



BUILDING WORKER POWER THROUGH WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



ReWork
the Bay

SUMMARY

Over the last 50 years a deep imbalance has been created in the labor market, with the pursuit of corporate profits taking precedence over the needs of workers. This is evident in several troubling trends related to job quality in the United States, including opaque and unfair hiring processes, poor health coverage, unstable scheduling practices, unsafe and unhealthy working conditions, and unlivable wages. Beyond the impact on individual workers, this trend also means workforce training programs have fewer and fewer options to connect students with the quality of jobs they need to sustain themselves and their families. In this way, the ability of a workforce development sector to achieve successful workforce outcomes is heavily influenced by employer practices and the resulting quality of jobs available in the communities they serve.

In October 2021, Rework the Bay initiated a project to engage workforce training providers as partners to improve job quality for Bay Area workers. Counter to most job quality efforts in the workforce system, our approach was not aimed at better equipping workforce providers to advocate for job quality on behalf of their participants. Instead, we developed and piloted a strategy focused on developing program participants as leaders who themselves can advocate for great pay and protections in their workplace.

To build our understanding of the system's current approaches to job quality and equitable

economic development, we partnered with UC Berkeley Labor Center to survey workforce development organizations across nine Bay Area counties. We then funded four Bay Area partnerships of workforce development and worker organizing groups to develop and test approaches to incorporating workers' rights education and job quality standards into the programming of existing workforce training programs.

Together, project partners trained over two hundred workers reflecting the diversity of our region's most systematically excluded communities, including:

- Workers in farming, transportation, hospitality, climate resilience, domestic work, landscaping, social services, and unemployed or underemployed workers
- Black men
- Returning citizens
- Longstanding and newcomer immigrant communities
- Indigenous communities
- Youth, young adults, and seniors
- Speakers of English, Spanish, Tagalog, Mandarin, and Cantonese

We present here a brief overview of this project, and a rich set of learnings and recommendations to share with the field as we work to transform worker training to meet the demands of the 21st century labor market.

INTRODUCTION

Over the last 50 years a deep imbalance has been created in the labor market, with control over hiring practices, pay, and working conditions in our economy overwhelmingly concentrated in large corporations. Corporations typically see maximizing profit as their primary obligation to shareholders and are experimenting with new approaches to reduce the cost of labor. Intended or not, these new approaches almost always come at the expense of workers and their families. Opaque and unfair hiring processes, poor health coverage, unstable scheduling practices, unsafe and unhealthy working conditions, and unlivable wages are all realities of today's job market that stand in the way of worker success and wellbeing.

Beyond the impact on individual workers, this trend also means training programs have fewer and fewer options to connect students with the quality of jobs they need to sustain themselves and their families. In this way, the ability of a workforce development sector to achieve successful workforce outcomes is heavily influenced by employer practices and the resulting quality of jobs available in the communities they serve.

Workforce programs are not powerless to fight these trends—and conversations around job quality are starting to occur in some community and community-college-based workforce development systems. Even still, only a minority of training providers are taking active steps to improve job quality in their local communities.

At the same time, in the same communities, worker organizations such as worker centers and labor unions are actively educating and organizing workers in low-wage industries to push back against worsening job standards. Constituents of these organizing groups often represent the most systematically excluded workers in those communities, populations that workforce programs seek to

serve. Worker organizations are well-situated to integrate workforce development work with organizing campaigns and policy initiatives that increase protections for workers, expand access to beneficial programs and lead to an increase in quality jobs - whether through “know your rights” trainings, unionization drives or taking on bad actor employers. Yet aside from minimal pre-apprenticeship/apprenticeship relationships, little collaboration exists between worker-organizing groups and workforce development providers.

Educating workforce training students about their labor protections and training them in organizing and policy work can concurrently tackle the issues of increasing access to workforce development programs for marginalized communities, while also creating quality jobs in the labor market.

Through this project ReWork the Bay and our partners have planted the seeds for a new approach to workforce development that not only provides participants the skills to do a job, but the mindset and confidence to be a leader.



Photo credit: North Bay Jobs With Justice

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

In October 2021, Rework the Bay initiated a project to investigate and pilot strategies to improve economic outcomes for workers by incorporating workers' rights education and job quality standards into the programming of a diverse set of Bay Area workforce training providers. To build our understanding of the system's current approaches to job quality and equitable economic development, we partnered with UC Berkeley Labor Center to survey workforce development organizations across nine Bay Area counties.

SURVEY

UC Berkeley Labor Center (the Labor Center) carries out research on topics including job quality and workforce development issues, providing an important source of research and information on unions and the changing workforce for students, scholars, policymakers and the public. The Labor Center designed, implemented and analyzed a survey aimed to provide a snapshot of the ways area workforce development organizations currently address workers' rights training and job quality standards, to gain insight into barriers to the use of these mechanisms, and to identify potential solutions to increase their uptake. Seventy-three (73) organizations across the nine-county Bay Area participated in an interview or online survey between February and May 2023.¹

Respondents self-selected into the survey and do not represent a statistically valid random sample of Bay Area workforce development agencies. One survey per organization was completed by one staff member representative whose role varied across respondents.



PILOT PROJECT

The pilot project sought to increase the number of quality, empowered jobs in the Bay Area by building power among systematically excluded workers of color who can then be job quality change agents as they navigate their careers. This pilot brought together four worker organizations and workforce development programs from various counties in the SF Bay Area. Together, we collaboratively designed and implemented a pilot project that integrated workers' rights education into workforce training programs and CBOs, community colleges, and/or Workforce Boards.

This pilot project built on the learnings of a 2019 Chicago-based initiative that integrated worker rights education into workforce programs, led by the Chicago Jobs Council and the University of Illinois School of Labor and Employment Relations, with support from the Chicagoland Workforce Funder Alliance. The Chicago initiative produced a curriculum that served as a template for the development of our uniquely tailored workers' rights education curricula.



Photo credit: Joyce Xi

¹Programs providing workforce development services (pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship, classroom or work-based learning, skills development, recruitment and placement in employment, career exploration and job readiness, connection to degree or certificate training for employment or advancement, skills upgrade training, incumbent worker training, rapid-response or re-employment support, supportive services for employment, wage-subsidies to employers for placement or advancement, etc.) in Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, San Francisco, Santa Clara, San Mateo, Solano, and Sonoma counties were eligible to participate.

PROJECT SITES



The type of worker organization ReWork the Bay partnered with on this project is referred to as a **Community Labor Partnership (CLP)**: a coalition of grassroots community organizations and organized labor affiliates fighting for social and economic justice by building the power of low-wage working people. Four Bay Area CLPs in the Bay Area carried out this project: **North Bay Jobs with Justice** (serving Napa and Sonoma County workers), **Jobs with Justice SF** (serving San Francisco workers), **East Bay Alliance for a Sustainable Economy** (serving East Bay workers), and **Working Partnerships USA** (serving Silicon Valley workers). **Jobs with Justice San Francisco** led the coordination among the four regions.

Together, project partners trained over two hundred workers across the four Bay Area regions, the majority of whom are systematically excluded workers including:

- Workers in farming, transportation, hospitality, climate resilience, domestic work, landscaping, social services, and unemployed or underemployed workers
- Black men
- Returning citizens
- Longstanding and newcomer immigrant communities
- Indigenous communities
- Youth, young adults, and seniors
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Because each worker organization serves different communities of excluded workers throughout the Bay Area, the curriculum was adapted and designed according to the needs of workers who participated in the pilot. This same flexibility allowed pilot sites to design an approach responsive to their local context extended to the selection of partners and program design at each Bay Area site.



SITE PROFILE

SAN FRANCISCO

WORKER ORGANIZATION LEAD:

Jobs with Justice San Francisco (JwJSF)

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS:

La Colectiva & Day Labor Program (LC & DLP) is a worker center whose members are Spanish-speaking immigrants working as domestic workers and day laborers. South of Market Community Action Network (SOMCAN) provides Filipino immigrants and families workers' rights programs that incorporate key elements of workforce development like resume building, mock interviews, assistance with application completion, and job placement. The Housing Rights Committee (HRC) is a tenant rights organization whose members range in age and economic status but who are united by a common struggle – housing insecurity in San Francisco.

POPULATION SERVED:

More than 50 predominately Filipino Tagalog speakers working in the retail, home care, and hospitality sectors.

LOCAL ECONOMIC CONTEXT:

Diverse economy and workforce in a densely populated urban area that has become an epicenter of massive displacement, gentrification, and increased housing costs, disproportionately impacting communities of color.

LOCAL CONTEXT PROGRAM ADAPTATIONS:

In collaboration with the Housing Rights Committee (HRC), JwJSF recruited participants to enroll in the workforce development training offered through San Francisco's Workforce Development board (the SF Office of Economic and Workforce Development), supplemented by a Know Your Rights training.

In addition to partnering with community organizations, JwJSF partnered with several other groups to infuse the curriculum with the most relevant and up-to-date content on current laws and protections, including:

- The Labor Occupational Health Program at UC Berkeley co-designed learning units to include health and safety protections to increase awareness of safety guidelines and the prevention of common injuries, specifically targeting industries where SOMCAN and LC & DLP members work.
- Santa Clara Wage Theft Coalition were invited to teach a unit about how to access job-protected leave—very valuable content to the SOMCAN participants, many of whom live in multigenerational households and often care for family members in their homes.
- CA Domestic Workers' Coalition provided a curriculum on the history of the fight to include domestic workers in OSHA protections, which was adapted to align with La Colectiva's existing theory of change, highlighting important historic wins for domestic workers, and reminding workers of their persistent exclusion from many labor protections that others take for granted.

“This program helps foster relationships with our local community and with nature, helps us connect to the fact that we are nature. The program also promotes our leadership, stewardship/guardianship in our communities.”

— Marta, trainee



SITE PROFILE

SONOMA COUNTY

WORKER ORGANIZATION LEAD:

North Bay Jobs with Justice (NBJWJ)

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS:

Santa Rosa Junior College collaborated with community stakeholders on a wildfire resilience training program for the existing landscaping and agriculture workforce in Sonoma County. This hands-on training program focused on fire-resilient and drought-tolerant landscaping; vegetation management and maintaining defensible space around homes; small repairs for home hardening and wildfire safety; post-fire cleanup and ash remediation; and workplace safety and worker rights. Resilience Works, a national labor brokerage that employs workers on climate-related projects like vegetation management, was the High Road Employer partner for this project.

POPULATION SERVED:

40 predominantly Indigenous Oaxacan immigrants who speak Spanish or other Indigenous languages and are typically employed in and around the vineyards of Sonoma County.

LOCAL ECONOMIC CONTEXT:

A mix of rural, small town and small city communities heavily dominated by farming, wine production and tourism. Importantly, this is also an area at high risk of wildfires fueled by climate change, having experienced several devastating fire events since 2017.

LOCAL CONTEXT PROGRAM ADAPTATIONS:

Sonoma County has been on the front lines of catastrophic wildfires fueled by climate change. In response, community will and millions of dollars in local, state, and federal government funds are focused on wildfire resilience and prevention work around homes and in wildland areas. Low-wage immigrant communities are disproportionately affected by wildfires due to income inequality and the outdoor, exposed nature of many jobs in the landscaping and agriculture sectors. Seizing on this moment, NBJWJ integrated workers' rights and safety training into a workforce development program for these new jobs and developed policy approaches to ensure the quality of the jobs.

To meet participant language needs, NBJWJ and SRJC partnered to develop and use a bilingual-accessible curriculum around three key areas of workers' rights:

1. Challenge: how landscapers and day laborers have been excluded from basic rights that other workers have;
2. Resources: Where can workers go when they believe their rights have been violated (for example, wage theft or unsafe working conditions);
3. Solidarity: How working people can organize to improve their jobs and lives. In addition, a new curriculum was developed on specific health and safety concerns for landscapers.

“Now that I have more information, I try to talk more with my employers about our rights and many employers have thanked me because there are rights that they do not know about as employers at home.”

— Guadalupe, trainee



SITE PROFILE

SAN JOSE

WORKER ORGANIZATION LEAD:

Working Partnerships USA (WPUSA)

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS:

Working Partnerships USA connected a trained attorney and facilitator to cohorts of participants selected by three separate partner organizations: Work2Future is San Jose's Workforce Development Board and Job Center for high-growth industries and in-demand occupations paying a living wage. Veggielution works to create connections by providing both food and opportunity for neighbors across Silicon Valley, including a programming focused on organizing and leadership development of immigrant food vendors. San Jose Conservation Corps provides skills-based training and professional development for transitional-aged youth, already has existing cohorts.

POPULATION SERVED:

26 workers participated, including the general low-income population served by the Workforce Development Board system, food service workers, and transitional aged youth.

LOCAL ECONOMIC CONTEXT:

Santa Clara County is one of two counties that are typically associated with Silicon Valley (the other is San Mateo County). Santa Clara County is a mix of urban and suburban communities with a primary focus on tech and innovation.

LOCAL CONTEXT PROGRAM ADAPTATIONS:

The Work2Future (W2F) partnership focused on incorporating regular worker rights education into the existing public workforce infrastructure. In W2F's network, all currently enrolled adult (18+) clients were encouraged to fill out an application, and the organization's career counselors then narrowed this pool to 11 participants.

The partnership with Veggielution served 7 Spanish-speaking workers in the food service industry, which is where some of the highest incidence of workers' rights violations occurs.

San Jose Conservation Corps had existing cohorts of transitional-aged youth that provided a natural pathway for 8 low-income youth to experience a targeted, and testable approach for disseminating comprehensive curricula on employee protections, which they then can carry into future workplaces as older adults.

“Now I understand my rights as a worker, I feel confident knowing that we have these rights and that we can ask for help when something unfair happens to us at work.”

— Anonymous trainee



SITE PROFILE

OAKLAND

WORKER ORGANIZATION LEAD:

East Bay Alliance for a Sustainable Economy (EBASE)

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS:

East Bay Alliance for a Sustainable Economy (EBASE) built upon its long-term existing partnership with the West Oakland Job Resource Center (WOJRC), which is committed to transforming the lives of underserved residents of West Oakland and the greater Bay Area by building a thriving, inclusive community that provides financial and economic opportunities, and by catalyzing industry and policy change.

POPULATION SERVED:

61 jobseekers participated in the pilot, the majority of whom were Black male returning citizens.

LOCAL ECONOMIC CONTEXT:

Alameda County is a mix of dense, diverse urban communities and suburban areas, with a diverse local economy that includes goods movement through the Port of Oakland, healthcare and technology.

LOCAL CONTEXT PROGRAM ADAPTATIONS:

EBASE and WOJRC developed a worker power/know your rights curriculum that was incorporated and permanently adopted into WOJRC's three-week Transportation, Distribution, Logistics (TDL) Pre-Apprenticeship training.

The supplemental curriculum consisted of a 4.5-hour session on workers' rights, with attention to Oakland-specific laws and policies and California standards as they apply to different workers. The curriculum built on EBASE's existing Know Your Rights training and its history and experience in the broader labor movement. The training covered a basic understanding of current labor laws, a history of how we got the labor laws, the agencies responsible for enforcement, as well as how to build power within your workplace and participate in unions.

“Everything we talked about (in the training) were things we didn’t even know and everyone should know it so we don’t get abused.”

— Dexter Williams, trainee

INSIGHTS

As a demonstration project, this initiative generated insights that can advance our understanding of the worker training approaches needed to equip people for success in the rapidly changing labor market.

THE 21ST CENTURY LABOR MARKET

The trust built between pilot project participants and trainers allowed for compelling moments of sharing. Workers felt safe to speak out about their experiences with today's labor market, a first step in advocating for their rights as workers. Common themes shared by workers included:

Unstable work is common and growing across the region. Local job opportunities are becoming less stable due to automation, varying climate conditions, and employers seeking more temporary employees. This contributes to a lack of consistent quality employer openings and therefore the placement of participants in less desirable positions to meet their immediate need for employment.

Wage theft showed up in many forms for our participants - most commonly, workers would not receive mandatory rest breaks or compensation for earned paid sick time hours as required under California law. Employers would also underpay workers by excluding hours or ignoring overtime on paychecks. However, the worst form of wage theft occurred when workers did not receive any payment for hours or full days of work. This was most commonly experienced by domestic workers and day laborers; oftentimes, their undefined immigration status makes them the most vulnerable to performing work without contracts. Not getting paid what they are owed for the work they do was among the most egregious and harmful challenge for workers, pushing some to the brink of homelessness.

"Break violations were definitely happening, but in the mix of super busy shifts, you can't even think of it."

— Dexter Williams, trainee

Health and safety violations were also prevalent. Even in work settings where safety training benefits both the employer and the employee, these precautionary measures were frequently bypassed. Domestic and home care workers in particular often dealt with exposure to chemicals like pesticides and harsh cleaning agents, falls without referral to medical attention, a lack of safety equipment, and risky work assignments.

Experiences with **harassment, discrimination and workplace violence** were also shared. Participants often struggled to find any recourse from workplace violence, harassment, racial discrimination, and sexual violence. Workers reported bullying, verbal abuse, wrongful accusations, physical violence as a form of "discipline", physical altercations, favoritism, and slurs within all sectors across all four sites. One worker shared that her employer bullied her, using slurs when referring to her, and was so abusive she was eventually forced to leave her role as a cashier. Participants reported that these issues were rarely addressed as they were either perpetrated by those with power in the workplace or were ignored and accepted as part of the work culture.

"An employer hit my colleague's hands because she felt she wasn't cleaning the dishes properly. This same employer asked us to clean an outdoor area of her home in the rain. We refused to do this task because it was dangerous and she fired us on the spot."

— Alma, trainee

Retaliation, at-will employment, and immigration threats often chilled workers into silence, preventing them from speaking out about rights violations and perpetuating poor working conditions. **Immigrant workers without legal status** in particular faced discrimination, mistreatment, wage theft and a lack of accountability from employers. However, all of the above, especially retaliation, was experienced by workers regardless of status, age, skin color, or any other aspects of participants' identities.

PROGRAM DELIVERY

Project partners were intentionally selected to ensure services were tailored to their local context, in terms of cultural responsiveness and local economic factors. This was largely successful, though insights were gained regarding the program design and funding implications of participant-responsive programming, including:

Both participants and staff identified a need for **longer and more in-depth training** to properly develop workers as leaders while accounting for workers' limited free time outside of work. Relatedly, a subset of participants expressed preference for program **accessibility via Zoom, which in turn led to some engagement and learning deficits.**

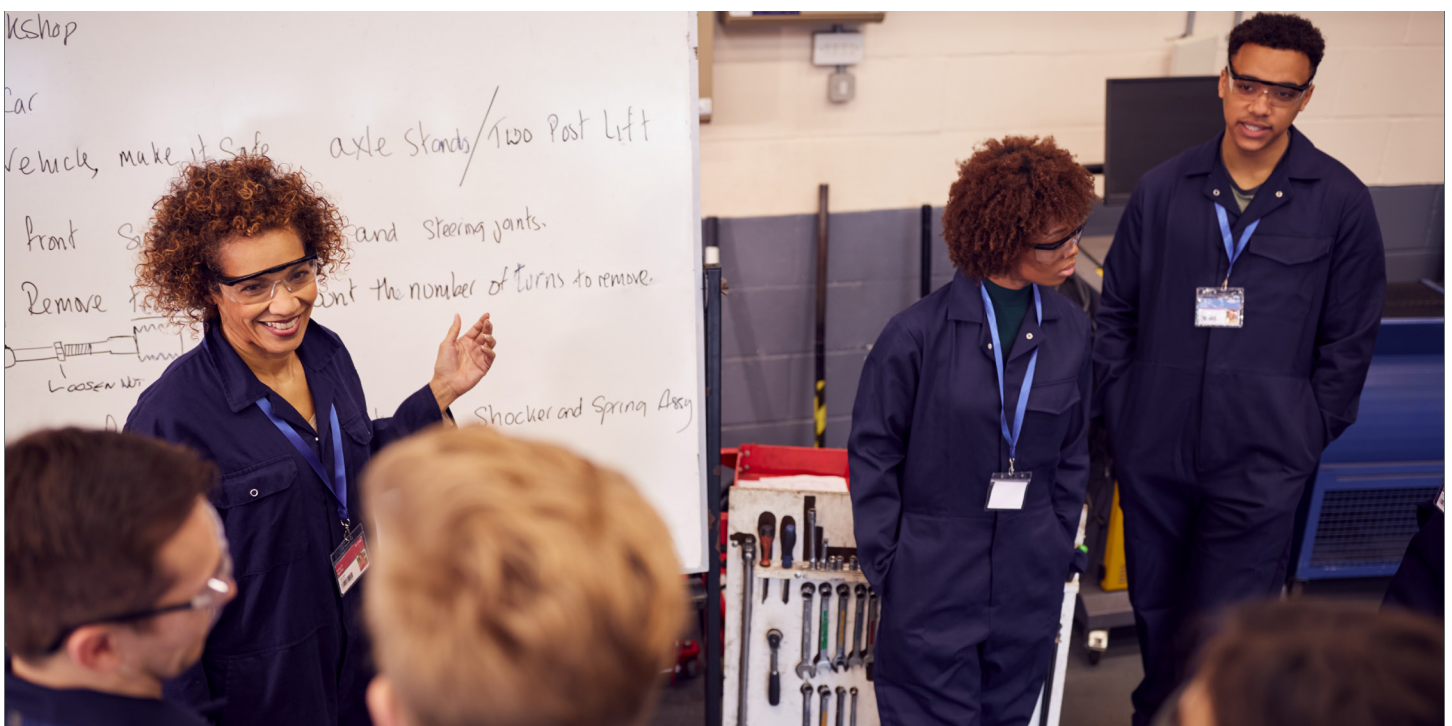
Stipends made participation possible for participants who are often excluded from accessing these skills due to economic hardship. **The need to offer stipends is a barrier to providing deeper, longer-term training.** In addition to funding constraints, some partners did not have the infrastructure to disburse stipend payments directly to participants. Disbursement was further complicated by the inclusion of workers with different immigration statuses, resulting in creative solutions needing to be developed to ensure participants received their stipends. In future program iterations, it would be beneficial to develop a more intentional strategy to disburse stipends that reduces the burden on staff at partner organizations.

"This program helps foster relationships with our local community and with nature, helps us connect to the fact that we are nature. The program also promotes our leadership, stewardship/guardianship in our communities. The financial support is key because we would not be able to access this program otherwise. It's key to continue this program because so many local participants are interested in accessing it."

— **Guadalupe, trainee**

The inclusion of newcomer immigrants also increased our awareness of obstacles they face in learning to navigate new systems in a new country and in a new language. For example, most of the participants at the San Francisco site were immigrants who speak Spanish, Tagalog, or Chinese. In Sonoma County, participants spoke Spanish and/or an indigenous language such as Mixteco. Offering **interpretation and translation of materials and instruction into multiple languages** proved to be both crucial and a huge undertaking as interpretation and translation services requires additional funding, staff capacity and pre-planning.

Supports such as food, childcare, proper scheduling to maximize attendance, delivering the training in hybrid models to increase participation, and ensuring materials are written with accessible language and across educational levels were all also identified as important program components to enable participants to succeed in the training, which required additional time and resources from project partners to plan and deliver.



PARTICIPANT IMPACTS

While this demonstration project did not serve a large enough sample of participants to produce quantitative impact data, survey results and participant and staff feedback across the four sites revealed some potential positive impacts of this approach. In particular, we heard a range of **indications that participants felt a stronger sense of agency, self-confidence and the ability to advocate for themselves** when needed—critical tools to successfully navigate the 21st century economy. Examples of this include:

Increased awareness of safety guidelines and the prevention of common injuries, specifically targeting industries that SOMCAN members work in (retail, hotels, homecare), which led to some trainees addressing violations in their workplaces.

“Now that I have more information, I try to talk more with my employers about our rights and many employers have thanked me because there are rights that they do not know about as employers at home.”

– Marta, trainee

“This program gives us ideas of how to better do our jobs with local employers, help create safety plans for the land we tend to at work, make pitches to employers to ensure their spaces are protected and therefore ours.”

– Sebastian, trainee

Increased understanding of basic labor history, including why and how certain protections were fought for and won. This demonstrated to participants the power of unions and that taking collective action is what is needed to make changes.

“Now I understand my rights as a worker, I feel confident knowing that we have these rights and that we can ask for help when something unfair happens to us at work”

– Anonymous trainee

Participants felt **empowered to be their own advocates and organize**, now knowing where they can go to address concerns in the workplace and access the resources they need.

“This program improves our power at work in its entirety. In the past, I have had people who do not want to pay you or want to pay you less. Now I feel a little stronger because I know more information about what is a fair payment and how to advocate for my payment.”

– Mayel, trainee

Participants got involved in policy change efforts, helping organize in support of domestic workers' rights campaigns led by partner coalitions. Multiple other participants connected with renters' rights and tax equity campaigns.



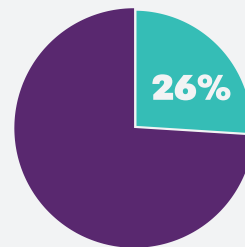
PROVIDER INSIGHTS

In addition to individual impacts with participants, we learned valuable insights about the readiness of workforce training programs to integrate this type of model and what support would be helpful to increase their readiness.

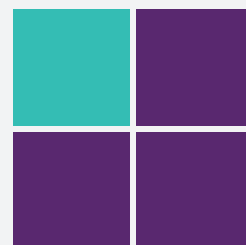
Our survey of 74 workforce organizations across the nine county San Francisco Bay Area focused on the degree to which workforce programs are incorporating worker rights and job quality programming into their strategic plan and service offerings. Although **relatively few responding organizations report barriers to including workers' rights and job quality topics in their strategic plans, less than a third report including each of the topics:**

- Twenty-six (26) percent of responding organizations reported including “employee or workers’ rights” information in their strategic plans, with barriers including workers’ “lack of funding to pay for staff professional development or guest speakers” and the topic not being “aligned to funder’s strategy”.
- One quarter of respondents reported that they include job quality standards in their strategic plan, with the top reported barrier being “lack of knowledge/confidence in teaching job quality standards.”

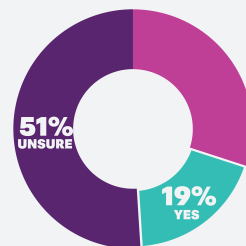
To examine the impact of funding sources on organizations’ approaches to workers’ rights and job quality standards, the survey also asked whether these topics are included in funding reporting. Regarding workers’ rights standards, 19% of respondents indicated “Yes” and 51% are “unsure” or reported that the organization did not include “employee or workers’ rights standards in its funding reporting”. **Only one in five respondents indicated they are “required or encouraged to submit job quality metrics of placed participants” by funders.** City, county, and state funding and grants are most frequently indicated as requiring or encouraging workers’ rights information in grant or funding reports. Independent of funding sources, 38% of respondents reported tracking the quality of job placements across demographics.



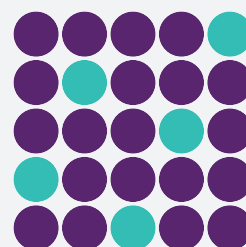
Surveyed organizations including “employee or workers’ rights” in their strategic plans.



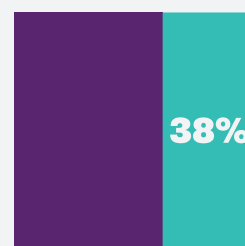
Respondents that include job quality standards in their strategic plans.



Respondents including “employee or workers’ rights standards in its funding reporting”.



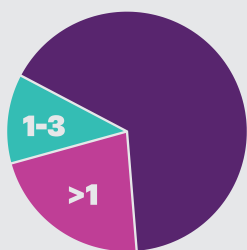
Respondents “required or encouraged to submit job quality metrics of placed participants” by funders.



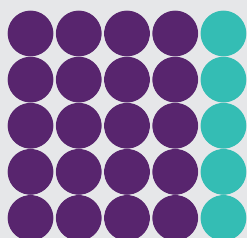
Respondents tracking the quality of job placements across demographics.

Learning: Organizational Size Differences

Smaller organizations were more likely to report including both workers' rights and job quality courses in their training curriculums. There was a slight difference in responses for the inclusion of workers' rights among small and larger organizations (52% versus 50%). However, there was a larger difference in responses for job quality, with smaller organizations being 20% more likely (39% versus 19%) to report incorporating such training than larger organizations.



Average hours spent
"teaching or discussing
worker's rights" per month.



Respondents spending
one to three hours a
month "teaching or
discussing job quality."

The variation in prioritization of worker's rights and job quality standards across organizations was also seen in responses to questions about the provision of related services to participants: **43% of responding organizations indicated that they include worker's rights information in training curriculum, and 34% of respondents report including job quality in training curriculum.**

Regarding "dosage" measured in a month's worth of programming:

- Twenty-two (22%) percent of organizations providing worker's rights training reported spending one to three hours per month "teaching or discussing employee or workers' rights". The next largest group, at 12%, report spending less than one hour a month on the topic.
- One in five respondents reported spending one to three hours "teaching or discussing job quality" and 19% spend three or more hours on the topic per month. Job quality topics most frequently reported by responding organizations were "safety and health at work," "learning opportunities," "healthcare benefits," and "living wage/earnings."

When asked what support organizations need to achieve their goals concerning workers' rights and job quality, staff training arose as a particularly important need. This was especially true for responding organizations serving "Homeless/housing unstable individuals" with 85% indicating needing "Staff Training" help to achieve workers' rights outcomes.

Curricula development was the second most frequently cited need, with information systems and evaluation support also listed as resources needed to increase job quality outcomes for participants. A third of all responding orgs serving "Black," "Latine," or "Homeless/Housing" unstable individuals, indicated need in these areas.

We were heartened to see the needs for staff training and curricula development were organically addressed in some pilot sites:

- Case management staff at one partner organization reported a new ability to aid workers in rights violation claims. This included gaining familiarity with the agencies and processes needed to file complaints and are more empowered to act as resources for clients who call in to obtain services during an active workplace health and safety crisis.
- Project partners also created curricula tailored to the local context, and in some cases translated those materials into additional languages, laying the groundwork for refining and scaling this approach with the tools needed by workforce providers.



NEXT STEPS/RECOMMENDATIONS

This pilot project and accompanying survey advance our collective understanding of the challenges systematically excluded workers face in attaining high quality jobs, and opportunities for workforce training programs to better equip participants to succeed in the 21st century labor market. Recommendations to reduce access barriers to workforce training include:

Language access: Hire interpreters and translators or compensate in-house staff who take on interpretation and translation for the program.

Childcare: Provide childcare that enables parents with young children to attend training sessions.

Transportation: Cover the cost of travel to ease the financial hardship incurred by additional travel to and from job training locations.

Meals: Provide meals so participants can connect over food and feel nourished—especially important if a program is attended after a long day at work.

Meals: Provide meals so participants can connect over food and feel nourished—especially important if a program is attended after a long day at work.

Responsive scheduling: Offer training sessions in the evenings or on weekends to increase program access for prospective participants, most of whom are already employed to some degree, often in jobs with little scheduling flexibility.

Paid training: Many workers do not benefit from stable work schedules, and they might have to miss or decline work to attend. Offering stipends for participation lessens the burden of missing out on paid work.

We also learned that **worker's rights education can be a transformative pairing with workforce development**. It can equip excluded workers to advocate for the creation of and placement into quality jobs. We saw that workers who become aware of their rights and feel confident that the skills acquired through workforce development programs will lead to job placement, they are motivated to join in advocacy with other workers and organizations. For that reason, **it is important that this approach is offered through partnerships anchored in the community and organizing work**, so workers can not only learn about their rights and get skilled up, but also connect with and be supported by others advocating for rights in the workplace.

Additional recommendations for next steps in advancing this work:

- Develop a meaningful, scalable way to track the impacts of this training on participants beyond anecdotal stories.
- Refine, translate, formalize and share program curricula and materials.
- Create a tool to track and publicize employer job quality, including but not limited to pay and benefits.

ReWork the Bay and our partners are now planning the next phase of this work, which will include identifying impact metrics, formalizing curricula and scaling this model. If you are interested in learning more and exploring partnerships to advance this work, please contact Brianna Rogers (brogers@sff.org) or visit www.ReWorktheBay.org.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to our partners for your leadership and support with this project:

CA Domestic Workers' Coalition | Local Adaptation Partner | cadomesticworkers.org

Chicago Jobs Council | Curriculum Prototype | cjc.net

Chicagoland Workforce Funder Alliance | Curriculum Prototype | chicagoworkforcefunders.org

East Bay Alliance for a Sustainable Economy | Community Labor Partnership | workingeastbay.org

Housing Rights Committee | Partner Organization | hrssf.org

Jobs with Justice San Francisco | Community Labor Partnership | jwjsf.org

La Colectiva & Day Labor Program | Partner Organization | missionaction.org/hire-workers/the-womens-collective

North Bay Jobs with Justice | Community Labor Partnership | northbayjobswithjustice.org

Resilience Works | High Road Employer | resilienceforce.org

SF Office of Economic and Workforce Development | Partner Organization | oewd.org

San Francisco's Workforce Development Board | Partner Organization | oewd.org/workforce

San Jose Conservation Corps | Partner Organization | sjcccs.org

San Jose's Workforce Development Board and Job Center | Partner Organization | work2future.org

Santa Clara Wage Theft Coalition | Local Adaptation Partner | wagetheftcoalition.org

Santa Rosa Junior College | Partner Organization | santarosa.edu

South of Market Community Action Network | Partner Organization | somcan.org

The Labor Occupational Health Program at UC Berkeley | Local Adaptation Partner | lohp.berkeley.edu

UC Berkeley Labor Center | Survey Research Partner | laborcenter.berkeley.edu

University of Illinois School of Labor and Employment Relations | Curriculum Prototype | ler.illinois.edu

Veggielution | Partner Organization | veggielution.org

Work2Future | Partner Organization | work2future.org