to meet all the requirements which is a lot of work, the other issue is cost in terms of time.

“Some producers are split when it comes to certain requirements. Some fill up the requirements after three years, some after one year etc”, said Auditor 1.

Auditor 1 continued and explained that before there were minimum requirements that had to be met at the time of certification but that has changed. FLO differentiates between regular requirements and process requirement. The process requirements are major requirements, which FLO show when they have to be met and that give a spread of cost for the producers.

The other is cost in terms of time. Auditor 1 said that if you look at the flower industry it is over audited. Auditor 1 emphasized that many stakeholders audit the flower farms, the government, the local standard of Kenya Flower Council, supermarkets and the international certification standards. This takes a lot of time for the management and workers who are interviewed.

The other thing, as Auditor 1 saw it, was over-certification and that many different certification bodies, representing the consuming North, wants to do audits and certify individually. Auditor 1 said that the reason for this is that the producers want bigger market access.

**Challenges with audits**

All three auditors saw challenges with the structure of the management at the farm. Auditor 3 described the challenges with the audits. Auditor 3 said that at the start of an audit the management often thinks that everything is perfect the first day and then in the end it proves that the condition of the farm is not ok from the papers of the auditors. Auditor 3 continued
and said that it is not easy if the farm has major “non-compliances”, especially if the farm is “old in the system”. Auditor 3 mentioned that one reason for this, can be a non-commitment for changes from the management’s side, which can be connected, to the fact that the management is only interested in monetary aspects and not in improving workers’ welfare.

Auditor 2 said that another challenge is the level of preparedness of the growers. Auditor 2 said that there has to be a good source to prepare adequately before the audits so that the audits would take minimum time and that the audits will be maximum beneficial for the producers.

Auditor 2 also emphasized that the auditors will keep looking into what the standards say in order to help his/hers understanding of the local situation. Auditor 2 also stressed the need to have information in place about the organization that is being audited.

“You would want to know previous audits that have been done before so that you have a feel. So you don’t walk into doing an audit with a fresh mind”, said Auditor 2.

Auditor 2 continued and said that an auditor would have a big advantage if they would visit the labor office and find more information that will give the auditor an indication of what to expect at the farm, before the audit starts. Auditor 2 also expressed that an auditor has to be strong but not too strong. Auditor 2 described it as if it is “delicate ground to walk” and for the audit to be as accurate as possible the auditor have to be careful so that she or he does not influence the findings from audit process too much.

Several of the auditors interviewed stressed the skills of the auditor. Auditor 1 said that the biggest challenge for an auditor is first to understand the codes.

“The audits are hard, I don’t know of a single audit which is easy in a general dimension, and the biggest challenge, because until you understand the code its not possible to step out and become an auditor. You know, the auditors are paid for just the day or two when they do the audits and if you look at the amount of work for preparation before the audit its huge, so you have to understand the codes, the local context, their relationship with the union etc.”, said Auditor 1.

Auditor 1 continued and said that for the auditor it becomes easier if he or she is well trained and if the audits are done in line with qualification. Auditor 2 claimed that with time the auditor becomes stricter and interpret more detailed findings in the audits.

Auditor 2 described some of the biggest challenges with the audits, from his point of view. One is whereby a standard may be looking for an item in three different ways and needs crosschecking. The problem as Auditor 2 saw it, was that for an auditor it could be very time wasting and even boring.

“In a situation where you are raising a non-compliance you must be very sure because if you are not very sure the producer you are auditing will say you are wrong. When they tell you you are wrong you are on very shaky ground and what do you do next? Generally when
you look at the level of knowledge and confidence of the auditor, it takes a lot of time to study first. The time invested by the certification organization to train the auditors and the time the auditor will have to stand in the opposite situation is very critical”, said Auditor 2.

Auditor 2 said that auditors need to be well trained and a lot of certification bodies will not provide finances. He claimed that this decreases the motivation for the auditors and a lot of auditors will just take the checklist and go and ask questions using the checklist.

Auditor 2 continued and talked about participatory-auditing and, according to him, the essence of it is to make sure that everybody has been given a chance, to be able to include for example the worker, watchmen and management. Auditor 2 underlined that in auditing, crosschecking must be done looking at one item through several people.

Auditor 2 continued and said that an auditor must make sure if workers are telling absolutely the truth and this must be done in an atmosphere where they can tell what is actually happening. Auditor 2 said that they must know that they are covered and that they do not have to worry about job security. Auditor 2 said that the workers that are randomly chosen to be interviewed must be chosen without the surveillance of the management, both when they are chosen and throughout the interview. Auditor 2 also said that when workers realize that the auditor is checking against the company they may say things which are not really actually factual. Auditor 2 said that it is the auditor’s duty to verify whether the information given is true or not.

“In terms of participatory approach the credible thing is translation of data. So if an auditor is confident and you go to an employer and says that ‘I’m seeing this as a non compliance’ what you are saying you must have verified without reasonable doubt that that it is a real issue”, said Auditor 2.

The other issued raised by Auditor 2 is the credibility in numbers, how many people that are saying something. Auditor 2 said that in social audits they may take twenty five percent of the workforce and sometimes there are times when you are forced to go down to five percent. Auditor 2 stressed that this is challenging in relation to the size of the workforce and gives an example of if you are talking to a workforce of 4000 workers and emphasized that in that case five percent will give you enough credibility.

Another challenge, put forward by some of the auditors, can be the shop stewards that in group can be timid. Auditor 3 said that it is possible that they want to protect the management.

“Who knows why, maybe they’ve been told what to say and that the management want their certification to be renewed”, said Auditor 3.

Auditor 3 said that this is usually the case in the beginning when a producer has just been certified. Another challenge that Auditor 3 emphasized was the farm’s workers committee that is usually there when there are no union representatives. Auditor 3 stressed that that kind of committee is not very open and are often not so critical. Auditor 3 also compared
them with the shop stewards who compare to the workers committee, Auditor 3 stated, are in a legal position to negotiate with the management.

6.3. Point of view from managers

Effectiveness of certification

All three managers thought that the industry had become more responsible and that the state of the working conditions had improved.

“Back then the situation was pathetic but I would say the industry has really grown to almost being the best industry in terms of worker protection, payments or minimum wages, general conditions of health and safety of the workers because those were the main issues; labor and health and safety.”, said Manager 1.

Manager 2 pointed out the following improvements: Workers safety – Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and putting measures in place, workers welfare, “paying the workers some good money”, the right to have a union, clean water and the workers are given lunch and transport to and from the workplace.
Manager 3 also believed that certification had improved the living standard of the workers. Manger 3 emphasized that most farms are looking forward to be certified because of the advantages that they face. Manager 3 continued and argued that while the producers are earning money, the workers are benefiting. Manager 2, who stressed that producers have to produce the products that the market is demanding, also brought up this aspect. Manager 2 thought that the improvements in the industry have been done through the help of non-governmental organizations, working groups, trade unions and the certification standards.

“Before certification you never cared about PPE etc but now for you to have a market, you are suppose to have those things.”, said Manager 2.

Manager 1 said the market and the certification standards have helped because the market has driven people to ascribe to particular certification standards. Manager 1 said that the standard requirements forces the producers to drastically adjust practices and that it has really helped.

All three managers also believed that improvements have been made in terms of environmental aspects. Manager 1 said that certification brought changes especially regarding the handling of effluent wastewater management and chemical waste handling. Manager 1 said, that in the past especially in the flower industry people had no respect for where they threw away their chemical residue.

“They could decide to let it drain away in the river or just in the environment.”, said Manager 1.

Manager 3 said that the more the industry is using chemicals the more it is polluting the environment. Manager 3 emphasized that restrictions in the certification standards affect the
usage of chemicals in the whole industry, not only the producers who ascribe to certification standards. Manager 2 said that for spraying they use class 3 and class 4 chemicals. Manager 2 further said that it is the law, which is put in place by the standards. Both Manager 2 and Manager 3 talked about personal protective equipment and an increased usage of it because of certification requirements. Manager 1 summarized Manager 1’s view on how certification has changed the industry like this:

“So I can say the industry has grown and also in terms of environmental protection they are more responsible apart from those ones who are not ascribing to any certification. They pull down the industry, but in general it has really grown.”

Manager 2 and Manager 3 also brought up the FLO premium and said that it is has improved the workers living standard as well as benefited the community. Manager 2 said that Fairtrade has created economic empowerment amongst the workers. Now there are joint bodies that are helping workers as well as the community. Manager 2 stated that producers have for example built schools and made boreholes from the premium money received through the joint bodies.

**Challenges with the certification**

Manager 1 and Manager 2 considered it challenging with all the different standards and are both requesting a universal standard. Manager 2 underlined on the duplication of standards and all different demands that customers in different markets have for different certification standards. Manager 2 said that it would be easier for the producers if the certification bodies came up with one international standard, since, according to him, they all have the same requirements.

This is also connected to how the managers see the certification standards as costly. Manager 3 said that it is challenging to make sure that what is written in the standard is actually happening on the ground and that most issues raised in the standards requires money. Manager 3 further argued that having auditors over is very costly. Manager 1 also put emphasis on the time management and how it affects the costs. Manager 1 stressed that there are many meetings to attend and since it is time consuming it makes it expensive. The main challenge, according to Manager 1, is the time it takes to prepare for the audits. Manager 1 also stressed that the certification fee is also a high expense for the producers.

“*They have to go for union meetings, health and safety meetings, gender meetings, first aid meetings, etc.*”, said Manager 1.

Manager 1 continued and said that all of them have to meet during working hours, at least once a month. Manager 1 stated that in total it will sum up to ten days and this is time consuming and expensive for the producers to have the committees. Manager 1 also stressed that the certification fee is also a high expense for the producers.

Another issue, which was brought up, by both Manager 1 and Manager 2 is the challenge in having the right personal protective equipment.
“You have to provide the right PPE and getting that right PPE in the market is very difficult. You would want a PPE that will last, suppliers know that you are being pushed for this so they would bring you something that will last for 3 months and its very expensive, and you have to keep getting them”, said Manager 1.

Manager 1 continued and said that no PPE is cheap and that there is not a “right” one available in the market.

Manager 2 argued in a similar way as Manager 1 and said that their farm has a policy of changing PPE but the quality is not really good and that sometimes the PPE has to be changed every three months.

A management-related challenge that Manager 3 emphasized is the structure and knowledge. Manager 3 said that non-certification managers at his farms do not see the benefits in that certification brings with it and that they are “too focused” on the market. Manager 3 states that there is a need to convince them about the guarantee of the standard. Manager 3 said that most managers make a commitment to understand.

“Improving the environment means improving the living standard of the poor. We have to guarantee sustainability in the business and the beneficial at the end of the day is the workers. Let’s say one chemical is removed the other managers do not know why. So that is my mission to explain”, said Manager 3.

The managers also pointed out more specific challenges. Manager 2 said that transport is a major issue included in workers welfare. Manager 2 said that the workers are transported in shifts.

Both Manager 2 and Manager 3 saw different challenges with the spraying. Manager 3 said that according to the standards the greenhouses must be locked after the spraying but questioned how producers with open greenhouses should handle that demand. Manager 3 continued and emphasized a challenge with MPS SQ which has a clause that says that if you spray more than 4 hours in a day those sprayers must only work for one week and then rest for two weeks. Managers 2 said that this requirement demands more workers from the producers. Manager 2 continued and said that the same standard requires that when you spray with class 4 you have to wait for 6 hours to go to the greenhouse. Manager 2 also referred to economic aspects and the loss of profit.

“This is the tropics it’s very warm. Within two hours it’s dry. It’s possible that the flowers will open again. ”, said Manager 2.

**Challenges with auditing**

The managers saw quite different challenges with the auditing. Although both Manager 2 and Manager 3 thought that the auditor picks out “small thing” and keep quiet about the issue and then it is brought up in the final audit report.
Manager 3 said that it could be that there are no antiseptics. Manager 3 said that when the auditor visits the site he or she finds out there are no antiseptics and then just writes “no antiseptics” without saying something to the manager. The manager emphasized that it would be better if the auditor could discuss before they write it down.

“The auditor just say ‘This is my final report’. No certification or no what. The auditors simply wait corrective action. They list all the non-conformities and then say ‘This is the final report and if you have any complaints, you complain to FLO-cert’”, said Manager 3.

The manager said that the CBA might be talking of this, but the company might be having a plan. Manager 3 further emphasized that a producer needs to consider what the company is aiming at. There are other ways of justifying what the company is doing. Manager 3 continued and said that Manager 3 would like to see a scenario where an auditor interacts with workers and managers all together. Manager 3 continued and said that some auditors say, “The standard says this and I am not changing anything”.

Manager 2 also lacked a commitment from the auditors. Manager 2 said that some things they do not communicate and some things they push. Manager 1 saw the structure of the audit as challenging and Fairtrade’s different level of compliance.

“I think it's just the way they structured the audit. Fairtrade have different levels of compliance, there are those things that you must comply within the first year of certification, then after 1 year, 2 years, 3 years and 6 years. They look at the intensity of the compliance requirements like if you did not have a building they cannot expect you to put up a building in one day and they come and audit. So they will give you a time frame like may be after the first year you must put up a changing room then after 2 years you must remove the asbestos, so for that they might give you a period of two years.”, said Manager 1.

Manager 1 said that the auditor would learn because the standards give the auditor what to check according to an inspection map. Manager 1 explained that depending on the layout of the farm the managers will give the auditor the best route to use so that it will take the least time inspecting, because he or she may tell you he or she wants to check the dam and may be the dam is on one end of the farm and then the changing room is on the other end. Manager 1 expressed the view that the managers must give a schedule that will make sure to take the auditor from one facility to the next but at the same time the auditor must tell the manager what he or she wants to inspect.

Manager 3 saw challenges with the “workers' interviews”. Manager 3 said that the most difficult part is the workers interviews. Manager 3 said that it is problematic with the auditors and that they want to be alone to interview workers and stated that the managers are therefore not sure whether the information which is being given is bringing forward the interest of the workers or of himself.

“When it comes to workers interview, there should be a way where someone from the company is verifying the information that you are collecting from the workers. Because at
the end of the day, auditors can come and say “The workers are saying this and this and this” and we are not sure if it’s the workers perception or that worker alone.\text{\textquotedblright}, said Manager 3.

Manager 3 also stressed, that how the manager saw it, the need for external auditors to suggest corrective action plans after non-conformities have been discovered in the audits.

\textit{“Different auditors do different audits. For the internal ones, you do the audits and suggest corrective actions immediately but the external auditors they just identify non-conformities without suggesting corrective action. Like FLO for example, they give banned list of chemicals but no alternative list”}, said Manager 3.

6.4. Point of view from workers

Workers F1 = referring to group interview with “ordinary” workers at Farm 1  
Workers F1 SS = referring to group interview with shop steward workers at Farm 1  
Workers F2 = = referring to group interview with “ordinary” workers at Farm 2  
Workers F2 SS = referring to group interview with shop steward workers at Farm 2

Effectiveness of certification

There are different views on possible changes between the shop stewards workers and the “ordinary” workers and in the four group interviews they mention different kinds of changes.

\textit{“I guess some things have changes over the past years but I don’t know if it’s because of certification or pressure from civil right groups. Before there were no house allowances and the management didn’t give us any PPE’s at all”}, said one worker from Workers F1.

Another worker in another interview group put emphasis on freedom of association.

\textit{“More workers have joined the union. The management has changed their attitude a little bit. The union is still fighting hard”}, said one worker from Workers F2.

\textit{“Five years ago before workers joined the union there were challenges like salary increment, but now since we joined the union the increment is after two years”}, said one shop steward worker in Workers F2 SS.

Several of the workers said that the changes that have been made are comparably small but still important. In workers’ interview groups from both of the farms the workers mentioned that the owners give them transportation to and from the workplace to their housing estates. They stated that this was not the case a couple of years back.

Shop steward workers in Workers F2 SS emphasized that there are “lots of benefits with the certification”. They said that many workers have joined and demand to work there since the union started. They also mentioned that because of the FLO premium the farm has a housing
project, computer training, driving training and this is possible for every section. They also have a small bus from the FLO that assists them in transports, for example if there is a death.

At both of the farms the workers mentioned a shift in terms of chemical usage and what chemical class that is used. In all four groups the workers said that earlier on the awareness of dangerous chemicals was much lower and the management did not care which chemicals that were being used as long as it gave them the results they wanted.

“Now we have chemicals class one, two, three and four. The chemical class one has been abandoned and disqualified. It is not used so often”, said Workers F1.

Certification challenges

Three of the worker groups put emphasis on personal protective equipment (PPE) as a challenge for the certification. All three groups said that they use equipment, which is old. In the group interviews of Workers F2 they said that the management have ordered new PPE’s but they have not arrived and that goes for all departments. In the spraying department one worker said that they are lacking new gloves, gumboots and masks. At the group interviews both with Workers F1 and Workers F1 SS, PPE’s are put forward as a problem. The Workers F1 SS said that some workers do not have PPE’s and sometimes workers are missing PPE’s. The Workers F1 use their own shoes. The workers are not given enough dustcoats. Often they use the same dustcoat for a long period of time, from one year up to three years.

“It depends on you, how you take care of it [dust coat]”, said one of the shop steward workers in Workers F1 SS.

The same is confirmed by one of the workers in Workers F1 who also mentioned problems with how the certification is missing out to control the PPE’s. They said that the PPE’s are old and in some departments, such as grading for example, PPE’s are missing. The managers do not provide gumboots for the workers and the workers use their personal shoes.

Both those in Workers F1 and Workers F1 SS put emphasis on how there are times when harvesters are in the green-houses when spraying of the flowers is taking place. The shop stewards said that this is an aspect that the certification is failing to cover.

“People are not given enough time to enter after two hours and sometimes the mangers do not see the chemicals as very dangerous and the women can enter after only one hour. They enter in the greenhouses when there is still water. Like that their clothes get chemicals”, said one worker in Workers F1.

The Workers F1 said that workers are in the greenhouses at the same time as sprayers spray the flowers.

“Usually the management do not care if the women are in the tent” said another worker in Workers F1.
Workers F1 SS said that there are harvesters who walk in wet soil, which is mixed with chemicals. When asked how often it happens that the harvesters are in the greenhouses at the same time as the sprayer the worker responded two times a week.

“We have tried to bring these issues up to the management and they have said that they don’t have the time. The do not even give us the time to go to toilet to drink water. And our greenhouses are very hot, about 28 degrees. These workers, they don’t have freedom when they are working”, said Workers F1 SS.

Workers F2 SS saw lack of knowledge as a challenge for the certification. They said that many workers think that the premium should be given as cash and that the concept is not explained enough to the workers. They thought that the beneficial should be explained and taught to the workers. According to Workers F2 SS it should also be explained that the workers benefit twice, both by working for the company but also how the Fairtrade premium helps the community.

Workers F2 saw union representation as a big challenge for the certification.

“Even though the managers know that unionization is part of the certification standards they say that they don’t want union in the compound”, said one worker in Workers F2.

Other issues brought up by Workers F1 SS and Workers F2 SS was the level of wages and overtime work. They claimed that wages are too low to live off of. The shop stewards said that the harvesters earn KSH 6 000 and at seasonal time they are given a little bonus of KSH 500 per year. As for overtime it exceeds 4-6 hours per week and that the workers are not paid for overtime work.

Audits challenges

In terms of audits, the level of knowledge differs between the shop stewards and the “ordinary” workers.

“The management is very tight with us as they don’t want the visitors to see us, then they will know that we will say the truth”, said one worker at Workers F2.

They also said that they are aware that there are visitors coming but they do not know more than that. Workers F1 gave similar answers.

“They’ve been coming but to the managers’ offices. Then the managers tell the workers ‘These are the visitors’. And by that time our bosses are harsh to us. They are strict by the time those visitors are there. Your have to be in place and no toilet visits”, said Workers F1 when they were asked about Milieu Programma Sierteelt (MPS).

The shop stewards have different views on the challenges with audits. The Workers F2 SS said that they think the auditors are doing their best by “giving morals” and the feedback that
is needed according to the standards. They also emphasized that if there is no auditing the managers will say that everything is okay. They also say that if there is auditing the auditors will make sure that the farms follow the standards.

Workers F1 SS saw the biggest challenges with auditing that the certification bodies such as Fairtrade and MPS, do not want to cooperate and talk with the shop stewards. The shop stewards also said that audits are being done without them being included. They also see it as a challenge that the auditors do not report to the union that they are coming to the farm for an audit that will affect workers welfare.

“You can hear from workers that the mangers tell the workers that the visitors are coming but we don’t know what type of visitors that are coming”, said Workers F1 SS.

Another problem, according to Workers F1 SS, is how the audits are carried out.

“They walk together when visitors are coming, the management, the human resource manager and the supervisor. The human resource manager cannot tell them about our problems. It’s very hard for them to tell about our problems”, said Workers F1 SS.
7. ANALYSIS

In this section I analyze the empirical results, link the empirical data to the theoretical background and make conclusions.

7.1. Analysis of empirical results

The answers, in general, given by the three stakeholders were not unexpected. The most surprising part of the interviews, when analyzing the answers was how contradicting some of the answers were. The contradicting answers were mainly between the workers and the managers, but also to some extent between the auditors and the other two groups.

From the managers point of view there is a conception that the workers are telling lies and making up things that are factual. Some of the managers expressed that this reason of behaving could be understood that there should be a willingness from the workers for them to want the audits to be beneficial for them. In connection to this one auditor mentioned and confirmed this kind of mistrust from the managers by putting emphasize on managers who want to “hide” non-conformities at the farm. This was expressed by how managers in relation to auditors expressed, at the first day of the audit, that the conditions at the farm were without any remark. Then later, when the audit progressed and the final report of the audit was presented, the audit report showed that there were non-conformities according to the certification scheme at the farm. This is another sign of mistrust from the manager towards the auditors. At the interviews with the managers, when talking about possible improvement with the certification, I felt at certain times as if the managers were exaggerating the positive outcomes to some extent. This could be explained by a will from the managers to clean their hands for the industry to get a bad reputation. Worth to mention was that the managers did not know that I had done interviews with the workers. It was also remarkable how managers referred to difficulties in lack of understanding from other managers, in terms of commitment for adaptations according to standard requirements.

The workers were critical towards managers and some expressed that there was a fear to join the union since the managers had showed a willingness not to unionize workers. This fear could very much coincide with reality since the level of unionized workers is fairly low. In connection to how the workers described the managers treatment of the workers it could at certain points feel like some workers were using more negative words to describe the managers for the purpose of this thesis.

Overall the managers were more positive towards certification and what it had improved in terms of labor rights in the Kenyan cut flower industry. They claimed that the labor rights had improved in terms for example personal protective equipment (PPE’s), the level of unionized workers and wages. This opinion was not shared fully by the managers and the workers.

Regarding wages, the managers thought that improvements have been made in terms of increased wages. However, the workers on the other hand did not consider the wages as
improved issues and still considered the wages too low to live off from. The auditors were also critical towards wage levels and one of the auditors stated that the workers are not paid a “living wage”.

It is significant that the level of knowledge about certification and standard schemes was very low amongst the workers. The level of knowledge was a bit higher among the shop stewards but my prejudgment was that the workers at the certified farms would be more educated about the certification. Another observation regarding the shop stewards was that at one of the farms the answers from the shop stewards and the answers from the workers did not entirely correspond. In some of the answers the shop stewards were more positive towards the non-compliances that remained whereas the workers were more critical. This could be connected to some kind of alliance between the management and the shop stewards, which was also referred to by one of the auditors as something that occurred from time to time.

7.2. Discussion on empirical data and theoretical background

Auditors were positive towards the North-South trade and how consumers in the North are concerned about the social aspects and ethics on how products are produced in the South. That is something that was not brought up either by workers or managers.

Both auditors and managers saw a larger market demand and that has been a huge change since 2002. This increasing consumer demand from the North for social standards to be adhered to, together with the will from producers to get larger market share can be linked to what Collinson refers to as value chains in which companies are required to adopt to social and environmental standards to keep market shares. This also fits well into Gereffi’s buyer-driven supply chain model. However, it is interesting to distinguish between the answers from the different stakeholders. The auditors’ critical approach, when expressing that the producers can no longer “hide” what they are doing, are along the lines of Dolan, Opondo and Smith, that criticized producers for satisfying consumers in the North instead of making substantive changes at the farms. While managers saw the shift as a change in attitude in terms of getting market share. The managers stressed that the market has driven producers to ascribe to standards of certification bodies and to adjust “drastically” to those.

All three stakeholder groups saw a shift in the level of unionized workers since 2002. One of the auditors stated that unionization has had a big impact on the condition of industry in terms of workers conditions and that the ability for workers to unionize has brought empowerment. That was also brought up by some of the managers as a significant change.

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The workers also said that more workers have joined the union. According to the shop stewards it has led to salary increments every second year.

Both managers and workers put emphasis on transportation to and from the workplace as something that had changed since certification became more popular.

Barrientos and Smith criticize social standards for focusing on visible aspects of standards instead of rooted issues such as discrimination. Barrientos and Smith distinguish between outcome standards and process rights. Outcome standards are visible aspects such as for example health and safety-related issues, and process rights are structural rights, like for example freedom of association. This division between outcome standards and process rights can very much be applicable to the context of this thesis and how the stakeholders saw some changes in terms of for example higher usage of personal protective equipment and transportation to and from the workplace. Mentioned aspects can be considered as outcome standards. However, the stakeholders highlighted several aspects in the certification standards as remaining challenges, which had the characteristics of process rights. Two of those were freedom of association and the level of wages. This analysis can also be done in connection to the findings in Dolan, Opondo and Smith’s research, which for example found remaining problems with union representation and low wages.

The managers were very positive towards how PPE’s are being used to a higher degree than before. However, that is something that was brought up neither by the auditors nor by the workers. The same goes for the level of wages, which was also brought up by the managers as something that has changed or the last years. Two of the managers said that workers are “getting some good money” however the workers themselves did not mention that as a big change that the certification had brought with it.

Both the workers and the managers pointed out PPE’s as a major challenge with the certification process. Two of the managers put emphasis on the PPE’s and saw them as a challenge. They both stressed that it is difficult to get the right PPE that will last for a long time and that it is common that the PPE’s that they get only last for a couple of months but also that PPE’s are very costly for them. Three of the workers groups said that they are using equipment, which is old. At one of the farms the workers said that the managers have ordered new PPE’s but that they have not arrived. At the other farm some of the workers do not have PPE’s at all and sometimes it is missing. A reoccurring problem is that the workers use the same PPE’s for a long time, without changing them. Some of the interviewed workers highlighted that the certification is missing out to control the PPE’s. The auditors on the other hand did not mention PPE’s as a challenge.

Two important aspects, which were brought up, by both workers and certification bodies are freedom of association and wages. On the other hand these are aspects were not mentioned as important challenges according to the managers.

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As for freedom of association the auditors saw this as something difficult to implement for the producers if farms are not involved in the process. One of the auditors stressed that the management must create a trust that the workers will not get fired if they join the union. The same auditor also stressed that is quite a task to implement freedom of association and that having workers committees instead of union representatives can be a middle-way to negotiate wages for example. However, some of the workers interviewed still saw union representation as a challenge for the managers and for the certification process. They highlighted that managers are still negative towards workers who organize in the union and that the management do not want the union in the compound.

As for wages the shop stewards at both of the farms put emphasis on the wages that the workers earn and stressed that the wages are too low to make a living off of. Two of the auditors put emphasis on wages and the urge for the managers and producers to pay “living wages”. One of them said that the Fairtrade lack the figure on how much the salary should be increased only that there should be an annual increment. The other auditor on the other hand was very critical about the living wage aspect and thought that the certifiers have not seriously studied what a living wage could be. He also stressed that workers do not understand that according to the figures that were estimated for living wage in Kenya, the workers do not know that they are earning far below the estimated amount. The auditor also said that living wage should be enforced, which had not been happening at the time of the interview.

KEWWO’s study from 2008 showed that workers at the researched farms had little knowledge about the workplace codes while Gårdman showed in her study, at the farms investigated, that the level of knowledge amongst the workers about their rights were higher at Fairtrade farms than non-Fairtrade farms. This lack of knowledge can also be identified in this study, in fact the lack of knowledge about the certification process of implementing and sustaining practices according to the certification standards was discussed by all three stakeholder groups. All three stakeholder groups saw lack of knowledge about certification as a challenge. One manager said that there is lack between the certification manager and other managers and that “other” managers do not see the benefits of the producer to be certified and that he has to convince them for the reasons. He highlighted that most managers make a commitment to understand but that there are still difficulties in the gap of knowledge. The lack of knowledge is of importance in other contexts of the supply chain too. One manager put emphasize on how the workers “do not understand” their role in the certification process, specifically in terms of the premium within the Fairtrade certification. The manager stressed that the workers think that they will get the money directly in their pocket and that they are not educated in how the premium will benefit the community as a whole and not increments in workers’ salaries. This is also confirmed by the Workers F2 SS who said that many workers think that the premium should be given as cash to the workers and that the concept of certification is not explained properly to the workers. This is an example of how the North decided what should be done with the premium money versus what those in the South want to do with the money, which was discussed by Dolon.

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Opondo and Smith\textsuperscript{105}. In this case some of the workers express that they want the money for themselves but someone else (the North) has decided that the money should benefit the community and that individuals cannot be trusted to spend the money in good enough ways. This also shows that maybe the goal is not really to affect change on the ground in the South in ways that an individual would choose for him/herself.

One of the auditors also brought up the value addition for producers who are certified. The auditor emphasized that for some of the producers they do not see this value addition in getting strong market value. This was not brought up as a challenge neither by managers nor by workers.

Dolon, Opondo and Smith emphasize that “the motivation for adopting codes was to satisfy the requirements of the Northern market rather than to effect substantive changes in employment practices and working conditions.”\textsuperscript{106} This critique can be linked to cost in time and cost in money that several managers chose to put forward in the interviews. The managers highlighted the administration that certification requires and that preparing for audits takes a lot of time. They mentioned that some of the workers have to stop producing in order to contribute to the certification process (i.e. interviews) or attend meetings required under the terms of certification. One manager also stated that for many workers there are several meetings each month that they have to attend, for example different gender meetings, the union, health and safety committee etc. These tendencies can be linked to the criticism of Dolon, Opondo and Smith\textsuperscript{107}. This shows an interesting part of the certification process, in how it can be linked in the sense that the managers sees the time and money as an “investment” to get more market share in the North, rather than as a way of improving the lives of their workers for its own sake. This is an example of how the managers do not see the intrinsic value in these “costs” provide to the lives of the workers and in the improvements of the working conditions.

In the interviews regarding the audit process and the challenges with the audits there were quite large differences between the three interview groups and their answers. Although there was one large reoccurring aspect which all three groups in one way or the other and that regarded the workers’ interviews.

The managers said that they are afraid the “wrong information” is given by the workers when the auditors interview them. One of the managers said that when the auditors are alone with the workers, he cannot trust whether the information which is brought forward, is in the interest of the workers or of the individual worker who is being interviewed. The manager thought that there should be a way to verify the information collected from the workers. The auditors on the other hand saw a challenge in crosschecking but some of them said that this is being done. The auditors said that they also thought it is difficult to know whether the workers are telling the truth or not. They stressed that workers might say things, which are


\textsuperscript{107} Ibid.
not factual. The auditors also mentioned that it is important to speak to the workers in an environment where the workers feel safe and can tell you what is happening and where they do not have to worry about job security. Exactly this was brought up by some of the workers who emphasized that the management do not want them to talk to the auditors. The workers stressed that in that kind of situation the management will know that the workers are telling the truth. The aforementioned critique amongst the different stakeholders, especially in terms of the workers interviews in social auditing, has been emphasized by several scholars such as for example Riisgaard, Barrientos and Smith but also by the multi-stakeholder initiative ETI. Riisgaard for example stresses that monitoring of social standards often has been done through self-assessment or checklist auditing.

The critique on social auditing can be identified in several of the interviews with the stakeholders. One of the most obvious examples is the worker interviews in the audits. The auditors, for example, highlighted that shop stewards might want to protect the management and the producers in the beginning of an audit when a producer have just been certified. One of the auditor stressed that they could possibly have been told what to say to the auditors by the management, and that the managers are only interested in getting their certification renewed. The same auditor pointed out workers committees as a challenge for the audits. The auditor stressed that this kind of committee is not very open or critical towards the management, especially not if you compare with shop stewards who are in a legal position to negotiate with the management.

The different interviewees saw different possibilities how the workers’ interviews in audits and the data collected could be improved and get a higher quality. One of the managers wanted to see interaction between the auditor, managers and workers all together, whilst the workers wanted to see a higher degree of interaction between the auditors and the shop stewards. The interviewed shop stewards said that at this point the auditors to not talk to the shop stewards, neither do they report to the union that they are coming for an audit. Instead the shop stewards thought that there should be a better communication between the trade union and the certification body.

Another aspect considered as a challenge by some of the auditors was the attitude of the managers. This was brought up by the auditors interviewed who highlighted that sometimes the managers, at the beginning of an audit, claim that everything is perfect at the farm and then later on, at the end of the audit it proves that the condition of the farm is not very good. This can be applicable to the critique that social auditing has gotten which was discussed by for example Riisgaard, Barrientos and Smith but also by the multi-stakeholder initiative ETI.

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The cost of certification, both in time and money, is highlighted by both Redfern and Snedker and Dolan, Opondo and Smith\textsuperscript{111}. In the interviews this was evidently brought up by managers and auditors but not by workers. The managers said that it is challenging to make what is happening on the ground to adhere to what it actually says in the standards. The same manager said that paying the auditors is expensive. An auditor also confirmed that following the standards is very costly and calls for a well-established business. Both auditors as well as managers saw the Kenyan cut flower industry as over-audited and several managers called for a universal standard. Duplication of standard requirements was confirmed both by managers as well as by auditors. This can be connected to Riisgaard who brings up that there are at least 16 different environmental and social standards, both national and international standards, in the cut flower export production\textsuperscript{112}.

The managers on the other hand thought that it is challenging with the different levels of compliance that the certification bodies have. One of the managers said that there are things that you have to comply within a couple of years and others which are shorter. The same person said that it is difficult if the certifiers want, for example them to put up a building, which is not something they can do just like that. Two of the managers were also critical about how the auditors pick out “small thing” in their audit report and according to them without letting the managers know about it until the final day when the audit report is presented. They stressed that these “small issues” should be discussed with the managers during the audit. The managers emphasized that the auditors just wait for a corrective action after listing the non-compliances. Later on in the interview the same manager requested the auditors to suggest corrective action plans, cause as he sees it the auditors only identify non-conformities and do not give plans how to act from those non-conformities.

The auditors saw different levels of preparedness by the growers and that this is a challenge for the audits. One of them stressed that depending of how the growers are prepared will facilitate for the auditors to carry out their audits. It is also the fact of how the auditors are prepared to carry out the audit, if he or she has been doing some research on the producers for which the audit will be carried out on, for example if previous audits have been looked up. Another auditor pointed out how the audits are depending on the auditors’ skills and if the auditor is well trained. The auditors were the only ones of the interviewees who put emphasis on the personal skills of the auditors and who also mentioned that the weakness of the auditor can be a disadvantage for the auditor. One of auditors said that if a situation occurs where there is a dispute between the management and the auditor it is possible that the manager bribes the auditor in order to get certified or renewal of the certification. However, this is something that was not brought up by any of the other interviewees.


7.3. Conclusions

The aim of this thesis is to examine if auditors, managers and workers see certification and auditing as tools to improve the working conditions in the Kenyan cut flower industry. Among the stakeholder groups there was not one commonly expressed understanding on if certification and auditing had improved the working conditions.

However, to a certain extent, all three stakeholder groups emphasized that certification and auditing had affected the working conditions in the industry in a positive way. Positive effects could for example be the increased amount of unionized workers, projects that were carried out with the Fairtrade premium money, higher degree of personal protective equipment among workers or more careful chemical usage by producers.

I would argue that certification and auditing are not effective tools alone, to reach long-term improvements in terms on working conditions in the Kenyan cut flower industry. They need to be complemented with other methods, which I argue for in this section.

At the same time as there are certain positive aspects in terms of labor rights within the certification and auditing process, there are four remaining challenges that can be concluded within the scope of the study. One is a visible challenge and the remaining three challenges need structural changes in order to be met.

The visible challenge is the use of personal protective equipment and the need for the managers to find long-lasting equipment. The workers claimed that it is sometimes missing and also that the ones they are using are old. This is an aspect that the auditing process does not seem to cover and something that needs to be solved by the management.

The three structural challenges are raising awareness about certification amongst workers, managers and auditors, the need for increased wages for the workers and the right for the workers to join the union.

In all the interviews the stakeholders expressed thoughts that could be explained by a need for an awareness-raising about certification amongst all three stakeholder groups. For example the workers can be uneducated about the certification standards and the Fairtrade premium, the managers can at times mistrust the workers in the auditing process and auditors on their end need to be well-educated about the local labor laws which do not always seem to be the case. These kinds of problems can for example partly be solved through education about the certification purposes and education about local labor laws.

The other two structural challenges is the right for workers to join the union and the level of wages. These aspects were seen as improved by managers but both examples were seen as remaining challenges by auditors as well as by workers. Although this study confirms that the degree of unionized workers has increased since the early 21st century, the level is still low. It will continue to be difficult to implement wages to live off of if the producers are not involved and are not positive about the process. A confidence must
be built between the farm management and the union. This is also strongly connected to the level of wages, which are kept down when workers are not able to collectively bargain their wages through the union. Workers’ wages might have improved to some extent, partly because of the collective bargaining agreement that was signed in 2002 but wages are still too low to be considered a level of a wage for workers to live off of and not in level of the estimates of what a living wage level could be for the industry.

Mentioned conclusions are four of the remaining challenges in the Kenyan cut flower industry and need to be addressed to reach a more sustainable industry. To some extent this study showed that certification and auditing is failing. For example there were tendencies that the managers were more focused on getting market share instead of improving the working conditions as well as it was consumers in the “North” who decided what the Fairtrade premium should be used for. Auditing through certification schemes is not one simple quick-fix solution to improve the working conditions in the Kenyan cut flower industry. Several factors are needed to make improvements, which can be combined with certification and auditing. A key factor in this process is that workers need to be involved to a larger extent in the improvement work. Other examples can be larger engagement between managers and local unions as well as labor rights organizations, a willingness and understanding of the managers to increase the wages for the workers and also a larger pressure from consumers in the North on producers in the South to take a larger responsibility. These examples and this study shows that consumers in the North can not see consumers labels as a guarantee for good working conditions. There are still improvements left to turn the Kenyan cut flower industry into a sustainable industry.
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Interview with Manager 1
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Interview with Manager 3
Group interview, Workers F1 = referring to group interview with “ordinary” workers at Farm 1
Group interview, Workers F1 SS = referring to group interview with shop steward workers at Farm 1
Group interview, Workers F2 = referring to group interview with “ordinary” workers at Farm 2
Group interview, Workers F2 SS = referring to group interview with shop steward workers at Farm 2

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Other references:

Employment Act (2007)

Appendix 1: Interview questions to auditors and managers

Introduction
Describe that the intention of the interview is to gather information on the certification process. Before interview start, explain that if the interviewees wish, they can have hidden identities in the final report. Describe the aim of the study.

1. Presentation
- What is your position in relation to the flower industry and the certification process?
- How long have you had that position?

2. Membership, different certification initiatives
- Is your farm member of any certification initiative(s)? Which?
- What was the initial interest in gaining the certification(s)?
- How come your farm has chosen to be member in that/those specific initiative(s)?
- For how long have you been a member? (In FT, MPS etc)
- Has there been any change in membership? (I.e. in MPS different levels)
- What is the difference from now and from before you became a member?
- What role do the initiative(s) play in terms of working conditions and for higher market share?

3. General
- Do the workers know which farms are certified?
- Are there any benefits for the workers if they choose to work at certified rather than non-certified farms?
- Are the workers informed about the certification initiatives (at your farm)?
- Which are the positive effects of the certification? (FT: Premium money of 8-12% of export value from developing countries)
- FT: How is the joint body elected? How does it function? Are the members elected and rotating?
- Do the certification initiatives cooperate with relevant stakeholders (trade unions, NGOs, local community etc.)?
- What do you think is the reason why all farms are not certified?

4a. Auditing/control
- Please describe in detail how the auditing for the certification is carried out.
- What aspects are being audited?
- For how long have audits been carried out?
- Does the farm make its own audits to guarantee the compliance of the certification?
- Are the governmental inspections carried out (to safeguard that the working conditions comply with the law)? If and how, do they differentiate from the certification audits and/or the farm’s own audits?
- Is there anything prepared before the certification audits are performed? (Issues that are particularly important, documents etc.)
How is the physical inspection carried out? Is there a difference between the certification audits and the farms’ own audits?
- How are the audits performed (By whom: staff at the farms, external auditors, trade unions? Are workers interviewed during the audits?)
- Are local organizations and trade unions involved before the audits are carried out?
- Is the auditing carried out by the same persons? How are the auditors chosen?
- Is the auditing done unannounced?
- How are the workers opinions being included in the auditing process? If they are interviewed, are they interviewed at work or off-work?
- Have there been cases where the management has chosen which workers the auditors can speak to? In that case, how is it avoided?
- In some cases farms have rehearsed prior to the audit, how is that avoided?
- Are you familiar with outsourcing at Fairtrade farms to non-Fairtrade farms especially during high season?

4b. Identified problems through audits
- What problems have you identified through audits? How common are problems?
- What do you do when you have identified a problem?
- Are there any non-compliances that are especially difficult to discover through audits?

5. Past certification problems and future challenges
- Looking back since the working conditions in flower farms were first observed and since the different initiatives where introduced in the industry. Which have been the past problems with the certification process?
- Do you think that there is a risk that certification initiatives function as a privatization of the law and how in that case? How can that be hindered? How can privatization of the law (certification) be hindered?
- According to you, which are the current and future challenges of the certification process? Why?
- What are the initiatives major deficiencies? Is there something that the certification initiatives do not manage to cover? (FT: environmental issues, methylbromid?)
- Have you ever heard of any social or ethical demands on decent working conditions from the buyers in western countries?
- Have I forgotten to ask something which you think is important considering the certification process?
Appendix 2: Interview questions to workers

INTRODUCTION (describe that the intention of the interview is to gather information on the following issues. The workplace in particular: Workforce profile, conditions of work, experience of employees and the perception of the ethics of the employer.

Before interview start, explain that the workers will have hidden identities in the final report. Describe that the aim of the report.)

GENERAL

1. Name, age, background, family?
2. How long employment?
3. What sort of employment (short time or permanent)?
4. Please describe your tasks at work?
5. How do you experience/like your work?
6. How do you like your employer?
7. Do you have any complaints of your work?
8. If yes, please describe what sort of problems you experience at the workplace?
9. Is anything done about these problems?
10. If yes, what have been done?
11. Have you tried to do something to change these problems?
12. What happened then? (Something changed? If yes, describe what?)
13. What is the turnover of employees at the plantation? (Find out if it is usual that workers end and move on, or if workers stay long time at the plantation compared to other plantations in the region?) Why?
14. Do you know where the production is exported? If yes, please tell which countries.

WORKING CONDITIONS

1. Describe your working hours?
2. How often do you work overtime?
3. How is the decision of doing overtime done? (Try to find out if it is voluntary or forced by the employer).
4. How do you get paid for night shifts and overtime?
5. What happens if you say no to overtime? (Find out if they are penalized for saying no to OT in any way or if they feel a pressure to accept OT for other reasons).
6. Is there any workers employed below legal age?
7. If yes, how many of the workers are child laborers?
8. What working tasks do child laborers normally do? (Find out if they work with easier tasks or the same work as adult workers or even worse tasks?)
9. What working hours do child workers have? (Find out if they work less hours, for example if they work evening and night shifts as well?)

WORKING ENVIRONMENT / HEALTH AND SAFETY
1. Describe your working environment?
2. Have you felt disturbed by your working environment sometimes/often?
3. If yes, describe in what way?
4. What protective clothing do you use?
5. When must you use it and how does it work?
6. Do workers work with chemicals? If so what protections are in place?
7. What are the names of the chemicals you use?
8. Are any of them dangerous? (Try to find out if workers are aware of risks)
9. Do any of them affect you? E.g. itchy skin, sore eyes/throat etc?
10. Did you ever get sick (or have colleagues that have got sick) from your working environment?
11. Have you had any training on how to use these chemicals?
12. Where are they stored? (Try to find out if the worker feels the chemicals are handled in a safe way).
13. Do you go for regular medical tests for your work? Any body-check ups?
14. How has working environment changed over time? (Find out if it is better or worse or the same)
15. Please describe the most dangerous tasks at your work?
16. How do you experience these tasks?
17. Do you any health and safety training at the workplace? Have you ever received health and safety, first aid, fire fighting or other such training?
18. Has there happened any work related accidents on the work place? If yes, please give details.
19. What happens if a worker gets hurt in an accident?

WAGES AND BENEFITS

1. What is your monthly wage?
2. How is your wage decided?
3. How is the wage development over time?
4. How is the wages structured at the plantation (which departments gets the best and the worst paid)?
5. What are your deductions, if any?
6. What other bonuses or benefits are there, except the wage?
7. What kind of paid leave do you get (if any)?

GENDER

1. Is there any discrimination towards women at the workplace?
2. How many men/women workers at the plantation?
3. Do women and men do different kinds of jobs at this plantation? If so why?
4. Do women and men get paid the same for doing the same kind of job?

UNION
1. Is there a union active at the workplace?
2. Are you active or not? Why?
5. What is your feeling of the union/unions? Why?
6. How are worker representatives elected?
7. Do they have a collective agreement with management as far as you know?
8. Are workers who are part of a worker organization treated any differently to other workers? (Is there any discrimination towards trade union members?)
9. Is there collective bargaining?
10. What other issues have been resolved by the workers organization?

FACTORY RULES

1. Is there any factory rules?
2. What happens if someone breaks a rule at the workplace?
3. Do you think everyone is treated the same when the disciplinary process is used?
4. Are workers fined or treated harshly as a punishment for breaking the rules?

CONCLUSION

1. Do you feel that the management listen and understand the issues for the workers?
2. Is it usual with complaints?
3. Have you ever hear of any social or ethical demands on decent working conditions from the buyers in western countries?
4. Have I forgotten to ask something, which you think, is important considering your working conditions and the work place?
5. Do you have any suggestions for improvements that the management should do when it comes to working condition and working environment?

Add General comments about how you as researcher perceived the interview (was the worker afraid to speak, outspoken, shy etc etc).