

# Evaluating the lived experiences of male Day Laborers in Oakland, California through the development, administration, and analysis of a self-efficacy assessment



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## Background

- The National Day Labor Survey in 2004 reported there are 256,000 Day Workers in the USA and 40,000 in California alone<sup>1</sup>
- Oakland** has the **highest incidence** of day labor **workplace injury** in the state: one out of every three day laborers suffered a workplace injury<sup>2</sup>
- 75% of day laborers in California reported that they find their occupations to be dangerous, while 82% of day laborers in Oakland find their work to be dangerous<sup>2</sup>
- Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI) revealed an **upward** trend in Latino worker deaths and injuries
  - Latinos only account for 36% of the workforce
- In contrast, **overall downward** trends prevailed both statewide and nationally<sup>3</sup>

## Community Partners

- WorkSafe-** California-based organization dedicated to eliminating all types of workplace hazards through advocacy and raising awareness
- Centro Legal-** comprehensive legal services agency protecting and advancing the rights of immigrant, low-income and Latino communities through bilingual legal representation, education, and advocacy.
- Street Level Health Project-** Oakland-based nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the health and well-being of underserved, urban, immigrant communities in the Bay Area.
  - Oakland Workers' Collective-** a Day Labor center



## Methodology

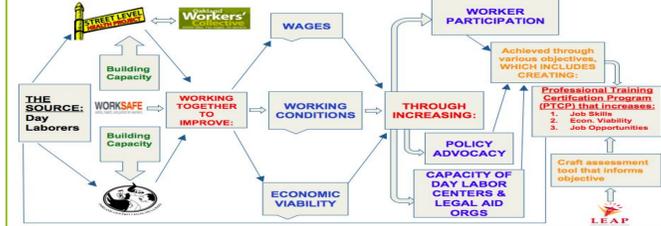
This project utilized a mixed methods approach using both quantitative and qualitative methods. A total of 62 day laborers were interviewed. We used Qualtrics as our data analysis tool. Within the questionnaire, we integrated the ACE questions and worker safety questions in order to quantifiably measure childhood trauma and worker violations. Lastly, we included strength-based questions to qualitatively understand worker perceptions of self and environment.

## Project Description & Goals

### Project Description

Our project contributes to an innovative pilot model between the above three organizations who are working collaboratively to effect broad systemic change and provide direct services for the community of day laborers and their families.

In collaboration with our community partners, we developed a questionnaire aimed at identifying day laborer stressors including childhood trauma and working conditions.



## Study Goals

- Develop a questionnaire to assess Oakland Day Laborers lived experiences relating to: encountered traumas during migration, social support, resources, demographics, strength based questions, childhood traumas, work health & safety risks, and injuries in the workplace.
- Administer 100 self-efficacy assessments that comprise of the day labor community in Oakland.
- Evaluate results of assessment and present findings that can be implemented into the "Safe, Secure, and Sustainable Jobs for Day Laborers" project collaboration between Street Level Health, Worksafe, and Centro Legal de la Raza to reach the following project objectives:
  - To support and promote the economic stability of the day labor community.
  - To provide job development resources for day laborers, organize day laborers, and build a policy reform campaign.
  - To create a Professional Certification Training program that will allow workers to receive training on employment, labor, and workplace conditions. The trainings will incorporate hazard specifics for various industries that day laborers work in such as constructions, transportation, gardening, and warehousing (these are the highest hazard industries) in conjunction with workers rights & policy advocacy trainings.

## Findings

### Occupational Safety & Worker Violations

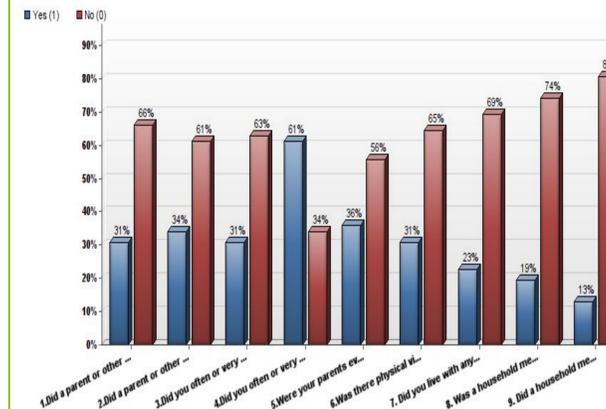
- 56% reported being injured on the job
- 44% reported reported getting medical help however
- 75% paid their own medical expenses



## Findings continued

### ACE (Adverse Childhood Experiences) Questionnaire

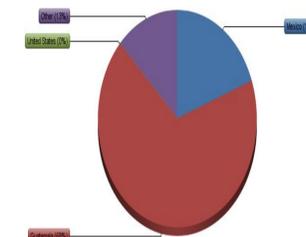
- A nationally recognized questionnaire that measures Adverse Childhood Experiences
- ACE scores indicate increased risks for issues such as:
  - Chronic Diseases** (hypertension, diabetes, eating disorder, COPD, etc.)
  - Depression** and other mental health concerns
  - Substance Abuse** (alcoholism, tobacco use, drug addiction, etc.)
- The most common shared trauma experience among workers was question number 4 with 61% of respondents answering "Yes" to the question:
  - "Did you often or very often feel that ...You didn't have enough to eat? Didn't have a place to sleep? Didn't have clothing to wear?"



### Day Laborer Demographics

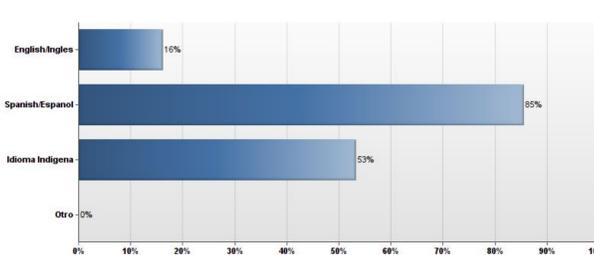
#### Origins

- 68% from Guatemala
- 19% from Mexico



#### Language

- 85% of respondents speak Spanish
- 53% spoke an indigenous language or dialect



## Conclusions

### Lessons Learned

Our findings confirm that Day laborers are a high risk population because of daily exposure to low wages, employer abuse, lack of work opportunities/unstable working conditions, health problems, family life, barriers due to immigration or documentation status, and encounters with law enforcement. Despite the fact day laborers are covered under certain health & safety and wage laws, much of the coverage is theoretical rather than practical. According to the 'Dying at Work' report completed by our WorkSafe partner, the Division of Occupational Health and Safety (DOSH) responsible for enforcing laws to protect the health and safety in California, lacks funding, resources, and is extremely understaffed. These same issues can also be identified in the Department of Labor Standards Enforcement; an agency responsible for enforcing wage theft and retaliation labor rights.<sup>4</sup> It is this combination, the lack of effective interventions for day laborers coupled with severely under resourced enforcement agencies that results in the abuse of this population.

This collaborative project between SLHP, WorkSafe, & Centro Legal, seeks to identify best strategies to address wage theft & hazardous working conditions affecting day laborers, while safeguarding existing protections, improving enforcement, & pushing for necessary policy change.<sup>5</sup>

### Recommendations

#### Day Laborer Suggestions for Improvement

- Workers mentioned they would like to receive more outreach days during the week with food, fruits, water to drink on hot days, and coffee on the days it's cold.
- Many day laborers mentioned that learning English has helped them overcome obstacles and recommended that SLHP offer more English classes on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday for 1.5 hours.

#### Community Partner Suggestions for Improvement

- SLHP is looking to expand the mental health services offered at the clinic to better address the unique physical, emotional, and social needs of day laborers and has suggested using the international version of the ACE questionnaire

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