



COOPERATION AND PARTNERSHIP TO

Identify and address Labour Standard Issues on Fishing Vessels

Speaker: Meli Raicebe (FIJI)



Presentation Flow

WHAT'S ON THE AGENDA

- Background of Fiji's Tuna Sector
- Labour Standard issues and needs
- What approach have we taken to address this?
- **Outcomes:** What have worked, what has not worked? (key lessons learnt)
- The next steps and conclusion



FIJI'S TUNA SECTOR



- Fiji Tuna Sector comprises of a domestic Tuna Fishery. Meaning we only register and licence vessels that are Fiji owned have established entities in Fiji.
- Fiji Tuna fleet (average of 90 vessels) operations is solely characterised by longline vessels.
- Sizes range from less than 20 meters fresh vessels to a high of 40 + meter frozen vessels.
- Source of our fishing crew are from China, Japan, Korea and Fiji for Captains and fishing masters with crew being sourced from China, Indonesia, Vietnam, Kiribati and Fiji.
- Fiji's concerns and implementation of labour standards is based on the complexities that characterises Fiji's context of being a coastal state, a flag state, a port state and a hub for most vessels that operation within the Western and Central Pacific Ocean.

Labour Standard Issues and Concerns:

HEALTH AND SAFETY RISK

It is considered one of the most hazardous occupations. Crew members face risk such as extreme weather conditions, long periods of being out at sea, handling of heavy equipment and exposure to chemicals and harmful substances.

LACK OF PROPER TRAINING AND GEARS

Fishing vessels do not prioritise crew training and the provision of protective gears.

EXPLOITATIVE PRACTICES

Crew members are subjected to exploitative practices, such as debt bondage, human trafficking, forced labour or physical and verbal abuse.

LOW WAGES

Many fishing vessels pay low wages, sometimes below the minimum wage, this is faced in small developing countries and countries that are sources of crews for fishing vessels. Additional workers may not receive fair compensation for their long hours of work and dangers surrounding their work.

LONG WORKING HOURS

Fishing vessels often operate 24/7, with crew members having to work extensive long shifts without proper rest periods. This leads to exhaustion, reduced alertness, and increase accident risk.

POOR LIVING CONDITIONS

Crew members face overcrowding, substandard living conditions including cramped cabins, limited sanitation facilities, and inadequate access to fresh food and clean water.

Administration and Enforcement concerns!

✓ NEED FOR WIDER COOPERATION AND COORDINATION

Inter-agency collaboration is pinnacle bilateral between states.

✓ NEED FOR POLITICAL SUPPORT

Due to the complexities of labour issues, Political support and backing needs to be fostered.

✓ LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY SUPPORT

There is substantial work needed in the development and implementation of legislative and policy guidelines to increase awareness and implementation.

✓ ENFORCEMENT

There is still work needed within the enforcement and compliance space in the identification and course of action to be taken if poor labour and crewing standards is identified.



What approach have we taken to address this?

- Due to limitations on funding and overall recognition of the need for an improved implementation on labour standards, we have worked toward achieving decisive action through broader partnership and collaboration.
- Worked with organisations such as FFA, IMCS network and ILO in the development of national policies and targeted work programs.
- Recognition of the need to involve our broader stakeholders such as the private sector and unions that would help build the recognition and protection of labours on board fishing vessels.
- Strengthened our international commitment as members to the Cape Town Agreement.
- Implemented mandatory insurance cover that protects crew on board vessels
- Bilateral and partnership agreement with countries that have sourced our crews.

Outcomes

WHAT HAVE WORKED?

- Broader recognition of the need to address Labour and Crewing standards
- Timeline for legislation and policy support is well underway and will strengthen the implementation work.
- Increased in collaboration from partners is still a strength for administrations such as Fiji in recognition of internal limitations.
- Crew and labours on board fishing vessel understand the progress of work and now becoming vocal towards raising awareness on the matter.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Extensive work needed in collating the work of different line agencies to help the progress of a collective and holistic approach.
- Support the limitations of small administrations
- Labour standards and implementation to be strengthened and boosted on a global scale.
- Need for information exchange to shared experience and best practices.
- The complexities of Labour Standards calls for decisive actions toward a collective approach.

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CONCLUSION & WAY FORWARD.

Labour standards on fishing vessels is a multifaceted, multi-jurisdictional problem involving a wide range of states and non-state actors.

FANSICO BLAHA