



Pacific
Community
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Pacific handbook for human rights, gender equity and social inclusion in tuna industries



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Pacific handbook for

human rights, gender equity and social inclusion

in tuna industries

Kate Barclay, Aliti Vunisea, Megan Streeter,
Senoveva Mauli and Natalie Makhoul



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Noumea, New Caledonia, 2023

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About this handbook

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Background

The initial idea for the Pacific Handbook for Human Rights, Gender Equity and Social Inclusion in Tuna Industries was raised during the development of the 2nd edition of the Pacific Handbook for Gender Equity and Social Inclusion in Coastal Fisheries and Aquaculture. The significance and importance of the Pacific's tuna industry for the fulfilment of Pacific people's economic, social and environmental rights in light of the Blue Growth debate was emphasised and a need was expressed by fisheries and social scientists to develop a similar handbook that provides guidance and practical support for tuna industry stakeholders. The lack of advice guided by human rights and knowledge in a sector that has been associated by the nature of the work with risk, danger and lack of transparency stood out. It became clear that a tuna-specific handbook needs to focus on human rights in addition to the gender and social inclusion dimensions while also pointing out the interplay of gender equality as a human right and how human rights dimensions touch on social inclusion.

Purpose of the handbook and target audience

This handbook is designed as a learning guide (1) to improve knowledge and awareness and (2) to provide practical ideas and approaches towards the application of gender equity, social inclusion and human rights (GESI/HR) to a mixed target audience.

The primary audience is Pacific national fisheries agencies and other public or semi-public and intergovernmental institutions that can, through their work, positively shape the Pacific's tuna industry towards a more equitable, inclusive, and human rights-based orientation. While portfolios for the tuna industry sit mainly with the offshore divisions in the respective Pacific Ministries of Fisheries, the handbook aims to provide practical guidance to oceanic fisheries managers, scientists, officers, economists and legal experts in these divisions. The overlapping nature of tuna fisheries with small-scale coastal fisheries is also acknowledged in this handbook (Module 6), and thus staff from coastal fisheries divisions may also benefit from this handbook.

In addition, this handbook acknowledges the role the private sector plays by uplifting the idea of a shared responsibility of private and public players to ensure that the Pacific's GESI and HR commitments and internationally recognised standards are applied in legal and policy frameworks as well as in business practices. This handbook provides angles, case studies, and information that is directly linked to how the private sector can apply GESI/HR lenses in business operations.

As a secondary audience, training and education institutions are targeted; these include the maritime colleges and the University of the South Pacific Marine Institute and the broader non-governmental and civil society organisations that advocate, raise awareness of and provide technical assistance to government agencies on matters that concern GESI and HR in the broader oceanic fisheries scene.

Structure and concept

This handbook is designed to provide applications support through tools, case studies, examples, best practices, tips, discussions and ideas, while also providing information, knowledge and research findings to increase understanding and awareness. An important aim of this handbook is to make it practical by tailoring GESI/HR concepts to suit the tuna industry's nature, and thus practitioners can pick it up and apply it in their daily work.

The handbook covers key thematic areas in eight modules ranging from introductory content on concepts and definitions to GESI and HR issues in various aspects of offshore and onshore tuna activities, management and science as well as stakeholder engagement processes. Additionally, Module 9 provides a case study for Fiji, highlighting an inside perspective of issues around labour conditions and documented human rights violations while pointing out challenges and opportunities to integrate GESI/HR lenses in the country context.

The handbook modules are designed as stand-alone units with integrated tools to enable and simplify content-specific learning and applications for practitioners. However, the handbook is an integrated learning tool with important links and references between modules. First-time users are therefore encouraged to work with the whole handbook – in particular the introductory modules – to build on the foundational basics as a starting point.

I. Introduction – the basics



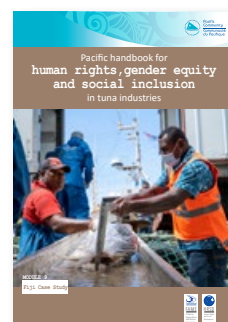
II. Site-specific HR and GESI issues – from the sea to the shore



III. Broader HR and GESI relevance



IV. The national scale



Glossary

Debt bondage is the most common form of slavery today. People trapped in poverty acquire a debt and are forced to work to pay it off. For example, a fishing crew on a very low wage might be required to pay for their airfares between home and their vessel, and deductions for expenses related to their work, such as rain gear and rubber boots.

Empowerment is about people controlling their lives through their skills, having the ability to solve problems, making decisions for themselves, being self-reliant and believing in themselves. Empowerment can come from recognition and respect within families. For example, when husbands and wives work together for the mutual benefit of the family, and allow for shifting roles of ‘breadwinner’ and ‘caregiver’, then both may be empowered. Empowerment can come from recognition and respect within tuna companies. If workers who have been abused are able to raise their grievances, receive support and have the problem addressed, they are empowered.

Forced labour: “Work that is performed involuntarily and under the menace of any penalty. It refers to situations in which persons are coerced to work through the use of violence or intimidation, or by more subtle means such as manipulated debt, retention of identity papers or threats of denunciation to immigration authorities”.¹ Indicators of forced labour are: high vulnerability; deception; physical abuse; intimidation and threats; abusive working conditions; retention of identity documents; and excessive overtime.

Gender: the sex of a person as male or female is biological. But a person’s gender is their **identity**, their sense of themselves as a man or a woman. Gender identity is learned by children as they grow up as part of their culture, through norms, behaviours and roles that are assigned to girls and boys, men and women (and other genders, such as fa’afafine in Samoa, vaka sa lewa lewa in Fiji, palopa in PNG, akava’ine in Rarotonga, fakaleiti in Tonga and fakafine in Niue).² **Norms** are informal social rules about how people should behave. Gender norms are the accepted attributes and characteristics of being a woman or a man (ideas of how men and women should be and act) at this point in history for this society or community. Norms change over time, and they vary between cultural groups.

Gendered division of labour: the allocation of different jobs or types of work to women and men. For example, men doing fishing and women doing processing or marketing activities, or men working outside the house for cash and women doing housework and work related to care of family members.

Human rights: “Human rights are rights we have simply because we exist as human beings; they are not granted by any state. These universal rights are inherent to us all, regardless of nationality, sex, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, language, or any other status. They range from the most fundamental – the right to life – to those that make life worth living, such as the rights to food, education, work, health, and liberty.”³

Table 1. Characteristics of human rights

Characteristics	Definition
Universal	Human rights are universal, regardless of political, economic or cultural systems.
Inalienable	Human rights are inherent in all human beings and cannot be transferred from an individual or group except with due process and in specific circumstances.
Equal and non-discriminatory	The Universal Declaration on Human Rights states: “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.” Freedom from discrimination ensures this equality.
Interdependent	Human rights are interdependent, as the level of enjoyment of any one right is dependent on the level of realisation of the other rights.
Indivisible	All human rights are equally important, and the improvement of any right cannot be at the expense of the realisation of any other right.

Source: Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. (2022). What are human rights? <https://www.ohchr.org/en/what-are-human-rights>

Human trafficking: “The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.”⁴

1 International Labour Organization. (2021). What is forced labour, modern slavery and human trafficking? Retrieved December 7, 2021, from <https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/forced-labour/definition/lang-en/index.html>

2 Strong, K. (2022). Why western gender labels don’t work for Pasifika. Pacific Media Network, 9 August, <https://pacificmedianetwork.com/articles/western-gender-labels-dont-work-for-pasifika-1>.

3 United Nations. (n.d.). What are Human Rights? Retrieved December 7, 2021, from <https://www.ohchr.org/en/what-are-human-rights>

4 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children (Article 3, paragraph (a)), Pub. L. No. Resolution 55/25 (2003). Retrieved from <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/organized-crime/intro/UNTOC.html>

Slavery is the severe exploitation of other people for personal or commercial gain ... From the outside, it can look like a normal job. But people are being controlled – via violence or threats, or through being forced into inescapable debt, or their employer may hold their passport and threaten that the employee will be deported. People fall into slavery through trying to find work that enables them and their families to escape poverty or insecurity and improve their lives.⁵ Slavery includes forced labour, human trafficking and debt bondage.

Social exclusion is the other side of inclusion, it is when people are unable to join in the majority social system or enjoy its rights and privileges. Usually social exclusion happens because of poverty or if people belong to a social group that is discriminated against.

Social identity is who a person is, in terms of the groups to which they belong. Examples of social identities are gender (male, female, other gender); age (young, middle-aged, old); physical condition (with a disability, with poor or good health); residency and citizenship status (indigenous, local, migrant); race or ethnicity (Pacific Islander, Indian, Chinese, European, mixed race); property (landless, landowner); caste (high caste, low caste, commoner); sexual orientation (e.g. heterosexual, gay, lesbian); and relationship status (married, single, widowed, separated).

Social inclusion, according to the World Bank, is the process of improving the terms on which individuals and groups take part in society – improving the ability, opportunity, and dignity of those disadvantaged on the basis of their identity.

Unconscious bias is the discriminatory views, beliefs and attitudes that we have towards others that we are unaware of. It becomes embedded in our thinking processes through social and cultural messages surrounding us in our childhood and daily lives. It causes us to stereotype persons and situations. We might assume women or men are more skilled at, interested in, or suited to a certain task or profession based on their sex. We may believe women pay more attention to detail and are more patient. We may believe that men are greater risk takers and ‘naturally’ better leaders.

⁵ Anti-slavery. (n.d.). What is modern slavery? Retrieved December 7, 2021, from <https://www.antislavery.org/slavery-today/modern-slavery/>



Pacific handbook for human rights, gender equity and social inclusion in tuna industries



MODULE 1

Overview of human rights (HR),
gender equity and social inclusion
(GESI) in tuna industries

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Pacific handbook for

human rights, gender equity and social inclusion

in tuna industries

Module 1: Overview of human rights (HR), gender equity and social inclusion (GESI) in tuna industries

Kate Barclay, Josephine Kalsuak, Natalie Makhoul, Aliti Vunisea



Noumea, New Caledonia, 2023

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This handbook is about human rights, gender equity, and social inclusion in Pacific tuna industries. This first module introduces the key concepts and terms, as a foundation for understanding issues raised in the following modules. It is divided into three main parts:

1. Overview of human rights (HR) and tuna industries
2. Overview of gender equity (GE) and tuna industries
3. Overview of social inclusion (SI) and tuna industries.

Then there are a couple of tools at the end of this module showing in a direct and practical way what needs to happen to protect human rights in tuna industries.

Finally, there is a list of international commitments to HR, GE and SI made by Pacific Island countries.

Key points

- The reason we have tuna industries is for the benefit of the people of the Pacific.
- Progressing human rights, gender equity and social inclusion is an essential part of building socially sustainable tuna industries that equitably benefit Pacific Island people today and for generations to come.
- Gender equality and social inclusion are fundamental human rights.¹ Equity is a principle that helps us work towards the goal of equality (see Figure 1.5). In this module we focus on gender equity.
- Social inequalities hold back social, political and economic development.
- Enabling everyone involved in tuna industries to enjoy their human rights will boost the gains in health, education, food security, employment and livelihoods that flow from tuna resources.

Industrial fishing methods in the Pacific²

Purse seine

Mainly skipjack and small yellowfin are caught by purse seine gear. Most catch is for canning. About 75% of the tuna catch in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPO) region is by purse seine gear, about 1.9 million tonnes in 2009. Most of the purse seine catch is taken within 5° of the equator.



Figure 1.1 Purse seine vessel and gear

¹ International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966); International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966).

² The text and graphics in this section have been sourced from the Pacific Community website: <https://oceanfish.spc.int/en/tuna-fisheries/fishing-methods>.

Pole-and-line

Mainly skipjack and small yellowfin tuna are caught by pole-and-line gear. Most catch is for canning or producing a dried product. About 7% of the tuna catch in the WCPO region is by pole-and-line gear, about 147,000 tonnes in 2009. In the 1980s several Pacific Island countries had fleets of these vessels, but most no longer operate due to competition with the more productive purse seine gear.

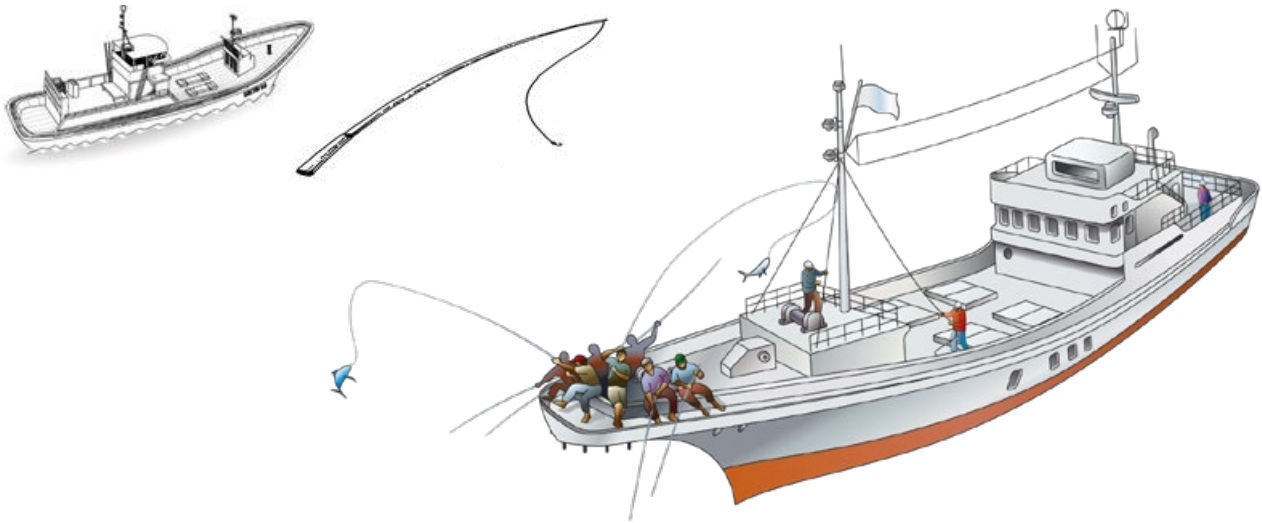


Figure 1.2 Pole-and-line vessel and gear

Longline

Most tuna caught by longliners are large size yellowfin, bigeye and albacore tuna. The prime yellowfin and bigeye are often exported fresh to overseas markets. Most of the albacore is for canning. About 10% of the tuna catch in the WCPO region is by longline gear, about 240,000 tonnes in 2009. There are two major types of longliners: (1) relatively large vessels with mechanical freezing equipment (often based outside the Pacific Islands), and (2) smaller vessels that mostly use ice to preserve fish and are typically based at a port in the Pacific Islands.

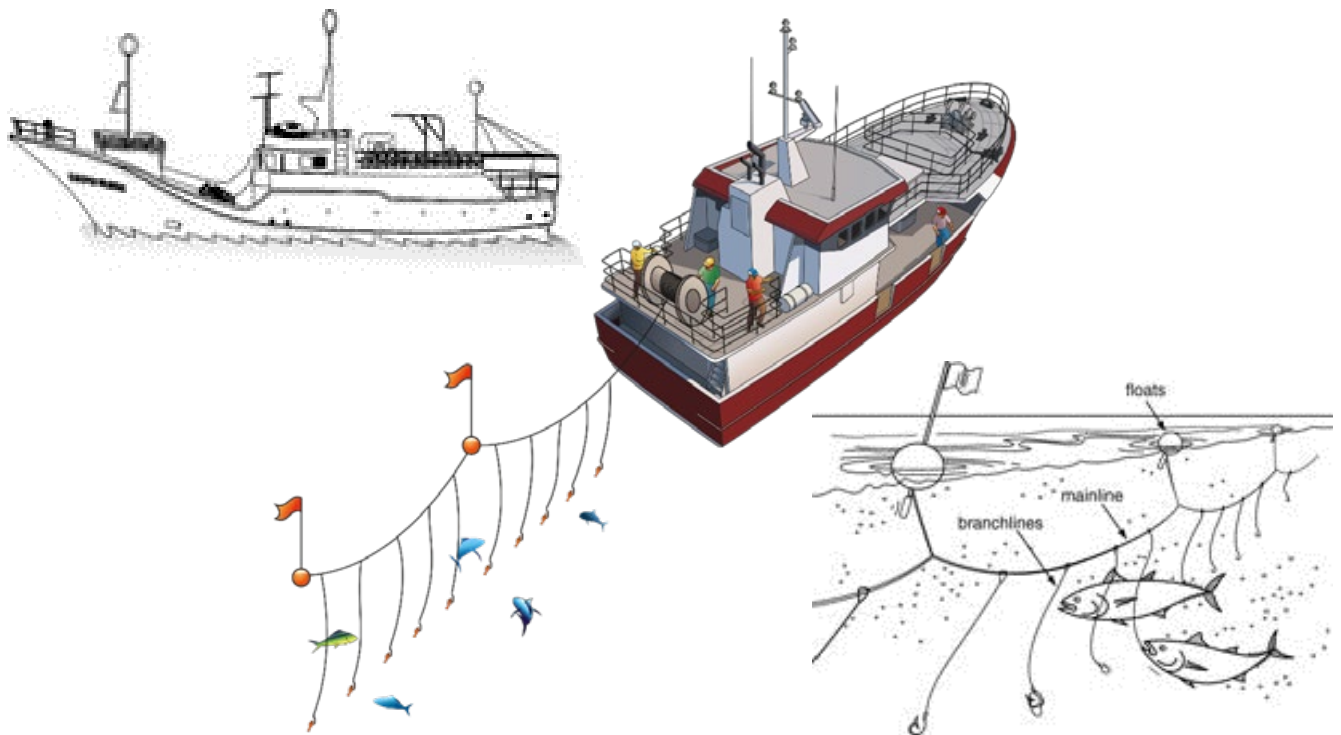


Figure 1.3 Longline vessel and gear

Troll

Large-scale trolling targets albacore tuna for canning. Gear types other than the three listed above are responsible for about 13% of tuna catch in the WCPO. Large-scale trolling by US vessels is an important part of this. It is carried out in the cool water to the south and north of the Pacific Islands region. Trolling in the south results in about 5,000 tonnes of albacore tuna annually.

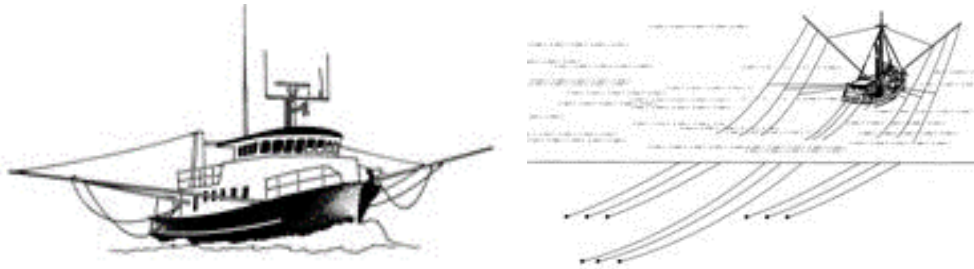


Figure 1.4 Troll vessel and gear



Social (or human) dimensions of tuna industries

Tuna is a vitally important resource for Pacific Island countries– bringing in revenue to governments, jobs onboard vessels, post-harvest jobs on shore, and food and livelihoods for coastal fishers and market sellers. Tuna industries are an important part of the economic mix in the Pacific – along with forestry, mining and tourism – in the context of limited private sector markets and Pacific Island countries being remote from major trade routes. For some Pacific Island Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) countries the access and license fees make up a vital source of government revenue – for Tokelau tuna fees have made up 81% of government revenue in recent years, for Kiribati 68%, Tuvalu 57% and for Marshall Islands and Federated States of Micronesia over 40%.³ In 2020 tuna industries provided nearly 23,000 jobs in FFA member countries, more than half of these in onshore processing, with the remainder in fishing and public sector fisheries management roles.⁴

The social (or human) dimensions of fisheries are their social, cultural, personal, governance and economic aspects – so:

- What are we missing when we overlook the social dynamics or human dimensions of tuna industries?
- What are those social dynamics?
- What are the benefits and risks associated with the jobs available in tuna industries?

Tuna resources constitute an important economic opportunity for Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Historically, the processes of colonialism stunted development in SIDS, and now climate change looks likely to cause the tuna resource to move out of many Pacific Island exclusive economic zones (EEZs).⁵

At the same time, industrial commercial tuna fisheries are part of the seafarer culture around port areas, which is associated with social problems around alcohol and drug use, and violence. There have also been human rights problems on some vessels, such as forced labour and unsafe work conditions.

Human rights-based approaches (HRBA) and gender equity and social inclusion (GESI) can illuminate where working environments can be made safer and people can be supported to raise their problems and participate in developing effective solutions.

HR and GESI are also important for oceanic fisheries management and the science supporting decision-making. For example, there is only a small amount of social and economic data and only basic analysis about the social and economic aspects of tuna industries, which means it is difficult to make evidence-based decisions about improving human rights and equity. Fisheries policy and the data used to inform policy, especially social and economic data, can really shape the social impacts of tuna fisheries in positive and negative ways. Taking account of gender in fisheries means discussing the varied impacts on women and men in different areas of work. Paying attention to HR and GESI throughout the policy cycle, through implementation and monitoring and evaluation practices is an important goal in itself in protecting people's rights and can also improve the social and developmental performance of fisheries.⁶ This handbook offers general pointers about the kinds of research and information needed to understand and improve social impacts in tuna industries, including monitoring and evaluation (Module 2) and mainstreaming GESI in fisheries management and science (Module 7).

3 FFA. (2020). Tuna Economic and Development Indicators 2019. FFA Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency.

4 FFA and Pacific Community. (2021). Tuna Fishery Report Card 2020. Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), Pacific Community (SPC).

5 Bell, J. D., Senina, I., Adams, T., Aumont, O., Calmettes, B., Clark, S., ... Williams, P. (2021). Pathways to sustaining tuna-dependent Pacific Island economies during climate change. *Nature Sustainability*, 4(10), 900–910. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41893-021-00745-z>

6 United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. (2011). UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Implementing the United Nations "Protect, Respect and Remedy" Framework. New York and Geneva: United Nations. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781351171922-3>

Overview of human rights and tuna industries

Definition of human rights

“Human rights are rights we have simply because we exist as human beings; they are not granted by any state. These universal rights are inherent to us all, regardless of nationality, sex, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, language, or any other status. They range from the most fundamental – the right to life – to those that make life worth living, such as the rights to food, education, work, health, and liberty.”⁷

All human beings have rights, and must respect the rights of others. In other words, having human rights does not mean we can act without regard to others. Human rights come with responsibilities. Rights and responsibilities work together. One example is that people have a right to free speech; however, they also have a responsibility to ensure that their free speech (what they say) does not hurt anybody. For example, captains on fishing vessels should not say racist things about Pacific Islander or Indonesian crew on their vessels, or sexist things about the women who come aboard. People’s duty not to kill other people is part of other people’s right to life.

Human rights are made up of entitlements and obligations. For example, people have a right to life, a right to food, a right to health. These rights have corresponding duties to be respected, protected and fulfilled. This means that from a human rights perspective there are ‘rights holders’ – individuals and their representative organisations – and ‘duty bearers’, the organisations and people responsible for protecting and enforcing human rights, usually governments. The responsibility of businesses in preventing human rights abuses has also been established at the United Nations level,⁸ and in some European countries there is legislation that companies can be held liable for failing to protect human rights. **This means that in tuna industries, fisheries management agencies, other government bodies responsible for labour rights and policing, as well as tuna fishing and processing companies are all ‘duty bearers’ with a responsibility to prevent, investigate, punish and compensate for human rights violations in tuna supply chains.**

What does ‘respect, protect and fulfil’ human rights oblige the government to do in practice?⁹

- Respect human rights: Government officials must refrain from interfering with people’s human rights (e.g. if crew who have been abused by their captain retaliate and kill the captain, they must be provided with a fair trial that takes the human rights abuses into consideration in sentencing).
- Protect human rights: Government officials must protect individuals and groups against human rights abuses from private actors or third parties (e.g. if crew on fishing vessels are being beaten, government officers must step in to stop the violence).
- Fulfil human rights: Government officials must take positive action to ensure the enjoyment of human rights (e.g. legal labour conditions on fishing vessels must be enforced by governments).

Human rights are written down in international human rights treaties, national constitutions and legislations (see Annex 1). These legal documents lay out citizens’ rights and responsibilities and the duties or obligations for governments of states that sign on to the treaties.¹⁰ They cut across priority sectors, including economic, social and cultural rights,¹¹ and political and civil rights and freedoms.

7 United Nations. (n.d.). What are Human Rights? Retrieved October 31, 2022, from <https://www.ohchr.org/en/what-are-human-rights>

8 United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. (2011). UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Implementing the United Nations “Protect, Respect and Remedy” Framework. New York and Geneva: United Nations. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781351171922-3>

9 Regional Resource Rights Team. (2017). Pacific Guide to Statistical Indicators for Human Rights Reporting. Suva, Fiji: Pacific Community.

10 Regional Resource Rights Team. (2017). Pacific Guide to Statistical Indicators for Human Rights Reporting. Suva, Fiji: Pacific Community.

11 Finkbeiner, E. M., Fitzpatrick, J., & Yadao-Evans, W. (2021). A call for protection of women’s rights and economic, social, cultural (ESC) rights in seafood value chains. Marine Policy, 128(March), 104482. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2021.104482>

Pacific island governments are making tremendous efforts to align their national legislations with international human rights standards. All Pacific Island countries have varying protections within the Bill of Rights provisions of their national constitution.^{12,13} Pacific cultures value fairness, equality, protection of the most vulnerable, helping and serving others, participation, dialogue and consensus building.¹³ These human rights values and principles are not foreign but are embedded in Pacific beliefs, laws and policies.

Types of human rights abuses existing in tuna industries

The connection between human rights and fishing rights has been written about since the 2000s, by scholars and by organisations such as the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF). For example, the FAO noted that a rights-based approach to fisheries should include the human rights of fishers around livelihoods, equitable allocation of rights to fish, and the protection of small-scale fish workers' access to resources and markets.¹⁴ Other considerations have included the freedom, well-being and dignity of all fishing people. For example, the Conservation Alliance definition of social responsibility in the seafood sector includes protecting human rights, dignity and access to resources.¹⁵ Taking a human rights-based approach to fisheries is seen as likely to lead to better and more sustainable human development outcomes.¹⁶

Human rights are sometimes abused for the purposes of commercial exploitation. That sometimes happens in seafood industries. The types of human rights abuses known to be taking place in Pacific tuna fisheries include slavery. **Modern slavery** is not the same as the old form of buying and selling human beings as European colonists did with African people in the Americas, or 'blackbirding' of people from Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. Modern slavery involves **forced labour**, **human trafficking** and **debt bondage**. Forced labour is forcing people to work by threat, for example of violence or economic harm. Human trafficking is transporting or holding people by threat, and has overlap with forced labour. Debt bondage is when people in poverty are trapped into a debt and forced to work to repay it (see the Glossary at the start of this handbook for more detailed definitions of these terms).

Human rights-based approach

We can address human rights abuses in tuna industries through taking a human rights-based approach (HRBA). HRBA means that human rights standards, principles and state obligations are placed at the centre of planning, policy, programming and practice to empower the most vulnerable people to participate in decision-making processes and hold duty bearers accountable.¹⁷ HRBA seeks to address inequalities via three principles.¹⁸

The principles of HRBA¹⁹

- Activities are based on standards to promote and protect human rights. Vulnerable and marginalised people are the focus.
- Activities respect the human rights principles of participation, accountability, non-discrimination, transparency, human dignity, empowerment and the rule of law. These principles apply to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and projects, in order to improve targeting, efficiency, effectiveness and the quality of the outcomes.
- Rights, duties, responsibilities and accountability mechanisms are promoted by developing the capacity of duty bearers to meet their obligation and of rights holders to claim their rights.

12 Pacific Community, & The United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. (2016). Human rights in the Pacific – A situational analysis. Retrieved from <http://www.spc.int/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Human-right-Pacific.pdf>

13 Pacific Community, & The United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. (2016). Human rights in the Pacific – A situational analysis. Retrieved from <http://www.spc.int/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Human-right-Pacific.pdf>

14 Charles A. (2011). Human rights and fishing rights in small-scale fisheries management. In R. S. Pomeroy & N. L. Andrew (Eds.), Small-scale fisheries management: frameworks and approaches for the developing world (pp. 59–74). CAB International. <https://doi.org/10.1079/9781845936075.0059>

15 Kittinger J. N., Te L. C. L., Allison E. H., Bennett N. J., Crowd, L. B., E. M. Finkbeine, ... T. A. Wilhelm (2017). Committing to Socially Responsible Seafood. Science, 356(6341), 912–913.

16 Charles A. (2011). Human rights and fishing rights in small-scale fisheries management. In R. S. Pomeroy & N. L. Andrew (Eds.), Small-scale fisheries management: frameworks and approaches for the developing world (pp. 59–74). CAB International. <https://doi.org/10.1079/9781845936075.0059>

17 European Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ENNHRI). (2019). Applying a Human Rights-Based Approach to Poverty Reduction and Measurement: A Guide for National Human Rights Institutions. Brussels: ENNHRI.

18 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (2015). Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries. Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication. United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Retrieved from <http://www.fao.org/docrep/field/003/ab825f/AB825F00.htm#TOC>

19 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (2017a). Exploring the human rights-based approach in the context of the implementation and monitoring of the SSF Guidelines. Retrieved from <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i6933e.pdf>



HRBA are minimum standards and can be tailored to any government or business activities.

A human rights-based approach to fisheries means:

1. enhancing the rights of fisheries-dependent people, and
2. fisheries management following human rights standards and principles.

HRBA for small-scale tuna fishers, informal processors and traders

Internationally, work has been done to articulate an HRBA for small-scale fisheries, including capture, processing and trade, in the *Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries*.²⁰ The guidelines promote rights of access to fisheries resources through governance of tenure and resource management, principles of decent work and the right to work along fishery value chains, and gender equality. There is a companion *Handbook Towards Gender-Equitable Small-Scale Fisheries Governance and Development*.²¹ See Module 6 for further discussion on HR and GESI in small-scale tuna enterprises in the Pacific.

Applying HRBA in tuna industries means placing people who are engaged in tuna industries at the centre of all decision-making processes. This means fisheries management and development should enhance the capacity of fisheries managers and tuna companies (**duty bearers**) to meet their obligations (such as safe working conditions, and fair pay for decent work) and of **rights holders** (including crew, factory workers) to make claims (such as grievances about unsafe work conditions or being underpaid). HRBA in tuna industries could also extend to the communities affected by tuna industries, for example, through pollution. In this handbook, however, we focus mainly on people working in the tuna sector.

The *UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights* (UNGPs) (2011)²² show how to apply HRBA in business contexts. These principles outline the **duty of states** to protect against human rights abuses by business enterprises and the **responsibility of business** enterprises to respect internationally recognised human rights – understood, at a minimum, as those expressed in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948) and the *ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work* (1998). The UNGPs call for companies to implement ‘human rights due diligence’, which means identifying, preventing, mitigating, and accounting for adverse human rights impacts. The four key steps of this process are: assessing actual and potential human rights impacts; integrating and acting on the findings; tracking responses; and communicating about how impacts are addressed. Companies are responsible for undertaking effective remediation of all adverse human rights impacts caused by their own activities, and also adverse human rights impacts to which they are linked through business relationships (e.g. supply chain companies), even if the company itself did not directly contribute to those impacts.

A recent study has looked at the application of HRBA and the UNGPs in seafood workplaces, identifying the legal minimum standards that have been internationally agreed.²³ Based on a review of workplace procedures to protect human rights in fish work, the study presents a list of **legally established rights and ‘duty actions’ for employers to implement, governments to oversee, and for supply chain companies to track as part of their human rights due diligence**. The paper provides a set of lists identifying issues to promote human rights in seafood workplaces (see Tool at the end of this Module).

To uphold fundamental rights in seafood workplaces, employers must provide:²⁴

- rights training for all new recruits in a language they understand
- a safe, responsive channel for workplace grievances linking into the line of command
- provisions for safe work in hazardous conditions
- safe passage for individuals choosing to leave.

20 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (2015). Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries. Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication. United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Retrieved from <http://www.fao.org/docrep/field/003/ab825f/AB825F00.htm#TOC>

21 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (2017b). Towards gender-equitable small-scale fisheries governance and development - A handbook. In support of the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication, Retrieved from <http://www.fao.org/3/i7419en/i7419EN.pdf>

22 United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. (2011). UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Implementing the United Nations “Protect, Respect and Remedy” Framework. New York and Geneva: United Nations. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781351171922-3>

23 and 24 Nakamura K., Ota Y., & Blaha F. (2022). A practical take on the duty to uphold human rights in seafood workplaces. Marine Policy, 135, 104844. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2021.104844>

Distilled list of rights to prevent forced labour in fish work:²⁵

1. Every new recruit is entitled to reach an agreement on terms prior to entering the work environment at the outset of the life–work cycle. This may be a contract or other form of agreement but never left open to discretion (by owners, supervisors or brokers). It must, at minimum, be compliant with national law for labour and safety.
2. Upon arrival, rights training for all new recruits is mandatory in a language they understand.
3. A safe, responsive channel for workplace grievances must be accessible to everyone working at the facility and must be linked into a credible and timely response by management (see box below on a safe complaints channel).
4. Clearly written terms for paying wages are to be explicit about deductions and limited to what is legal in the country of operation, or else prohibited. (Fees for equipment, ongoing service fees, and excessive deductions as typically defined by national labour are generally illegal).
5. All of the above-mentioned points are to involve and be verified by people working there themselves or their representatives in a safe and voluntary manner.

Example of a safe, responsive complaints channel

SolTuna cannery and loining plant in Solomon Islands established a new complaints and grievance system a few years ago. Previously workers had to report their grievances to their line manager, and the line manager was supposed to fix it. But what if their complaint is about their line manager? Even if their line manager is not the problem, it can be hard to raise complaints to their manager. SolTuna placed anonymous feedback boxes around the facility. People could write their complaints on a piece of paper and slip it into the box privately. Then company management responded to all the complaints in the monthly company newsletter. Everyone could then see the complaint, and management responding to the complaint.

Human rights for workers in tuna industries

In relation to tuna industries we are mainly talking about people's rights in their place of work, so there is a lot of overlap between human rights and labour standards for the issues covered in this handbook. Labour issues are conventionally dealt with between: (1) employers; (2) workers (often represented by trade unions); and (3) governments (often through a Ministry of Labour). Just as with human rights, there is an international framework for labour standards through the International Labour Organization (ILO).

“

“Since 1919, the International Labour Organization has maintained and developed a system of international labour standards aimed at promoting opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work, in conditions of freedom, equity, security and dignity. In today's globalized economy, international labour standards are an essential component in the international framework for ensuring that the growth of the global economy provides benefits to all.”²⁶

You can see from this quote that labour standards are very much what we are talking about regarding HR in Pacific tuna industries. So, are decent and safe working conditions in tuna industries a human rights issue, or a labour standards issue? The answer is: both, and more!

²⁵ Nakamura K., Ota Y. & Blaha F. (2022). A practical take on the duty to uphold human rights in seafood workplaces. *Marine Policy*, 135, 104844. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2021.104844>

²⁶ International Labour Organization. (n.d.). Introduction to International Labour Standards. Retrieved December 7, 2021, from <https://www.ilo.org/global/standards/introduction-to-international-labour-standards/lang--en/index.htm>

There are many guidance documents and standards that are relevant for tuna fisheries (e.g. child labour in fisheries). They were developed jointly by ILO and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), but also with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) on topics such as:²⁷

- training and certification of fishers
- design, construction and equipment of vessels
- safety of fishing vessels.

The cross-border nature of tuna industries, since so many crew work outside their country of citizenship, means decent and safe working conditions are also a migration issue. The International Office of Migration (IOM), established in 1951, is another relevant forum for when migrant crew or observers are mistreated, or require assistance if they are left stranded overseas by their employer, without money for a ticket to return home. Domestically such matters fall within the jurisdiction of border control and immigration agencies.

Furthermore, decent and safe working conditions in tuna industries are also a fisheries issue. As noted earlier, fisheries management agencies and their officers, as government duty bearers, are responsible for protecting human rights in fisheries under their jurisdiction. Internationally the FAO is involved in efforts to reduce human rights abuses of fish workers.

Human rights in tuna industries is a fisheries issue, and a labour issue, and a migration issue

So, when people try to say that protecting the human rights of fish workers is not a fisheries or maritime issue, and is instead a human rights or a labour issue, or an immigration issue, they are incorrect. The human rights of workers in tuna industries are all of these things – labour, migration, shipping/navigation and fisheries.

See Annex for a list of all the different international treaties that are relevant for decent and safe working conditions in fishing.

Human rights and gender

Gender equity and social inclusion are fundamental to the achievement of human rights and are therefore a critical dimension of tuna industries. The majority of Pacific Island countries have ratified the international Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination and Violence Against Women (CEDAW), showing that the governments and societies of the Pacific generally agree with the principle of ending discrimination and violence against women. However, there is still a way to go until this goal is reached. Family health and safety surveys conducted by SPC and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in the Pacific show that many women – from 25% up to 68% in some countries – have experienced violence from an intimate partner during their lifetime.²⁸

It is important to note that ‘gender’ is not only about women – it is also about men. Gender includes women and men in all their diversities and how social expectations about male and female roles shape peoples’ lives (see the following section).

While gender roles and relationships vary across cultures, in most societies, women struggle to exercise their human rights, have limited access to productive resources, less control over incomes and little say in decision-making. Some women, such as those who come from important families or who achieve high levels of education and career status, are more powerful than some men without those benefits in life. But in general, there tends to be a power imbalance against women, which makes gender a core issue in human rights.

What is gender?

The sex of a person as male or female is biological. But a person’s gender is part of their **identity**, their sense of themselves as a man or a woman, girl or boy (and other genders, such as *fa’afafine* in Samoa, *vaka sa lewa lewa* in Fiji, *palopa* in PNG, *akava’ine* in Rarotonga, *fakaleiti* in Tonga and *fakafifine* in Niue).²⁹ Gender identity is learned by children as they grow up as part of their culture, through norms, behaviours and roles that are assigned to girls and boys, men and women, and other genders.

27 Relevant IMO conventions include the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Fishing Vessel Personnel (STCW-F) (1995) and the International Convention on the Safety of Life at Sea Convention (SOLAS) (1974).

28 For more information see: Pacific Community. 2015. Beijing +20: Review of progress in implementing the Beijing Platform for Action in Pacific Island countries and territories. Noumea, New Caledonia: SPC. <https://www.spc.int/sites/default/files/wordpresscontent/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Beijing20.pdf>

29 Strong K. (2022). Why western gender labels don’t work for Pasifika. Pacific Media Network, 9 August, <https://pacificmedianetwork.com/articles/western-gender-labels-dont-work-for-pasifika-1>.



Overview of gender equity in tuna industries

Usually people talk of gender ‘equality’ but in this handbook we focus on gender ‘equity’, because we believe the target audience of the handbook is more comfortable with the term equity.

Equity and equality: What is the difference?

Gender equality is the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of men and women, girls and boys. Gender equality does not mean that people must become the same. It means that even though they are different, they have the same rights. Equity means compensating for disadvantages so that outcomes are equal.

In fisheries, we want to achieve equality in development outcomes for everyone in the community. But providing everyone with the same inputs or interventions may not be the best way to ensure equality in outcomes, because people have different life conditions or different capacities. To ensure equality of outcomes, an intervention must be tailored to fit these differences. Achieving equality of outcomes from fisheries development may require providing different resources or a different amount of resources to different groups in the community. This may mean the intervention is unequal but the end result is greater equality across groups in society.

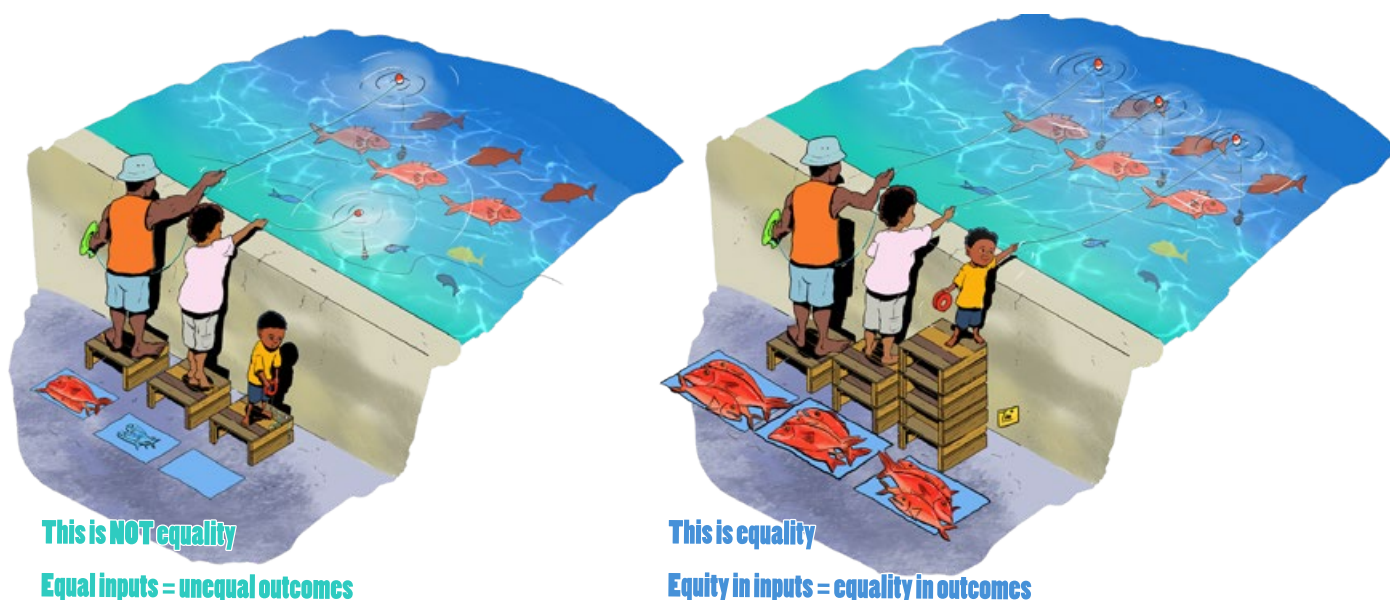


Figure 1.5 Equality and equity

Source: Barclay, K., S. Mangubhai, B. Leduc, C. Donato-Hunt, N. Makhoul, J. Kinch, & J. Kalsuak (Eds.) (2021), *Pacific handbook for gender equity and social inclusion in coastal fisheries and aquaculture* (2nd ed.). Noumea, New Caledonia: Pacific Community.

Gender equality in the Pacific

Laws still exist in Pacific island countries that treat women and girls differently from men and boys or ignore gender-specific needs and barriers, restricting their opportunities and rights in areas such as employment, social protection, sexual harassment in the workplace, and decision-making over resources, among others.³⁰ Nevertheless, gender equality has been promoted by Pacific Islanders for over 25 years and has increasingly been integrated in domestic policies and legislation (see Annex 1).

³⁰ Vunisea A. (2021). Gender Mainstreaming in Fiji's Offshore Tuna Industry. Suva, Fiji: WWF-Pacific. Retrieved from https://wwfasia.awsassets.panda.org/downloads/gender_mainstreaming_in_fiji_s_offshore_tuna_industry_report.pdf

Gender equality, according to Pacific Ministers of Women's Affairs, means that women and men of all diversities have:³¹

- the right to be safe
- the right to be respected
- the right to earn incomes
- the right to express their views and be heard
- the right to express their gender identity
- the right to choose how many children they have
- the right to choose their intimate partner
- the right to have safe and accessible services and infrastructure for people differently abled
- the right to participate in decision-making and occupy leadership positions, and
- the right to decide for themselves the future they want.

According to the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, the main issues around gender inequality in Pacific Island countries are visible in:³²

- high rates of gender-based violence;
- very limited representation and participation of women in decision-making at all levels. The Pacific region has the lowest rate of female political representation in the world;
- limited access to employment and income-generating opportunities, and invisibility of women's roles in livelihood activities and unpaid care work;
- difficulties in accessing the justice system;
- attitudes to sexual and reproductive health and rights. These rights are often not recognised or not translated into effective legislation, policies and services.

Legal structures and informal influences in society interact to create inequalities. For example, domestic violence legislation and services have been specifically designed to support women and children escaping violence, but many women do not use the law or services due to shame, family pressure, cultural practices of forgiveness, and so on.

The East Asia and Pacific region has substantial loss in human capital from gender discrimination, an estimated USD 49.9 trillion in 2018.³³ As yet there is no data on the costs of gender discrimination in the Pacific separate from East Asia, but the Pacific Community Human Rights and Social Development (HRSD) Division is improving regional data on gender so there might be data in future.

31 Pacific Community. 2017. Pacific Platform for Action on Gender Equality and Women's Human Rights 2018–2030. Noumea, New Caledonia: Pacific Community. <https://www.spc.int/sites/default/files/wordpresscontent/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/PPA-2018-Part-I-EN2.pdf>. The content is adopted from Barclay K., Mangubhai S., Leduc B., Donato-Hunt C., Makhoul N., Kinch J. and Kalsuak J. (Eds.) (2021), Pacific handbook for gender equity and social inclusion in coastal fisheries and aquaculture (2nd ed.), Noumea, New Caledonia: Pacific Community.

32 Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. 2016. Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration trend assessment report 2012–2016. Suva, Fiji.

33 Wodon Q., and de la Briere B. (2018). Unrealized Potential: The High Cost of Gender Inequality in Earnings. Washington D.C. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2845116>.

The current interest in ‘gender and fisheries’ follows from an early wave of effort in the 1980s to promote the role of ‘women in fisheries’ in the Pacific.³⁴ The focus on gender equity, equality and social inclusion comes from awareness of women’s critical role in fisheries and management of marine resources, and the importance of equitable benefits from marine resources. Differences between the roles of women and men of different ages and their power relations in terms of decision-making and income sharing, is often at the root of development and environmental issues.³⁵ Women may not actively participate at the same level as men in governance bodies, especially those set up to address natural resources management. Researchers have found that when gender is not considered in natural resource management, decisions can reinforce gender inequities, and enable the inequities to continue.³⁶ In the past, the belief that fisheries is a male-dominated sector in which women played a small role as ‘helpers’ shaped how programmes and services were designed by external agencies such as development partners.

Gender composition in tuna industry workforces

The **gendered division of labour** is the allocation of different jobs or types of work to women and men. For example, men doing fishing and women doing processing or marketing activities, or men working outside the house for cash and women doing housework and work related to care of family members. It varies across groups and can change quite quickly when the social context of work changes. For example, new employment opportunities for women in tuna processing facilities have changed gendered divisions of labour in those women’s families and villages. Another common division of labour is where women fish in inshore reefs and mudflats and men fish beyond the outer reefs. This tradition has contributed to the misconception that women cannot go on industrial or offshore fishing vessels.

There are mixed female and male workforces in some parts of tuna industries, such as trading, office work, quality control units, port handling and facilities management. But some parts of the tuna industry have a strong tendency to employ either women or men.³⁷

Fishing crews tend to be entirely male, and the processing lines in factories are almost entirely female. For example, in Fiji in 2020, there were 1429 men employed in the tuna catching sector and 126 women, but most of these women were in onshore roles – 1032 men were employed on vessels, and only five women.³⁸ All-male fishing vessels may have particular kinds of masculine on-board culture, and shore leave recreational habits involving sex, drug and alcohol abuse and gambling, both of which can increase risk of harm to crew, their families back home and communities (see further discussion on these points in Modules 3 and 4).

Workplaces that lack diversity can be problematic. Masculinity can take many forms within cultural contexts, including features that are positive for individuals, families and communities. However, under poor leadership, fishing vessels, like other all-male working environments, can develop a form of ‘toxic masculinity’ that involves violence and substance abuse (see Module 3 for more discussion of ‘toxic’ masculinity).³⁹ Having gender diversity on fishing vessels could improve the workplace culture.

Pacific Islands leaders have committed to encouraging the employment of more women in the maritime sector. In 2019, transport ministers from around the Pacific Islands region endorsed the *Regional Strategy for Pacific Women in Maritime 2020–2024* in Apia. This commitment includes improving equal opportunity and safe working environments on vessels for women working in the sector. Currently that does not include fishing vessels, but the issues and working environment are similar.

On the other hand, mainly women are employed on tuna processing lines. In 2020 in Fiji’s largest tuna processing company, PAFCO, 66.5% of employees were women, and 88% of them worked on the fish cleaning lines.⁴⁰ For the Pacific region as a whole, it is estimated that women make up 70%–90% of the tuna processing workforce.⁴¹ Given there are few formal employment opportunities for women without tertiary education across the Pacific islands region, tuna processing facilities provide a positive employment opportunity. There is more to be done, however, to improve salary and conditions for the lowest paid roles so that they meet the standards of ‘decent work’.

34 Williams M. J. 2014. Twenty-five issues of the Women in Fisheries Information Bulletin: The story within the story of 25 years of women in fisheries at SPC. Women in Fisheries Bulletin 25 (October). Noumea: SPC. 5–10. <http://coastfish.spc.int/en/publications/bulletins/women-in-fisheries/433-women-in-fisheries-information-bulletin-25>

35 Lawless S., Lau J., Ruano-Chamorro C., Cohen P. and McDougall C. (2019). Advancing Gender Equality for Equitable Livelihoods in Coral Reef Social-ecological Systems. Policy Brief, James Cook University and WorldFish. <https://digitalarchive.worldfishcenter.org/handle/20.500.12348/4919>

36 James R., Gibbs B., Whitford L., Leisher C., Konia R. and Butt N. (2021). Conservation and natural resource management: where are all the women? *Oryx*, 55(6), 860–867. doi:10.1017/S0030605320001349.

37 Price K. (2021, May 25). In the fishing industry, women face hidden hardships: study. Genderaquafish. <https://www.genderaquafish.org/2021/05/25/in-fishing-industry-women-face-hidden-hardships-study/>

38 Vunisea A. (2021). Gender Mainstreaming in Fiji’s Offshore Tuna Industry. Suva, Fiji: WWF-Pacific. Retrieved from <https://www.fasia.awsassets.panda.org/downloads/gender-mainstreaming-in-fiji-s-offshore-tuna-industry-report.pdf>

39 Alliso, E. H. (2013). A “provocation” on maritime masculinities – and why they matter for management. Paper presented at MARE People and the Sea Conference, University of Amsterdam. Retrieved from <https://genderaquafish.files.wordpress.com/2013/08/04-allison-mare-maritime-masculinities.pdf>

40 Vunisea A. (2021). Gender Mainstreaming in Fiji’s Offshore Tuna Industry. Suva, Fiji: WWF-Pacific. Retrieved from <https://www.fasia.awsassets.panda.org/downloads/gender-mainstreaming-in-fiji-s-offshore-tuna-industry-report.pdf>

41 Gillet, R. and Tauati M. I. (2018). Fisheries of the Pacific islands: Regional and national information. FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Technical Paper.



Gender norms, stereotypes and bias in tuna industries

Norms are informal social rules about how people *should* behave. Gender norms are the accepted attributes and characteristics of being a woman or a man (ideas of how men and women should be and act). Norms change over time, and they vary between cultural groups. Rigid gender norms can result in gender stereotypes. The idea that women should not work on offshore fishing vessels is a gender norm. The idea that women are better at men than cleaning fish is a gender stereotype.

There is a tuna industry-wide stereotyping of women as being well suited to the task of preparing fish for canning, due to their smaller hands being suited to work that requires fine motor skills and dexterity.⁴² Similar kinds of stereotypes exist in manufacturing industries, but it has been found that the root cause of the stereotype is the beliefs of managers, not an objective difference in the capabilities of men and women for fine hand work.⁴³ If women are 'naturally' better at doing detailed food preparation jobs, because of hand size or something else, then we would expect to see a similar gender bias across all food preparation industries. Chefs, however, are often men. It is important to recognise stereotypes because they are part of the 'unconscious bias' that can result in discrimination (for a definition of unconscious bias see the Glossary at the start of this handbook).

There are biological differences to do with strength or dexterity that make certain people more skilled at some jobs than others. But not all men and all women have the same body types and skills as each other. On average men are physically bigger and stronger than women, but this does not mean that no women are strong enough to work as fishers. Unconscious bias can contribute to keeping stereotypical thinking alive. Gender is a socially constructed concept that changes when societal structures change, but if unconscious bias leads people to believe that women or men doing particular jobs is based on the biological characteristics of their sexes, then people may argue against change.

In many cases of bias people are not intending to discriminate. The rationales for not allowing women to go to sea are often about protecting them from work considered to be too physically heavy for women, or protecting them from the bad behaviour of men on board. In these cases the discrimination is underlying and not obvious, but the outcomes remain discriminatory.

Misconception: Gender equality in tuna industries means fishing crew and processing lines must be 50:50 male:female

What would gender equality in tuna industries look like? It would mean that anyone who wants to work on a fishing vessel, or a fish processing line, and has the skills to do it well, can pursue that career and feel like they belong as a respected employee and workmate, with equal pay for equal work and equal opportunities. Equality of proportions of female:male workers in different areas are not the goal, they are an indicator. When proportions of men or women are uneven it can indicate that there are reasons men or women do not feel comfortable in that type of work, and some of those reasons can be fixed to enable equal opportunity.

There is an existing assumption that women are not suited to employment on fishing vessels and in shore-based roles involving heavy equipment, or traditionally male roles such as electrician, plumber or mechanic. Is this a problem? It is a form of discrimination, so some people may be missing out on roles that would really suit them. Men who would appreciate cannery processing work, and may be very good at it, are excluded by the stereotype that women are better at cleaning fish.

42 Barclay K. (2008). A Japanese Joint Venture in the Pacific: Foreign Bodies in Tinned Tuna. London: Routledge; USAID Oceans. (2018a). Gender analysis of the fisheries sector: Bitung, Indonesia. Manado Indonesia: Report authored by the Faculty of Fisheries and Marine Science Sam Ratulangi University for the USAID Oceans and Fisheries Partnership (USAID Oceans). Retrieved from <https://www.seafdec-oceanspartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/USAID-Oceans-Indonesia-Gender-Analysis-2018-Final.pdf>; USAID Oceans. (2018b). Gender analysis of the fisheries sector: General Santos City, Philippines. Iloilo City: Report authored by WINFISH for the USAID Oceans and Fisheries Partnership (USAID Oceans). Retrieved from <https://www.seafdec-oceanspartnership.org/resource/gender-analysis-of-the-fisheries-sector-general-santos-city-philippines/>

43 Villareal A. and Yu W-h. (2007). Economic globalisation and women's employment: the case of manufacturing in Mexico. American Sociological Review 72: 365-389.

Case study: women in non-traditional roles



- Solomon Islands tuna companies, SolTuna (processing) and National Fisheries Development NFD (fishing) have experimented with placing women in conventionally male occupations. For example, SolTuna had been offering trainee positions to women in the maintenance and engineering department but were unable to recruit many. They had more success with forklift-driving – training and hiring two women. NFD offered women cadetships on tuna fishing vessels, although none of those three women stayed working on the vessels long term; they left once they had children. As of 2021, NFD is interested to continue the programme and is considering new approaches that will result in cadets seeing their training through and making a career in fishing.⁴⁴
- In PNG the Australian Government in partnership with PNG shipping companies has supported cadetships for women to spend three years doing a combination of study at maritime college and training on vessels at sea, on a career path to possibly become captains or chief engineers.⁴⁵ Nako Fisheries in Milne Bay Province has employed women in roles such as mechanics and electricians for many years.⁴⁶
- One challenge for companies is to factor in maternity leave and arrangements for childcare close to the workplace so women can continue breastfeeding their infants when they return to work. It is not feasible for mothers to continue breastfeeding if they go to sea for weeks at a time, and WHO recommends babies are breastfed until six months of age, so ideally women working on vessels who have young infants should be given the choice to work shore-side during the breastfeeding period. There are also other types of work on tuna landing facilities that have been all-male and could benefit from drawing from a larger and more diverse labour pool through also employing women, such as fuel bunkering, slipways, and gear maintenance.

Gender-based violence and tuna industries

Development activities of any type carry risks of violence within families.⁴⁷ For example, a project that improves women's incomes may contribute to violence in households if male relatives try to control the income. Likewise, women taking up work in processing factories can also mean a heavy burden on women, with paid work outside the house added to their household family care responsibilities. There may be violent conflict if men become angry about housework, or if male relatives feel threatened by women's paid work situation. When men who have been away fishing for long periods come home they may react to the various stresses in their lives by being violent when they return to their families and communities. Women selling fish and seafood in local markets are at risk of sexual harassment and other forms of abuse that occur in public areas.⁴⁸

Opportunities in tuna industries can contribute to women's economic empowerment but also have the potential to generate conflict. The solution is not to avoid improving the socio-economic situation of women, but to work with people or organisations with gender and development expertise, and civil society organisations that offer services, to find the right approach to deliver the services and put safeguards in place to prevent gender-based violence.

44 IFC. (2016). SolTuna – Tuna processing, Solomon Islands - Gender Case Study. Washington DC: International Finance Corporation (IFC), World Bank Group; IFC. (2017). Investing in Women: New Evidence for the Business Case. Washington DC: International Finance Corporation (IFC), World Bank Group; Funnell, C. (2020). Facing inequality head on helps SolTuna succeed. Retrieved February 21, 2020, from https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/news_ext_content/ifc_external_corporate_site/news+and+events/news/tackling-gender-inequality-solomon-islands; IFC. (2019). Investing in Fisheries and People in Solomon Islands. Retrieved November 27, 2019, from https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/news_ext_content/ifc_external_corporate_site/news+and+events/news/investing+in+fisheries+and+people+in+solomon+islands

45 PNG Women in Maritime Association. (2019). Cadets set sail on MV Szechuen. Retrieved December 8, 2021, from <https://www.facebook.com/PNGWiMA/photos/cadets-set-sail-on-mv-szechuenpng-saw-its-first-batch-of-female-cadets-step-on-b/553386678492279/>

46 Kinch J., and Bagita J. (2003). Women in fisheries in Milne Bay Province, Papua New Guinea. SPC Women in Fisheries Information Bulletin, 12(May), 32–37.

47 Eves R. and Crawford J. 2014. Do no harm: The relationship between violence against women and women's economic empowerment in the Pacific. Canberra: Australian National University, State Society and Governance in Melanesia (SSGM). https://openresearch-repository.anu.edu.au/bitstream/1885/143080/1/SSGM_IB_2014_3_0.pdf

48 Tuara Demmke, P. (2006). Gender issues in the Pacific Islands Tuna Industry (DEVFISH Project). Honiara, Solomon Islands: Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC). Retrieved from [https://www.ffa.int/system/files/Gender issues in P. I. Tuna Industries 1_0.pdf](https://www.ffa.int/system/files/Gender%20issues%20in%20P.I.%20Tuna%20Industries%201_0.pdf); UN Women. (2014). Markets for Change, Fiji, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu: Market Profiles. Suva, Fiji. Retrieved from <https://www.empowerwomen.org/en/resources/documents/2014/11/markets-for-change-fiji-solomon-islands-vanuatu-market-profiles?lang=en>

Pacific cultures and gender

Culture is a central part of life, including for peoples of the Pacific, and so is a huge influence on gender (Figure 1.6). Pacific cultures value fairness, working together as a community for the collective good, protection of the most vulnerable, helping and serving others, participation, dialogue and consensus building.⁴⁹ These values are opportunities that can be used as a foundation for working on gender equity.

Terms like ‘gender equality’ may seem foreign; however, most Pacific Island cultures value women’s roles. In Marshall Islands women have been respected as protectors of land and peace. In Fiji intricate cultural norms exist of gifting land and rights to women and their children (vasu). In Tonga, Samoa and most Micronesian countries women have special status in resource use, and decision-making. There are also some cultural traditions directly connected to norms against women fishing for tuna. In various places around the Pacific women may not go on boats to fish and may not venture beyond the reef edge. The basis of this rule, which appears especially in Polynesia, is respect for and protection of women, who are the bearers of future generations.

Pacific island cultures, like cultures everywhere, are not static. They change over time as a result of urbanisation, education, technology, media, communication, migration, and so on. This does not mean cultural identity and practices are wiped out. Rather, they continually adapt. For example, in the past, it was rare to see Pacific island women working in the government and occupying decision-making positions. Now it is normal in many countries. Cultural knowledge gaps also exist between the older generation and the young, so a lot of cultural traditions are being lost. At the same time, there is continued respect for the cultural, traditional roles of men and women in a society. Islanders’ cultures keep communities strong, so it is important to support cultural continuation.

Cultural challenges in working on gender equity: Gender roles, social status and social hierarchies are often deeply ingrained in cultural traditions. Questioning power and identifying what differentiates men and women across all ages and social status groups may be uncomfortable. Principles of equality may be viewed as being ‘foreign’, ‘westernised’ or ‘urban’ concepts that are in conflict with traditional cultures and values. In some instances, a process is seen as fair when someone takes a decision on behalf of the household or the community. However, in those instances, the concept of fairness is far from being equal or inclusive.

Cultural solutions in working on gender equity: Gender equality can be achieved while maintaining core cultural values, by adopting practices that avoid harmful outcomes. Social change is never an easy process, and some people may fear losing their privilege and power. The message here is that ‘everybody should work together, side by side, so that we can all advance as one community’. One way to approach these discussions is to think about the origins of a practice that causes social exclusion and examine whether it is still useful today, or if it has become something that community would like to change. In fact, fair and equal treatment of an individual is the basis for a healthy community, and a healthy community is the backbone of Pacific communal lifestyles.

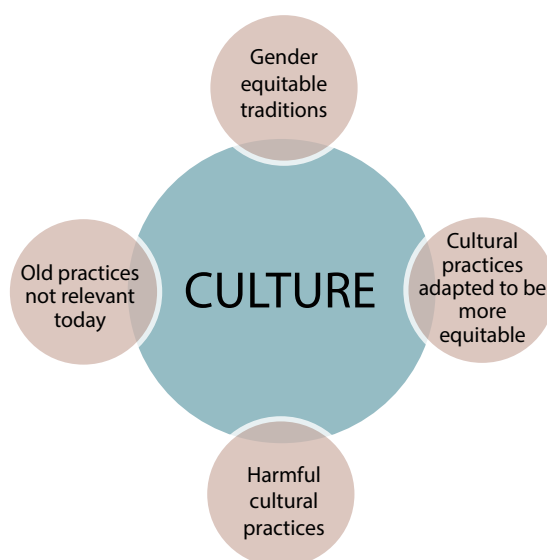


Figure 1.6 Culture is central to gender equity

Adapted from: Delisle, A., Mangubhai, S., & Kleiber, D. (2021). Module 6: Community Engagement. In K. Barclay, S. Mangubhai, B. Leduc, C. Donato-Hunt, N. Makhoul, J. Kinch, & J. Kalsuak (Eds.), Pacific handbook for gender equity and social inclusion in coastal fisheries and aquaculture (2nd ed.). Noumea, New Caledonia: Pacific Community.

49 Tukuitonga C. 2015. Opinion: Advancing human rights in the Pacific. <https://www.spc.int/updates/news/media-release/2015/12/opinion-advancing-human-rights-in-the-pacific>

Gender equitable traditions

Some cultural traditions promote gender equity. For example, in rural parts of Fiji where cultural practices are intact, when women marry they go to their husband's village. They have a safety net, however, through the practice of *covicovi ni draudau*, which means she and her children retain a right to use *mataqali*, the land of her birth village if she needs it. This practice ensures women always have access to land and resources, and that they maintain their cultural and spiritual connection to their ancestral home. This practice has provided a reserve for women's food security.

Harmful cultural practices

The 'culture of silence'⁵⁰ is an example of a cultural tradition that is inequitable. It is the unwritten rule that women only speak when spoken to or if asked, and must not go against decisions made by elders and community leaders. This practice is common in many Pacific Island cultures and continues to limit the full participation of women and young people in decision-making processes, including those relating to fisheries and aquaculture.

In Tuvalu, women were traditionally excluded from actively engaging in the *Falekaupule*, the local decision-making body. Instead, they were only allowed to sit at the back and observe. This exclusion was to protect them from the physical and verbal violence that used to occur during heated political debates, but acted to prevent women from having a voice in local decision-making. The rule was embedded in the law, which hindered women's formal participation in the local structure, even though Tuvaluan political debates are no longer associated with violence. The law was amended in 2012 to allow women's voices in the *Falekaupule*. However, women still largely do not speak in the *Falekaupule* due to long-standing practice. This is an example of an old cultural practice that is based on the idea of protecting women, and is no longer relevant but is nonetheless still in use, with discriminatory outcomes.⁵¹

There is a lot of cultural difference between groups across the Pacific about whether women should speak up in public meetings. Kiribati has a similar custom to Tuvalu, called the *Maneaba*, and Wallis and Futuna is also similar. In Fiji and some other Melanesian countries, women who are chiefs, the wives of chiefs or who are from important families are accepted to speak, while women with lower status are subject to the culture of silence. In Palau, on the other hand, it is the opposite, because land rights in Palau are passed on matrilineally. Women speak up at meetings about coastal resources and men wait to be invited to speak. In the Marshall Islands and Nauru the culture is also more matrilineal. In Samoa, young men are excluded from community meetings.

Adapting cultural practices to be more gender equitable

Culture does not stay the same for ever, it is flexible and community members can choose to adapt cultural practices to new circumstances. Some communities with a culture of silence for women have adapted the traditions around public meetings to allow more participation by women. In Fiji in community-based fisheries management meetings, as well as the women chiefs who could already speak, now female fisheries officers are also expected to be involved in discussions.

In Kiribati, historically community decision-making in the *Maneaba* also involved women sitting behind the men to protect them from any violence that may have arisen, and not participating in the discussion except to listen to what is being decided by the men. Many say that women speaking in the *Maneaba* is not part of Kiribati culture. At the same time, more and more young women graduate from universities and want to use their knowledge to help their communities. Some younger women have found a way to contribute to community discussions without eroding the Kiribati culture, by first seeking permission from elders to speak in the village meeting at the *Maneaba*. 'If I pay respect to the village elders and seek their permission to speak in the *Maneaba*, then together we can maintain our cultural values while also enabling me as a young woman to contribute my education for community benefit' says Maiango Teimarane of the Kiribati Islands Conservation Society.⁵²

These examples are not about breaking culture, but adapting it, to make new possibilities to bring women into community-based decision making.

50 Vunisea A. 2008. The 'culture of silence' and fisheries management. SPC Women in Fisheries Information Bulletin #18, March 2008. Noumea: SPC. 42-43.

51 Delisle A., Mangubhai S., & Kleiber D. (2021). Module 6: Community engagement. In K. Barclay, S. Mangubhai, B. Leduc, C. Donato-Hunt, N. Makhoul, J. Kinch, & J. Kalsuak (Eds.), Pacific handbook for gender and social inclusion in small-scale fisheries and aquaculture (2nd ed.). Noumea, New Caledonia: Pacific Community, p.16.

52 Barclay K., Leduc B., Mangubhai S., Vunisea A., Namakin B., Teimarane M., & Leweniqila L. (2021). Module 1: Introduction. In Barclay K., Mangubhai S., Leduc B., Donato-Hunt C., Makhoul N., Kinch J., & Kalsuak J. (Eds.), Pacific handbook for gender equity and social inclusion in coastal fisheries and aquaculture (2nd ed., p. 20). Noumea, New Caledonia: Pacific Community, p.8.



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Overview of social inclusion in tuna industries

What is social inclusion?

Social inclusion is the process of improving the terms on which individuals and groups take part in society – improving the ability, opportunity, and dignity of those disadvantaged on the basis of their identity.⁵³

Identity – ‘Who you are’

Your gender, your age, and the family and social groups you belong to give you your roles, responsibilities, social status and entitlements. Identity includes gender (male, female, other gender); age (young, middle-aged, old); physical condition (do you have a disability, do you have poor or good health); residency and citizenship status (indigenous, local, migrant); race or ethnicity (Pacific Islander, Indian, Chinese, European, mixed race); property (landless, landowner); caste⁵⁴ (high caste, low caste, commoner); sexual orientation (e.g. heterosexual, gay, lesbian); and relationship status (married, single, widowed, separated).

People experience economic opportunities and problems differently depending on their identity. For example, when household resources are limited, more may be put towards education for boys rather than girls. The reverse may also happen, with boys sent out to work to support the schooling of their sisters. People who don't finish high school have very limited work opportunities. People who have not finished school can work as deckhands on fishing boats, but these days even entry-level processing work in a cannery requires a high school diploma.

People with disabilities are often excluded from formal employment, including in tuna industries, where some work involves heavy manual labour, and other work involves heavy equipment, such as forklift trucks. Company managers regard it as unsafe to employ people with disabilities. Social exclusion often translates to being dependent on the generosity of others and being vulnerable to poverty.

In all societies social inclusion and exclusion is influenced by people's identity. Socially excluded people have limited capacity to influence and participate in decision-making even if they are involved in fishing or processing tuna, or are affected by tuna industries by living near a port or processing facility. For example, a young woman with low social status who has an opportunity for education may get a good job in a tuna cannery, but may still not be comfortable to take on leadership roles at work due to her low social status. A young woman from a high social status family, with a good education, may be employed in fisheries management. She may have been brought up to be confident as a leader, so go on to achieve high ranking jobs in her career.

In fisheries management policy and projects it is important to enable social inclusion. Experience shows that when equity and inclusion issues are addressed well, better outcomes result.⁵⁵ For example, the tuna processing company SolTuna has used ‘gender-lens’ human resources ideas to make it easier for women fish processing workers to attend work for the full pay cycle and to reduce harassment of women in the workplace. These initiatives have improved all employees' feelings of being valued and respected, with men as well as women appreciating the benefits (see Module 5 for further details). Inclusive approaches can lead to improved outcomes for everyone in tuna industries, not only for groups who are disadvantaged and discriminated against.

Social inclusion goes beyond including people in a project designed for the ‘majority’. It is about designing policies and projects to address the needs of marginalised people and establishing rules that:

- recognise the diversity of concerns and needs of different segments of the population, and
- contribute to removing the obstacles causing the social exclusion of some members of a society.

⁵³ World Bank. 2022. Understanding poverty / topics / social inclusion. The World Bank website. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/social-inclusion>

⁵⁴ Some Pacific societies have a clear ‘caste’ system that differentiates high-caste and low-caste people (sometimes called ‘commoners’). Each caste has different sets of privileges, responsibilities and rights, with clear ownership rights. In Tonga, for example, the system of royal, aristocratic and commoner status also shapes social hierarchies. In Yap in the FSM, a caste system still exists which deprives the participation of lower castes, when there are higher castes in meetings or discussions.

⁵⁵ Levitas R., Pantazis C., Fahmy E., Gordon D., Lloyd E. and Patsios D. 2007. The multi-dimensional analysis of social exclusion. University of Bristol: United Kingdom.

Social inclusion is not about striving to put people in a ‘frame’, but rather transforming the frame to make it inclusive (see Figure 1.7). Social inclusion requires transforming institutions or the ‘rules of the game’. It involves removing barriers that maintain unequal opportunities to access development outcomes, and introducing changes at the system level. If professional or management practices result in some people not having the same opportunities as others, those practices (‘how we do things here’) need to change. In sum, social inclusion recognises and values diversity, i.e. the fact that people are different and do not all have the same life experiences and needs.

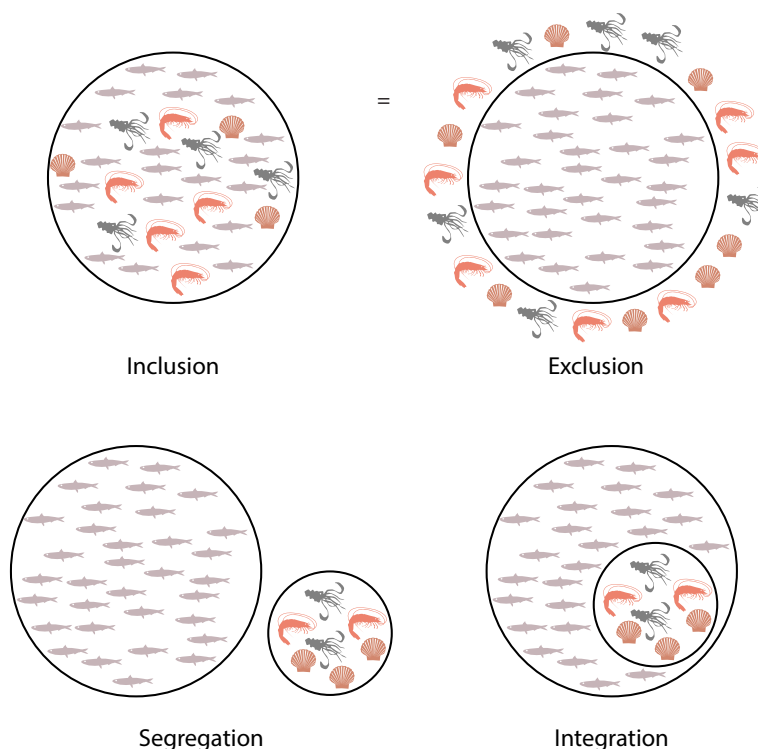


Figure 1.7 Difference between inclusion, exclusion, segregation and integration

What is social exclusion?

Social exclusion is the other side of inclusion, it is when people are unable to join in the majority social system or enjoy its rights and privileges. Usually social exclusion happens because of poverty or if people belong to a social group that is discriminated against.

Social exclusion – or marginalisation – is a complex and multidimensional process. It involves the lack of resources, rights, goods and services, and the inability to participate in the normal relationships and activities available to other people in a society, in economic, social, cultural or political areas. It affects both the quality of life of individuals and the equity and cohesion of society as a whole.

Social exclusion is difficult to define because the people who are socially excluded are not the same everywhere – it depends on the social context. For example, in some countries, elders are highly respected and they are the decision-makers in their household and community. However, in other societies, elders are seen as a burden and not fit for modern society, so their voice in decision-making is very limited.

Social exclusion affects individuals who cannot participate in a tuna industry, or do not benefit equally from tuna resources because of their identity. For example, there are two deckhands working on a longline vessel – one is Fijian, one is Indonesian. They are employed to do the same job, but the Fijian is paid more than the Indonesian. This is because Indonesian deckhands are recruited from the section of Indonesian society that has very limited economic opportunities and they will accept lower wages. Fijian deckhands can benefit more in terms of wages because their economic context is different – with better land-based wage possibilities than the Indonesian crew. On the other hand, the identity of ‘Pacific Islander’ (see below for an explanation of identity), contains stereotypes of being bigger and stronger. For this reason Fijian deckhands may be pressured by the rest of the crew to do more heavy lifting work than crew of another nationality.

Even when laws and policies claim that all people are equal, the reality is that they do not experience equality in all dimensions of their lives. Women and other socially excluded groups – such as people disadvantaged through

poverty, women-headed households, single fathers, disabled people, migrants and elderly people without support – struggle against unequal treatment in many areas. Even if policies and rules do not discriminate against marginalised people or prevent them from accessing resources and services, marginalised people still do not benefit equally in terms of development outcomes because they have different needs and capacities (see Figure 1.5 earlier in this module, on equity and equality). The violation of marginalised people's rights is often overlooked in development initiatives and public services.

For example, there is a settlement called Kalekana at Lami in Fiji. In the mid-20th century most of the people in Kalekana were from Solomon Islands; now the settlement is more mixed, with people from all over Fiji. The Solomon Islander descendants are marginalised in Fijian society, without access to *mataqali* land, although the land given to the original Solomon Islander settlers includes a small area for farming. Many of the young men do not have as much schooling or other training as other Fijians; they leave school and rely on fishing as a job. The young men from Kalekana and other poor settlements around Suva are more willing to work on the longline vessels than other Fijians. When people have low levels of schooling they are not well able to check contracts or pay records, although in Fiji there is a problem of companies not always providing written contracts in any case. Lack of other work choices due to lack of schooling or training, and lack of skills for checking on contracts and conditions are two of the ways marginalised people can be open to exploitation, and may have their human rights abused.

The informal rules related to identity may mean people benefit more or less than people from other identity groups, or even deny people their right to participate at all. Women are largely denied the opportunity to work on tuna fishing vessels. Thus, the way people are treated because of their identity leads to them becoming marginalised. Being marginalised is the same as being socially excluded.

To see who is socially excluded you need to:

- understand the cultural and social dynamics of a work environment in terms of people's age, gender, disabilities, nationality, educational background, leadership mechanisms, and social and economic status;
- identify who attends decision-making meetings within companies, with community leaders in tuna towns and within fisheries management circles. See who speaks up and who does not express their views⁵⁶. See also who does not attend meetings. For example, unions and women's groups are not part of the NGO group at the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) meetings. These patterns reveal whose concerns and interests are being discussed, and whose are not;
- observe social interactions to determine who is likely to be socially excluded. Are there people who are subject to violence or mockery, or who are ignored? Do people from some groups behave in a submissive way? Are they shy or silent? Do they stay away from social interaction?
- think about the workplace culture. The 'culture of silence' prevalent in Pacific Island countries means that some people feel comfortable to speak up in the workplace (see the box in the previous section about harmful cultural practices), and this can lead to social exclusion. In these cases, social inclusion means that workplace practices are developed to enable them to participate;
- analyse differences in the standard of living among groups in workplaces based on income level, quality of housing, food and clothing, ownership of new technology (e.g. mobile phones), and ownership of bikes, motorbikes, outboard motor boats and cars.

In many societies around the world, women experience various levels of social exclusion, as do other groups who are disadvantaged or face discrimination. The situation is not the same across the Pacific region, and there is less discrimination than in the past. There are matrilineal societies, such as Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and Nauru, and others that are mixed matrilineal and patrilineal in Melanesia and Polynesia. In some of these places, and in matriarchal cultures such as in Palau, there are obstacles for men, especially young men. It is important to work flexibly within appropriate cultural frameworks to remove obstacles that prevent groups in tuna industries from exercising their human rights and benefiting equitably from programmes and services.

⁵⁶ Dyer M. 2018. Transforming communicative spaces: The rhythm of gender in meetings in rural Solomon Islands. *Ecology and Society* 23 (1): 17. doi:10.5751/ES-09866-230117

Empowerment and social inclusion

Empowerment is about people taking control of their lives by gaining skills, being able to solve problems, making decisions for themselves, being self-reliant and believing in their capacity. It is about people exercising their rights. A combination of resources and actions is needed to support this process. Empowerment can come from recognition and respect within families. For example, when husbands and wives work together for the mutual benefit of the family, and allow for shifting roles of ‘breadwinner’ and ‘caregiver’ according to opportunity, then both may be empowered. Empowerment can come from recognition and respect within tuna companies. If workers who have been abused are able to raise their grievances, receive support and have the problem addressed, they are empowered.

Social inclusion means supporting the empowerment of people who are socially excluded. Different strategies for empowerment work best in different contexts, such as the type of workplace, and which groups of people might feel threatened by empowering the socially excluded group. The process for supporting one socially excluded group (such as youth) may be very different from the best process for another group (such as people with disabilities). Moreover, people may be empowered in one area of their lives and disempowered in other areas. For instance, a woman may be empowered in her work life because she has good employment and holds a director’s position, but she may be disempowered in her family life because she has to conform to social norms that compel wives to obey their husbands or suffer domestic violence. Empowerment requires training and capacity building for both more powerful and less powerful groups, to work towards a common platform of understanding.

When people are empowered, they participate in decision-making that affects their lives and they exercise their rights. When people who are socially excluded are empowered, they have greater capacity to address their issues and transform the rules that have contributed to their exclusion. For example, the Rise Beyond the Reef initiative in Fiji⁵⁷ empowered women in rural areas through income generation activities, which contributed to the development of whole communities, and led to women being supported by other members of the community to become more involved in decision-making.

⁵⁷ <https://risebeyondthereef.org/pages/mission>

Tool: HRBA for tuna industries

Table 1.1 Human rights-based approach for tuna industries

HRBA principles	Tuna industry action points
Participation – Everyone has the right to participate in decisions that affect their human rights. Participation must be active, free and meaningful. It is both a means and an end in itself.	<p>Tuna company owners and managers should provide an enabling platform to engage in mutual dialogues with fish workers (crew, processing workers) so that they can actively voice their concerns and needs to management.</p> <p>Tuna industry workers should be free to participate and be members of trade unions.⁵⁸</p> <p>Government agencies (for fisheries, labour, etc.) must regulate companies to allow union membership.</p> <p>All relevant stakeholder groups are part of government decision-making processes about tuna industries management and development (see Module 8 on stakeholder engagement).</p>
Non-discrimination – As human beings we are all equal. No one should be denied their rights because of factors such as race, colour, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property or birth.	<p>All national and migrant fish workers should be treated equally. Migrant fishers in the distant water fishing fleet must be paid at least the national minimum wage and provided with equivalent social protection.⁵⁹</p> <p>Women and men should be given equal opportunity to work in all areas.</p> <p>Fair recruitment includes ensuring international recruitment agencies follow national laws, and that contracts depict the actual terms and conditions in the workplace, conform to national law, and, for people travelling for work, are consistent with what was agreed before their departure.</p>
Transparency – Humans should be free to seek, receive and impart information (freedom of expression). This provides the basis for transparency in government and in companies, so people can see why and how decisions are reached.	<p>Labour conditions, including investigations of HR abuses, should be monitored in tuna industries, and publicly reported on.</p> <p>Outcomes of complaints and grievance processes should be reported back to staff.</p> <p>All fish workers should be aware of their rights, of what practices constitute abuse, and how to lodge effective complaints.</p>
Human Dignity – All people have a special value because they are human. This value is not because of their class, race, gender, religion, abilities, or any other factor other than them being human.	<p>Work should be safe and decent. Workplace health and safety should be in line with legal requirements, on fishing vessels, processing plants, fish markets.</p> <p>Sexual harassment is not allowed.</p> <p>Shaming people around sex work is not acceptable.</p> <p>Women who work on fishing vessels should not be shamed.</p>
Empowerment – Everyone should be able to claim and exercise their human rights. This means understanding their rights, and participating actively in developing policies and practices that affect their lives.	<p>Do fish workers understand the content of their work contracts? Do they have access to information, but also access to justice, including through existing grievance mechanisms (see accountability)?</p>
Rule of Law – All people should be treated equally in legal processes. Equality before the law means people are not punished unless they have broken the law, and that all law breakers, even wealthy and powerful people, are punished.	<p>Labour and human rights and anti-discrimination laws should be enforced as well as fisheries management measures. This could mean enforcing the FFA Harmonised Minimum Terms and Conditions for fishing crew and observer safety.</p>
Accountability – Compliance with human rights should be effectively monitored against standards and achievement of human rights goals. Human rights abuses should be effectively fixed.	<p>Human rights in tuna industries are monitored and reports are made public.</p> <p>There should be a grievance mechanism that enables workers to lodge complaints to people other than their manager, including anonymously, and the investigation and resolution of complaints are reported back to relevant employees.</p>

⁵⁸ Environmental Justice Foundation. (2019). Blood and water. Human rights abuse in the global seafood industry, 1–44.

⁵⁹ Greenpeace International. (2020). Greenpeace Sustainability, Labour & Human Rights, and Chain of Custody Asks for Retailers, Brand Owners and Seafood Companies. Amsterdam: Greenpeace International. Retrieved from https://www.greenpeace.org/usa/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Final_GP-seafood-market-ask_Feb-2020.pdf

Tool: Operational requirements for protecting human rights in seafood work

Table 1.2 Operational requirements for protecting human rights in seafood work

Human right	Requirements/How to achieve them
Upholding basic universal rights	Before the arrival of new recruits in the workplace, the operation must have a system for managing human resources that delivers mandatory rights protections per the coastal, port or flag state or, at minimum, mandatory human rights due diligence in jurisdictions offering insufficient governance for protecting human rights (like open registries / flags of convenience)
	All people working (including informally) are provided with access to a grievance channel
	Every person in fish work holds a written work agreement compliant with ILO core standards, itemising terms and pay in a language they understand, and signed by the facility owner
	Working conditions comply with 15 years as the minimum age to work onshore and 16 years on fishing vessels, where schooling is also facilitated and hazardous work is limited
	Workers cannot be required to work without pay
	Earnings must meet or exceed minimum wage rates in the country of operation and be consistent with decent work, including wages based on productivity rather than time
	Deductions from pay for costs of work or taken at the supervisor's discretion are prohibited per domestic regulations and tracked and eliminated to reduce the exposure debt bondage, forced labour and human trafficking
	People working in a confined workplace are provided with access 24/7 to their personal identification documents (passports, ID cards) and to telecommunication or other ways to signal distress
	Individual rights to associate and to bargain collectively are upheld and provided for, per the coastal, port or flag state or, at minimum, mandatory human rights due diligence in jurisdictions disallowing it
	People in fish work earn equal pay for equal work regardless of gender identifications
	Women in fish work have full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making across the operations
	Working conditions are protected from gender-based violence and sex role stereotyping
	Discrimination in hiring, work placement and advancement are tracked and eliminated
	Parental leave is provided or facilitated
	Medical insurance or coverage is provided for workplace injuries and incidents
	Migrant fish workers earn equal pay for equal work and are provided with equal opportunities for decent work terms and benefits, and to advance as nationals
Fair recruitment	Seafood operations hire directly or use a labour recruiter registered with a competent authority
	No people working in the seafood operation shall be charged directly or indirectly, in whole or in part, any fees or related costs for their recruitment, unless conforming to domestic law
	A list of people working in the operation and copies of their signed work agreements are maintained for every fish worker in the facility
	Work agreement documents depict the actual terms and conditions in the workplace, conform to domestic law, and for people travelling for work are consistent with what was agreed before their departure
	Work agreements do not specify any pay deductions for necessary items to do the job, such as boots, protective clothing, or costs of transit to and from the operation

Human right	Requirements/How to achieve them
Safe work in hazardous conditions	Conditions in the workplace comply with international standards for operational health and safety, including conditions and equipment for worker safety
	Conditions in the workplace comply with domestic standards for operational health and safety and with requirements by regulatory inspectors and law enforcement
	Minimum rest hours and working hour limits are observed in all workplaces, including fishing vessels
	All new recruits are provided with safety training and annual upgrading to raise their professional qualifications
	All new recruits are provided with health coverage for workplace injuries and illnesses
	First aid is accessible to all people working at the facility at all times
	People who are injured on the job are transported to clinics or hospitals without delay and at the employer's cost
	All work safety resources and documentation are accessible in the workplace, including safety manuals, crew handbook, medical certificates and insurance documents
	In a confined workplace, access is provided to nutritious and sufficient food and at all times to clean water
	On fishing vessels, safety risks for crew members on the vessel are assessed annually and addressed
	On fishing vessels smaller than 24 m, appropriate training and personal equipment are provided
Rights of local people affected by operations	Equal rights of local operators to resources (like fish, water, ice) to make income are recognised
	Access to public resources (like fish, water, ice, dock and loading space) is facilitated equitably
	Discriminatory practices to women in local seafood enterprises are eliminated
	Access to markets for local operators is facilitated by governments and never blocked by larger or foreign companies
	Customary rights to fish and to aquatic resources for indigenous and local people and enterprises are recognised
	Respect for rights is demonstrated to smaller scale local operators and to self-employed people and all who work informally, without exclusion due to age, gender, disability, race or ethnicity
	Food security is maintained by seafood operations that are removing food resources from a local area for trade, and food insecurity is mitigated for local people by governments
	Free, informed and prior consent is obtained and developments are reported publicly in advance where they will cause actual and potential adverse impacts to the rights of local people
	Local area management or engagement is recommended among rights holders of aquatic and fish resources to coordinate benefit sharing and adaptation to climate change
	Respect is demonstrated and adjustments made for different cultural contexts and approaches.

Source: Nakamura, K., Ota, Y., & Blaha, F. (2022). A practical take on the duty to uphold human rights in seafood workplaces. *Marine Policy*, 135, 104844. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2021.104844>

Acronyms

CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination and Violence Against Women
EEZ	Exclusive economic zone
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FFA	Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency
FSM	Federated States of Micronesia
GESI	gender equity and social inclusion (outside this handbook the word 'equality' is usually used, rather than 'equity', in GESI)
HIES	household income and expenditure survey
HR	human rights
HRBA	human rights-based approach
HRSD	Human Rights and Social Development Division in the Pacific Community
ICSF	International Collective in Support of Fishworkers
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMO	International Maritime Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IUU	Illegal, unreported and unregulated [fishing]
NFD	National Fisheries Developments, a tuna fishing company in Solomon Islands
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNGPs	United Nations guiding principles on business and human rights
OHCHR	United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
WCPFC	Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission



Annex 1: Pacific commitments to human rights, gender equity and social inclusion

Pacific Island governments have committed to promote human rights, gender equality and social inclusion in coastal resource management and development internationally, nationally and regionally.⁶⁰

Table 3. International and regional commitments regarding HR and GESI in the Pacific

Commitment	Relevance to HR and GESI in tuna industries	Pacific governments committed
Human rights		
UN Universal Declaration on Human Rights (1948)	The initial formal international agreement on Human Rights.	As a 'declaration' this is not legally binding but the international community agreed on it and many of the human rights provisions are considered binding as part of international customary law. The protection of rights and freedoms outlined have also been incorporated into many national constitutions and other domestic legal frameworks.
Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (1965)	Racial discrimination remains a barrier to the full realisation of human rights. This committee works to break down exclusions and restrictions based on race, colour, descent, and national or ethnic origin.	Governments that sign and ratify 'conventions' accept the responsibility to implement and maintain the guaranteed rights and are legally bound by their commitment. Signed and ratified: Fiji, PNG, RMI, Solomon Islands, Tonga. Signed but not ratified: Nauru, Palau.
International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966)	In addition to HR, economic, social and cultural (ESC) rights were internationally agreed as very important, especially for livelihoods, so are relevant for fisheries industries. ⁶¹	A 'covenant' is like a 'convention' and is legally binding. Signed and ratified: Fiji, PNG, RMI, Solomon Islands. Signed but not ratified: Palau.
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966)	Adding to the UN Declaration on HR, this convention specifies that all humans have civil and political rights, which is about the self-determination of peoples, as well as individuals' rights within countries.	As a covenant this is legally binding. Signed and ratified: Fiji, PNG, RMI and Solomon Islands. Signed but not ratified: Palau, Nauru.
Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (1984)	This agreement flows from the Declaration on HR and the Covenant on Civil and Political rights, to focus on eliminating torture internationally.	As a convention this is legally binding. Signed and ratified: Fiji, Nauru, RMI, Samoa, Vanuatu. Signed but not ratified: Palau.
Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)	This agreement focuses on upholding HR for children.	All independent Pacific Island countries have ratified and signed this agreement.
UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons (2000)	The main international agreement relevant for the forced labour elements that exist in the global fishing industry, including tuna.	State parties are bound by their obligations under this protocol. Signed and ratified: Fiji, Kiribati, FSM, Nauru and Palau.
Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006)	People with disabilities are not often employed in tuna value chains, which reflects their exclusion in society. Workplace safety is a problem in tuna fishing, and is a cause of disability.	Signed and ratified: All independent Pacific Island countries except Niue. Signed but not ratified: Solomon Islands, Tonga.
UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (2011)	A framework that helps define how HR should be promoted in business, including seafood businesses.	'Guiding principles' are not legally binding.

60 For an analysis of how well international commitments are followed through in regional and national documents, see: Govan H. (in press). Coastal Fisheries Policies: Linkages between Pacific Island and global policies. FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Circular No. C1192. Apia, FAO. See also Graham A., & D'Andrea A. (2021). Gender and human rights in coastal fisheries and aquaculture: A comparative analysis of legislation in Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. Noumea, New Caledonia: Pacific Community (SPC).

61 Finkbeiner E. M., Fitzpatrick J., & Yadao-Evans W. (2021). A call for protection of women's rights and economic, social, cultural (ESC) rights in seafood value chains. Marine Policy, 128(March), 104482. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2021.104482>

Commitment	Relevance to HR and GESI in tuna industries	Pacific governments committed
Labour rights in general		
International Labour Organization (ILO) Abolition of Forced Labour Convention 105 (1957)	In this Convention, HR about forced labour are addressed by the International Labour Organization (ILO), showing this clear overlap between HR and labour rights.	In force (signed and ratified): Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, PNG, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu. Not ratified: RMI, Tonga, Tuvalu.
International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of the Families (CMW) (1990)	Fishing crew working across international boundaries in tuna industries are migrant workers. This is relevant for both Asian crew working in the Pacific and Pacific Islander crew who work on distant water fleets.	Only Palau has signed this convention, and has not ratified it. No other Pacific Island country has signed or ratified it.
ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998)	Member states should respect and promote principles and rights in these four categories: 1) freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining (e.g. in trade unions); 2) the elimination of forced or compulsory labour; 3) the abolition of child labour; and 4) the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.	This is a 'declaration' so is not binding.
ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention 182 (1999)	There is no evidence that child labour is a significant problem in Pacific tuna industries; however, most of the international measures against forced labour include child labour.	In force: Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Palau, PNG, RMI, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu.
ILO Violence and Harassment Convention No. 190 (2019)		In force: Fiji. Not ratified: Cook Islands, Kiribati, Palau, PNG, RMI, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu. Not signed or ratified: FSM, Nauru, Niue.
Labour rights and safety in fisheries		
International Labour Organization (ILO) Work in Fishing Convention No. 188 (2007)	Sets minimum standards for workers at sea, alongside other measures including PSMA (see below), CTA (see below) and STCW-F, to enable port states to ensure working conditions on fishing vessels are safe and decent (and fishing is legal).	No Pacific Island country has ratified ILO C188, but most have signed it. Not signed or ratified: FSM, Nauru, Niue.
International Maritime Organization (IMO) International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Fishing Vessel Personnel (STCW-F)	Sets certification and minimum training requirements for crews of seagoing fishing vessels aiming to promote safety at sea, taking into account the unique nature of the fishing industry and the fishing working environment.	All independent Pacific Island countries are party to this convention, except Nauru and Tuvalu.
IMO Cape Town Agreement on Fishing Vessel Safety (CTA) 2012	Seeks to enhance safety onboard fishing vessels via an internationally binding agreement to facilitate better control of fishing vessel safety by flag, port and coastal states.	As of 2022 this treaty is not yet in force, The treaty will enter into force 12 months after at least 22 states, with an aggregate 3,600 fishing vessels of 24 m in length and over operating on the high seas have expressed their consent to be bound by it. Cook Islands is one of 17 contracting member states; no other Pacific island countries are.

Commitment	Relevance to HR and GESI in tuna industries	Pacific governments committed
FAO Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA) (2009)	The PSMA is a binding international agreement against illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing by preventing vessels engaged in IUU fishing from using ports and landing their catches. By strengthening port state control over fishing vessels, port states can potentially investigate and prosecute for labour and HR abuses.	Party states: Fiji, Palau, Tonga, Vanuatu.
ILO Seafarers Identity Documents Convention No. 185 (2003)	Seafarers identity document using fingerprints or retinal (eye) scan to aid in identification without a passport.	In force: RMI, Vanuatu. Signed but not ratified: Cook Islands, Fiji, Palau, PNG, Samoa Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu.
Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) 2018-01 Resolution on Labour Standards for Crew on Fishing Vessels	This resolution flagged the importance of labour rights for tuna fishing crew, but is not binding on members. As of 2021 a working group of the WCPFC was preparing a binding measure for voting on at a future meeting.	Not a binding measure.
Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) Harmonised Minimum Terms and Conditions (HMTc) for Access by Fishing Vessels (2019)	The FFA HMTc was revised to protect working conditions and safety for observers (Part III Section 9) and crew (Part V) in 2019. In principle vessels contravening the HMTc could be removed from the list of vessels of good standing, and thus not be allowed to fish, but in practice there are various obstacles to implementing it this way. It needs to be enabled in domestic legislation, and currently there is no clear system for monitoring, investigating or prosecuting.	All FFA member countries have agreed to the HMTc. As of 2022 it is not yet implemented in national legislation in any countries.

Commitment	Relevance to HR and GESI in tuna industries	Pacific governments committed
Gender equality in general		
Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (1979)	‘Discrimination against women’ means any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect of impairing women’s human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil arenas. Article 11 is about equality in employment. Article 14 is about the particular problems faced by rural women, such as those involved in fishing and aquaculture.	Signed and ratified: all independent Pacific island countries except Tonga and Niue have signed and ratified this. Signed but not ratified: Palau
Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995)	The Beijing Platform for Action is aimed at removing all the obstacles to women’s active participation in all spheres of public and private life through ensuring women have a full and equal share in economic, social, cultural and political decision-making.	This is a declaration, not a binding agreement.
Commission on the Status of Women, 62nd Session (2018)	Rural women are critical agents in poverty eradication, in enhancing sustainable agricultural and rural development as well as fisheries. Meaningful progress in these areas necessitates closing the gender gap, introducing appropriate gender-responsive policies, interventions and innovations, including women’s equal access to agricultural and fisheries technologies, technical assistance, productive resources and markets (para. 16). Encourages the provision of support and resources for: women fishers in developing countries (para. 50); empowerment of all rural women and girls (para. 46); mainstreaming a gender perspective in fisheries development (para. 46 r); and facilitating rural women’s entrepreneurship (para. 46 dd).	The Commission resulted in agreed conclusions, but is not legally binding.
SAMOA Pathway (2014) – Outcome of the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS)	Based on the recognition that gender equality and women’s empowerment and the full realisation of human rights for women and girls have a transformative and multiplier effect on sustainable development and are a driver of economic growth in SIDS (see paras 76, 77 a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i).	The Conference called for support for the efforts of SIDS but is not legally binding.
Pacific Platform for Action on the advancement of women and gender equality (1994, revised 2004 and 2017)	The original document and its revisions aim to increase efforts to mainstream gender perspectives across all legislation, policies, programmes and services delivered by governments, CROP (Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific) agencies and CSOs (civil society organisations). This includes establishing mechanisms and systems to make stakeholders accountable for implementing commitments on gender equality and the human rights of all women and girls, including through harmonised monitoring and reporting.	Not a legally binding document.

Commitment	Relevance to HR and GESI in tuna industries	Pacific governments committed
Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration (2012)	The Leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum committed with renewed energy to implement the gender equality actions of the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Revised Pacific Platform for Action on Advancement of Women and Gender Equality (2005 to 2015); the Pacific Plan; the 42nd Pacific Island Forum commitment to increase the representation of women in legislatures and decision-making; and the 40th Pacific Island Forum commitment to eradicate sexual and gender-based violence.	Not a binding legal document.
Regional Strategy for Pacific Women in Maritime 2020–2024	The strategy covers merchant marine, not fishing vessels, but could potentially be applied to fisheries in future.	Not a binding legal document.
Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency Gender Equity Framework (2016)	A framework to underpin gender equity in the work of FFA, with member countries.	Not a binding legal document.
Development goals, including those regarding fisheries, gender equality and social inclusion		
Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development	<p>SDG 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere</p> <p>SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all</p> <p>SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls</p> <p>SDG 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources</p>	The SDGs are not legally binding but governments are expected to take ownership of the SDGs, working with civil society, academia and businesses to work towards the goals.
Pacific Youth Development Framework (2014)	<p>Four outcomes:</p> <p>1) More young people secure decent employment;</p> <p>2) Young people's health status is improved;</p> <p>3) Governance structures empower young people to increase their influence in decision-making processes;</p> <p>4) More young people participate in environmental action.</p>	Not a binding legal document.
Future of Fisheries: Regional Roadmap for Sustainable Pacific Fisheries (2015), Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency and the Pacific Community.	Contains four goals for tuna fisheries for the region from 2010 to 2035: 1) sustainability; 2) value; 3) employment; and 4) food security.	Not a binding legal document.
Pacific Framework for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2016)	Improve the social and economic inclusion of people with disabilities in all areas of life – by ensuring that they have equal access to development opportunities, representation in government decision-making, access to sexual and reproductive health services, and that their special vulnerabilities to intersectional discrimination, including all forms of violence, are addressed.	Not a binding legal document.

Commitment	Relevance to HR and GESI in tuna industries	Pacific governments committed
Gender equality and social inclusion in coastal fisheries (includes small-scale tuna fisheries)		
Voluntary guidelines for securing sustainable small-scale fisheries (SSF) (2015)	Developed under the auspices of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the SSF guidelines take a human rights-based approach to the principles for the responsible management and development of small-scale fisheries and value chain fish work. They apply to small-scale coastal tuna fisheries, processing and marketing activities. FAO has also developed a handbook to support gender equity in implementing the SSF guidelines. ⁶²	As the name suggests, these are voluntary guidelines.
A new song for coastal fisheries: The Noumea strategy (2015)	'A new song for coastal fisheries' is the key document guiding Pacific coastal fisheries. It emphasises that the contributions of women and youth are often overlooked or diminished and says that women and youth must have a greater role in decision-making about coastal resources and more equitable access to benefits from them.	Not a legally binding document.
Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) roadmap for inshore fisheries management and sustainable development 2015–2024	The MSG (Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu) has pledged to implement this set of principles in national jurisdictions by 2024. Its vision is to achieve sustainability for economic, social, ecological and food security purposes, including by empowering communities to manage their coastal resources.	Not a legally binding document.
Pacific Framework for Action on Scaling up Community-based Fisheries Management (2021–2025), Pacific Community	The goal of the Framework for Action is: "Coastal communities are empowered and supported as crucial for scaling up effective management to ensure sustainable coastal fisheries provide benefits to Pacific peoples in terms of food, nutrition, livelihood, culture and health."	Not a legally binding document.

⁶² Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (2017b). Towards gender-equitable small-scale fisheries governance and development - A handbook. In support of the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication, by. Retrieved from <http://www.fao.org/3/i7419en/i7419EN.pdf>



Pacific
Community
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Pacific handbook for human rights, gender equity and social inclusion in tuna industries



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MODULE 2

Monitoring, evaluation and learning
(MEL) and social analysis



EUROPEAN UNION



Sweden
Sverige



PEUMP

Pacific-European Union Marine Partnership Programme



FAME

Fisheries,
Aquaculture
and Marine
Ecosystems
Division



HRSD

Human Rights
and Social
Development

Pacific handbook for

human rights, gender equity and social inclusion

in tuna industries

Module 2: Monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) and social analysis¹

Kate Barclay



Noumea, New Caledonia, 2023

¹ This module has been adapted from similar modules in the Coastal Fisheries and Aquaculture Handbook: 'Module 2: Gender and social inclusion analysis' by Leduc Brigitte, Barclay Kate, Kunatuba Joanne, Danford Makelesi, Rakuro Meliki and 'Module 3: Monitoring evaluation and learning' by Mangubhai Sangeeta, Donato-Hunt Connie, Kleiber Danika. Both in: Barclay K., Mangubhai S., Leduc B., Donato-Hunt C., Makhoul N., Kinch J. and Kalsuak J. (eds). Pacific handbook for gender and social inclusion in coastal fisheries and aquaculture. Second edition. Noumea, New Caledonia: Pacific Community.

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Reference Note

This handbook has been adapted from the Pacific Handbook for Gender Equity and Social Inclusion in Coastal Fisheries and Aquaculture, with several of the authors involved in both pieces of work. Some of the text and graphics from the Coastal Handbook have been adapted for use in the Tuna Handbook.

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Key points

- We need to invest in routinely collecting information about HR and GESI in tuna industries. This will provide the evidence base to strengthen regional and national legal and policy frameworks to meet HR and GESI goals for the Pacific.
- Monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) is evaluating progress towards policy objectives. It means identifying indicators for the objectives, and data relevant for the indicators. The data is collected and analysed periodically, for example, annually for a policy area or at key stages in a project, showing whether the situation is moving in the right direction. The learning aspect of MEL is about applying lessons from the evaluations, for continuous improvement.
- Social analysis is research into the human dimensions of a policy area. For this handbook we consider social analysis for human rights (HR), and social analysis for gender equity and social inclusion (GESI).
- There is a lot of overlap between social analysis and MEL for HR and GESI.
 - Social analysis and MEL provide information to inform legislation and policies and the design of programmes and services to ensure tuna activities provide equitable benefits for everyone.
 - Both require qualitative data (e.g. stories) and/or quantitative data (e.g. numbers), and both involve analysis using social science methods.

What is MEL for HR and GESI in tuna industries?

MEL is part of the process of managing projects, programmes and policy areas (see Figure 2.1). MEL reveals whether our activities are having the intended results or outcomes.¹ The United Nations has agreed standards for MEL as part of knowing whether governments are achieving what they set out to do, and if not, for learning how to do better.² The Pacific Community has a formal MEL policy called planning, evaluation, accountability, reflection and learning (PEARL). PEARL helps the Pacific Community use resources in the most effective way to address the needs of member countries.

KPIs for HR and GESI in Pacific tuna industries

Measurable indicators for seeing progress are a practical tool for the kinds of changes we are talking about throughout this handbook. What would be some appropriate key performance indicators (KPIs) for HR and GESI in Pacific tuna industries? The Tuna Report Cards produced by the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency have some indicators for regional tuna industries, such as increasing the total number of jobs in tuna industries by 18,000 over ten years, and an additional 40,000 tonnes of tuna available for regional consumption.³ This section on MEL outlines the steps to take, and resources needed, for designing and implementing KPIs. See also the tool at the end of the Module: MEL for HR and GESI in tuna industries.

1 Outcomes are the likely or achieved effects or changes resulting from activities. They are often divided into short-term (1–2 years), medium-term (2–5 years) and long-term (5–10 years or more).

2 United Nations Evaluation Group. (2016). Norms and Standards for Evaluation. New York: United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG). Retrieved from <http://www.unevaluation.org/2016-Norms-and-Standards>

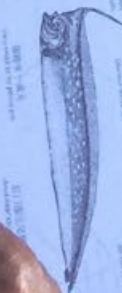
3 The Tuna Fishery Report Cards are available at: <https://www.ffa.int/node/1569>



Lophotus capellei



Lophotus lacepede



TRANS SHIPMENTS
FORM

Basic elements of MEL

Table 2.1. Key steps in MEL

Define what is being evaluated	Identify the intended outcomes of the project, programme or policy. Intended outcomes can also be called goals, aims and objectives. They can be divided into high level goals, such as 'improving livelihoods' and more direct, practical operational objectives specific for the fishery or value chain activity.
	Identify the activities and outputs that will achieve the outcomes.
Select indicators, data and methodology	Work out how you will know whether the project, programme or policy is achieving what it has set out to do.
	To do this, develop specific indicators for project/programme/policy objectives, that will show whether the activity is having the intended outcome.
	Decide how you will measure for the indicators – what data and what analysis methods?
	For example, if your objective is to have anonymous, accountable grievance mechanisms for fishing crew, your indicators might be whether or not fishing companies have such a grievance mechanism, whether crew are aware of it, and what happens with grievances lodged. Your data for this might be interviews with fishing company managers and fishing crew representative organisations. Your evaluation method might be a qualitative thematic review of interview data (see more on methods below in the section on social analysis).
Collect data	The kinds of data used for MEL for HR and GESI are the same types as used for social analysis – qualitative and quantitative interviews (group or individual), questionnaire surveys, or various kinds of social statistics.
	Data collection may include collating existing information (e.g. from existing social analysis reports, or ongoing statistical data such as from the Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES), or census) or gathering new information.
	Baseline – it is very important in MEL that a baseline be set, against which to evaluate progress towards intended outcomes. Subsequent data collection is measured against the baseline data.
	For HR and GESI, data must be collected with demographic details such as sex, age, ethnicity, job type and rank and other relevant social groupings, to enable a thorough evaluation of which groups are most vulnerable to HR abuse, or social exclusion.
Analyse data to answer key questions	This is where we evaluate progress towards intended outcomes. See the section on social analysis below for some information about analysis methods.
	During data analysis ensure data is disaggregated and presented by gender, age, ethnicity, and other relevant social groupings that are linked to the intended outcomes.
Report results	Communicate disaggregated monitoring and evaluation information to all relevant stakeholders to inform ongoing review.
Identify and use learning	Use results to adapt activities and revise and/or improve outcomes as necessary.

Monitoring: Are we doing things right?

Monitoring is the systematic and ongoing collection of information on project implementation, with a focus on processes, activities⁴ and outputs.⁵ Monitoring identifies what is working well and what is not working well, to help track progress and guide implementation. Data collected continuously, or at regular intervals during the programme or project, can help determine whether goals or outcomes (e.g. improved human rights protection, improved livelihoods for marginalised groups) are being achieved.

Evaluation: Are we doing the right things?

Evaluation looks at the overall picture, that is, the whole project and its broader context. It includes assessment of the design at certain time periods, implementation and results of a project. Evaluation is usually carried out at the midpoint and end of projects. Evaluations can examine relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. They should provide findings that can be used in decision-making by project beneficiaries, implementers and funders.

Learning: Have we adapted how we do things?

Monitoring and evaluation information can be used to refine, adapt and improve project design, planning, implementation and management. Lessons learned from both successes and failures can be used to modify a programme or project to ensure goals are met. By building learning into the design and implementation of future projects, we avoid making the same mistakes again.

⁴ Activities are the actions taken in a project or policy area, fisheries management measures, interventions made, and work performed.

⁵ Outputs are products or services resulting from the activities. For example, reports, or pieces of legislation.

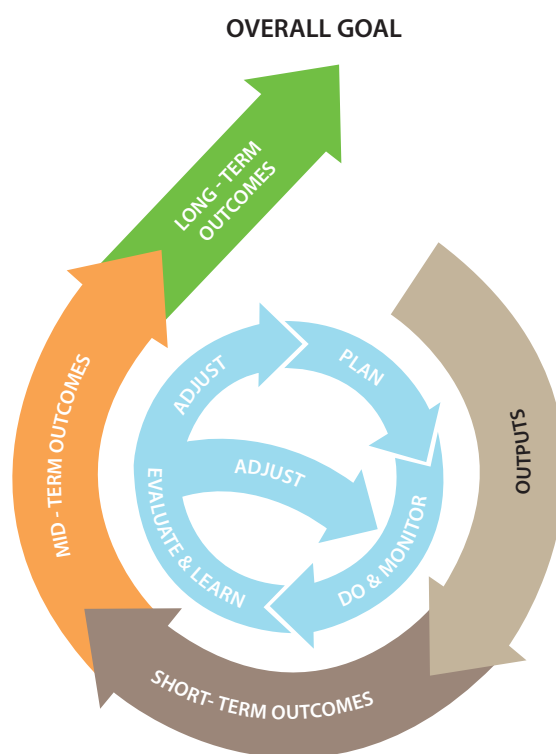


Figure 2.1 MEL as part of adaptive management

Source: Mangubhai Sangeeta, Donato-Hunt Connie, Kleiber Danika. 2021. Module 3: Monitoring evaluation and learning. In: Barclay K., Mangubhai S., Leduc B., Donato-Hunt C., Makhoul N., Kinch J. and Kalsuak J. (eds). Pacific handbook for gender and social inclusion in coastal fisheries and aquaculture. Second edition. Noumea, New Caledonia: Pacific Community.

MEL is most commonly used in projects or programmes with a defined timeline. Most donor-funded projects have MEL as a required part of the project, to show that the project achieved its goals (or not). But MEL is also an important part of ongoing policy. For example, in tuna industries stocks of the key commercially fished species – skipjack, yellowfin, bigeye and albacore – have been **monitored** by the Pacific Community Oceanic Fisheries Programme for many decades. As part of Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) annual work process, fisheries are **evaluated** against the stock monitoring, and **learning** is used in adjusting fisheries management accordingly. For example, bigeye tuna stocks were found to have been badly affected by juveniles being caught around fish aggregating devices (FADs), so the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) group put in place measures to limit FAD fishing.



Tip: indicators do not stand alone – they must be tailored to objectives

Sometimes fisheries people talk about sets of social and economic indicators for fisheries as if they stand alone and can be applied without first setting out the objectives (intended outcomes) to be achieved. Indicators indicate progress towards programme or project objectives, so indicators are meaningless without being tied to objectives. For example, fishery contribution to GDP is a commonly cited indicator, but it is only relevant if the objective is to increase or maintain economic contribution at the national level. If the objective is to increase or maintain economic contribution in a rural area, the indicator would be contribution to the local economy (not the national economy). If the objective is to increase or maintain livelihoods for women in rural areas, then contribution to GDP, or even the local economy, is not the right indicator – the indicator should relate to incomes of women, men and their households within communities.

MEL is relevant for understanding HR and GESI on fishing vessels, around port areas, in onshore tuna processing, small-scale tuna fisheries, and informal marketing of fresh or industrial tuna catches. For example, for tuna processing, MEL for GESI requires information on the different types of employment, such as the ratio of men and women in different types of jobs, in different pay bands and at different levels of seniority.

The information provided in this module is very basic. Here are some resources with further details on designing and implementing MEL:

- Wongbusarakum, S., Myers Madeira, E., & Hartanto, H. (2014). Strengthening the social impacts of sustainable landscapes programs. Arlington, Virginia, US: Forest & Climate Program of The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and Indonesia Terrestrial Program and Central Science Division of TNC. Available at: <http://nature.ly/socialimpacts>
- Blue Marble Evaluation. (2021) Blue Marble Evaluation. Website. bluemarbleeval.org
- BetterEvaluation. (2021). BetterEvaluation. Website. betterevaluation.org/en



Existing MEL for HR and GESI in Pacific tuna industries

The authors of this handbook are not aware of any MEL that has been conducted regarding HR in Pacific tuna industries at the time of writing.

The main existing MEL for social and economic aspects of tuna industries is that conducted by the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) the annual Tuna Fishery Report Cards (see Table 2.2)⁶ following the Regional Roadmap for Sustainable Pacific Fisheries (2015), and the annual Economic Development Indicators and Statistics (EDIS)⁷ reports. All of the indicators are at the national level, which do not show patterns across groups within societies, meaning that existing MEL for tuna industries does not show how GESI issues are affecting the distribution of benefits among different social groups in countries (women, men, youth, different ethnic groups, rural versus urban, etc.).

Table 2.2 HR and GESI-relevant MEL in Tuna Fishery Report Cards

Objectives	Comments on indicators and data
Value: double the value of the region's tuna catch 2015–2024	
Increase the value of foreign access fees and licenses	Data is provided by FFA member governments.
Increase the value of fishing to GDP (gross domestic product)	Early versions of the Report Cards included estimates of the contribution by the tuna harvest sector to GDP (value added) but the 2020 Report Card noted that due to difficulties locating the economic base of fishing the method is under revision. It is not easy to reliably calculate the contributions of fishing to GDP ⁸ and many Pacific governments lack the general economic statistics to enable use of orthodox methods for calculating contribution to GDP.
Increase the share of catch value taken by FFA member country fleets	This data is available as part of the national catch data collected by the Oceanic Fisheries Programme of the Pacific Community for WCPFC processes.
Increase export values of tuna by 25% during 2019–2024	Estimates of export values from FFA member countries are based on import data from the major export destinations for tuna from the region.
Employment: increase total tuna-related employment by 18,000 during 2015–2024	Employment data is not disaggregated by gender or other social groupings that would enable understanding of HR and GESI issues. Employment figures are not in a standardised unit such as full-time equivalent (FTE), so are quite imprecise. The Report Cards note that employment should be 'decent work', and that minimum labour standards on fishing vessels are being introduced via the 2019 revision of the FFA Harmonised Minimum Terms and Conditions (HMTTC). No data is yet collected to enable monitoring against labour standards.
Food security: increase tuna available for consumption within the Pacific islands region by 40,000 tonnes during 2015–2024	Lack of baseline data means it is difficult to say the extent to which this has been achieved. Existing national and regional seafood consumption data is not disaggregated enough to say clear things about tuna.

Source: Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency and Pacific Community. (n.d.). Future of Fisheries Roadmap and Report Cards. Retrieved December 10, 2021, from <https://www.ffa.int/node/1569>

⁶ Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency and Pacific Community. (n.d.). Future of Fisheries Roadmap and Report Cards. Retrieved December 10, 2021, from <https://www.ffa.int/node/1569>

⁷ Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency. (n.d.). Economic Indicators. Retrieved December 10, 2021, from https://www.ffa.int/economic_indicators

⁸ Cai J., Huang H., & Leung P. (2019). Understanding the Contribution of Aquaculture and Fisheries to gross domestic product (GDP). FAO Fisheries and Aquaculture Technical Paper (Vol. 606).

Existing social analysis by researchers and existing technical reports may provide information useful for MEL, possibly for setting the baseline, but also for setting the context and highlighting the issues to investigate. For small-scale tuna fisheries and market activities in the Pacific Islands region, the Pacific Community, WorldFish, the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), the University of the South Pacific, and various other organisations have produced information on women's roles in fisheries and some gender analyses. Here are some useful resources:

- Pacific Community <https://coastfish.spc.int/en/publications/bulletins/women-in-fisheries>
- Worldfish <https://www.worldfishcenter.org/research-theme/gender>
- WCS Fiji <https://fiji.wcs.org/resources/reports.aspx>.

Data obstacles and opportunities

The quality and availability of data is a key factor constraining the development of MEL. Table 2.2 shows the lack of data on social and economic aspects of tuna industries generally, and none of it disaggregated enough for HR and GESI indicators. In 2020 the Forum Fisheries Committee, the governing body of the FFA, requested that the FFA develop a socio-economic development indicator framework for tuna industries. In 2020 and 2021 the FFA worked with external consultants towards drafting a framework. When completed and implemented, this framework will improve the data available for MEL for HR and GESI purposes. Likewise, the Pacific Community's Human Rights and Social Development Division is working on improving gender data for the Pacific.

MEL is also relevant for tuna companies – at a very basic level companies keeping track of their finances is a form of MEL. Large companies with a social responsibility agenda can also collect data on HR and GESI factors, like equal opportunity statistics. Companies are also an important source of information about HR and GESI factors, such as human rights complaints, for government monitoring.

Another point about existing data for MEL is that many government databases in the region need verification to correct inaccuracies. The quality of data put into databases is what is extracted and used for decision-making. Any inaccuracies carry forward and make the data less useful for MEL purposes, or even misleading.

The data required to understand HR and GESI in tuna industries is cross-cutting, so requires collaboration across different kinds of agencies. Some of it is labour data, some is health data, some is fisheries management data on compliance, some relates to women's affairs and social services. Some economic data is held by finance agencies, and some by national statistics offices. Data collection for HR and GESI MEL therefore requires going outside normal fisheries data collection, and collaborating with other agencies. Regionally it means collaboration between FFA and groups within the Pacific Community such as Fisheries and Aquaculture Marine Ecosystems (FAME), the Statistics for Development Division (SDD), the Oceanic Fisheries Programme (OFP) and the Human Rights and Social Development Division (HRSD). Another relevant regional organisation is the International Labour Organization (ILO) – they do not hold data but their knowledge and networks are useful for designing MEL frameworks relating to labour and human rights.

Human rights and labour abuses on some fishing vessels are one of the most pressing social concerns about tuna industries in the Pacific. Reports indicate that there are problems with slavery/trafficking/forced labour on fishing vessels, and other issues such as unreasonably long working hours, unsanitary living conditions, violence or discriminatory behaviour, and so on. But there are no solid numbers on the extent of these issues.

It is very difficult to collect or verify such data on offshore fishing vessels because the vessels operate out at sea; often the vessels are owned in one country, crew are recruited by agents based in another country, there are language barriers, and so on. These vessels provide fish catch data, which is verified by an observer system, but thus far a system for collecting and verifying data on labour conditions is not in place.

Ideas for how to collect HR and GESI data on offshore tuna fishing vessels

This is a new field so there are not yet tested and proven methods for data collection about HR and GESI for offshore fishing vessels. Here are some ideas for how it could be done in the Pacific, based on discussions with stakeholders in preparing this handbook.

Fisheries observers are well placed to collect information on HR and GESI on fishing vessels, and according to interviewees, observers already record the cleanliness of a vessel, whether there are bed bugs, how helpful the master is, and any points they notice about labour conditions. This data would be very useful for ongoing monitoring for HR on fishing vessels. Is there a way to capture this kind of data, separating it off from the catch data and feeding it back to FFA or member states for the purposes of monitoring labour conditions? Staff at the Solomon Islands Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR) have considered this question, particularly the difficulty of debriefing crew without the master overhearing. In addition to observers on vessels at sea, port samplers and the multi-agency teams that board vessels for customs and border inspections are well placed to gather data for monitoring HR and GESI on fishing vessels and around port areas.

There are several caveats to note regarding using fisheries observers and port samplers to collect data on HR and labour conditions on fishing vessels:

- Observer work is already risky, with several having disappeared or died under questionable circumstances. Asking them to report HR abuses will increase their risk.
- Observers already have a heavy workload, so adding further HR reporting may not be feasible.
- Observers are trained in the biological and technical aspects of fisheries, not social analysis. Training in social science methods for HR and GESI would be needed.

Electronic and video surveillance of vessels could also be used as a source of data about HR on vessels, with 'dry' observers monitoring electronic data from an office on shore. Video monitoring is already being rolled out for biological monitoring to complement the work onboard observers do. For example, video surveillance could be used to monitor the length of working hours, as well as instances of physical abuse.

Other possibilities for collecting data on HR on fishing vessels include using innovations being designed to help improve the communication connectivity of crew while at sea, via smart phones, as part of work to improve 'worker voice' in the seafood industry. Or possibly data could be collected by fisheries agencies from recruiting agents, who debrief crew after trips. Increasingly tuna companies are using digital catch documentation and traceability – these are already established in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. There are efforts to include it also for social responsibility including labour and human rights. See Module 3 for further details on ideas that are under development



What is social analysis for HR and GESI in tuna industries?

There is no one-size-fits-all model for social analysis. This module provides examples of the types of information to include in analysis. Most Pacific Island governments do not have the resources for social analysis in their fisheries agency budgets, but external donors may fund it. Some external funders require such analysis as part of projects.

Social analysis helps identify stakeholders and work out what people need from the project/programme, and the possible social impacts – both positive and negative. Some people may have more opportunities than others, or be more vulnerable to human rights abuses based on their gender, life circumstances, economic background, social standing or education. Social analysis helps identify human rights issues and ensures the different needs of women and men of all diversities are recognised and considered.

Governments promote tuna industries because of the revenue dollars, economic activity and jobs they provide, but to truly understand the development impacts from tuna industries, we need to know who is doing what in the sector – in industrial fishing, processing, and trading, and small-scale coastal fishing and domestic markets. The social effects of tuna industries, positive and negative, should be understood as part of ongoing management of the sector.

Social analysis may involve looking at who benefits from tuna industries, such as employment numbers across gender, ethnicity and age distributions, and the conditions under which people are employed in terms of wages, leave provisions and so on. It may involve social and economic impact analysis to see whether the economic benefits of tuna industries outweigh the social costs they may cause. Social analysis can include almost anything related to the human dimensions of fisheries. In this handbook we focus on social analysis specifically related to HR and GESI.



TIP: developing in-house expertise in social analysis

If you are in a position to approve staff training or allocate funding for capacity building, you could consider sending staff for training in social analysis. You could also make it a requirement that a staff member trained to undertake social analysis does HR and GESI assessments of work plans, projects and strategies. It is important to note that one-off training will not make someone a social analysis specialist. Continuous investment in staff training and capacity building in social analysis is required, as well as working in partnership with the national agency for gender equality (sometimes called 'women's affairs'), and other GESI and human rights specialists.

Methods for social analysis of HR and GESI in tuna industries

There is a range of social science methods that are useful for analysing social issues in fisheries generally, including in HR and GESI in tuna industries. Some of these are:

- interviews with open ended questions, qualitative, such as 'tell me about the social impacts of tuna industries in your community'
- interviews can be individual or with groups, called focus group discussions
- questionnaire surveys, with closed-end questions requiring answers such as yes/no, numbers (e.g. kilograms, dollars), or Likert scales (on a scale of 1–5 'how satisfied are you with fisheries management in your country?')
- desk reviews
- mapping
- observation.

Much of the information that goes into a social analysis can be obtained by a ‘desk review’ of existing reports and research relevant for tuna industries in the Pacific. You can then supplement the findings of the desk review with new data collection, such as via interviews – questionnaire surveys or mapping – and specific social analysis of the group of people targeted in your project. In this handbook we focus on the content of social analysis, rather than methods. For methods, your agency may arrange for training or expert advice from a social scientist. There are also many published guides to social science methods and research design, which may be available through a library or to buy online. For example:

Vaccaro, I., Smith, E. A., & Aswani, S. (2010). *Environmental social sciences: methods and research design*. Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press.

Existing HR and GESI social analysis for tuna industries

As of 2021 there have not been many publications on social analysis of HR issues in Pacific tuna industries. The group that has done most is Human Rights at Sea, who have many reports of cases of human rights abuses of tuna fishing crew and observers on their website: <https://www.humanrightsatsea.org/publications/>

Since the 1980s there have been several publications of social analysis of GESI issues in tuna industries, mainly focusing on women’s employment in tuna industries.

Here are some of the key publications:

- Meltzhoff, S. K., & LiPuma, E. S. (1983). *A Japanese fishing joint venture: worker experience and national development in the Solomon Islands*. Manila: International Center for Living Aquatic Resources Management (ICLARM).
- Emberson-Bain, A. (1994). *Sustainable development or malignant growth? Perspectives of Pacific island women*. Suva, Fiji: Australian International Development Assistance Bureau (AIDAB).
- Tuara Demmke, P. (2006). *Gender issues in the Pacific Islands Tuna Industry (DEVFISH Project)*. Honiara, Solomon Islands: Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC). Retrieved from [https://www.ffa.int/system/files/Gender issues in P. I. Tuna Industries 1_0.pdf](https://www.ffa.int/system/files/Gender%20issues%20in%20P.I.%20Tuna%20Industries%201_0.pdf)
- Sullivan, N., Ram-Bidesi, V., Diffey, S., & Gillett, R. (2008). *Gender Issues in Tuna Fisheries: Case Studies in Papua New Guinea, Fiji and Kiribati*. Honiara, Solomon Islands: Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Pacific Community (SPC).
- Vunisea, A. (2021). *Gender Mainstreaming in Fiji’s Offshore Tuna Industry*. Suva, Fiji. Retrieved from https://www.fasia.awsassets.panda.org/downloads/gender_mainstreaming_in_fiji_s_offshore_tuna_industry_report.pdf
- Barclay, K. M., Satapornvanit, A. N., Syddall, V. M., & Williams, M. J. (2021). *Tuna is women’s business too: Applying a gender lens to four cases in the Western and Central Pacific*. *Fish and Fisheries*, 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1111/faf.12634>

HR social analysis

Human rights are based on legal frameworks, so social analysis for HR is oriented to legally defined human rights. To pursue a human rights-based approach (HRBA) for tuna industries means we need to first understand the impacts on people's human rights. What rights are affected by tuna industries? What can be done to protect, fulfil, and respect HR in tuna industries? How can rights holders be empowered and claimable rights strengthened? How well are duty bearers performing in guarding these rights?

The New Zealand Government has developed a short guide for social analysis for human rights.⁹ According to that guide, analysis for HR should identify:

- any risks and vulnerabilities and negative, unintended consequences of [tuna industries], and how to mitigate against them;
- baseline data that is needed to ensure targets and indicators sensitive to human rights are included;
- who has capacity to improve human rights outcomes and the support they may need; and
- opportunities and describe interventions to protect and promote human rights.

Social analysis could mean finding out the extent and nature of HR abuses on fishing vessels, and across different fleets. It could mean exploring which interventions to address HR abuses on fishing vessels are most effective.

There are resources on human rights in seafood industries with lists of topics to cover in social analysis. You can search the websites of organisations such as RISE (<https://riseseafood.org/>) and Human Rights at Sea (<https://www.humanrightsatsea.org/>).

Here are two useful resources:

- Conservation International. 2021. Social responsibility assessment tool for the seafood sector: a rapid assessment protocol. Available at: www.riseseafood.org

Nakamura, K., Ota, Y., & Blaha, F. (2022). A practical take on the duty to uphold human rights in seafood workplaces. *Marine Policy*, 135(September 2021), 104844. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2021.104844>

GESI social analysis

What can we find out from a GESI analysis of tuna industries?

GESI analysis helps to identify:

- the roles of women and men of all diversities in tuna industries;
- different impacts on different groups of people (e.g., men and women, socially marginalised groups) based on different engagement with industry (job types, etc); and
- how different people benefit from tuna industries, through income, food or cultural benefits or if they do not benefit.

GESI analysis also examines:

- how changes in fisheries management, or social and economic conditions affect those benefits; and
- how social interactions, including relations between women and men, and social rules and hierarchies affect people's roles in tuna industries, and the opportunities and benefits they gain from the sector if they do.

The public image of the tuna fisheries is that men are the main players. However, when we look at whole value chains – including marketing, processing, and fisheries management – women are just as involved as men.¹⁰ A gender analysis could show that we overlook certain areas of tuna industries because of 'unconscious bias' that offshore fisheries are male-dominated. Unconscious bias is discrimination that we are unaware of. It becomes embedded in our thinking processes through social and cultural messages surrounding us in our childhood and daily lives. Unconscious bias clouds people's perceptions and understanding of fisheries participation, resulting in women being excluded from opportunities and decision-making (see more on unconscious bias in Module 1).

⁹ New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. (2013). Human Rights Analysis Guideline. Auckland: New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT). Retrieved from https://www.mfat.govt.nz/assets/Aid-Prog-docs/Tools-and-guides/Human_Rights_Analysis_Guideline.pdf especially p.5.

¹⁰ Barclay K. M., Satapornvanit A. N., Syddall V. M., & Williams M. J. (2021). Tuna is women's business too: Applying a gender lens to four cases in the Western and Central Pacific. *Fish and Fisheries*, 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1111/faf.12634>



Recognising discrimination

A basic principle of social analysis is that people are often not conscious of all the ways that discrimination works in their community. The analysis must therefore go beyond surface ideas and probe into the social relations around fishing, processing and market activities.

Misconception: 'Women do not fish for tuna'

In order to properly monitor or evaluate GESI in tuna industries, we must be able to see beyond stereotypes or we might miss important data. A researcher interviewing people about tuna industries in Solomon Islands in 2019 was told by many interviewees that women do not fish for tuna. "The women are mainly involved in the cleaning of the fish and processing it for markets but the fishing part of things, especially when it comes to tuna, it is all males".¹¹ However, the research found that some women were involved in small-scale tuna fisheries near Gizo, usually with their husbands, and in 2019 the Noro-based fishing company NFD recruited three women cadets for the industrial fishery.¹² Gender-disaggregated data is needed to uncover participation that people don't expect, and which can be important for making sure fisheries projects are equitable.

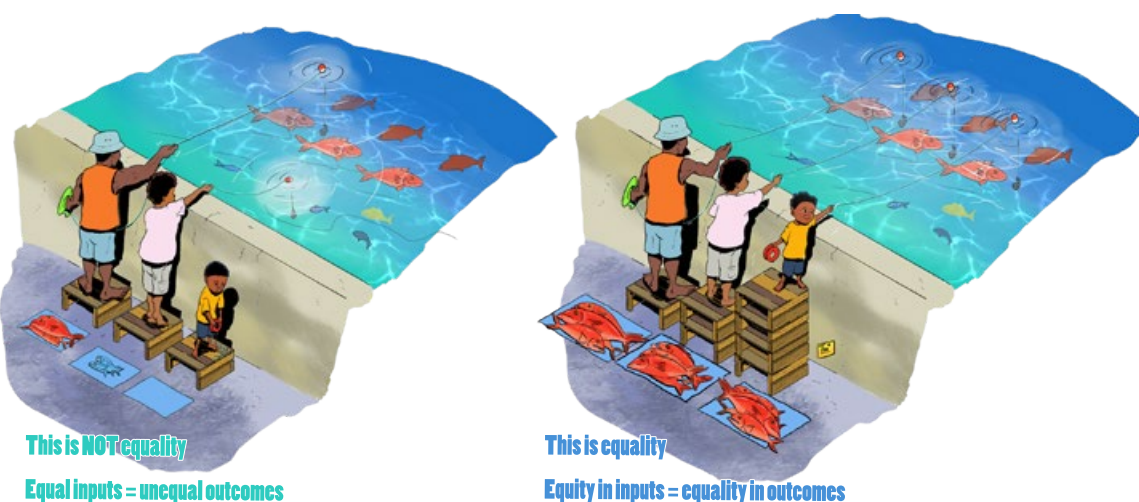
The internationally accepted definition of discrimination in the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which most Pacific Island countries and territories have ratified, is very broad and includes direct and indirect forms: "any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex ... in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field".¹³ Freedom from discrimination on the basis of sex is thus both a codified human right, and a key element of gender equity.

Using the findings of social analyses in policymaking and programme and project design enables all segments of the population to gain development benefits from tuna industries in a fairer manner.



People are not the same

Because people have different capacities, aspirations and life situations, equality of inputs does not necessarily lead to equitable outcomes. Social analysis can reveal people's needs, enabling the design of equitable interventions to provide equal outcomes for all. Income inequality is not a breach of human rights, but inequality of opportunity based on discrimination is.



11 Barclay K. M., Satapornvanit A. N., Syddall V. M., & Williams M. J. (2021). Tuna is women's business too: Applying a gender lens to four cases in the Western and Central Pacific. *Fish and Fisheries*, 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1111/faf.12634>

12 International Finance Corporation. (2019). Investing in Fisheries and People in Solomon Islands. International Finance Corporation (IFC), World Bank Group. Retrieved from https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/news_ext_content/ifc_external_corporate_site/news-and-events/news/investing-in-fisheries-and-people-in-solomon-islands

13 United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. (1979). Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Retrieved from <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CEDAW.aspx> Article 1

Misconception: 'Gender' is only relevant for women

Effective social analysis about gender relations in tuna industries must be based on a solid understanding of gender in society. Gender is about the roles of all people, whatever gender they are. It also refers to the relationships between women and men and their respective status in their society, community and family. It is not only about women.

The roles that women have are fundamentally shaped by their societies. Gender roles and relationships are based on beliefs and practices that can be transformed to create more balanced relationships, partnerships and resilience for everyone, as has happened in Pacific cultures for thousands of years. Some social ideas about masculinity can be harmful to men, who may be expected to behave in certain ways, such as 'being strong' rather than seeking help when struggling with a health problem, or to take up activities that can affect their mental and physical health, such as alcohol and tobacco.¹⁴

When we take a gender perspective, we look at relationships between women and men to identify where there are differences that generate inequalities, vulnerabilities, fears and exclusion. Transforming harmful social ideas and practices requires everyone's collaboration, regardless of their gender. Good leadership enables such transformation. Poor leadership can amplify social exclusion. Some uses of social media can also amplify social exclusion.

Misconception: 'Women do not identify gender inequality as an issue, so it is not important for them'

Social analysis goes further than what people say about inequality and also looks at its effects on the lives of community members of different genders, ages, ethnicity, and so on.

Inequality is built into societies and into the way people live and interact with each other. It is therefore difficult for some people experiencing inequality to identify it. For example, in some cases, women who experience domestic violence believe it is 'normal' and that it is women's responsibility to 'behave' themselves to avoid angering their partners. The same applies to other population groups who are socially disadvantaged or discriminated against – they may come to see the discrimination as an unavoidable part of life, or even as being justified.

In other situations people do understand they are being unjustly discriminated against, but do not feel able to speak openly about it. They may believe that raising the problem will not solve the problem and may make things worse for them. Additionally, people prioritise other concerns over gender inequality and prefer to focus on those other concerns. For example, interviewees in an i-Kiribati tuna fishing community in Solomon Islands felt the most important discrimination they faced was as a migrant group, and they wanted the social researchers to focus on that, not on gender relations.¹⁵ It is important for researchers to respect such wishes, and at the same time recognise that people prioritising other concerns over gender inequality does not mean that gender inequality does not exist.

14 American Psychological Association Boys and Men Guidelines Group. (2018). APA Guidelines for psychological practice with boys and men. Retrieved from <https://www.apa.org/about/policy/boys-men-practice-guidelines.pdf>

15 McClean N., Barclay K., Fabinyi M., Adhuri D. S., Sulu R. J., & Indrabudi T. (2019). Assessing tuna fisheries governance for community wellbeing: case studies from Indonesia and Solomon Islands. Sydney, Australia: University of Technology Sydney. Retrieved from <https://www.uts.edu.au/about/faculty-arts-and-social-sciences/research/fass-research-projects/assessing-governance-tuna>

Misconception: 'We work for the families and/or the communities. People all face the same issues so we do not need to make a difference between women and men – they work together'

Fisheries development is often based on the assumption that whole families will benefit. It might seem then that we do not need to gather gender disaggregated data for social analysis or MEL; we can just collect data about whole communities or households. However, benefits may not flow equally between and among families. For example, a nearshore fish aggregating device (FAD) may greatly improve the availability of fish, but FADs can only be used by people with access to boats (usually men). Sometimes only local resource-owning groups will be allowed to use the FADs. Therefore, the benefits may not be equitably shared. Men may share cash income with their families but they may also buy beer, which may lead to increased family violence. Women's income from working in tuna factories may be appropriated by relatives. A careful social analysis can help projects and programmes avoid causing inequalities and negative social impacts and ensure that every section of the community gains benefits. Financial literacy training undertaken with women cannery workers by SolTuna with gender specialists from the International Finance Corporation (IFC) involved planning household budgets within families, so that cannery wages could be divided among priorities, with some being saved for housing improvements, school-related costs, and other family needs, and some allocated for recreational purposes, such as a beer or two. This is a gender-sensitive example from tuna industries of handling development that builds family relations, rather than worsening inequalities.

To properly understand HR and GESI in tuna industries, analysis must look at social inequality in the broader society. A good social analysis explores existing social issues and possible violations of basic human rights, such as:

- unequal division of labour and benefits (some people do more of the work but get less of the benefits, or vice versa);
- unequal access to equipment, training or income by women, youth and people of low social status; and
- conflicts within communities, including gender-based violence and child abuse, that restrict women's mobility and access to opportunities.

These social factors have a direct impact on the ability of different groups in communities to gain benefits from tuna industries in an equitable and sustainable way.



1 – Basic overview

Describe the social structure of the relevant group of people – for example, fishing crew, processing factory workers, fishing community, market vendors. Include gender, age, ethnicity/nationality and identify any socially excluded groups, such as people with disabilities.

- What are the roles of women and men of different segments of society (youth, socio-economic status, level of schooling, ethnic group, migration status, caste) in relation to tuna industries?
- Do inequalities exist in accessing resources for tuna-related activities (access to fishing grounds, equipment, information, training, etc.)? Are there inequalities in the distribution of benefits from tuna industries?
- How do environmental or economic changes in tuna industries affect women and men from different segments of society? Are the impacts different for women and men?
- To achieve equitable development from tuna resources, what are the needs of women and men from different segments of the community, including in accessing services and programmes?
- Are there opportunities to promote more equitable benefits from tuna resources?
- Who has access to equipment such as boats and engines, technical or traditional knowledge and decision-making power over tuna resources? Does any group have limited access to these things?

2 – GESI analysis of tuna livelihoods

‘Tuna livelihoods’ means earning a living through activities connected to tuna fishing. It could be working on fishing vessels or a shore base, working in a processing factory, working in fisheries management for the government, or small-scale tuna fishing and market activities.

- Describe the composition of the population involved in tuna livelihood activities by sex, age, social status, ethnicity, schooling level, income level, caste, geographical location and origin.
- Which activities are performed in relation to tuna industries and by whom (with information disaggregated by sex, age, caste, ethnic group, and other relevant social categories)?
- What level of access do women and men from different segments of the population have over the resources required to effectively engage in tuna livelihood activities (fishing vessels, engines, gear)?
- Do men and women have access to education and training for tuna industries? Does this access vary for men and women from different segments of the community?
- What are the benefits of tuna industries, as perceived by women and men from different segments of the community?
 - Food security: How many times do they eat tuna per day/week/etc? What proportion of protein intake does this fish represent (e.g. half the protein intake per week)? Is the tuna in canned form, fresh from local small-scale fishers or salted fish from the industrial fleet?
 - Incomes: What is the investment in terms of time and money for tuna activities? What percentage of total household incomes comes from these tuna activities? How is the income distributed within the family? What do people do with the income (buy food, save, pay school fees, etc.)?
 - Are there other benefits (e.g. cultural)?

3 – Decision-making for tuna industries

- What organisations are involved in managing tuna resources (e.g. mainly national fisheries agencies)?
- What is the social composition of these governing bodies (by gender, age, caste, landowning status, ethnic group, etc.)?
- What are the decision-making processes of these bodies?
 - Are women, coastal villagers and NGOs able to participate effectively, or do certain groups with influence and power tend to dominate (e.g. older men, company owners, government officials?)
 - Are small-scale fishers, fish workers and people who sell tuna in markets able to participate effectively, or does the industrial fishery and processing sector dominate?
- At the household level, how are financial decisions made in relation to tuna activities (e.g. buying equipment; paying for help with harvesting; selling products; using the income generated)?
 - Are women, young people, and other socially excluded groups happy with the decision-making process? Do they think some things should be done differently?

4 – Social or economic impacts of proposed changes

- How would changes proposed by legislation, by policy or by a development project affect different segments of the population?
 - Refer to activities performed, time dedicated to those activities, workload, use patterns, productivity, financial benefits, nutritional benefits, access to and control over income, and so on.
 - Break the impact assessment down by gender, age, ethnic group, and any other relevant social category.
- How will the changes proposed affect gender and other social relationships?
 - Could they worsen the social exclusion experienced by women or other groups?
 - Do they have the potential to positively transform situations of inequality by reducing exclusion and leading to equality in development outcomes across communities?

GESI concerns can also be added to routine types of analysis that fisheries agency staff already undertake see Table 2.3.

Table 2.3

Routine analyses done by fisheries staff	How to add GESI to these analyses
Assessments of fisheries development needs	<p>What are the needs of each group in the community (disaggregated by sex, age, other social categories)?</p> <p>What are the perspectives of different groups on proposed activities?</p> <p>Who will be doing what kinds of work in the activities?</p> <p>What are the costs and benefits of the activities for different groups in the community?</p>
Market surveys	<p>How many women and men are selling tuna in the market?</p> <p>Who owns the marketing business?</p> <p>Are they selling fresh fish from local small-scale fishers, or are they selling reject fish from the industrial fleet?</p> <p>What are the arrangements for fish supply, for example, what are the transport and any 'middle-person' costs?</p> <p>Did they buy the fish they are selling, or are they selling fish they or their family member caught? If a retailer is employed by the market stall owner, how much is the retailer paid?</p> <p>What are the prices of the different sizes of tuna and fresh versus saltfish in the market?</p> <p>For people selling cooked or smoked tuna, what are the costs of cooking or smoking?</p> <p>How is the income from tuna sales distributed in families?</p> <p>Who makes decisions about the sale of tuna, who uses the income generated, and what do they buy?</p>

Please note that the suggestions made in this section are basic. For more detail, there are many good resources on gender analysis and research for fisheries in developing countries. You can search the WorldFish and FAO websites. Here are two useful resources:

- Gender research in fisheries and aquaculture: A training handbook. USAID Oceans and Fisheries Partnership, and Gender in Aquaculture and Fisheries Section of the Asian Fisheries Society. (2018). Bangkok. Retrieved from <https://repository.seafdec.or.th/handle/20.500.12067/991>
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (2017). Towards gender-equitable small-scale fisheries governance and development – A handbook in support of the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication. Retrieved from <http://www.fao.org/3/i7419en/I7419EN.pdf>
- Ali, S. (n.d.). Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Toolkit. Suva, Fiji: Fiji Women's Fund with support from the Australian Government. Retrieved from <https://womensfundfiji.org/resources/fund-publications/gender-equality-and-social-inclusion-toolkit-social-inclusion-toolkit/>

Tips for planning gender analysis



When planning a gender analysis, it is often helpful (and easier) to speak to a gender specialist, a local non-governmental organisation (NGO) with gender expertise, or your national agency for women's affairs to get an idea about the scope and work required. The Toksave Pacific Gender Resource is an online community for gender research, enabling members to access reports on the latest gender research in the region, including on fisheries.¹⁶ A gender analysis checklist is provided as a tool at the end of this module.



Action points: how can fisheries managers use HR and GESI social analysis and MEL in their work?

Social analysis and MEL are foundational for being able to plan for and assess the human dimensions of any fisheries management or development initiative. This is the case for HR and GESI as well as for all other social or economic impacts. Fisheries agencies should use social analysis and MEL for all projects and programmes.

Fisheries management agencies are very important stakeholders for establishing high quality information about decent work in fisheries and post-harvest industries, in collaboration with other agencies. For example, fisheries management agencies are best placed to facilitate ongoing social and economic data collection on human rights on fishing vessels, decent work in fishing and processing, gender equity in tuna fishing, processing, and informal market activities, and economic data about small-scale tuna fisheries, and domestic markets for fresh tuna and industrial reject fish.

While fisheries management agencies are best placed as the central point for data collection social analysis and MEL for HR and GESI in tuna industries, the reality is that this is a huge task. Social analysis and MEL are not part of the skill sets of most fisheries managers. Fisheries agencies are already busy trying to manage the biological side of fisheries. One way to move forward with HR and GESI social analysis and MEL, given the capacity constraints, is to explore ways of better using existing resources – such as the vessel and labour conditions data already collected by observers, electronic observation data, and leveraging the access to vessels that observers and port samplers have to gather carefully selected additional data relevant for HR and GESI. Another way to move forward is to collaborate with other organisations.

Collaborate with other government agencies

Some relevant HR and GESI capacity gaps in fisheries agencies can be supplemented through collaborating with government agencies working in the areas of labour, justice, and gender affairs. These other organisations have additional sources of information and expertise that would greatly strengthen the efforts of fisheries management agencies. To ensure fisheries policies and services are socially inclusive, data for social analyses must be disaggregated by gender, age, ethnic group, and other relevant social categories. Some of this data is generated outside the fisheries agencies, for example, by national statistics offices that have household income and expenditure surveys (HIES) and censuses.

Collaborate with industry

Tuna fishing and processing companies gather quite a lot of information about their working conditions and corporate social responsibility that they provide to their buyers. This could be a useful source of data on HR and GESI. Companies provide data on catches that is verified through independent observer and port-based monitoring; possibly a similar model could be used for social and economic data. The scandals about human rights abuses on fishing vessels damage the industry, so there is an incentive for the industry to improve this situation.

Collaborate with NGOs, IGOs and regional organisations

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that work with seafarers and women are invaluable sources of knowledge that is relevant for designing social analysis and MEL for HR and GESI in tuna industries. They can help set the context, and may be subcontracted for monitoring activities. Intergovernmental organisations (IGOs) such as the International Labour Organization (ILO) and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and regional organisations such as the Pacific Community and FFA are also useful as sources of information, networks, and to support national activities.

¹⁶ Toksave. (n.d.). Toksave Pacific Gender Resource. <https://www.toksavepacificgender.net/>



Tool: MEL for HR and GESI in Pacific tuna industries

Here are some potential objectives, indicators and data that could be used for MEL for HR and GESI in tuna industries.¹⁷ Are these suitable for your country? Can you think of some additions or alternatives that would be useful for your situation?

Objective: Working conditions on tuna fishing vessels are safe for everyone.

INDICATORS

- Crew labour standards under the FFA HMTA (or equivalent) are implemented
- The existence of independent fish worker associations (such as unions) for workers on tuna fishing vessels
- Proportion of workers with legal, enforceable contracts
- Numbers of safety incidents occurring annually
- Existence of effective, anonymous, accountable grievance mechanisms
- Presence of effective measures to prevent sexual harassment or other discrimination against male and female crew

SOURCES OF DATA FOR THE INDICATORS

- Labour conditions audit or survey – several audit documents have been developed for seafood industries¹⁸
- Review of legislation and the extent to which legal requirements are enforced
- Interview /survey labour organisations, including national trade union peak bodies, and international bodies such as the International Labour Organization
- Company data on contracts and labour organisations
- Company data, non-governmental organisation (NGO) data, government data on safety incidents at sea
- Questionnaire survey of small-scale fishing communities on working conditions including safety

Objective: Use tuna resources to improve food and nutrition security across all groups in society

INDICATOR

- Tuna is available and affordable for and eaten by groups at risk of food insecurity

SOURCES OF DATA FOR THE INDICATOR

- Canned tuna sold domestically – this data exists in the FFA economics database and OFP cannery survey, but is national only (not useful for understanding HR and GESI).
- There is no systematic data collection on domestic sales of raw tuna – including rejects from the industrial fleet (saltfish) or catches from local small-scale fisheries. This data could be obtained via landings surveys, processor surveys and market surveys.
- Tuna consumption by vulnerable groups (such as low-income urban households, or women and youth within households). Some of this information could be adapted from the HIES, but since that is not a consumption survey it would need further work.
- HIES could be used to identify groups at risk of food insecurity.
- Pacific governments generally do not have nutritional data collection that could be used for this indicator.
- New data can be collected via surveys of dietary diversity among vulnerable groups using modules developed by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Health Organization (WHO).¹⁹
- A free online database that gives micronutrient information for fish species is available: <https://www.fishbase.se/topic/List.php?group=nutrientwhich>

¹⁷ Note that the usual national economic indicators such as contribution to GDP are not included here, because that kind of indicator is not useful for understanding HR and GESI issues within national economies, or for migrant workers in global fishing industries. Finer grain economic factors to do with employment and informal livelihoods are more appropriate.

¹⁸ Conservation International. (2021). Social Responsibility Assessment Tool for the Seafood Sector: A Rapid Assessment Protocol. Retrieved from www.riseseafood.org; Seafood Task Force. (2020). Code of Conduct & Auditable Standards Tuna Handbook. Seafood Task Force. Retrieved from https://www.seafoodtaskforce.global/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/STF.G.S.002.EN_STF-Tuna-Handbook-English.pdf

¹⁹ Gibson E., Stacey N., Sunderland T. C. H., & Adhuri D. S. (2020). Dietary diversity and fish consumption of mothers and their children in fisher households in Komodo District, eastern Indonesia. PLoS ONE, 15(4), 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0230777>

Objective: Ensure tuna sector employment wages are above the poverty line

INDICATORS

- Entry level wages in tuna sector in relation to the poverty line
- Numbers/proportion of tuna-earning households living above the poverty line

SOURCES OF DATA FOR THE INDICATORS

- Wages data from companies, disaggregated by gender, age, ethnicity, schooling level, and so on, to enable understanding of GESI correlations with poverty
- HIES data for informal sector tuna (fishing, processing, trading) incomes disaggregated by social groups
- National labour force surveys
- Relevant national or subnational poverty line from the relevant government agency, such as the Ministry of Finance

Objective: Tuna industries offer equal employment opportunities

INDICATORS

- Proportions of women and men employed in different roles and remuneration bands in tuna companies and fisheries management
- Average incomes per role in tuna companies, disaggregated by gender and/or other social grouping
- Roles and incomes in informal tuna livelihood activities, disaggregated by gender and/or other social grouping
- Existence of equity-oriented training for employees

SOURCES OF DATA FOR THE INDICATORS

- FFA economics database for numbers employed, but not standardised to FTE unit, not disaggregated by role or remuneration band, some gender disaggregation
- National labour force surveys
- Could use HIES if occupational classifications are upgraded
- Could undertake specific employment/incomes survey
- Company data
- Fishing community interview or questionnaire surveys
- Gender mainstreaming data within fisheries management agencies

Objective: Tuna processing factory working conditions are safe for everyone

INDICATORS

- Effectiveness of workplace health and safety measures on processing lines, working with machinery and heavy equipment, and in cold storage

SOURCES OF DATA FOR THE INDICATORS

- Company data, including relevant reports/audits provided to buyers on corporate social responsibility
- Interviews/questionnaire with employees
- Interviews/questionnaire with worker associations
- Health clinic/hospital data on injuries requiring treatment

Tool: gender analysis checklist for a programme or project cycle²⁰

Ensuring that gender considerations are accounted for throughout the programme or project cycle requires consideration of key issues and questions at each stage. Reflecting on the results of this checklist will indicate if and where the programme or project cycle's proposals (for objectives, activities and mechanisms for engagement and analysis) should be modified and improved to maximise the participation of men and women and thus the effectiveness of the programme or project.²¹

Phase 1: Preparatory

Institutions and governance

- Describe the current bodies or committees that deal with tuna industries. How gender sensitive are the people/groups represented here? Have participants received any kind of gender training?
- Describe the mechanisms that exist to ensure balanced representation of different groups (men, women, youth, elders, people with disabilities) within these structures.
- Describe the mechanisms that will be used to raise awareness and share information about the project/programme/policy. How will these mechanisms ensure that all groups have access to information that targets their specific information needs?
- Identify the type of scientific information and socio-economic analysis needed to inform the programme or project. What expert support may be needed to ensure that gender considerations are addressed adequately?
- Identify how social structures (such as traditions, governance, religion, rights and status of groups) promote or reduce the ability of men and women to access resources and information critical to livelihoods in tuna industries.

Phase 2: Situation analysis, and Phase 3: Problem analysis

Policies, plans, strategies

- Are gender issues in relation to tuna industries clearly identified and addressed in current policies, programmes and institutional arrangements? How?
- What tuna industry development plans and policies already exist? To what extent do these reflect gender equality commitments? Do these policies and plans contribute to addressing gender issues in relation to access to and control of critical resources for tuna industries?

Conduct an initial stocktake of roles and responsibilities – who is doing what in the following areas?

- Identify who (women or men) are involved and in what ways in tuna fishing and fishing support activities.
- Identify who (women or men) are involved and in what ways in post-harvest activities (e.g. industrial processing and export, small-scale informal marketing, drying, smoking).
- Identify relevant employment and income-generating activities. Who (women or men) does what?

Knowledge gaps

- Are sex-disaggregated data or indicators available for the relevant tuna activities? If so, what information do they provide?
- What information needed to complete a gender analysis is missing? How will these gaps be filled during the planning phase?

Small-scale fishing knowledge and skills – who knows what and who can do what?

- Identify what resources men and women use, for example, boats, engines, fishing gear, FADs, fishing grounds. Who (men or women) have particular knowledge of these resources, where they are located, their seasons? Identify who has control over these resources.
- Describe what knowledge and skills are used by men and by women to manage fisheries resources or develop aquaculture.
- What fishing or aquaculture techniques are used? Who (women or men) uses what?

²⁰ This checklist is adapted from: Secretariat of the Pacific Community. (2015). The Pacific Gender and Climate Change Toolkit: Tools for Practitioners. Suva, Fiji. <https://www.pacificclimatechange.net/document/pacific-gender-climate-change-toolkit-complete-toolkit>

²¹ PACC. 2014. Mainstreaming climate change adaptation in the Pacific: A practical guide. Apia: SPREP/UNDP.

Small-scale fishing access to (use rights) and control of (decision-making rights) resources – who controls what?

- What are the different levels of access to each of the following, for women and for men? Who has access to: fisheries inputs (fishing vessels, outboard motors, bait, nets, freezers); aquaculture or fisheries extension officers; local NGOs or other community members; knowledge about fishing practices; transport?
- Who has control over: fishing grounds; FADs; transport; and finance for accessing credit to purchase inputs; advisory services; access to markets?

Phase 4: Solution analysis, and Phase 5: Design

Needs – who needs what and for what?

- Describe how project objectives and activities adequately address the needs and priorities of men and women in tuna industries. What mechanisms are used to identify these needs and priorities? How do these mechanisms ensure that men and women contribute equally? (Note: this is especially relevant if either men or women are perceived as having the main role in the activity.)
- What resources do men and women need in order to gain benefits from tuna industries? How might current differences in the ability of men and women to access these resources affect programmes/projects?
- What are the expected benefits and opportunities that the project will generate? Indicate ones that may be more accessible for women than men and vice versa (e.g. fisheries training; juggling carer responsibilities with income opportunities, etc.)

Knowledge and skills – who needs to know what?

- What capacity-building needs in relation to tuna activities were identified? For each one, indicate whether it was identified by men, women or both groups.
- Will the project provide training, awareness and education to enhance the current skills and knowledge of men and women? What mechanisms will be used to ensure that men and women contribute and benefit equally? (Note: this is especially relevant if either men or women are perceived as having the main role in a particular activity.)

Inputs from social scientists

- How and to what extent have social scientists, including gender specialists, been involved in the design process?
- Has a gender analysis of proposed policies and interventions been undertaken? If not, when will such an analysis be planned and carried out?
- What resources are allocated to ensure that gender considerations are acted on?

Phase 6: Implementation, monitoring and evaluation

Implementation

- Do the implementing partners already have commitments to achieving gender equity?
- Do they have the skills and capacity to implement programmes using gender-sensitive approaches? If not, include capacity building for partners at the outset.
- Describe the mechanisms that are being used to ensure the full and active participation of men and women at all stages of the implementation process.
- Have any specific measures to address gender issues been identified during the planning phases? If so, describe how they will be resourced and their implementation tracked.

Monitoring and evaluation

Through the use of sex-disaggregated indicators specifically designed for project/programme objectives and specific tools, the monitoring and evaluation framework should allow us to track the following kinds of issues.

- How the programme or project has addressed women's and men's needs in tuna industries.
- How the programme or project has affected women's and men's workloads.
- The additional resources made available for women and for men for tuna-related development, for example, equipment, training, improved access to extension services, improved access to credit, including any shifts in knowledge and skills.
- Capacities and knowledge developed by women and men relating to tuna industries and how they are using these to strengthen development outcomes for all groups within communities.
- Reduction in gender inequalities, for example, in terms of access to benefits from or control over tuna activities.

Tool: gendered value chain analysis²²

A value chain (Figure 2.3) is the full range of production activities that all people are involved in when a product passes through different stages and gains value. This includes access to productive resources (e.g. equipment, finance) before harvesting, during harvesting, during processing and transportation of the product, and during trading to wholesalers, exporters, or final consumers at a market, shop or restaurant. Value chains include local or national, regional and/or global markets.



Figure 2.3. A simple value chain showing the different stages for a marine product

In general, we find that how women and men participate in the value chain as part of their livelihood activities very much depends on the existing division of labour, and the social norms governing work considered appropriate for women and for men in their culture. These roles can also be influenced by other factors such as age, marital status, ethnicity and economic status, which are sometimes identified as ‘gender-based constraints’ (GBC) in the value chain. It is important to recognise the activities women perform in value chains, whether their work is paid or unpaid, part time or full time, the specific needs of women and the specific barriers they face in value chain activities. Women’s participation along the value chain can include their access to and control over productive assets (e.g. nets, ice-chests) and the benefits derived from them (e.g. income). This is often influenced by an individual’s ability to make decisions or choices and to transform these choices into desired livelihood outcomes – such as food or income, payment of school fees, improved housing and other forms of material well-being. Achieving these outcomes depends on people’s ability to control access to resources and profits.

A gender-sensitive value-chain analysis (or mapping) identifies all value-chain actors (women and men, youth) and their level of involvement in each stage, their relationships with each other, the gender-based constraints (GBC) faced by women and men in performing their tasks (see Table 2.4) including inequalities in access to and control over resources, or in decision-making about certain activities in the value chain. Identifying GBC is a key step that complements a simple value-chain analysis by adding a gender lens.

The information collected on the various actors, their relationships and the GBC they face along value-chain nodes need to be gender-disaggregated using gender indicators or measures (see Table 2.4). This helps identify gender-specific barriers and underlying forms of discrimination that relate to existing gender norms. For example, women and men experience access to markets differently because of their gender roles. Women’s mobility may be more restricted because they are expected to stay home and look after children and manage households; they may not own or have access to a means of transportation; or travelling might not be safe for them.

Table 2.4 Tool for analysing gender-based constraints (GBC) in value chains

Activity per stage	Constraints faced by women	Causes/factors leading to GBC	Consequences for the value chain	Actions to address GBC
Preparation				
Harvesting				
Processing				
Wholesale				
Retail				

Source: adapted from Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2018). Developing gender-sensitive value chains – guidelines for practitioners. Rome: FAO, in Stacey N., Govan H. (2021). Module 8: Livelihoods. In: Barclay K., Mangubhai S., Leduc B., Donato-Hunt C., Makhoul N., Kinch J. and Kalsuak J. (eds). Pacific handbook for gender and social inclusion in small-scale fisheries and aquaculture. Second edition. Noumea, New Caledonia: Pacific Community.

Value chain analysis also identifies where improvements in the quality of the product could help producers or sellers to gain higher value. For example, if saltfish from industrial tuna fishing vessels is kept cold rather than left on the deck or wharf in the sun before being picked up by people who trade in saltfish, saltfish sellers might be able to sell their product for higher prices. Interventions could include postharvest seafood quality training for saltfish traders, ensuring saltfish traders have affordable reliable access to ice-chests and ice, improving access to credit (to avoid money lenders with high interest rates), facilitating transport used in the saltfish trade, or establishing women’s cooperatives to help sellers access information to better understand market and trade prices.

²² This gendered value chain analysis tool has been adapted from Stacey N., Govan H. (2021). Module 8: Livelihoods. In: Barclay K., Mangubhai S., Leduc B., Donato-Hunt C., Makhoul N., Kinch J. and Kalsuak J. (eds). Pacific handbook for gender and social inclusion in small-scale fisheries and aquaculture. Second edition. Noumea, New Caledonia: Pacific Community.

Acronyms

CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
EDIS	Economic and Development Indicator Statistics
FAD	fish aggregating device
FAME	Fisheries Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystems Division of the Pacific Community
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
FFA	Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency
FTE	full time equivalent, a standard unit used for measuring employment
GBC	gender-based constraints
GDP	gross domestic product
GESI	gender equity and social inclusion (outside this handbook the word 'equality' is usually used, rather than 'equity' in GESI)
HIES	Household income and expenditure survey
HMTC	Harmonised Minimum Terms and Conditions for Access by Fishing Vessels (FFA)
HR	human rights
HRBA	Human rights-based approaches
HRSD	Human Rights and Social Development Division of the Pacific Community
IFC	International Finance Corporation (World Bank Group)
IGOs	intergovernmental organisations, such as the Pacific Community or United Nations bodies
ILO	International Labour Organization
KPI	key performance indicator, a prominent part of MEL processes
MEL	monitoring evaluation and learning
NFD	National Fisheries Development, a tuna fishing company in Solomon Islands
NGO	non-governmental organisation
OFF	Oceanic Fisheries Programme in FAME in the Pacific Community
PEARL	planning, evaluation, accountability, reflection and learning
PNA	Parties to the Nauru Agreement
SDD	Statistics for Development Division of the Pacific Community
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
WCPFC	Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society
WHO	World Health Organization



Pacific
Community
Communauté
du Pacifique

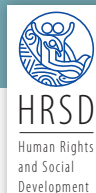
Pacific handbook for human rights, gender equity and social inclusion in tuna industries

© Francisco Blaha



MODULE 3

HR and GESI at sea



Pacific handbook for

human rights, gender equity and social inclusion

in tuna industries

Module 3: HR and GESI at sea

Kate Barclay and Senoveva Maui



Noumea, New Caledonia, 2023

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Original text: English

Reference Note

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Key points

Working on offshore fishing vessels is hard work physically and emotionally, with long periods away from shore and family, but it is an important employment opportunity for people without other opportunities. Most work in tuna fishing does not involve human rights abuses.

- In some types of offshore tuna fishing, particularly distant water longline vessels operating from Fiji, and longliners based in Vanuatu, there have been documented human rights abuses.
- Monitoring and regulating human rights on fishing vessels is made difficult by the multi-jurisdictional nature of operations – with beneficial ownership, vessel flag, company base, and labour recruitment often being across multiple states. Much longline tuna fishing occurs outside national waters, in areas ‘beyond national jurisdiction’. Crews are from different countries. It is hard for coastal states in the Pacific to control everything that goes on in Pacific tuna industries. Flag states also need to take more responsibility for what occurs on their vessels.
- Good foundations for protecting human rights on fishing vessels are laid out in the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) Harmonised Minimum Terms and Conditions, and in international frameworks such as the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 188 on work in fishing. The next step is to implement and enforce these frameworks.
- There are also areas of improvement for gender equity and social inclusion in offshore tuna fishing. There are now more opportunities for women to work on fishing fleets, but, in order for this to be safe, progress must go hand-in-hand with improving human rights protections. Even when women are not present, sexual abuse among men is part of the problem with human rights at sea to be addressed.
- Broader social exclusion issues with inequality of pay and discrimination around nationality and hierarchies on board are also important considerations.

Industrial fishing methods in the Pacific¹

Purse seine

Mainly skipjack and small yellowfin tuna are caught by purse seine gear. Most catch is for canning. About 75% of the tuna catch in the WCPO region is by purse seine gear, about 1.9 million tonnes in 2009. Most of the purse seine catch is taken within 5° of the equator.

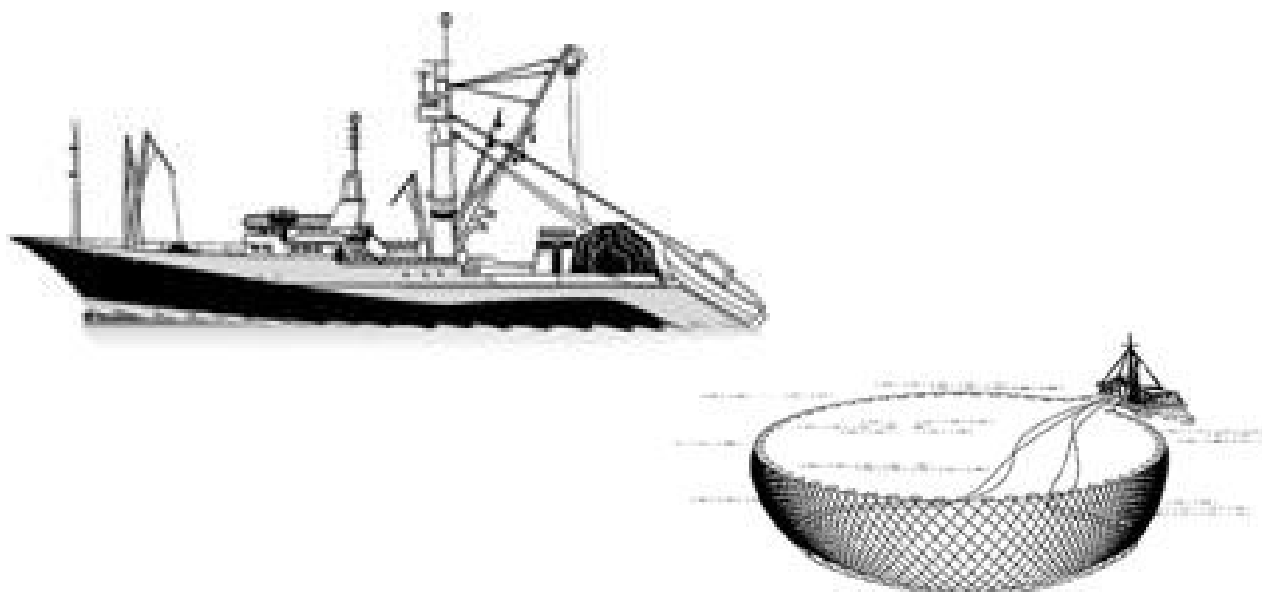


Figure 3.1 Purse seine vessel and gear

¹ The text and graphics in this section have been sourced from the Pacific Community website: <https://oceanfish.spc.int/en/tuna-fisheries/fishing-methods>



Pole-and-line

Mainly skipjack and small yellowfin tuna are caught by pole-and-line gear. Most catch is for canning or producing a dried product. About 7% of the tuna catch in the WCPO region is by pole-and-line gear, about 147,000 tonnes in 2009. In the 1980s several Pacific Island countries had fleets of these vessels, but most no longer operate due to competition with the more productive purse seine gear.



Figure 3.2 Pole-and-line vessel and gear

Longline

Most tuna caught by longliners are large size yellowfin, bigeye, and albacore. The prime yellowfin and bigeye are often exported fresh to overseas markets. Most of the albacore is for canning. About 10% of the tuna catch in the WCPO region is by longline gear, about 240,000 tonnes in 2009. There are two major types of longliners: (1) relatively large vessels with mechanical freezing equipment (often based outside the Pacific Islands), and (2) smaller vessels that mostly use ice to preserve fish and are typically based at a port in the Pacific Islands.

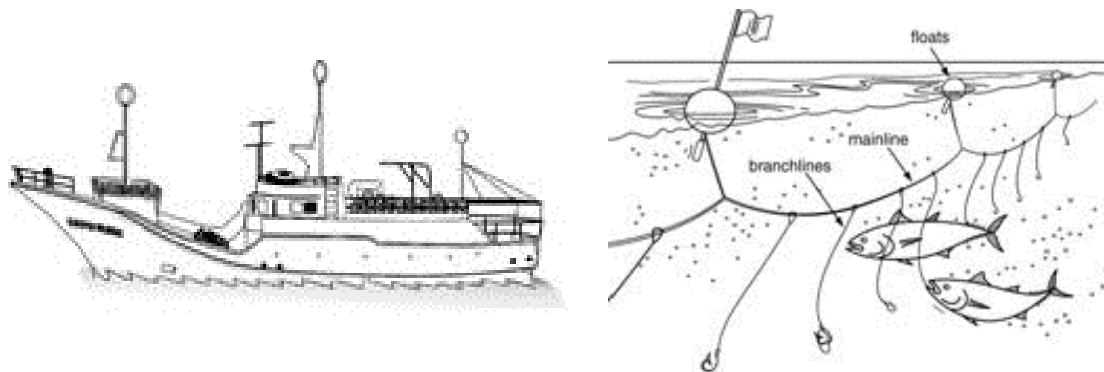


Figure 3.3 Longline vessel and gear

Troll

Large-scale trolling targets albacore tuna for canning. Gear types other than the three listed above are responsible for about 13% of tuna catch in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean (WCPO). Large-scale trolling by US vessels is an important part of this. It is carried out in the cool water to the south and north of the Pacific Islands region. Trolling in the south results in about 5,000 tonnes of albacore annually.



Figure 3.4 Troll vessel and gear

Work on tuna fishing vessels in the Pacific

Working on an offshore fishing vessel is not for everyone, but some people love it. For others, even if they only like some parts of the job and find other parts hard, it is a really important employment opportunity, especially for people who did not finish school or do not have good employment options at home. Offshore fishing is hard physical work, many people suffer seasickness at first, it has long hours and requires people to be away from home for weeks, months or even years at a time. But it provides an income and gives people a chance to develop a career, people who might otherwise not have that chance.

Case study – life story of a purse seine crew member



My name is John Reuhanua, and I am from West 'Are'Are in Malaita Province, Solomon Islands. I did my primary schooling at Waimarao village, and continued my secondary education to Koloale Community High School. I could not complete my F5 in 2015 because of school fee difficulties so I decided to go into direct employment. I worked with a logging company first, then in 2016 I went to Noro, where one of the big local tuna fishing companies is based – National Fisheries Development or NFD. I started as casual crew on board NFD purse seiner Solomon Ruby. NFD trained me, and later I gained a permanent role as 4th Engineer on board.

The crew of Solomon Ruby is 25, with three internationals and 22 Solomon Islanders. Living conditions on board the vessel are OK. We can travel for three weeks not seeing land, and working hours can be long. Wake-up call is at 4 a.m. in the morning to begin fishing, and a day's work can end at 1 a.m. in the night. We aim for at least 50 tonnes before we return to shore to offload. Accidents at sea are the most threatening part of the work. The handling of fishing equipment (e.g. nets) can be quite dangerous and when someone gets hurt it can be life threatening. It can be hours till we reach the nearest clinic. I had an accident in December 2021 and it was long hours of pain before getting medical attention. All the crew have first aid training and can attend to small wounds, but no one on board has advanced medical knowledge.

The time away from my wife and two children is the most challenging part of working at sea. We spend long hours and time away from our families. Most months we spend only three to four

days on shore, and then head out into the sea again to fish. Some of my colleagues quit working because they eventually could not cope with the situation. I love doing this job, but yes, it has its challenges when you have a family and know that they need your support. Crew are entitled to a month's annual leave so we can travel back to our home village. We take unpaid leave at times when we need to get off the vessel to attend to family needs, or attend to a death in the family. I enjoy my job and still keep working, because my wife is very supportive. She works at SolTuna tuna processing company and cares for our two children when I am out at sea. I am indeed very thankful for my family.



Figure 3.5 Purse seine vessel engineer John Reuhanua with his daughter Marjorie. ©Senoveva Mauli

I can recommend this job to other members of my family, but will tell them that you know the consequences and to cope with the situation you have to be willing. Being willing is key in this work at sea.

These cases are quite normal in the tuna fishing industry. Keeping in mind that in normal situations offshore fishing is hard work but can be rewarding in various ways, we can now turn to consider what happens in the minority of cases, when things go wrong in terms of human rights and labour conditions. Although there have been some cases of human rights abuses in Pacific tuna fishing, it is not correct to say that the whole industry relies on slavery. In the words of one of the stakeholders who contributed to this handbook: “sometimes fishing gives an opportunity to escape a life that is worse than conditions on board”.

Human rights issues on tuna fishing vessels

In recent years, various organisations, journalists and researchers have brought to public attention the fact that there are human rights abuses on some tuna fishing vessels, especially those that operate on the high seas, where legal jurisdiction is not clear and they are far away from law enforcement agencies. This problem affects fisheries globally.² 2020 was a particularly difficult year for seafarers everywhere, on top of already poor vessel conditions for many, because COVID travel restrictions meant tens of thousands of crew were trapped on board for months at a time, unable to get ashore or to travel home.³ To emphasise the points made above, tuna is among the products from China and Taiwan distant water fishing fleets – both of which operate in the Pacific – included on the US Government’s list of commodities associated with forced labour.⁴

In offshore tuna fishing in the Pacific, certain types of fishing are more associated with human rights abuses than others. Stakeholders who contributed to this handbook agree that the problems with poor living and working conditions are mainly on longliners, not purse seiners (see Figures 3.6–3.8) or pole-and-line vessels. The main documented problems have been on distant water fishing vessels (especially vessels flagged in Taiwan or China) and some of the vessels in locally based fleets in Vanuatu.⁵ Many of the longline vessels are old, poorly maintained and were constructed with very limited space for crew, with shared sleeping and toilet facilities (see Figures 3.8 and 3.9). It is important to note that there are cultural differences about the importance of privacy for sleeping and bathrooms, with vessels designed and built in Europe and North America tending to have greater privacy, and vessels designed and built in Asian countries often having less privacy. Many of the vessels used in the Pacific were designed or built in Japan, Taiwan or China. Many Pacific Islanders share sleeping rooms at home, so shared facilities are not necessarily seen as a problem by crew. Indeed, even on purse seine vessels from the US or Europe, deckhands sleep four to six in a cabin – not everyone has a separate sleeping room. Even when domestic longline vessels are old and have very basic facilities for crew, stakeholders argue that the labour conditions can be fine and crew can be satisfied to live and work on them.



Figure 3.6 Living conditions on purse seine vessels in the PNG fleet © Marcelo Hidalgo

Note: the bed and bathroom shown here is for a captain or other senior crew. Lower ranked crew have shared sleeping quarters and bathrooms.

- 2 Godfrey M. (2021a, November 19). China blocks US forced labor proposal at WTO fishery subsidies talks. Seafood Directions. Retrieved from <https://www.seafoodsource.com/news/environment-sustainability/china-blocks-us-forced-labor-proposal-at-wto-fishery-subsidies-talks>; Godfrey M. (2021b, November 22). Taiwan's tuna industry adopts CCTV, blockchain in effort to mend image. Seafood Source. Retrieved from <https://www.seafoodsource.com/news/environment-sustainability/taiwan-s-tuna-industry-adopts-cctv-blockchain-in-effort-to-mend-image>
- 3 International Transport Workers' Federation. (2021). Day of the Seafarer is meaningless without vaccines and our rights restored. International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF). Retrieved from <https://www.itfseafarers.org/en/news/day-seafarer-meaningless-without-vaccines-and-our-rights-restored>; Coles, F. (2021, June 2). Seafarers - scum of the earth. Splash247.Com. Retrieved from <https://splash247.com/seafarers-scum-of-the-earth/>
- 4 Godfrey M. (2020, November 19). US ramping up pressure on China's use of forced labor in distant-water fishing. Seafood Source. Retrieved from <https://www.seafoodsource.com/news/environment-sustainability/us-ramping-up-pressure-on-china-s-use-of-forced-labor-in-distant-water-fishing>
- 5 For example, Willie G. (2022, May 21). Mission to Seafarers wants safety of seafarers prioritised. Vanuatu Daily Post. https://www.dailypost.vu/news/mission-to-seafarers-wants-safety-of-seafarers-prioritised/article_992a6397-90fa-5b8c-9223-be9cbc54e7b5.html; Lee J. Y. C., Croft S., & McKinnel T. (2018). Misery at sea: human suffering in Taiwan's distant water fishing fleet. Taipei, Taiwan: Greenpeace East Asia; Human Rights at Sea. (2017). Investigative report and case study: fisheries abuses and related deaths at sea in the Pacific region. Havant, United Kingdom: Human Rights at Sea; Human Rights at Sea. (2019). HRAS case study: in their own words. The case of the killing of Fesaitu Riamkau, a Fijian crewman. Havant, United Kingdom: Human Rights at Sea: Defending Maritime Human Rights.



Figure 3.7 Sleeping and eating conditions on an Asian-built purse seine vessel operating in the Pacific ©Francisco Blaha.

Note: The bunks shown are for an observer and engineer. Deckhand bunks are similar but with four bunks instead of two and no private bathroom. The layout of crew quarters varies according to the age and country of fabrication of the vessels, with European-built vessels prioritising privacy in sleeping and bathroom conditions more than Asian-built vessels.



Figure 3.8 Living conditions on a typical longline vessel in the Pacific ©Francisco Blaha.



Figure 3.9 Food preparation area on a typical longline vessel operating in the Pacific ©Francisco Blaha.

Fisheries expert Francisco Blaha points out that since the 1990s the Pacific longline fleet has shrunk by two thirds but is deploying twice the number of hooks.⁶ Francisco says gear and technology has remained the same since the 1990s so this effort increase has happened by vastly increasing crews' workloads.⁷ Unsafe or uncomfortable practices seem to have become accepted as 'normal' on longline vessels. Longline vessels have less mechanised equipment for lifting heavy weights than purse seine vessels, and longline vessels target large fish, so crew are expected to carry fish as heavy as 50 kg. Longline fishing activities can take 18–20 hours in a day, and most vessels do not carry enough crew to enable them to take shifts so they may have as little as 4–6 hours of rest each day when fishing operations are underway.

Reports of abuses against Pacific Islander crew and crew from elsewhere, predominantly Indonesia and the Philippines, on tuna fishing longline vessels operating in the Pacific Ocean include inhumane living and working conditions, extremely long working hours, poor sanitation (sometimes the toilet facilities are a shared bucket), long periods at sea with no holidays or contact with family, inadequate diet, heavy lifting causing injuries, and being made to jump into the water to untangle nets caught on the propeller. In order to avoid loss of fishing time by going into port to transfer crew or observers, longline vessels sometimes move crew or observers from one vessel to another at sea by putting a life vest on them and pulling them across the water by rope from one vessel to the other.⁸

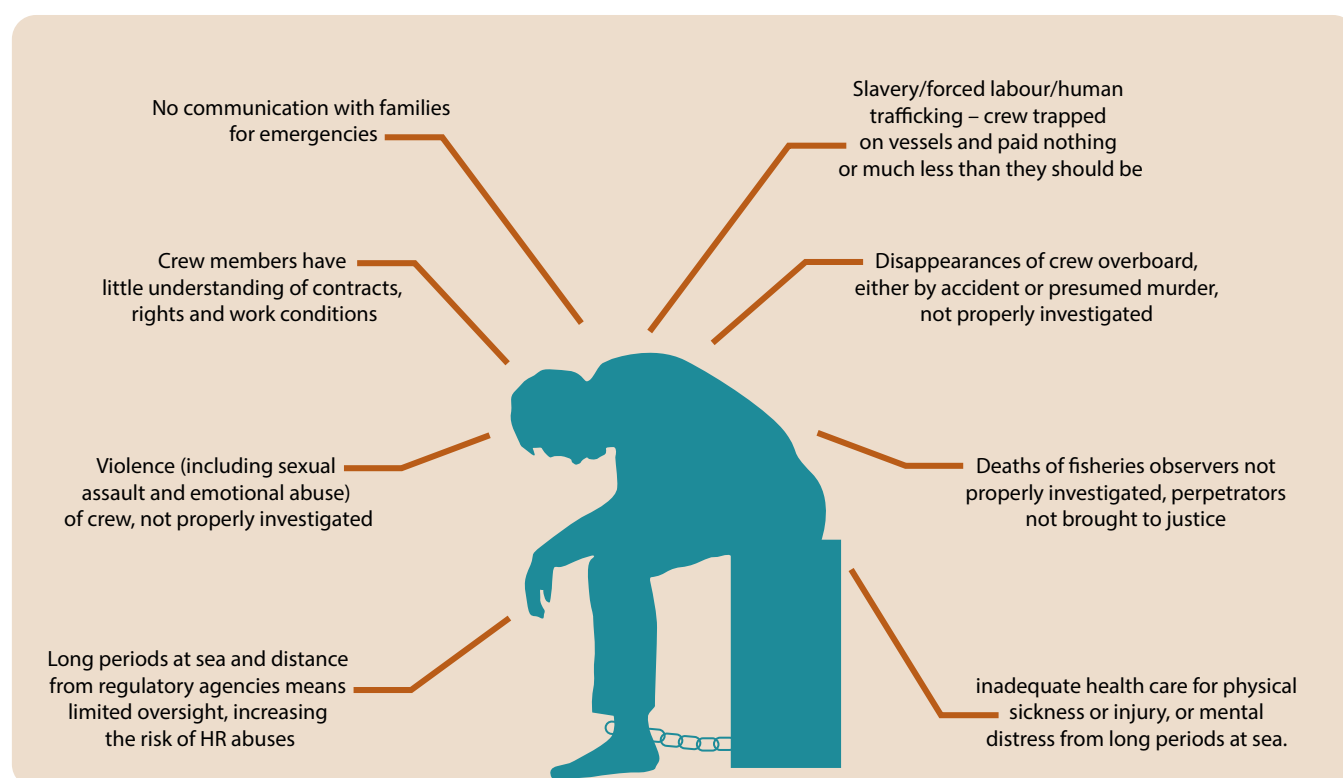


Figure 3.10 Abuses experienced by crew on tuna fishing vessels

Sources: Lee, J. Y. C., Croft, S., & McKinnel, T. (2018). Misery at sea: human suffering in Taiwan's distant water fishing fleet. Taipei, Taiwan: Greenpeace East Asia; Human Rights at Sea. (2017). Investigative report and case study: fisheries abuses and related deaths at sea in the Pacific region. Havant, United Kingdom: Human Rights at Sea; Human Rights at Sea. (2019). HRAS case study: in their own words. The case of the killing of Fesaitu Riamkau, a Fijian crewman. Havant, United Kingdom: Human Rights at Sea: Defending Maritime Human Rights. <https://doi.org/10.14260/jadbm/2015/50.Imai>; Human Rights At Sea. (2019). HRAS case study: a family perspective in their own words. Salote Kausuva, the widow of Fijian crewman Mesake, who worked on Taiwanese longliners. Havant, United Kingdom: Human Rights at Sea: Defending Maritime Human Rights. Retrieved from <https://www.humanrightsatsea.org/who-are-we/>; Environmental Justice Foundation. (2019). Blood and water. Human rights abuse in the global seafood industry. <https://ejfoundation.org/reports/blood-and-water-human-rights-abuse-in-the-global-seafood-industry>.

6 Hare S. R., Williams P. G., Jordan C. C., Hamer P. A., Hampton W. J., Scott R. D., & Pilling G. M. (2021). The Western and Central Pacific Tuna Fishery: 2020 overview and status of stocks. Tuna Fisheries Assessment Report No.21. Noumea, New Caledonia: Oceanic Fisheries Program, Pacific Community. Retrieved from http://www.spc.int/DigitalLibrary/Doc/FAME/Reports/Harley_15_Western_Tuna_2014_overview.pdf, p.37.

7 Blaha F. (2021c, November 26). On the 2020 WCPO Tuna Stock Status Report, Harvest Strategies and Crew Labour. Francisco Blaha Blog. Retrieved from <http://www.franciscoblaha.info/blog>

8 There are many reports detailing human rights abuses in Pacific tuna fishing available on the Human Rights At Sea website <https://www.humanrightsatsea.org/case-studies/>. See also Greenpeace. (2020). Choppy Waters: Forced Labour and Illegal Fishing in Taiwan's Distant Water Fisheries. Greenpeace East Asia. <https://www.greenpeace.org/southeastasia/publication/3690/choppy-waters-forced-labour-and-illegal-fishing-in-taiwans-distant-water-fisheries/>; Greenpeace, & Serikat Buruh Migran Indonesia (SBMI). (2021). Forced Labour at Sea: The case of Indonesian Migrant Fishers. Greenpeace Southeast Asia. <https://www.greenpeace.org/southeastasia/publication/44492/forced-labour-at-sea-the-case-of-indonesian-migrant-fisher/>; Environmental Justice Foundation. (2019). Blood and water. Human rights abuse in the global seafood industry. <https://ejfoundation.org/reports/blood-and-water-human-rights-abuse-in-the-global-seafood-industry>.

Offshore tuna fishing vessels are places where labour and human rights abuses can occur for several reasons (see Figure 3.10):

- Long periods at sea with crew unable to leave the vessel.
- The practise of crew identity documents being held by captains rather than the crew themselves is a human rights risk, because it makes it difficult for crew to leave abusive situations.
- Some countries preventing crew leaving the vessel or port area for border control reasons, which makes it easier to hide trafficked crew on vessels in port.
- Long hours of catching and processing catch.
- Poor working conditions on some vessels.
- Poor (practically no) access by enforcement bodies when vessels are at sea.
- Flags and jurisdiction issues used as barriers to enforcement.
- Use of migrant labour who have no union representation in their place of work.
- Language barriers:
 - The contract may be in a language with which the crew is not familiar, leaving crew vulnerable to exploitation.
 - Where general crew and senior crew or company management do not share a language it is hard for crew to communicate grievances.
- Outsourced recruitment via overseas agencies – especially when vessel ownership, vessel registration and fishing company ownership may all be from different countries – reducing transparency and making accountability more difficult.
- In some countries crew usually not being given a copy of their contract before committing to work on a fishing vessel, or not understanding all of the conditions in their contract, especially if they have limited schooling and low reading skills for ‘legalese’ language in contracts.
- Crew not knowing that they have a right to seek health care when they are injured or fall sick.
- Crew not being aware that they have the right to be in contact with their family, especially if urgent issues come up at home.
- Crew not being aware of rights around rest breaks and meals.

Question – do tuna fishing crew members receive payments into their retirement pension savings funds?



Requirements for employees to pay into a pension savings fund vary from country to country, but in most places formal employees should be receiving payments into their pension fund. Casual employees or people hired without proper contracts may not be receiving payments. According to the Fiji Fishing Industry Association (FFIA) all locally flagged vessels are required to pay in to the Fiji National Provident Fund (FNPf), irrespective of whether their contract is ‘service of’ or ‘service for’ (two kinds of employment conditions for Fijian tuna fishing crews).

There are several factors that enable human rights abuses at sea in the Pacific, some of which are the responsibility of government agencies and some the responsibility of fishing companies:

- Weak enforcement of labour laws by not auditing or enforcing labour conditions on crew, including foreign crew, on locally flagged vessels.
 - Collaboration between labour agencies and fisheries agencies may be required – labour agencies are not present on the water or around ports, and fisheries agencies do not have jurisdiction or skills to enforce labour laws.
- Weak enforcement of labour laws by governments of distant water fishing states (such as Taiwan, Spain, the USA, China) and of immigration regulations for non-national crew (e.g. Indonesian crew) operating on their flagged vessels.
- Not enforcing labour regulations on visiting vessels as port states. All Pacific Islands ports implement some level of port State measures even if they have not signed the Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA).⁹ Pacific Island states Fiji, Palau and Vanuatu are Parties to the PSMA.
 - The PSMA gives port States the right to deny port entry or port use for fisheries reasons. With the FFA HMTTC it could be argued that abuses of crew or observers is a ‘fisheries’ reason. Human rights and labour laws may be enforced by port State control officers carrying out inspections under the Maritime Labour Convention (2006). Fisheries officers do not usually have jurisdiction, or relevant training, to enforce labour regulations.
- Confusing, unclear laws regarding human and labour rights on fishing vessels in part due to jurisdictional overlaps and gaps, related to use of overseas recruiting agencies.
- Vessels with a history of human rights and labour abuses still being allowed to operate.
- Failure to check safety standards or crew qualifications on vessels.
- Some countries allowing Flags of Convenience vessels, which can mean no state takes proper responsibility for the vessel or its crew (accountability).
- Lack of capacity.
 - Human resources, technical expertise, financial resources for enforcement activities.
- Lack of cross-agency collaboration and unclear mandates to address human rights abuses on fishing vessels.
 - Legal aspects may be the responsibility of Attorney Generals’ offices, maritime surveillance may be the responsibility of the police, navy, coast guard or fisheries agencies, investigations and evidence gathering may be the responsibility of police or fisheries officers, labour rights are the responsibility of labour agencies, and so on.
- Transshipment at sea facilitating possible human trafficking.
- Opaque supply chains hiding possible exploitative activities.
- Consumer demand for cheap tuna.

Pacific Island governments have been vocal in calling for protection of observers at sea and have a will to improve crew conditions, as is shown by the 2019 revisions to the FFA Harmonised Minimum Terms and Conditions document. Thus far, however, the various governments involved in Pacific tuna industries, both coastal Pacific Island governments and the distant water fishing governments, have failed to prevent human rights abuses in offshore tuna fishing.

⁹ The full name of the PSMA is the Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (2016).

Case study – bad conditions on tuna longline fishing vessel Tunago 61¹⁰



Tunago 61 was flagged to Vanuatu under a ‘flag of convenience’ arrangement, and shows how bad human rights abuses can get in offshore fishing. The Taiwanese captain of the vessel was murdered in 2016. Six Indonesian crew members were charged with murder and given 18-year prison sentences in Vanuatu. No government was taking responsibility to check that the fishing operations were in line with labour laws and human rights obligations. The fact that the Vanuatu Supreme Court did not investigate alleged human rights abuses or consider self-defence as a mitigating factor is itself a violation of the human right to a fair trial. The night before the murder the captain apparently threatened to kill one of the six Indonesian crew who were later found guilty. The alleged abuses on the Tunago 61 include: crew being hit with a stick; verbal abuse including racist comments; inadequate and inappropriate food (Muslims were fed pork); there was no medicine for sick or injured crew; sick or injured crew were forced to work; crews’ passports were held by the captain so they could not easily leave the vessel; crew were not paid according to contract; living conditions were unclean and crowded; crew were forced to work 20 hours a day and suffered sleep deprivation; crew had no leisure time. Several years earlier six crew members had ‘jumped ship’ from Tunago 61 in American Samoa and made reports that the captain frequently threatened their lives, saying if he killed them he could just report that they were swept overboard. They also reported that the captain and his brother the chief engineer beat crew members badly with sticks, and committed other abuses.¹¹ In 2018 an Indonesian crew member of the Tunago 61 disappeared, allegedly lost overboard.¹²

Holding identity documents is something that comes up often because it is a risk factor for forced labour or other human rights abuses.¹³ The captains of fishing vessels hold the original identity documents (such as passports) of crew, because it is convenient for them when they have to show the documents to border authorities when entering and leaving countries. Captains are legally obliged to give the identity documents back to crew if they ask for them, but if a crew member is being abused and wants to flee the vessel, they are unlikely to feel able to make that request. Crew thus flee without their passport, as undocumented aliens, and making it even more difficult for them to seek safety or return home. The conventional practice regarding identity documents sitting with the captain is thus an inherent human rights risk on offshore fishing vessels.

One human rights issue for crew on distant water fishing vessels is the restriction of their movement when their vessels are in port. Conventionally crew can move around and spend some time on land when their vessels are in port. Some countries, however, such as the USA and Japan, have long restricted the movement of foreign fishing crews, confining them to the port area or their vessels. This problem was made much worse during COVID, with crews around the world prevented from leaving their vessels due to public health concerns. This meant low-income seafarers the world over, including distant water fishing crew, were unable to travel home, or if they did manage to get home were unable to get back to work. Some were unable to get off their cramped vessel for more than a year.¹⁴ Kiribati had no quarantine facilities, so hundreds of Kiribati seafarers, including some fishing crew, were prevented from returning home.

10 Lee J. Y. C., Croft S., & McKinnel T. (2018). Misery at sea: human suffering in Taiwan's distant water fishing fleet. Taipei, Taiwan: Greenpeace East Asia.

11 EJF. (2010). All at Sea - The Abuse of Human Rights Aboard Illegal Fishing Vessels, London: Environmental Justice Foundation. https://ejfoundation.org/resources/downloads/report-all-at-sea_0_1.pdf, p.10

12 Tuilevuka N. (2018, June 2). Police Probe Death Of Fishing Crew Member. Fiji Sun. <https://fijisun.com.fj/2018/06/02/police-probe-death-of-fishing-crew-member/>

13 White C. (2021b, September 22). US action shines spotlight on labor issues in Fijian fishing fleet. Seafood Source, pp. 1–4. Retrieved from <https://www.seafoodsource.com/news/environment-sustainability/us-action-shines-spotlight-on-labor-issues-in-fijian-fishing-fleet>

14 Blaha F. (2021b, September 27). Fishers in distant water fishing have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. Francisco Blaha Blog. Retrieved from <http://www.franciscoblaha.info/blog/2021/9/27/fishers-in-distant-water-fishing-have-been-disproportionally-impacted-by-covid-19>; Coles, F. (2021, June 2). Seafarers - scum of the earth. Splash247.Com. Retrieved from <https://splash247.com/seafarers-scum-of-the-earth/>

Esther Wozniak, a Fijian woman who lives in the USA, talked about meeting her fishing crew relatives when their vessel came to the city she lived in:¹⁵

“While it was great to reunite with family, it really bothered me that they were not able to leave the boats. Imagine being out at sea for months at a time, and then when you finally reach shore, you are told that you can’t go home and you can’t leave the boat or step onto US soil ...

My uncle made a comment to me that really hit home. He said: “We as Pacific Islanders take these boats to South Pacific waters and fish our natural resources to bring back here ... but once we get here, they take the fish and tell us to get back on the boats. We cannot even stand on their land.”

This really upset me and they explained some of the discrimination they had faced. I called the immigration officer patrolling the area to explain that COVID has left them stranded here. There needs to be some leniency. All I wanted was to be able to sit with my family to share a meal, similar to when we were growing up in Fiji, sitting on a mat. I explained that they had been out at sea for so long and would appreciate being able to leave a cramped boat to have their feet on land. But alas, she said they could not.

Observers also at risk

Fisheries observers are also at risk of human rights abuses on tuna fishing vessels, with several Pacific Islander observers going missing or dying in recent years.¹⁶ In many cases the causes of death remain a mystery and no one is held accountable. For example, an i-Kiribati observer, Eritara Aati Kaierua, died in 2020. His case demonstrates the many gaps in the system for protecting human rights on offshore fishing vessels. Kiribati did not have the capacity for a post-mortem to verify the cause of death that was written in the original pathology report, so a pathologist came from Fiji, which took a couple of weeks. The first pathology report concluded that death was caused by a head injury, likely homicide. The fishing company hired another pathologist to report on the cause of death, who found death was from natural causes (high blood pressure). The Police and Attorney General staff handling the case did not have expertise in investigating or prosecuting a case based on human rights at sea with multi-transnational crime scenes and overlapping jurisdictions. If Eritara Aati Kaierua was beaten and died from his injuries there seems no way now that those responsible will be prosecuted.¹⁷

Non-governmental and civil society organisations working for seafarer welfare

There is a range of not-for-profit non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and civil society organisations (CSOs) that work to support seafarers, including fishing crews. Some of these are industry associations, such as the Seafarers’ Association of PNG. Others are charitable organisations such as Mission to Seafarers, which at the time of writing did not have an active presence in Pacific Island countries.

15 Tora I. (2021, August 12). From the shoreline to the high seas: Esther Wozniak’s story. FFA’s Tuna Pacific: Fisheries News and Views. Retrieved from https://www.tunapacific.org/2021/08/12/from-the-shoreline-to-the-high-seas-esther-wozniaks-story/?fbclid=IwAR1bxGpNNIpkBpBjQYvqjldUusw77F_wNH-eA8nyNMhYS8p1xndsfNvH4dY

16 Association for Professional Observers. (2021). Observer Deaths and Disappearances. Retrieved December 10, 2021, from <https://www.apo-observers.org/observer-safety/misses/>

17 Human Rights at Sea. (2021). Independent Case Review Into the Investigation of the Death of Kiribati Fisheries Observer Eritara Aati Kaierua. London, UK. Retrieved from <https://www.humanrightsatsea.org/2021/05/19/death-at-sea-independent-case-review-of-kiribati-fisheries-observer-eritara-aati-kaierua/>



Volunteer activities to support seafarers

In Fiji the Anglican Church ran a Seamen's Centre on Kings Wharf as part of a Mission to Seafarers programme. It provided some assistance to seafarers when human rights abuses were reported or when seafarers needed to get home but their employer or recruiting agency (who should arrange and pay for crew travel) had gone defunct or was non-contactable. They provided accommodation, meals and even clothes when necessary. In 2021 there were plans to restart an initiative with the Anglican Church, but at the time of writing nothing had yet been established.

In the early 2000s SPC worked with the Ports Authority to establish seamen's centres similar to the Anglican Church one in all ports in Fiji, employing Mrs Viti Whippy to run them. The centres gave access to a chaplain (spiritual and counselling), there were computers where seafarers could check their email, they sold phone cards with a phone to use for crew to call family. Sometimes the centres arranged tours for 'newbies' to show them where was best for shopping and to share a meal at a restaurant in town. After initial funding from SPC the Ports Authority and NGOs were intended to continue the Centres. Staff turnover and changing priorities around costs and port security meant the centres were discontinued.

Pacific Dialogue was an organisation based in Fiji that interviewed fishing crew and their families affected by human rights and labour abuses. Some of their reports were published by the UK-based charity Human Rights at Sea. Pacific Dialogue presented on these stories at stakeholder meetings and in international meetings on human rights. They followed up with government departments where possible to try to clarify or resolve issues.

Another Fiji volunteer organisation, Human Dignity Group, worked with fishing crews to explain about their rights, such as the fact that the company should pay for their personal protective equipment and not take the cost out of their wages. Human Dignity Group also secured funding for training at the Fiji Maritime Academy for the Basic Sea Safety Certificate and for seafarers to acquire their Seafarer Employment Record Book (SERB).

Labour recruiting agencies

The majority of crew working on tuna fishing vessels in the Pacific are from Indonesia, with crew also from the Philippines and China. Captains and engineers are often from Taiwan and Korea. Third-party labour recruitment agencies hire people from Indonesia and the Philippines for tuna fishing vessels. Indonesian men seeking work on tuna fishing vessels may go to a recruiting agency and sign up. Some labour recruiters go to villages, saying they will do all the paperwork, provide the short training required, and get people a contract on a vessel.

Some recruiting agencies have good practices, while others are associated with labour rights problems, such as inadequate or misleading contract practices, underpayment of wages, debt bondage, not covering repatriation costs, and so on. The fact that recruiting agencies are often based in countries other than where the fishing occurs contributes to the difficulty of trying to enforce labour regulations.

Fishing companies seeking crew ask the recruiting agencies for applicants, and arrange for payment of travel, labour permits and immigration paperwork. According to people who have worked on fishing vessels, both crew and captains get to know which agents are good and which are bad. Captains are approached by crew members who tell them their agent has not forwarded their wages to their family as they should, and the crew member then asks for money from the captain to send directly to their family. Many captains then avoid dealing with those recruiters in future, because an unhappy crew does not work as well as a happy crew.

It should be possible with mobile technology and social media for prospective fishing crew to find out about the company trying to recruit them, and see if they have a good record of looking after crew. Fishers who have been victims of abuse could also share their experiences on such platforms. So far, however, this has not been effective. Unless it is carefully managed, social media can be a poor source of information, and may even be used to spread 'fake' information that does more harm than good.

The Indonesian government has tried to prevent exploitative recruiters through licensing and inspecting processes. The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) has a platform for listing registered agents for Indonesia, the Philippines, India and Myanmar, and for red-listing agents who have been involved in multiple incidents of labour abuse.¹⁸ So far, however, the unscrupulous recruiters remain able to operate. New crew or vulnerable crew sign on with them. Some captains and fishing companies continue to use exploitative recruiters.

¹⁸ <https://www.itfshipbesure.org/>

Some Pacific Island countries, such as Fiji, also have local recruiting agencies, which can also be exploitative. Some target young men who have dropped out of school, are desperate for work and have limited capacity to ensure their working arrangements are fair and legal. The government and fishing companies are responsible for ensuring such labour is legal.

‘Worker voice’ and unions

Worker voice and labour organisations are crucial to human rights and decent work. Unions are key players here. In-house unions have limited ability to be independent. National unions and some international unions are very important actors. It is difficult to promote human rights and decent work in workplaces without the support of unions.

The term ‘worker voice’ is currently used to talk about labour rights in seafood industries. Labour rights build on a long history of the work of trades unions. Workers organised into groups to collectively bargain for conditions remains a key way to protect rights, but unions face various difficulties working in the offshore fisheries area. National unions, such as the Fiji Trade Unions Congress (FTUC) or the Solomon Islands National Union of Workers (SINUW) can be strong and independent voices, but they struggle to recruit and maintain paid membership. Such unions have faced obstacles from large companies and governments that make them less able to protect workers than they could be.

Many tuna companies in the Pacific have in-house unions. It is difficult for in-house unions to be independent of management, and they do not have the resources or knowledge of larger independent unions. For offshore fisheries, international unions like the ITF are particularly relevant, but it is difficult for them to maintain offices accessible to fishing crews in every country, so they are not as active as could be useful for fishers. Some Pacific Island crew make tuna fishing a career and stay for many years, but others do it only for a season or so to earn some cash. For short-term workers, it may not seem a good investment to pay fees to a union.

In addition to unions, there are also other ways of enabling crew to be heard and have a say in their working conditions. Several initiatives are exploring the range of options under the banner of ‘worker voice.’¹⁹ These are run by companies doing ‘due diligence’ to try to prevent problems from human rights and labour abuses. Fisher-driven approaches are arguably a better focus than company risk mitigation-driven approaches. One multi-stakeholder initiative called the Seafood Task Force includes companies such as Costco and Walmart. Some of these initiatives look at ways to improve internal grievance mechanisms, hotlines and reporting labour problems, and support centres that can provide advice and contacts for services.²⁰

Thai Union, a huge international player in tuna processing, tried worker voice initiatives with its communication technology for seafood traceability, to enable mobile phone chat applications for crew to connect with friends and family, although this was discontinued.²¹ Technologies such as smart phones with internet connections are key to helping improve worker voice, so that fishers can send photos, video, text and audio to let the relevant organisations know about what is happening with them. Increasingly vessels have Wi-Fi to enable this. Most crew have smart phones. It is beneficial for crew to enable them to keep in contact with friends and family while they spend so long away from home.

In 2020 the Taiwan Fisheries Agency tested satellite Wi-Fi on distant water fishing vessels for use by fishermen. This initiative was very welcome for NGOs, unions and migrant fishermen in Taiwan as it could play an important role in enabling communication and help to address various challenges stemming from isolation at sea. However, the Fisheries Agency did not roll out the programme beyond the initial tests due to a lack of funding.²²

Many of the initiatives to enable workers to speak up, to connect better with family, to report their problems and have them dealt with on an individual level, do not address the fundamental power imbalance between low income employees and their employers. This power imbalance is what puts workers at risk in the first place. Worker *voice* must be accompanied by worker *empowerment* so that workers can negotiate for satisfactory conditions.²³ This can be addressed through unions and human rights organisations. The International Labour Rights Forum (ILRF) proposes four ‘essential elements’ built from worker-driven social responsibility principles for compliance programmes to improve human rights in seafood industries that are the foundation for ‘worker voice’:²⁴

19 Global Seafood Assurances. (2020). White Paper on Worker Voice on Fishing Vessels. Retrieved from https://bspcertification.org/Downloadables/pdf/standards/Worker_Voice_on_Fishing_Vessels.pdf

20 Shen, A., & McGill, A. (2018). Taking Stock: Labor exploitation, illegal fishing and brand responsibility in the seafood industry. Washington D.C. Retrieved from www.laborrights.org

21 Kearns, M. (2019, June 13). Turning up the volume on worker voice : A Thai Union case study. Seafood Source. Retrieved from <https://www.seafoodsource.com/news/environment-sustainability/thai-union-turns-up-the-volume-on-worker-voice-with-digital-traceability-pilot-program>

22 Civilmedia Taiwan. (2021, October 3). The first anniversary of the “listing” of foreign fishermen’s rights issue calls on the Executive Yuan to resolve the issue. Civilmedia Taiwan, Human rights, labor. <https://www.civilmedia.tw/archives/10513>

23 Shen, A. (2021, September 22). Worker voice without worker agency fails seafood workers. International Labor Rights Forum. Retrieved from <https://laborrights.org/blog/201805/worker-voice-without-worker-agency-fails-seafood-workers>

24 Shen, A., & McGill, A. (2018). Taking Stock: Labor exploitation, illegal fishing and brand responsibility in the seafood industry. Washington D.C. Retrieved from www.laborrights.org. See also the ILRF website: <https://laborrights.org/essential-elements-effective-social-responsibility-seafood-sector> and the Worker-driven Social Responsibility website: <https://wsr-network.org/what-is-wsr/statement-of-principles/>

- Workers and their organisations should be involved in designing, implementing and governing programmes, facilitated through ongoing communication between at-sea workers and their representative organisations on shore.
- There should be transparent and thorough verification of compliance with relevant human rights requirements.
- Agreements with retailers and buyers should be enforceable to ensure worker rights are respected all along the supply chain.
- Buying practices, such as responsible sourcing policies or strategies, should enable producers to comply with human rights norms, rather than giving them the main responsibility when they may not have the capacity.

For worker voice to have real meaning, the other side of the conversation also needs to reply. In other words, fishing companies need to respond to complaints raised, and report back to workers, describing how issues are being resolved. This could be done through company newsletters, through executive crew announcements on vessels, or possibly via online worker voice platforms accessed from mobile devices.

NGOs who work with fishing crew find that most fishing companies and recruiting agencies simply ignore complaints. They only respond to issues raised if the matter goes to court, or if their product is banned as a result of a labour complaint. However, it is possible to set up anonymous, responsive complaints processes within seafood companies. SolTuna processing company in Solomon Islands has done so, with feedback boxes available for staff to submit their complaints anonymously. This is much more conducive to honest feedback than the usual process where staff have to report complaints through their line supervisor. The SolTuna Human Resources team review the feedback in the boxes and respond to comments in the monthly staff newsletter. Ideally companies should have internal monitoring and improvement processes led by workers to ensure human rights issues continue to be addressed.

Market state measures

An additional motivation to improve labour conditions in tuna industries comes with importing buyer states starting to implement labour regulations as part of their compliance against illegal, unregulated, unreported (IUU) fishing. This adds to the commercial reasons why Pacific Island governments and fishing and processing companies need to take stronger measures to prevent labour abuses.

For example, in 2021 a Fijian longline fishing vessel was found by US border authorities to have three indicators regarding forced labour: (1) withholding wages, (2) debt bondage, and (3) retention of identity documents. A US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) 'withhold release order' was placed on the vessel, and vessels under such orders cannot export to the United States until the order is removed.²⁵ The company said that, as a result, all their US customers are now reluctant to trade with them. The suspected forced labour violations seem to have been carried out by the Indonesia labour recruiting organisation that supplied crew for the affected vessel. The recruiting company held important identification documents of a crew member who left the vessel and returned to Indonesia, and was refusing to release the identity documents until the crew member paid the recruiting company money the company alleges he owes them. If the recruiting company is charging crew fees or travel costs, when those should be paid by the employer, that could be debt bondage.²⁶

Due to several human and labour rights problems with the Taiwanese tuna fleet, leading to export problems with the EU and the US as market states, the Taiwanese fishing industry is now experimenting with closed circuit video and artificial intelligence to monitor working conditions on board.²⁷ There are limitations to market state measures, however. A recent attempt by the US to require annual inspections of fishing fleets for forced labour as part of a World Trade Organization accord on curbing illegal fishing subsidies has been blocked by China.²⁸

One problem with the market state measures is that blocking imports puts the responsibility for fixing labour problems on the exporting state, or exporting company. The country to which a fishing vessel is flagged should take responsibility for regulating the activities of the vessel to ensure there are no human rights abuses. For distant water fishing vessels, the home government of the vessel – Taiwan, China, European countries or the USA – should be taking responsibility. These are large countries, and wealthy, so it is not fair to leave it up to small island developing states in the Pacific to make sure labour

25 Previously similar orders were placed on two vessels flagged to Taiwan – the Tunago 61 and the Da Wang. See blog posts by Francisco Blaha: <http://www.franciscoblaha.info/blog/2020/8/22/another-vanuatu-flagged-longliner-on-a-us-customs-detention-order-for-forced-labor>; <http://www.franciscoblaha.info/blog/2019/2/11/a-trade-restrictive-measures-for-forced-labor-violations-the-case-of-the-tunago-61>.

26 White C. (2021b, September 22). US action shines spotlight on labor issues in Fijian fishing fleet. Seafood Source, pp. 1–4. Retrieved from <https://www.seafoodsource.com/news/environment-sustainability/us-action-shines-spotlight-on-labor-issues-in-fijian-fishing-fleet>

27 Godfrey M. (2021b, November 22). Taiwan's tuna industry adopts CCTV, blockchain in effort to mend image. Seafood Source. Retrieved from <https://www.seafoodsource.com/news/environment-sustainability/taiwan-s-tuna-industry-adopts-cctv-blockchain-in-effort-to-mend-image>

28 Godfrey M. (2021a, November 19). China blocks US forced labor proposal at WTO fishery subsidies talks. Seafood Directions. Retrieved from <https://www.seafoodsource.com/news/environment-sustainability/china-blocks-us-forced-labor-proposal-at-wto-fishery-subsidies-talks>

rights are being protected. The FFA developed the observer and crew protections in the Harmonised Minimum Terms and Conditions (HMTTC) in 2019, but none of the big distant water fishing countries are establishing similar frameworks to ensure crew on vessels flagged to them are not abused. Indonesian workers on Taiwanese flagged vessels should be paid and protected according to Taiwanese labour laws; the same for workers on USA flagged vessels and so on.

International intergovernmental organisations

Several intergovernmental organisations work at the international level on human rights that are relevant for offshore tuna fishing. For example, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) oversees work to prevent human trafficking, and to support victims, so can be of assistance in repatriating fishing crew stranded overseas if their employer fails to make arrangements for repatriation. The ILO works to promote fair working conditions, which overlaps with human rights. The Work in Fishing Convention (2007, no.188) is the main area where the ILO is relevant for human rights on offshore tuna fishing vessels.

Private sector social responsibility auditing

The tuna buyer companies in export countries can require fishing and processing companies to meet corporate social responsibility criteria. This is an informal way of regulating HR and GESI through market relations. For example, Golden Ocean in Fiji says since they have been selling to the EU, their buyers have required increased accountability – there are internal and external audits. Improvements that Golden Ocean managers notice from the auditing are that management pays more attention to crew concerns. For example, there had been complaints about the food served on board, and there are not many food complaints now. The company has also ‘beefed up’ their on-board safety precautions as a result of the audits.

A key way the private sector regulates human rights is through social auditing processes. These processes are still new, and studies have found that on their own these processes are not adequate protection to prevent human rights abuses.²⁹

Social responsibility auditing is separate to both government regulation of a sector and trade union efforts to ensure workers are protected. Fair Trade is an example of a third-party certified process to ensure a ‘fair’ level of remuneration goes back to producer communities. One example of auditing for labour protection for seafarers is On-board Social Accountability (OSA).³⁰ Another example is the Social Responsibility Assessment Tool (SRAT) for the seafood sector, developed by Conservation International and being applied to tuna industries in some Pacific Island countries. The SRAT takes a risk-based approach to sustainability and human rights, across a jurisdictional area.³¹

29 MSI Integrity. (2020). Not Fit-for-Purpose - The Grand Experiment of Multi-Stakeholder Initiatives in Corporate Accountability, Human Rights and Global Governance. (Issue July). www.msi-integrity.org/beyond-corporations/; Nakamura, K., Ota, Y., & Blaha, F. (2022). A practical take on the duty to uphold human rights in seafood workplaces. *Marine Policy*, 135, 104844. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2021.104844>

30 OSA International. (n.d.). On-board Social Accountability (OSA). Retrieved December 10, 2021, from <http://www.osainternational.global/>

31 Conservation International. (2021). Social Responsibility Assessment Tool for the Seafood Sector: A Rapid Assessment Protocol. Retrieved from www.riseseafood.org; Kittinger, J. N., Bernard, M., Finkbeiner, E., Murphy, E., Obregon, P., Klinger, D. H., ... Gerber, L. R. (2021). Applying a jurisdictional approach to support sustainable seafood. *Conservation Science and Practice*, 3(e386). <https://doi.org/10.1111/csp2.386>



On the other hand, private sector social audits may fail to uncover serious human and labour rights problems. According to one study on human rights in seafood industries, the misuse of audits is “one of the most fundamental challenges to the accurate identification and resolution of human and labour rights violations in global supply chains”.³² The paper cites other studies showing that legal violations can be hidden from, or unseeable to auditors in short site visits. For example, social certification programmes do not conventionally interview people working informally (‘casuals’), but may assume that conditions for salaried employees apply also to temporary labourers. The interests of auditors do not necessarily align with worker interests, and there may be pressure for them to refute or suppress testimony to preserve the contract for their work as an auditor. Death from negligence has occurred in workplaces soon after social audits reported that working conditions there were “good”.³³

There is an argument to be made that private sector auditing is a duplication of efforts that should be going on through government regulation and trades unions, and that it would be a better use of resources to strengthen government capacity to implement and enforce measures such as ILO’s C188 on work in fishing, and for governments and companies to cooperate with unions rather than undermining them.³⁴ However, distant water fishing governments and Pacific Island governments have thus far failed to protect human rights on fishing vessels, so it is worth looking at the possibilities of promoting human rights through social auditing.

From 2017 the Papua New Guinea Fishing Industry Association (FIA) has been working towards a benchmark audit tool based on Seafoodmatter scoring for assessing the social responsibility and human rights of its tuna industries. The tool brings together 19 relevant standards, including the ILO C188 on work in fishing, with seven principles, including worker voice, and 40 key performance indicators (KPIs).³⁵ Some of the worker voice parts are around formal grievance reporting, but they also want to facilitate informal channels of communication via smart phones. All this is part of the PNG Fishing Industry Association (FIA) Responsible Sourcing Policy (RSP) launched June 2018, with a Social Responsibility and Human Rights Compliance started in November 2019. In 2021 the draft FIA PNG labour procedure and audit tool was internally peer reviewed by FIA member company operations managers. Then there was a stakeholder peer review later in 2021 with Human Rights at Sea, FISHWISE, Conservation International, and Caterers’ Choice (a Global Tuna Alliance member). FIA has also sought third party social accountability certification with the ‘FISH standard’.³⁶ This standard is stronger than others: the auditors visit to observe living and working conditions, rather than relying on video calls. On the first assessment the FISH auditors found that the crew recruiters were not staffing the complaints phone line, were not issuing proper contracts and they were charging crew fees for recruitment, so FISH did not certify the fleet. FIA told the recruiters if they did not improve FIA would change recruitment companies, because FIA wants to pass their second attempt at assessment.

FIA also plans to link labour and working conditions to the electronic traceability platform already used for recording catches. This will mean FIA members’ social accountability can be tracked online. FIA also plans to collaborate with the Papua New Guinea National Fisheries Authority (NFA) on their labour code of conduct. If the PNG FIA example proves to work well in promoting human rights, the example could be adopted in other Pacific island tuna fisheries. It is worth noting, however, that purse seining is the main mode of offshore tuna fishing in PNG, and it may be more challenging to have these measures applied in longline fisheries.

The Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) have partnered with Global Seafood Alliance to adopt the Responsible Fishing Vessel Standard (RFVS) for the purse seine fleet operating in their waters. This is intended to show consumers and buyers that the fish has been caught by people working without forced labour, in a safe working environment with fair pay and conditions.³⁷

In theory, technologies such as blockchain, which publish online relevant information from the whole supply chain, can help shed light on human rights and labour rights in the fishing industry, and increase fishing companies’ accountability. In practice blockchain requires a set of key data elements to be agreed on and collected frequently (daily or weekly). This is very expensive, so as yet blockchain is only an aspiration for Pacific tuna industries. Existing electronic monitoring systems for vessels using GPS can potentially be used as an independent source of information for things like checking vessel resting periods for crew. The Labour Safe Screen is an online tool (developed 2013–2017) for assessing working conditions in the seafood industry at sea, in port and processing. It is intended to be a business-to-business tool for companies to make sure there is not labour abuse in their supply chain.

32 Nakamura K., Ota Y., & Blaha F. (2022). A practical take on the duty to uphold human rights in seafood workplaces. *Marine Policy*, 135, 104844. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2021.104844>

33 Nakamura K., Ota Y., & Blaha F. (2022). A practical take on the duty to uphold human rights in seafood workplaces. *Marine Policy*, 135, 104844. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2021.104844>

34 Blaha F. (2021a, January 17). My take on private certification of labour standards on fishing vessels. Francisco Blaha Blog. Retrieved from <http://www.franciscoblaha.info/blog/2021/1/17/my-take-on-private-certification-of-labour-standards-in-fishing-vessels>

35 Fishing Industry Association PNG. (2021, December 4). PNG FIA Social Policy - Labour on Board Review and Audit. www.fia.png.com. See also <https://seafoodmatter.eu/about-seafoodmatter/>.

36 The FISH Standard. (n.d.). Retrieved December 10, 2021, from <https://fishstandard.com/>

37 Carreon B. (2021, November 24). Responsible Fishing Vessel Standard gaining traction in Pacific tuna fisheries. *Seafood Source*.



Labour reporting in sustainably certified fisheries

The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) is a certifying organisation for the ecological sustainability of fisheries. It does not certify regarding labour practices, but increasing market pressure from retailers and brands to avoid the taint of slavery and other human rights abuses means the MSC does have some measures in place regarding labour. For fisheries it is a template regarding 'Forced and Child Labour Policies, Practices and Measures' that is completed by the certificate holder and submitted with the other fishery assessment documents. In the template certificate members put country-specific information about what organisation is responsible for labour regulation, the government and private measures in place to identify and fix risks of labour abuses, methods of crew recruitment, engagement with fish worker groups, details about the nature of contracts, any labour audits performed, minimum age requirements, repatriation arrangements, practices to avoid debt bondage, grievance mechanisms, and practices to ensure crew have access to their own identity documents. This labour template is intended as a tool to foster transparency and to encourage fisheries to make public the information about the measures that they have in place to mitigate the risks of forced and child labour and provide an information source for interested parties on a topic about which there is limited information in the public domain. It is not intended to provide the basis of an audit, as the MSC does not have a programme or ecolabel claim for third party verification of labour requirements in fisheries.

The MSC labour template says what should happen, but in practice cases do not always work out that way. Vessels which are fishing in MSC certified fisheries have been accused of doing the wrong thing. For example, Hangton No. 112 which is part of Fiji's MSC certified fishery was issued a 'withhold release order' by US Customs and Border Protection for suspected labour abuses.³⁸ According to industry interviewees, Hangton Pacific is working with the US government to improve their systems to prevent the possibility of labour abuses. Because of the reputational damage caused by the publicity around the withhold release order, the certified group of companies decided to remove the Hangton 112 from the certified fishery for the time being. The MSC itself will only remove vessels from certification if labour abuses are proven in a legal process.

The MSC labour template offers opportunities. One is that the MSC documentation provides a starting point for discussions about identifying where the system does not work as it should and exploring options for making it work better. At the moment this kind of country-specific information about how the relevant organisations (fisheries, labour, immigration, police, health, CSOs) are supposed to work together does not exist elsewhere, so it is a useful resource, and is relevant for all tuna fishing companies, not just the certified ones.

Additionally, there is pressure for certified companies to improve their practices. It is bad publicity for the certified fishery and the MSC if a company that is part of a certified fishery is caught 'doing the wrong thing', so other members will want them to improve. At the moment the system for collaborating to fix problems among relevant organisations is not very functional. If an NGO uncovers suspected or real labour abuse they go to the media to raise a scandal, and then the fishery and the MSC is in reactive mode and can become defensive. Alternatively, when an issue comes up the NGO could go to the fishing companies or MSC 'behind the scenes' and try to fix it collaboratively. A third option is that fishing companies in the certified fishery and the MSC could be more proactive to avoid problems arising, building on the progress made with the labour template, and going further to make sure the mechanisms outlined in the template work as they should.

At the time of writing the certificate about labour protections in place is accessible publicly on the MSC website. For example, on the MSC page for the Cook Islands longline fishery you click on the 'Assessments' link on the left side of the screen, then click on 'General Documents' and the labour template is there.

In the future the nature of these documents and their location on the internet will change, but some form of labour rights documentation is likely to remain, and it may be strengthened.

³⁸ White C. (2021b, September 22). US action shines spotlight on labor issues in Fijian fishing fleet. Seafood Source, pp. 1–4. Retrieved from <https://www.seafoodsource.com/news/environment-sustainability/us-action-shines-spotlight-on-labor-issues-in-fijian-fishing-fleet>

GESI and industrial tuna fishing

There are several different ways gender equity and social inclusion is relevant for the fishing node of tuna supply chains. One is the impacts on women and families when men go away to fish. When men take up crew work on tuna fishing vessels they are gone for long periods of time. It helps families to have cash coming in from the men's work, and depending on the arrangement with the company, families may be receiving regular payments, but while men are absent, wives and women relatives become household heads and pick up men's responsibilities. Many families of seafarers struggle to keep their relationships intact due to disruption of a daily routine together. Absent seafarers miss out on being around for the birth of children, seeing their children growing up, for important family milestones, or being able to help out when family members are sick. There are higher rates of separation and divorce. For example, according to the Gender Affairs Department in Tuvalu, women have called for mental support for 'left behind' seafarer wives, such as an internet café service for contacting husbands on vessels – but it is difficult for small island developing states to resource such services. Also some wives living for long periods with their in-laws while their husbands were away were not getting along well with their in-laws. Relatives and neighbours have supported single mothers but some of this community support has eroded with cultural change. There is a Tuvalu Overseas Seaman's Union (TOSU) that supports seafarers, but no organisation supports their families.

Fisheries social scientist Eddie Allison proposed the term 'maritime masculinities' to explain the various social influences on seafarers, such as their socio-economic background at home and lack of other economic opportunities, the all-male environment on board, and lack of family or village authority on board.³⁹ Historically, there was a British seafarer culture that was summed up in the phrase: "ashore it's wine, women and song, aboard it's rum, bum and bacca". In many contemporary cultural contexts, seafarer life involves young men living away from home, with cash, living high-risk lives, without a clear path for what is next in life. This correlates with a culture that encourages binge drinking, other drug use and sexual promiscuity – as reflected in the concentration of bars and commercial sex industries around port areas.

Of course, not all fishing crew drink/take drugs or are sexually promiscuous. Many crew from Indonesia, the Philippines and the Pacific have strong religious convictions and do not drink alcohol or have sex outside their marriage. According to stakeholders, the presence or absence of alcohol is a key factor in violence – both on board and in port. "A dry boat is a peaceful boat". According to former-fisher-turned-fisheries-consultant Francisco Blaha, offshore fishing has long attracted people who did not 'fit in' very well in society ashore, which contributes to some of the rough behaviour of crews. But in recent decades there are also a lot of poorer people from Indonesia, Philippines, Vietnam and Myanmar who are not 'misfits'. Their economic circumstances mean they have no other option but to go to sea.⁴⁰

Many of the men working on offshore tuna fishing vessels are socially excluded in broader society, and these social exclusion dynamics are repeated in relations among crew. According to one interviewee, "captains are God on board, so anything goes". Strong hierarchy does not have to be unhealthy; it depends on how good a leader the captain is. A good captain can mentor and look after their crew within that hierarchical relationship. Captains with a more 'toxic' kind of leadership, on the other hand, can cause social inclusion/exclusion dynamics on board based on social hierarchies, such as gender, race, class and so on.

One example of social exclusion is men shaming other men by saying they are feminine in some way, such as calling them weak 'like a woman'. Misogyny (hatred of women) is part of the on-board culture on some vessels – which is a problem even if there are no women on board. Another example is that in some Pacific cultures there is a strong power dynamic between elders and youth that can be abused on board. An interviewee said that in Tonga some older crew bully younger crew to do more work and the worst jobs. Abuse among crews can include sexual abuse and rape, among men. There are no clearly understood and implemented processes or mechanisms for reporting, recording and following up of sexual abuse or harassment, as there are with other human rights abuses. Violence and abuse among all-male crews are human rights violations and can be treated as such, but we should also recognise that there is a gendered element to it – these are forms of gender-based violence because entrenched gender roles and status and the connected power dynamics are part of these forms of violence. So, gender awareness and measures to address misogyny are part of the solution, along with improving food, rest and living conditions, and discouraging discrimination based on race or age. Captains have such a lot of power on board; they therefore have the responsibility to use that power in ways that promote social inclusion and human rights, or at least avoid causing social exclusion or human rights abuses.

Sexual abuse:

The WHO defines sexual abuse as 'actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions'.⁴¹

39 Allison E. H. (2013). A "provocation" on maritime masculinities – and why they matter for management. Presentation at the MARE People and the Sea Conference, University of Amsterdam, July 2013. <https://genderaquafish.files.wordpress.com/2013/08/04-allison-mare-maritime-masculinities.pdf>

40 Blaha F. (2021b, June 1). A look on the mental health of fisherman. Francisco Blaha Blog. <http://www.franciscoblaha.info/blog/2021/5/31/a-look-on-the-mental-health-of-fisherman>

41 World Health Organization. (n.d.). Sexual exploitation and abuse, prevent and protect, what you need to know and do. Zurich: World Health Organization (WHO). Retrieved from www.who.int/about/ethics

Social and health aspects of masculinities

Masculinity, like femininity, is many different things, some of which are positive in human relations. Some elements of masculinity, however, have been identified as harmful to men and the people around them; these elements are considered ‘toxic’.



This quote about masculinities and health is from the American Psychological Association:

Boys and men are diverse with respect to their race, ethnicity, culture, migration status, age, socioeconomic status, ability status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and religious affiliation. Each of these social identities contributes uniquely and in intersecting ways to shape how men experience and perform their masculinities, which in turn contribute to relational, psychological, and behavioral health outcomes in both positive and negative ways. Although boys and men, as a group, tend to hold privilege and power based on gender, they also demonstrate disproportionate rates of receiving harsh discipline, academic challenges (e.g., dropping out of high school), mental health issues, physical health problems, public health concerns (e.g., violence, substance abuse, incarceration, and early mortality), and a wide variety of other quality-of-life issues.⁴²

For example, men taking leadership roles as household heads can be positive, but notions that men must *always* be the ‘bread winner’ of the family can lead to problems. When people believe men must be the bread winner, if men are unable to generate enough money, or if women in their family earn more money than them, men can suffer self-esteem problems and may then be violent to women and children in their family. Misogyny (the hatred of women) and homophobia (the hatred of people who have sex with people of the same sex) are two traits related to toxic masculinity. They are ‘toxic’ because they promote gender-based violence including sexual assault, bashing and domestic violence. Gender ‘norms’ (see Module 1 for an explanation of gender norms) are developed early in childhood and continue as children grow through learning from the people around them. Toxic gender norms normalise violence by boys, including bullying, aggressive behaviour and harassment. This may be trivialised in sayings such as ‘boys will be boys’ or ‘stop crying like a girl’, or in blaming victims for rape by saying they were wearing provocative clothes.

One way to approach this is to identify the healthy forms of masculinity exhibited on vessels with well-functioning on-board culture, and promote those as ideals to replace the toxic versions. What does good organisational culture look like at sea? What kind of crew management leads to good productivity, meaningful and decent work for crew, reasonable health outcomes, for all crew, of different nationalities and personalities? Sufficient food and rest and improving occupational health and safety on board is a basic starting point. Ensuring alcohol and other recreational drugs are not used in high-risk workplaces such as fishing vessels is another basic health requirement. Some fishing companies have policies in place to reduce fighting on board. Gender awareness would fit well with such initiatives. Captains are pivotal to positive solutions – if captains do not tolerate gender-based, racial and other forms of discrimination and violence, and encourage a healthy workplace, then the whole atmosphere on board will follow.

Women working as crew

From a gender equity perspective it is good for women to be able to work wherever they want, if they have the right skills. As discussed in Module 1, better gender equity has benefits for all of society.

Although industrial fishing remains very male dominated, small numbers of women have started working on or managing fishing fleets. They work in tuna marketing, business management, financial and personnel services, and other areas. One of the tuna fishing companies in Fiji, Solander, has had a woman as General Manager since 2011. In 2021 in NFD in Solomon Islands, six women held managerial roles within the Inshore Department, one being the Fleet Manager. In recent years women have also started training in small numbers as crew for tuna fishing vessels.

The Fiji Maritime Academy (FMA) trained several women for work on longline vessels, under a program with WWF and supported by the New Zealand Government.⁴³ In 2019 a group of 57 (33M and 24F) were recruited to train as deckhands. In 2020 they had 20 scholarships for this training (11F, 9M), and in 2021 there were another 20 scholarships. From April 2020 training went online due to COVID-19. In October 2021 these trainees finished their theory part of the course, but as of April 2021 they still needed to complete 24 months at sea and have not been able to do that during COVID. Solander had 10 women working on their fleet at one stage, but as of April 2022 they had only one left. The women were working on vessels that targeted fresh tuna and stay out at sea only for around two weeks, rather than working on the vessels that do longer trips of a month or longer. The vessels doing two-week trips were hard hit by COVID conditions and many stopped fishing. Another Fijian fishing company, SeaQuest, collaborated with FFA

42 American Psychological Association Boys and Men Guidelines Group. (2018). APA Guidelines for psychological practice with boys and men. Retrieved from <https://www.apa.org/about/policy/boys-men-practice-guidelines.pdf>

43 Vunisea A. (2021). Gender Mainstreaming in Fiji's Offshore Tuna Industry. Suva, Fiji. Retrieved from <https://www.fasia.awsassets.panda.org/downloads/gender-mainstreaming-in-fiji-s-offshore-tuna-industry-report.pdf>

in 2022 in running a training trip on the longliner Seaka II, with an all-women crew including captain (Master Class 5 certificate holder), engineer (engineer cadet with training in engineering and watchkeeping), bosun and deckhands.⁴⁴

Small numbers of women have also been trained as crew for pole-and-line fishing vessels in Solomon Islands, one progressing through training to the level of captain. However, the young women cadets started families. Much of the physical labour on a fishing vessel is not suitable for pregnancy, and the women have stopped fishing so as to look after their young children at home. NFD is now looking to recruit another set of women cadets.

Case study – Tanny Saepio, Vessel Compliance Manager, National Fisheries Development (NFD), Solomon Islands

My name is Tanny Saepio and am from the Western part of Solomon Islands. My career began in 1998, when I completed the Basic Seamanship programme at the Marine College in Honiara. After my apprenticeship as a Deck Cadet, I started out as a skilled deck officer gaining sea time and experience in navigation of foreign vessels. In 2013, I graduated with a Trade Diploma in Nautical Science / Class 3 Mate License at Fiji National University. I started out as an officer of the watch on tug boats. Later in 2017, I changed my career from merchant shipping to the tuna industry and moved to NFD. The best moment in my working life so far was my promotion to Vessel Compliance Manager in NFD. I am proud to manage an area now where it relates to my career on shore as an apprentice.

What inspires me the most is a desire to find out how good I can become in my field. I love this job. During my childhood, our family usually travels to our home Province for the Christmas holidays. I always loved to watch how the Captain navigates and brings the vessels to port. My interest in ships grew during those travels, and since then I started imagining myself on the bridge in the wheelhouse. Working on board vessels is fun and challenging for me at the same time. Each day comes with a new beginning and new lessons and a lot of new challenges too. As the environment is strictly male dominated, at times I feel left out or ignored. But the only solution is to work together and earn their respect. All men think and react differently. If you have a good relationship with a particular person, it can stimulate jealousy and also lead to favouritism. It is better not to be close or over-friendly to avoid mistreatment. In my current role as a Vessel Compliance Manager I deal with the welfare of the crew and the overall safety of the vessel, which is a very challenging task; for instance, getting replacement crew when anyone is sick or has family issues and needs to disembark the vessel on short notice.



Figure 3.11 NFD Vessel Compliance Manager Tanny Saepio with her family ©Tanny Saepio

Being a single mum with four kids is tough and stressful at the same time but, with the great team I work with, I have the strength to face the challenges. I would encourage my family, especially young women who plan to become seafarers, to be ready to face the tasks and fears involved. As the environment is strictly male dominated, many women fear taking up this career, because it is not the usual thing for females. However, I believe fear is nothing but only a product of our imagination. If you believe in yourself and if you have strong determination, nothing is impossible. When you want to do it, study and work hard for it. One needs to be prepared mentally, physically, and emotionally before choosing this profession. It requires strength and courage, but with a positive attitude and approach you can do it.

⁴⁴ Nanuqa J. (2022, June 13). First all-female crew set off on first fishing trip. FBC News. <https://www.fbcnews.com.fj/news/first-all-female-crew-set-off-on-first-fishing-trip/>; Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA). (2022). First female crew set course for Pacific fishing industry. Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency Website. <https://ffa.int/node/2711>

Misconception – women are not strong enough to work in tuna fishing

There is a prevalent notion that women are not suitable for fishing work due to the physical strength needed for some fishing activities. One point argued by industry against having women crew is that it will increase the workload for the men. During fishing periods crew are doing heavy lifting and other manual tasks for hours at a time. They argue that if women are on a team that will slow down the work and result in men having to do more to cover for the women on their team. No doubt tuna fishing is hard physical work, requiring endurance and strength, but it is a misconception that all women are weaker than all men. Some women are very physically strong, and some men are not so physically strong.

Another way of looking at this is to say all people have diverse skills, and we can match each person in a team to the tasks that suit their talents. On a longline vessel the strongest people in a team should do the heavy lifting work, and pulling in the lines. The people in the team with good stamina but not as much lifting strength can do the gutting work, manage the ice for storage and bait the hooks.

During 2021–2022 the Fiji Fishing Industry Association (FFIA) was headed by a woman, and several Fijian tuna companies have women in senior positions. When the authors of this report talked with women managers in Fiji's tuna companies, they were in favour of increased involvement of women in the tuna industry, but also had reservations about having women on board fishing vessels. They saw it as important to first establish social safeguards on fishing vessels before pushing for more gender equality in onboard work.

One reason against allowing women to join offshore fishing crew is that the facilities onboard are seen as unsuitable for mixed gender crews, especially on older longline vessels where shared sleeping quarters are cramped, and toilet and shower facilities have no doors. It is to be hoped that new longline vessels will be more like purse seine vessels, allowing for more comfort and privacy, be they single-sex or mixed crews. According to industry stakeholders, it is difficult to modernise the fleets after the longline fleet targeting sashimi markets has suffered so badly with disrupted airfreight to export markets and loss of the local tourism market during COVID. Some kind of support or incentive may be called for.

Governments could provide incentives to improve comfort and privacy on fishing vessels through their licensing regulations. When designing crew sleeping and bathroom arrangements, however, it is important to listen to all stakeholders, including the crew, about what they want, as well as considering financial and operational feasibility. We should not assume that Pacific Islander and Asian crew working in the Pacific will want the higher level of privacy seen on European vessels. There are cultural differences, not just one ideal arrangement that all people will prefer.

Because some of the work and living environments in the offshore tuna fishing industry are already unsafe for men, when including women in the workforce it is important to make sure the environment is safe for them, by addressing the various human rights, health and social concerns raised above. A risk assessment could be undertaken to identify whether fishing vessels are 'safe enough' for women staff before employing them. However, environments being 'not yet' safe enough should not be used as an indefinite excuse not to change the status quo. There are active steps companies and governments can take to start making the environment safer before recruiting women to jobs on fishing vessels.

One possibility is to start with short trips (less than two weeks) and sort out safety and any other issues on board before progressing to longer trips.⁴⁵ Another is to trial all-female crewed vessels. One or two longline companies in Fiji started operating all-female crewed vessels, but COVID hit the longline industry hard in Fiji and these trials ceased until the Seaka II trip in 2022. In Solomon Islands some industry people have expressed a preference for all-female crew, rather than mixed crews.

A parallel example from football in Australia

A parallel situation from another field can reveal the unfairness in preventing women from becoming fishers because of the risks that they will be abused. In recent years in Australia there have been many reports of racism in professional football, and the damage this has done to players of colour, including Aboriginal players, Pacific Islanders and those of African descent. The response is not to ban players of colour from playing football for their own protection, but to try to fix the racism. The response should be the same about risks for women working as crew on fishing vessels. Don't ban the women, fix the human rights problems in the fishing industry. A more equitable, less abusive industry will be better for everyone.

⁴⁵ Vunisea A. (2021). Gender Mainstreaming in Fiji's Offshore Tuna Industry. Suva, Fiji. Retrieved from <https://www.fasia.awsassets.panda.org/downloads/gender-mainstreaming-in-fiji-s-offshore-tuna-industry-report.pdf>

Another important issue around women working as crew on fishing vessels is that they are stigmatised by some people. There is an image problem, with women working at sea seen as prostitutes or ‘hussies’. The belief that women should not be going out on a fishing vessel with men means women fishers and observers may be shamed (see Box in Module 7 on shaming women who go to sea). If women working on fishing vessels suffer abuse they are sometimes blamed for that abuse, rather than abuser men being held accountable for their behaviour.

Women as well as men engage in this stigmatisation of women fishing crew, including people from older generations, and some from younger generations who uphold rigid forms of traditional values and ideas on gender roles as ‘cultural gatekeepers’. On the other hand, many other people around the Pacific admire women moving into fields conventionally dominated by men, such as mechanics. Pacific cultures are complex and adaptive. Traditional ways of thinking can be used not only to stigmatise; cultural traditions can be used to support women and men in careers that develop themselves, their families and communities (see Module 1 for more on HR and GESI and cultural traditions).

Related to this point about stigmatising women who go to sea, several interviewees for this handbook mentioned that training of women as seafarers does not work because the women ‘get pregnant’, or ‘have affairs’ on board. One interviewee said that of three women trained as seafarers in recent years, two were ‘expelled’ from their training programmes for having sexual relations when working at sea. There are several issues here that may be questioned. Why are the women seen as responsible for pregnancies or affairs, and not the men involved? Sex between some men in fishing crews surely already occurs, but this is not raised as a reason to prohibit men crew, as it is for women crew. Have these relations been investigated to make sure they were consensual, or was rape or other sexual assault involved? The strict hierarchies on ships mean junior women crew may be vulnerable to pressure for non-consensual sex from senior crew. Was it only the women who were expelled, or were their male sexual partners also expelled? If pregnancies are common occurrences when women go to sea, questions can also be asked about sexual health awareness and availability of condoms for crew, especially since HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections are an increased risk among seafarers. The important thing is to make sure that any sexual relations are not abusive (there is consent), and to promote good health practices to prevent sexually transmissible infections (STIs) and accidental pregnancies.

Consent is crucial for any sexual relations, including transactional sex. It means both people understand what the other is asking of them, and consents to it, every time, and even during sex (in case someone changes their mind). Because power relations and politeness may make it difficult to clearly say ‘no’, some say that ‘enthusiastic consent’ is necessary. Sex without consent is rape (i.e., sexual abuse).

Small numbers of women do work on industrial fishing vessels internationally, so it seems likely that women will become a permanent part of the industrial fishing workforce in the Pacific too. Although women in crews in industrial tuna fishing is a new thing, there are other fields where women have been part of seafaring work for much longer, such as the merchant marine and navies. No doubt there are many differences between life on board in the merchant marine, navy, purse seine vessels and longliners, but there are also some similarities. The tuna industry could learn from these other sectors with a longer history of mixed gender crews about practices that work well and pitfalls to avoid, and could brainstorm with other women seafarers how to tackle new issues specific to fishing. The Pacific Women in Maritime (PacWIMA) group, which has previously focused on the merchant marine, is looking to expand their membership to women in fisheries and to work more closely with national entities for women in fisheries, such as the Fiji network.

Changes in perceptions of women and fishing

Across many cultures in the world, including in the Pacific, there have been taboos about women on fishing vessels being or bringing bad luck. In Niue the Ministry tackled this belief by organising fishing competitions and promoting women to compete, as a fun way to dispel the myth. Previously in Niue, women were confined to gleaning on reefs. The competition has led to some changing family traditions with daughters going out in canoes with their fathers to practise fishing for the competition. Hearing ladies share their stories at the afterparty creates a ‘domino effect’ with more women interested to enter the following year. One year a woman nearly 70 years old caught yellowfin tuna and mahimahi, helping her village win. There is no industrial tuna fishing in Niue, so women are not taking up jobs as crew, but they can now join in conversations about fishing, and understand better what is involved in resource management.

Social exclusion by nationality in tuna fishing

Social inclusion is about cultural diversity and diverse sexualities, and sometimes gender fluidity. Little is known about LGBTQIA+⁴⁶ in tuna industries, so we have been unable to write about it in this handbook. Cultural and racial discrimination, however, is a well-known issue.

There is national and racial discrimination in international seafaring, including in industrial tuna fishing. This is most starkly visible in the pay differentials. According to tuna fisheries management consultant Francisco Blaha, based on conversations he has with crew while doing his work on fishing vessels, below are some pay rates across different nationalities employed on tuna fishing vessels in the Pacific.

- European crew on Spanish-owned purse seine vessels make USD 3,390 per month with substantial periods of home leave (3 trips on and 2 trips off).
- Ecuadorian crews on purse seine vessels make USD 750 per month and have 80 days for home leave in a year.
- Indonesian and Vietnamese crew on Taiwanese-flagged vessels (purse seine and longline) should under Taiwanese law be paid USD 450 per month.⁴⁷ Those on Taiwanese-owned but US-flagged purse seine vessels, however, say they are paid USD 350 per month, with no home leave until they complete their three-year contract.
- Vietnamese crew working on Chinese-owned longliners are said to be paid around USD 150 per month.

Crew have told Francisco their wages may be supplemented with catch shares, but the lowest ranked crew, such as deckhands, may not be given a catch share, or if they are it is the smallest share of the crew.

According to other interviewees Fijian crew on longliners may receive USD 400 per month, whereas ni-Vanuatu crew on longliners may receive as little as USD 250 per month. Pacific Islanders working on purse seine vessels earn more than on longliners.

The ITF lists the ILO recommended basic minimum wage for seafarers:⁴⁸

- for Masters USD 2,160 per month, plus holiday pay and overtime.
- for Able Seamen USD 641 per month, also plus holiday pay and overtime.

The other inequity is that seafarers from wealthy countries like the US, European countries, Australia and New Zealand have easy labour mobility when moving across jurisdictions. Pacific Islanders, Indonesian and Filipino seafarers have much more restricted mobility. Some are unable to transit through the US or US territories, like Guam, so end up with long and inconvenient travel plans going to and from home. This problem is a key reason crew changes may be done from carriers rather than in port. For visa-related reasons they may be prevented from going ashore when in port in some countries.

In addition to the pay discrimination across national lines, there is also pervasive racism in the fishing industry. Dark-skinned southeast Asian and Pacific Islander crew may be treated as inferior or primitive by white European or north-east Asian captains.⁴⁹ One interviewee asserted that on some vessels Pacific Islander crew are ‘treated like animals’.

Cultural stereotypes can ‘intersect’ with gender and the sexualised power relations noted above on tuna vessels. One interviewee quoted an Indonesian crew member as telling him: “the only thing worse than being an Indonesian crew member on a tuna boat is being a *pretty* Indonesian crew member”. Indonesian crew members are often treated as racially inferior on tuna vessels, and part of that may include unwanted sexual advances. Or the discrimination may take the form of accusations of inferior physical ability and endurance for tuna fishing work.

Pacific Islander leaders have for decades been calling for the offshore tuna fishing industry to localise more of the employment on the fleets.⁵⁰ One reason for this is to empower Pacific Islanders in the industry by providing employment and career development in countries with limited cash employment opportunities. Particularly in lower tech pole-and-line and longline fleets – where training is more easily available and cheaper than for higher tech and purse seine vessels – many Pacific Islanders have trained as captains and engineers. Fully localised vessels have fewer cultural and language barrier issues. Local captains know local conditions and can navigate in and out of harbours without the need for

⁴⁶ LGBTQIA+ stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual and others. It is a term used to refer to sexual and gender diversity.

⁴⁷ <https://www.ffa.int/node/2697>

⁴⁸ International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITF) information on recommended minimum wages is available here: <https://www.itfseafarers.org/en/your-rights/wages-0>

⁴⁹ Barclay K. M. (2006). Between modernity and primitivity: Okinawan identity in relation to Japan and the South Pacific. *Nations and Nationalism*, 12(1), 117–137.

⁵⁰ Barclay Kate, & Cartwright I. (2008). Capturing wealth from tuna: case studies from the Pacific. *Capturing the Wealth From Tuna: case studies from the Pacific*. https://doi.org/10.26530/oapen_458838

harbour pilots. Nevertheless, many fishing companies around the Pacific persist in employing mostly expatriate crew, or at least expatriate officers (captains and engineers). These companies give many reasons why they need expatriate crews and/or officers, including productivity differences, a lack of qualified local staff, or that if they train staff up they will go elsewhere (local crew cannot afford to pay for the training personally, so it is a company investment).⁵¹ NFD in Noro in Solomon Islands, however, has proved those reasons false. From the 1990s NFD and Solomon Taiyo started training up locals to all fleet positions, and today NFD has a productive, profitable, mostly localised fishing fleet of purse seiners with a couple of pole-and-line vessels.⁵²

Junior Delaiverata's Story



Petaia Delaiverata JR is one of the first Solomon Islanders to have moved up the ranks in the fishing fleet from a Cadet to now a Captain/Fishing Master. He began his studies at the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education (SICHE), as a Deep Sea Cadet and in 1999 he acquired his Class 5 Mate qualification. In 2000, he attended further training for Pacific Islands Fisheries at the Australian Fisheries Academy in Adelaide, Australia, and later attended the PNG Maritime College, APTC and did an Advance Safety Course at the Maritime Academy at the Solomon Islands National University.

Mr Delaiverata said what inspired him in this career was to become the first local to be Captain/Fishing Master in the Purse Seiner Industry and he has accomplished that, saying "if the others (expats) can do it, so can I as a local". He said one of the major challenges in fishing is finding fish, knowing where to go and how much fish to catch in each trip of the season.

Another challenge is setting, catching and putting fish on board the vessel. It is important to consider the environmental factors such as the state of the sea, the currents, winds and swells. The third challenge is working in this space and that includes the boat and crew. Without a good boat, machinery and fishing gears it would always be impossible to fish properly and the boat is no better without a good team on board.

Junior said that a positive impact of his work is that since localising the fishing fleet in 2008 we now have more than eight localised personnel in our fishing fleet. During the pandemic (COVID-19), most of the expats were called back to their homes or could not travel to Solomon Islands due to travel restrictions so we (the local crew) kept the industry going, which not only helped NFD and our families but our country as a whole. I am proud not only as a Solomon Islander but as a Pacific Islander who is directly involved in this industry and our natural resources.

In my role as Fishing Master, I can also help other locals to understand and manage our natural resources for our next generations and will continue to encourage others to take up the challenge and achieve their dreams. To anyone who is keen to take on this role, my advice is always having an aim and goal in life. Nothing is impossible if you work hard and put your commitments in to it.

I miss my family, but I always thank God for the opportunity, privilege, his provisions and blessings. I am blessed to have my wife and children who understand and support me in my career. I had seen so many colleagues quit their fishing career, but I remember that it was only after 10 years in service and I finally reaped what I had sown.

"Patience is a virtue" – and that has kept me going every day in this job.



Photo credit @Junior

51 Barclay Kate, & Cartwright I. (2008). Capturing wealth from tuna: case studies from the Pacific. Capturing the Wealth From Tuna: case studies from the Pacific. https://doi.org/10.26530/oapen_458838

52 Barclay Kate. (2008). A Japanese Joint Venture in the Pacific: Foreign Bodies in Tinned Tuna. London: Routledge.

The working and living conditions and pay are usually better on purse seiners and pole-and-line vessels than on longliners. Although purse seine operators in PNG have not had the same success in localising crews as NFD, as of 2022 20% of the PNG-based purse seine fleet are PNG nationals, with the rest mainly Filipino crew. In Fiji, many longline companies say they ‘must’ engage Asian crew because local crew don’t return for a second voyage, or don’t show up after having agreed to their first voyage. The pay and conditions are not good enough for Fijian crew who have other options. For example, a Fijian who works as general crew on a longliner is paid FJD 28 per day, and must stay on board for a month, with food many find to be ‘lousy’, living conditions that may include cockroaches and bed bugs, and have only a few hours of sleep every day. The same person may be able to work as a security officer for FJD 35 per day, eat the food they want to eat, sleep in their own bed, and spend their weekly days off with friends and family. Some crew from Indonesia do not have the same options so are more willing to take the work on longliners. Even so, some Fijian crew love working at sea, especially if there are other Fijians on board to work with. They keep working on longliners even though they could be paid more for other work on shore.

Action points: what can Pacific fisheries management agencies do to improve human rights, gender equity and social inclusion in industrial tuna fishing?

National and regional organisations working in the fishing area can do a great deal to improve human rights, gender equity and social inclusion in industrial tuna fishing. This is best done in collaboration with organisations that specialise in human rights, labour rights and gender equity. The existence of the FFA as a Pacific voting bloc within the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) is a positive point for the Pacific in dealing with these issues in cross-jurisdictional offshore fishing activities. Having a coordinating body like the FFA puts the Pacific in a good place to address human rights issues at sea. It is more difficult for individual small island states to stand up to large distant water fishing states, especially since the revenue and jobs brought by fishing are important in Pacific Island countries. With a regional approach it balances up the power relations in negotiations. Also, individual Pacific Island countries and territories have vast exclusive economic zones (EEZs) over which to implement monitoring, control and surveillance, with limited equipment and personnel, and limited capacity to influence activities beyond their national borders. Regional cooperation can overcome these limitations. In addition to the FFA and WCPFC, other regional bodies that can facilitate cooperation for fisheries interests include the PNA, the Te Vaka Moana Group of countries with interests in longline fisheries, the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG), the Micronesian Challenge group and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat.

Implement and enforce fishing vessel labour regulations regionally and nationally

Pacific Islands fisheries agencies and other tuna-related organisations, including NGOs that work with crew to report problems, can work together to ratify, implement and enforce existing frameworks for protecting the rights of fishing crew and observers, and develop new ones as needed. Flag states, including Spain, the USA, Taiwan and China also have a responsibility to prevent human and labour rights abuses on vessels operating in the Pacific and flagged to them. The international frameworks that already exist to protect the rights of crew on fishing vessels include the following (see Module 1 Annex 1 for a list of the main international conventions relating to HR and GESI in fishing).

- IMO STCW-F⁵³ (1995) entered into force in 2012 providing standards of training, certification and watchkeeping for fishing vessel personnel;
- FAO PSMA⁵⁴ entered into force in 2016 to ensure that catch transhipped through port states is legal;
- ILO C188⁵⁵ entered into force in 2017 to improve the working conditions for crews;
- Note that as of January 2022 no Pacific Island country nor any of the major distant water fishing countries in the Pacific has ratified this convention; and
- IMO Cape Town Agreement⁵⁶ regarding on-board safety was ratified in 2021.

53 International Maritime Organization. International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Fishing Vessel Personnel (STCW-F) (1995). Retrieved from <https://www.imo.org/en/OurWork/HumanElement/Pages/STCW-F-Convention.aspx>

54 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (2016). Agreement on Port State Measures. Retrieved from <https://www.fao.org/port-state-measures/en/>

55 International Labour Organization. C188 Work in Fishing Convention (No. 188) (2007). Retrieved from https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0:NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C188

56 International Maritime Organization. (2012). Cape Town Agreement on the Implementation of the Provisions of the 1993 Protocol relating to the Torremolinos International Convention for the Safety of Fishing Vessels. Retrieved from <https://www.imo.org/en/About/Conventions/Pages/The-Torremolinos-International-Convention-for-the-Safety-of-Fishing-Vessels.aspx>

Regionally the FFA Harmonised Minimum Terms and Conditions (HMTc) for Access by Fishing Vessels (2019)⁵⁷ cover the rights of crew (section V) and protections for observers (section III part 9) (see Annex 1 of this Module 3). Even though it has been approved by FFA member country Ministers of Fisheries at the Forum Fisheries Committee, the HMTc still needs to go through individual member parliaments for approval, which may take some time. Moreover, even once it is agreed, it will take some resources and collaborative political will to enforce.

The WCPFC is also working on a consolidated observer insurance scheme, to expedite payments to families of observers who meet with tragedy at sea. However, it should be noted that while observer safety has been on the WCPFC agenda for a decade or more, concrete improvement in outcomes has yet to be achieved. Fijian observer Usaia Masibalavu died in 2016, but as of 2021 his widow had still not received an insurance payment.

Governments of Pacific Island countries and territories should also ensure they meet their national responsibilities regarding looking after their observers. Each observer programme is obliged to provide all observers with a two-way satellite communication device for every trip, and a waterproof personal life-saving beacon. The mystery around the death of Kiribati observer Eritara Aati Kaierua is in part due to his not having a communication device in the weeks preceding his death. Pacific Island governments are vocal about observer safety, and frequently discuss methods to improve it, but also need to meet existing obligations.

In 2018 the WCPFC passed a Resolution on Labour Standards for Crew on Fishing Vessels.⁵⁸ This resolution is non-binding. In 2020 a binding measure was raised but voted down, so a working group led by Indonesia continued to revise the measure in 2021 and 2022 in the hope that it may be passed in future. The binding measure was argued against on the grounds that human and labour rights issues are not fisheries issues. China argued human and labour rights should be handled through the ILO or UN Human Rights Commission, not regional fisheries management organisations (RFMOs). Experience shows, however, that the offshore nature of tuna fisheries makes it too hard for labour organisations alone to manage these issues; fisheries agencies must be involved. Human and labour rights abuses on offshore fishing vessels are cross-cutting and difficult due to their cross-jurisdictional nature, so are the responsibility of fisheries organisations as well as labour and human rights organisations. Fisheries management, after all, is about managing humans, and the aim is to manage fisheries such that they improve human well-being. Several member countries led by Indonesia, in collaboration with international organisations such as the ILO, are re-drafting the measure to put it before the WCPFC again. Work progressed during 2021, and will continue in 2022, with China joining the working group.

If international agreements to protect crew and observers are ratified by governments, a measure is passed through the WCPFC and then these are implemented in national legal frameworks; failure to abide by these rules then becomes an IUU fishing issue. If fishing vessels are found to have engaged in IUU they can lose their access to fish, for example, by being taken off the FFA list of vessels of good standing.

Other potential initiatives that could be pursued at the regional level include the following.

- FFA and/or PNA could generate a database on beneficial owners and ‘persons of interest’ to help identify the good and the bad in companies, captains and vessels, as data to help track human rights of crew and observers as one part of preventing IUU. Flag states could support these efforts by providing information from their vessel registries.
- Work could be done towards reducing the discrimination between nationalities, to harmonise remuneration on vessels operating in the Pacific, so that equal work means equal pay regardless of nationality.

57 Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency. (2019). Harmonised Minimum Terms and Conditions for Access by Fishing Vessels (HMTc). Retrieved from https://www.ffa.int/system/files/HMTc_as_revised_by_FFC110_May_2019_-_FINAL.pdf

58 Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission. (2018). Resolution on Labour Standards for Crew on Fishing Vessels (2018-01). Retrieved from <https://www.wcpfc.int/doc/resolution-2018-01/resolution-labour-standards-crew-fishing-vessels>



Action being taken at the national level

Pacific Island countries are working towards domestic implementation of the frameworks mentioned above. The first step is putting the measures into domestic legislation and regulations. The next step, which requires extensive capacity building, is to enforce them. Checking labour conditions is a new area of work for fisheries (or other agency) officers who are checking vessels for compliance. Ship boarding officers are more familiar with checking catch documentation, biosecurity and customs matters. Officials tend to focus on paperwork and don't always check living conditions, maintenance of facilities, or the adequacy of diets. Pacific island countries do not generally yet have the legal framework for inspecting labour conditions in place. That could come from ratifying and implementing one of the international agreements such as ILO C188 for work in fishing or the FFA HMTTC, and establishing Approved Port State Inspectors for Fishing Vessels. Prosecuting and penalising vessels found to breach labour conditions is another new area requiring resourcing, and since some fishing industry players are wealthy and politically influential, care is needed to ensure the integrity of the system, and reliable handling of evidence so prosecutions can succeed.

Vanuatu is working to implement the WCPFC 2018 Resolution on Labour Standards for Crew on Fishing Vessels.⁵⁹ The Ministry of Fisheries is working with Internal Affairs (responsible for ni-Vanuatu crew working on foreign vessels), the Labour Department, Ministry of Infrastructure and Public Utilities (maritime regulating body) and consulting domestic crewing agents to finalise the draft of standards for citizens. They may later look at including foreign crew in this standard, the current draft only captures labour standards for national crew. These measures are only relevant for ni-Vanuatu nationals, however, while foreign crew employed on Vanuatu-flagged vessels remain at risk. Vanuatu has an open vessel registry, meaning it hosts 'Flag of Convenience' fishing and fish transport vessels, without properly regulating the activities of these vessels. Two vessels flagged to Vanuatu have had 'withhold release' orders imposed by the US Government for suspected human rights abuses.

The Solomon Islands Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources is working towards implementing a national crewing policy for domestic and foreign fleets in alignment with FFA's HMTTC section V. They are considering whether to implement it through legislation (which takes a long time), or licence conditions (which can be amended annually). They are also looking at expanding pre-licence inspections of vessels to cover living conditions, sleeping, toilet/shower and meal arrangements. Once the HMTTC section V becomes law, compliance officers can follow up on conditions, including labour standards. Penalties for breaches will have to be set to allow a strong enforcement that deters breaches.

Cook Islands has started implementing measures for the 2021 International Maritime Organization (IMO) Cape Town Agreement,⁶⁰ which provides standards on the design, construction and equipment of fishing vessels and includes regulations designed to protect the safety of crews and observers, and which facilitates better control of fishing vessel safety by flag, port and coastal states. A policy is being prepared for government endorsement in late 2021. Cook Islands has been testing their existing systems to see how provisions can be implemented, such as mandating crew contracts through licensing arrangements, offsetting insurance coverage or enforcing conditions for all vessels flagged or licensed to fish in Cook Island waters.

Papua New Guinea has lost several observers at sea so is pursuing domestic legislation changes to increase penalties on fishing companies for failing to protect observers. As of 2021 the Merchant Shipping Act was the main legal framework for all people working on vessels, but the National Fisheries Authority is the agency directly involved in observer activities, so new legislation revisions were being planned for the Fisheries Management Act.

Build frameworks, collect data for ongoing monitoring of HR and GESI conditions in fishing

Just as for fish stocks, ongoing monitoring is required to understand and manage HR and GESI issues in industrial tuna fishing. Data is needed for accountability. Without data it is impossible to know the extent of any problems, or whether they are improving or getting worse. Labour conditions on fishing vessels could be seen as part of social and economic monitoring the Forum Fisheries Committee has tasked the FFA to develop. See Module 2 for further details on monitoring for HR and GESI.

The main source of monitoring and reporting on HR and GESI on fishing vessels should be vessel boarding teams and port monitoring staff. Observers already take some notes on living and labour conditions, but these notes are not used to monitor HR and GESI on board. With some training, observer notes on HR and GESI could be used as one source of information. However, it is important to note that observers already have a heavy workload, so it is possibly unreasonable to ask them to do more. Also, collecting information on human rights or labour abuses could put observers in harm's way. Vessel boarding teams and port monitoring staff are less vulnerable than observers alone on vessels out at sea.

59 Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission. (2018). Resolution on Labour Standards for Crew on Fishing Vessels (2018-01). Retrieved from <https://www.wcpfc.int/doc/resolution-2018-01/resolution-labour-standards-crew-fishing-vessels>

60 International Maritime Organization. (2012). Cape Town Agreement on the Implementation of the Provisions of the 1993 Protocol relating to the Torremolinos International Convention for the Safety of Fishing Vessels. Retrieved from <https://www.imo.org/en/About/Conventions/Pages/The-Torremolinos-International-Convention-for-the-Safety-of-Fishing-Vessels.aspx>

Multi-stakeholder forums for cross-sector collaboration to improve labour conditions

Since HR and GESI on offshore fishing vessels is such a cross-cutting issue, national and regional multi-stakeholder platforms are required. Multi-stakeholder platforms can bring together the various organisations responsible for, and with expertise in, the different aspects of protecting human and labour rights at sea. Fisheries agencies could chair these platforms, and include membership from labour agencies, immigration agencies, the police, fishing industry associations, unions, human rights groups, the national UN agency coordinator, ports agencies, health organisations, counselling services and government agencies and NGOs working in the gender area, including services handling sexual abuse and gender-based violence. Each Pacific Island country (including the territories where possible) could establish an Office for the Voice of Seafarers to help coordinate discussions with the many relevant organisations.

Regionally, a start is being made with a new joint project on decent work in fisheries between FFA, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the United Nations IOM. Nationally, several Pacific Island countries have recognised the need and are moving towards establishing multi-stakeholder forums, but at the time of writing none were yet established and functioning to improve HR and GESI in tuna fishing.

One concrete and relatively easy first task for a national multi-stakeholder platform is to put together a protocol for handling distressed seafarers. Distressed seafarers include those who lodge complaints about their treatment, who flee vessels while they are in port, or who are abandoned by their employer in an overseas port with no income or way to get home. One of the main problems that arises with these cases is that the different agencies who come into contact with distressed seafarers are not aware of services other agencies might have in place to help. As part of developing the protocol, the organisations can work out a referral structure for who is responsible for what, what services are available, who pays for repatriation from what source of funding, and so on.

For example, an Indonesian crew member experiencing abuse might ‘jump ship’ while in port and end up at a local police station seeking support to lodge a complaint and/or to return home. He may not have identification documents because these documents are held by the captain. Without understanding the appropriate way to handle such cases the police may feel there is nothing they can do, and may even take the crew member back to the vessel from which they fled, putting them back into harm’s way. The IOM has a programme to repatriate vulnerable migrants, including crew stranded in the Pacific who are not from Pacific Island countries and territories (PICTs), but police officers are unlikely to be aware of the existence of this programme. Without some kind of multi-stakeholder platform and cross-agency protocol for handling distressed seafarers, it is difficult for a single agency, such as the police, to know what course of action to take, and what services are available.

Develop a protocol for distressed seafarers

A multi-stakeholder forum for human and labour rights at sea could develop a distressed seafarer protocol so that any organisation that comes into contact with a distressed seafarer knows what to do.

- A good starting point is the Labour Certificate template used by the MSC, which has been compiled for many PICs. See the Tools section of this module for a modified version of this template.
- Once a distressed seafarer protocol is established, posters with key contact information for seafarers seeking assistance could be posted around port areas. These could be written in key languages, such as local languages, English, Bahasa Indonesia, Chinese, Korean and Tagalog.
- The different organisations can collaborate to verify media or NGO reports that allege human or labour rights abuses, which fisheries agencies alone may find difficult to do.
- Fisheries agencies should be informed about relevant active investigations being conducted by other agencies (such as labour), and in other jurisdictions.

Training

Training and education are other key areas where HR and GESI in offshore tuna fishing can be addressed. Fishing crew should receive training at the fisheries and maritime colleges around the Pacific before they go to sea, although apparently in some countries there is not enough monitoring of crew certificates, so some companies employ crew without their having undertaken the basic training. Another persistent problem in the training system is that of funding. Crew cannot afford to pay for the training themselves, so companies pay, and there is constant pressure from fishing companies to reduce the length/costs of the training. Government funding of training through fishing fees may help ensure crew receive the appropriate amount of training. National governments and regional efforts are also necessary to enforce training requirements.

Assuming funding is secured, the training offered by the fisheries and maritime colleges is an area of opportunity for improving HR and GESI on offshore tuna fishing vessels. FFA hosts the Heads of Fisheries Colleges meetings to raise awareness on the need for crewing conditions and to highlight education and training content needs, and obligations of employers. This includes embedding the HMTC and crew agreements. The Pacific Community runs parallel Heads of Maritime Training Institutes meetings. There is some overlap in terms of training fishing crew and other maritime crew, so increased coordination efforts between these two groups could be helpful.

It may be useful to pool resources between mandatory training regulated by governments and private sector social auditing practitioners who also do training in seafood industries. Social auditing practitioners conduct training on social accountability, interpersonal relations, basic counselling, social well-being, and basic mental health case management. In 2013 PNA and member countries collaborated, using WCPFC offices in FSM, to train observers for auditing tuna catches on purse seiners for the MSC Chain of Custody.⁶¹ Possible sources of private sector training relevant for tuna fisheries include:

- KIWA International;
- the online learning module for ‘Decent Work at Sea’ by RISE Seafood;⁶²
- Equimundo (formerly called Promundo), an organisation that runs training and organisational change work for gender equity, focusing on men and masculinities, and has run fisheries workshops in Solomon Islands in the past; and
- the World Maritime University.

Fisheries colleges have some basic modules in all courses, such as on HIV/AIDS and basic health, and Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS). Competency-based teaching modules on HR and GESI could be developed as part of basic training. Examples of potentially useful topic areas include:

- awareness of human rights at sea and labour rights for work in fishing, including how to check for risks at the recruitment phase;
- coverage of relevant parts of labour laws regarding the importance of having a contract before going to sea, making sure a family member onshore has a copy of the contract, what to look for in a contract; and
- awareness about sexual harassment and other kinds of abuse, and what to do if such abuse occurs on board.

One challenge for mandatory training is that some industries, such as some longliners in Fiji and Vanuatu, seem to be employing crew even without the mandatory training. The Fiji Maritime Academy (FMA) has been running safety training for people already working at sea but who did not do the training before. The Vanuatu Maritime College (VMC) is also aware of this problem in the Vanuatu fishing industry and would like to find a solution.

Interviewees noted that not only crew lack understanding of human and labour rights, but captains and vessel owners may also lack understanding of their local legal obligations, especially if they are working across two or more jurisdictions. Possibly captains and masters who have trained elsewhere and are working in Pacific Island countries and territories should be required to undertake a short course in local legal requirements before working in those countries. Captains are very powerful on vessels, and thus can greatly influence HR and GESI issues on board, especially if they are well respected by crew. It could be a good strategy to target captains as agents for change in the fishing industry.

61 Jaynes B. (2013, April 8). PNA Continues to Add Value and Generates Return to Pacific EEZs. Kaselehlle Press

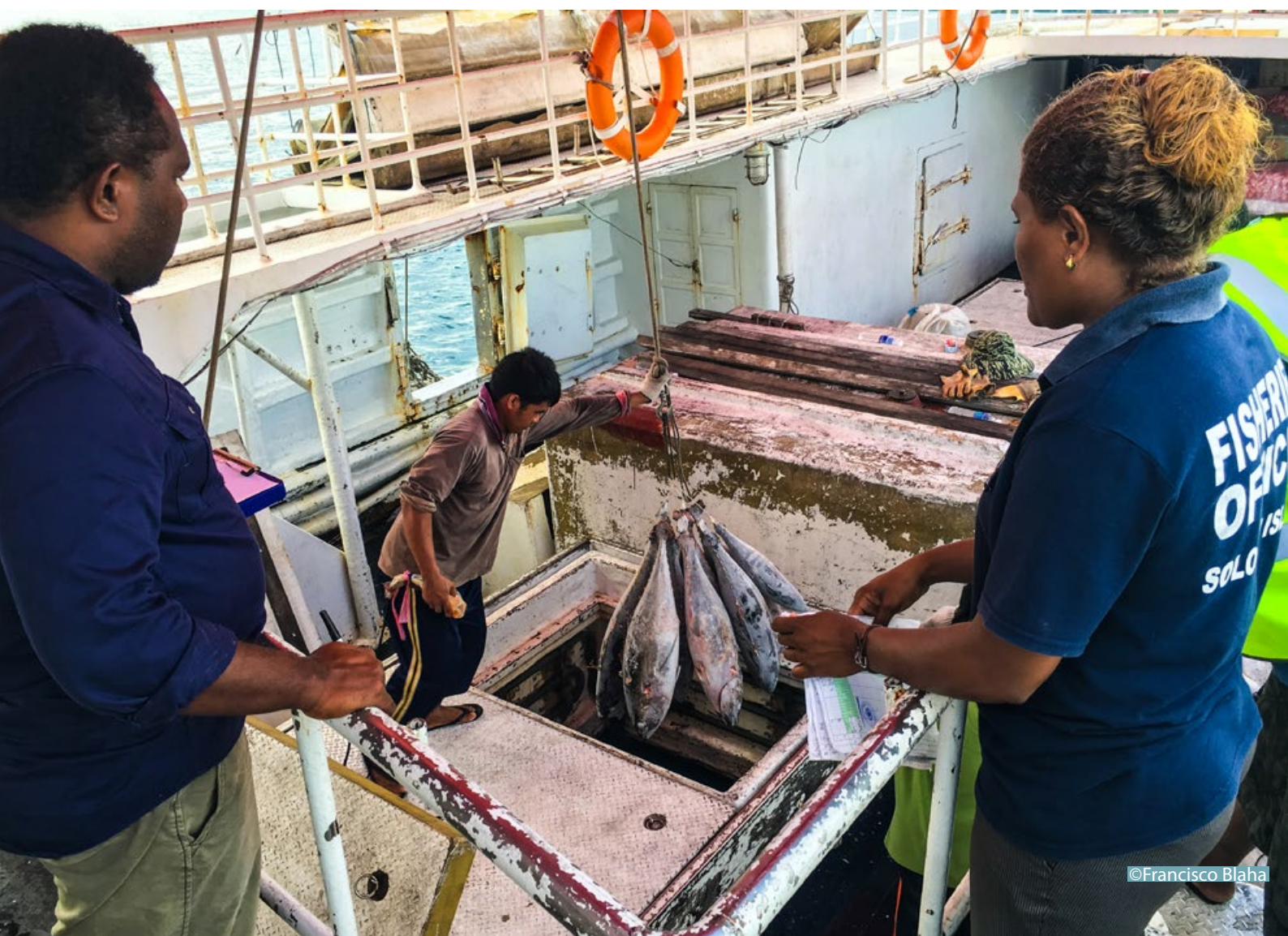
62 RISE. (2021). Decent Work at Sea. Retrieved December 10, 2021, from <https://rise seafood.org/foundations/decent-work-at-sea/>

Create a Community of Practice for women seafarers to share lessons learned from different sectors

Women working on industrial tuna vessels is a relatively new thing in the Pacific, and the numbers are still very small, so it could be useful to combine forces with groups about women working in other seafaring roles with a longer history and larger numbers, for example, the PacWIMA Secretariat that sits with the SPC Maritime Training Adviser. Since the relaunch of PacWIMA in April 2016 a significant number of State Women In Maritime Associations (State WIMAs) have been established and officially launched in Fiji (2016), Tonga (2017), Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Kiribati (2018), and Samoa, Nauru and Tuvalu (2019). The Papua New Guinea WIMA has been active since 2007. The country WIMAs play a critical role in national efforts to increase women's participation and representation in the sector to increase gender equality. They promote access to maritime training and education opportunities for women and girls, provide safe spaces for shore-based females and female seafarers to share their experiences of life on board, the lessons they have learned and the challenges and ways to address these challenges.

PacWIMA policy interventions around human rights in workplace policies and practices and social inclusion more broadly are useful for improving labour conditions overall, not just for women. PacWIMA has experience in handling sexual harassment and abuse on vessels. These interventions include educating people about use of language, behaviour, and integrating inclusiveness. Some of this is through formal channels on government committees, and some is through 'informal chats' with male colleagues. For example, to address lack of women's access to training and education opportunities offered by the IMO, invitation letters specified that one of the nominated applicants had to be a woman. This pushed governments to consider women for capacity development opportunities.

PacWIMA has until now had very little to do with fishing, being focused on the merchant marine sector, but could expand to include tuna fishing. PacWIMA could engage with Women in Fisheries networks nationally and regionally, the fishing industry, and fisheries agencies. With the existing WIMA network at the national level, PacWIMA could be extended to tuna fishing crews and observers. That would require commitment at the national level via ministers to then push for implementation regionally via the Pacific Community and FFA. There is some scope for extending PacWIMA to fisheries in that the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Fishing Vessel Personnel (STCW-F) is an IMO convention ratified by several Pacific countries, and could be a tool to facilitate working across the silos of fisheries versus other kinds of marine industries.



Tool: Labour auditing frameworks

There are many labour auditing frameworks⁶³. Some that are specifically useful for offshore tuna fisheries include:

- On-board Social Accountability (OSA)⁶⁴;
- Seafood Slavery Risk Tool (SSRT) by Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch⁶⁵;
- Social Responsibility Assessment Tool for the Seafood Sector by Conservation International, using the Monterey Framework for social responsibility⁶⁶; and
- Seafood Task Force, which has an auditable vessel checklist with criteria for labour, and also a tuna handbook⁶⁷.

63 Garcia Lozano A. J., Decker Sparks J. L., Durgana D. P., Farthing C. M., Fitzpatrick J., Krough-Poulsen B., ... Kittinger J. N. (2022). Decent work in fisheries: Current trends and key considerations for future research and policy. *Frontiers in Marine Science*, submitted.

64 OSA International. (n.d.). On-board Social Accountability (OSA). Retrieved December 10, 2021, from <http://www.osainternational.global/>

65 Monterey Bay Aquarium. (2021). Seafood Slavery Risk Tool. Retrieved December 10, 2021, from <https://www.seafish.org/responsible-sourcing/tools-for-ethical-seafood-sourcing/records/seafood-slavery-risk-tool-ssrt/> (currently v.2 is under development)

66 Conservation International. (2021). Social Responsibility Assessment Tool for the Seafood Sector: A Rapid Assessment Protocol. Retrieved from www.riseseafood.org

67 Seafood Task Force. (2020). Code of Conduct & Auditable Standards Tuna Handbook. Seafood Task Force. Retrieved from https://www.seafoodtaskforce.global/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/STF.G.S.002.EN_STF-Tuna-Handbook-English.pdf



Tool: Checklist for protecting human rights and labour rights in tuna fisheries

This tool is adapted from the MSC Certificate Holder Forced and Child Labour Policies, Practices and Measures Template.⁶⁸ It is a useful template for gathering all relevant local and flag state information about legal frameworks, services and practices relevant for HR in offshore tuna fishing.

1. What agencies control labour-related regulations for fisheries in the coastal state and the flag state? What is the relevant legislation in the coastal state and the flag state? How are laws enforced?
2. Describe the processes, including government and certificate holder measures, that are in place to identify and mitigate any risk of child and forced labour.
3. Describe the typical methods used to recruit crew and describe the migrant composition of crew if any.
4. Where there is known engagement of fishing companies with fisher, migrant, and worker rights groups, describe how this occurs and the organisations engaged with workers.
5. Describe the nature of contracts or legal work agreements used in tuna fisheries and the issues addressed in such agreements.
6. Describe any third party audits and certifications on labour, or labour inspections conducted in the last two years.
7. Describe national minimum age requirements for crew members serving on vessels.
8. Describe systems in place, both regulatory and private sector systems, to ensure that crew members meet national minimum age requirements.
 - Describe how this is checked, including enforcement by the responsible governing authority or oversight body such as labour inspectors.
9. Describe how repatriation issues are dealt with in the 'Unit of Certification' (the fishery) with respect to periods of leave, end of contract, voluntary and involuntary termination, and freedom of movement, and the extent to which these are included in contracts.
10. Describe if there is evidence of systemic practices to impose costs on crew members for placement or brokerage fees, travel to the workplace, visa, medical, safety gear, clothing/protective gear, food at the workplace, communications access, remittance fees, repatriation, etc.
 - If so, describe such practices and how debt bondage is avoided.
11. List any policies or measures (e.g. hotline) that are in place for crew voices to be heard and to report and remediate any instances of forced or child labour.
12. Describe policies and practice in place to ensure that crew members have free and timely access to their identification documents, including National ID, passports, visas, etc.
13. List any other relevant points regarding labour practices for seafarers.

⁶⁸ The Templates are completed for certified fisheries and placed in the Assessment section, under General Fishery Documents on the MSC website. For example, for Fiji longline fisheries it is available here: <https://fisheries.msc.org/en/fisheries/fiji-albacore-yellowfin-and-bigeye-tuna-longline/@assessments>

Acronyms

C188	International Labour Organization. C188 Work in Fishing Convention (No. 188) (2007)
CBP	Customs and Border Protection (USA)
COVID	COVID-19, coronavirus disease
EEZ	Exclusive economic zone
EU	European Union
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
FFA	Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency
FFIA	Fiji Fishing Industry Association
FMA	Fiji Maritime Academy
FNPF	Fiji National Provident Fund
FSM	Federated States of Micronesia
FTUC	Fiji Trades Union Congress
GESI	gender equity and social inclusion (outside this handbook the word ‘equality’ is usually used, rather than ‘equity’, in GESI)
HMTC	Harmonised Minimum Terms and Conditions for Access by Fishing Vessels (FFA)
HR	human rights
ILO	International Labour Organization
ILRF	International Labor Rights Forum
IMO	International Maritime Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ITF	International Transport Workers’ Federation
IUU	illegal, unregulated, unreported [fishing]
MSC	Marine Stewardship Council
MSG	Melanesian Spearhead Group
NFD	National Fisheries Development, fishing company in Solomon Islands
NGO	non-governmental organisation
OSA	On-board Social Accountability
PacWIMA	Pacific Women in Maritime regional seafarers’ organisation
PNA	Parties to the Nauru Agreement
PSMA	Port State Measures Agreement
RFMO	Regional fisheries management organisations
RFVS	Responsible Fishing Vessel Standard
SERB	Seafarer Employment Record Book
SINUW	Solomon Islands National Union of Workers
SRAT	Social Responsibility Assessment Tool
SSRT	Seafood Slavery Risk Tool
STCW-F	International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Fishing Vessel Personnel (STCW-F) (1995)
UN	United Nations
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
US	United States of America
VMC	Vanuatu Maritime College
WCPFC	Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission
WIMA	Women in Maritime seafarers’ organisation

Annex – FFA Harmonised Minimum Terms and Conditions for Access by Fishing Vessels, excerpts relevant for human rights

PART III, Section 9, Observers

- A) The operator and each member of the crew of a vessel shall allow and assist any person identified by an FFA member as an observer to: ...
- iv. disembark at an agreed place and time; and
 - v. carry out all duties safely.
- B) The operator or any crew member of the vessel shall not assault, obstruct, resist, delay, refuse boarding to, intimidate or interfere with an observer in the performance of his or her duties.
- C) The operator shall provide the observer, while on board the vessel, at no expense to the licensing member, with officer level accommodation, food and medical facilities.
- D) The following costs of the observer shall be met by the operator:
- full travel costs from the licensing member to and from the vessel as applicable;
 - salary or allowance, as applicable;
 - full insurance coverage for the observer to and from, and on, the vessel, which shall include the components set out in paragraph 9A(e)(ii-iii);
 - a two-way communication satellite device and a waterproof personal lifesaving beacon, and the operating costs of such devices, as required and specified by the observer service provider; and
 - all other costs associated with observers performing their duties as an observer.
- E) The operator will provide:
- a copy of the insurance coverage policy for an observer; and
 - the associated certificate of currency for that policy to that observer's provider and to any national fisheries authorities in whose waters the vessel is licensed to fish.

9A. Observer Safety

- A) The operator shall be responsible for the health and safety of the Observer while he or she is on board the vessel throughout the duration of the trip.
- B) The operator shall immediately rectify any conditions that may cause serious health and safety issues to the observer, not limited to availability of basic safety equipment and general sanitation, on board the vessel.
- C) The operator shall immediately cease fishing, report to the observer service provider and facilitate the replacement and transfer of the observer under the following circumstances:
- where the observer is incapacitated from performing his or her duties due to sickness or injuries that require immediate medical attention;
 - where the health, including mental health or safety of the observer is at risk;
 - where the observer has been assaulted, harassed or intimidated; or
 - where the operator has been directed to do so by the observer service provider or the licensing authority for reasons of the safety and wellbeing of the observer.

- D) Where the observer is missing or presumed fallen overboard, or as applicable where the observer has passed away, the operator shall:
- immediately cease all fishing activities, activate search and rescue protocols then conduct a search immediately for at least 72 hours or as otherwise directed by authorities;
 - report the incident immediately to the observer service provider including the vessel's position where the incident happened;
 - alert other vessels in the vicinity by using all available means of communication;
 - whether or not the search is successful, return the vessel for further investigation to
 - the nearest port as designated by the observer service provider; and
 - provide a full report to the observer service provider and appropriate authorities on the incident and fully cooperate with the investigation, while remaining in port until further notice.
- E) The operator shall be responsible for the following, as required and specified by the observer service provider:
- the cost of all safety equipment to be used by the observer;
 - in the event of injury or illness of the observer, full repatriation and medical costs, as applicable, where the observer is returned to port for medical reasons;
 - in the event of injury or death of the observer, to pay for the autopsy, funeral expenses, and adequate costs for medical, repatriation, loss of earnings, and other related expenses as applicable;
 - in the event of death of the observer, to ensure that the body is well preserved for the purposes of an autopsy and investigation.
- F) The operator shall assist the observer service provider to replace or disembark the observer at the nearest port where any member of the immediate family, namely spouse, child or parent, is seriously ill or has died.

PART V: LABOUR/EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS

22. Crew Employment Conditions

- A) The Operator shall be responsible for the health, welfare and safety of the Crew while he or she is on board the vessel throughout the duration of the contract.
- B) The Operator shall ensure that a written contract is executed and signed between the operator or through a representative of the Operator and the Crew before the commencement of employment which shall contain the particulars as set out in Annex 6.
- C) The Operator shall observe and respect any form of accordance with basic human rights of the Crew in accepted international human right standards.
- D) The Operator shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that Crew are not assaulted or subject to torture, cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment and shall treat all crew with fairness and dignity.
- E) The Operator shall be responsible for the provision to Crew for health protection and management for sickness, injury or death while employed or engaged or working on a vessel at sea or in a foreign port. In the event of injury or sickness, medical care shall be provided free of charge to the crew.
- F) The Operator shall in the event of death notify relevant authority as soon as practicable and ensure that the body is well preserved for the purposes of an autopsy, investigation, and shall undertake immediate repatriation of the body to the nearest appropriate available port.

G) The Operator shall be responsible for advising the Crew's next of kin in the event of an emergency.

H) The Operator shall provide a decent and regular remuneration to the Crew.

I) The Operator shall provide repatriation of the Crew to his or her point of hire and all related cost where the contract is terminated as follows:

- The contract is expired whilst the crew is still abroad
- The crew cannot perform his or her duty due to sickness or other medical reasons
- Where the contract is terminated in accordance with the signed contract.

J) The Operator shall ensure that Crew are given regular periods of rest of sufficient length to ensure safety and health in accordance with international standards.

K) The Operator shall be responsible to ensure:

- that the vessel is safe in accordance to accepted international standards on safety of vessels; and
- the safety of Crews on board and the safe operation of the vessel and to provide on-board occupational safety and health awareness training.

L) The Operator shall provide the following at no cost to the Crew:

- Full travel costs from the point of hire to and from the vessel;
- Full insurance coverage, to and from, and on, the vessel throughout the duration of the contract;
- Copy of the insurance policy;
- Appropriate and adequate safety equipment and tools;
- Appropriate accommodation which shall be in a clean, decently and habitable condition and is maintained in a good state of repair taking into regard the comfort, the health and safety of the crew;
- Appropriate sanitary facilities which are hygienic and in a proper state of repair;
- An adequate amount of suitable food and water having regards to the crew's health, religious requirements and cultural practices in relation to food.

M) The Operator prohibits deduction from crew wages by any party for any expenses related to work.

Summary of selected licence terms and conditions

The Operator shall comply with all laws and regulations of the licensing member [*this includes labour laws*].

Failure to comply with these and other terms and conditions of the licence, national laws and regulations may, in addition to any judicial penalties that may be incurred, result in the suspension or cancellation of the licence, either temporarily or permanently.

Annex 4 – Procedures for the operation of the FFA vessel register

Criteria for withdrawal or suspension of good standing

Good standing may be suspended if there are reasonable grounds to believe that the vessel operator violated terms and conditions of access, including but not limited to:

assault, obstruction, resist, delay, refuse boarding to, intimidate, use of threatening or abusive language or behaving in a threatening or insulting manner, and interfering in any way with the performance of the duties of an authorised officer or observer failure to comply with license conditions regulating employment, vessel safety and crew numbers.

Annex 6 – Particulars of crew agreement

The Crew's family name and other names, date of birth or age, and birthplace;

The place at which and date on which the agreement was concluded;

The details of the next of Kin in the event of an emergency

The name of the fishing vessel or vessels and the registration number of the vessel or vessels on board which the Crew undertakes to work;

The name of the employer, or fishing vessel owner, or other party to the agreement with the crew;

The voyage or voyages to be undertaken, if this can be determined at the time of making the agreement;

The capacity in which the Crew is to be employed or engaged;

If possible, the place at which and date on which the Crew is required to report on board for service;

The provisions to be supplied to the Crew, the amount of wages, or the amount of the share and the method of calculating such share if remuneration is to be on a share basis, or the amount of the wage and share and the method of calculating the latter if remuneration is to be on a combined basis, and any agreed minimum wage;

The termination of the agreement and the conditions thereof, namely:

- if the agreement has been made for a definite period, the date fixed for its expiry;
- if the agreement has been made for a voyage, the port of destination and the time which has to expire after arrival before the Crew shall be discharged; and
- if the agreement has been made for an indefinite period, the conditions which shall entitle either party to rescind it, as well as the required period of notice for rescission, provided that such period shall not be less for the employer, or fishing vessel owner or other party to the agreement with the Crew;

The right of termination by the Crew in the event of mistreatment and abuse;

The protection that will cover the Crew in the event of mistreatment and abuse, sickness, injury or death in connection with service;

The amount of paid annual leave or the formula used for calculating leave, where applicable;

The health and social benefits coverage and benefits to be provided to the Crew by the employer, fishing vessel owner, or other party or parties to the Crew's work agreement, as applicable;

The Crew's entitlement to repatriation.



Pacific
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Pacific handbook for human rights, gender equity and social inclusion in tuna industries



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MODULE 4

HR and GESI
in port areas



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in tuna industries

Module 4: HR and GESI in port areas

Kate Barclay



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Reference Note

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Key points

- Port areas are vibrant places full of people and economic activity, but an element of seafarer culture means there also tends to be drugs and alcohol, and casual sexual encounters, which can give rise to HR and GESI issues.
- Port areas include the actual port itself, and the part of town around ports connected to the port through businesses servicing ports and crews, and where the social life is affected by seafarer activities.
- Some of the key factors in good governance of port areas is to avoid stigmatising or criminalising the sexual encounters, including transactional sex, so as to avoid driving it 'underground' and exposing people to more risk. Facilities for crew while they are in port is a great help, as are services for prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted infections and gender based violence, and for economic empowerment so that everyone has a viable alternative to sex work if they want it.
- HR and GESI around fishing ports is relevant for fisheries management, but fisheries managers do not have the expertise or resources to address it, so collaboration with other organisations interested in social issues around port areas is key.

Social issues arising from visiting seafarers around ports

As noted in Module 3, maritime masculine cultures worldwide have some problematic elements in terms of risk taking, violence, substance abuse and promiscuity.¹ Not all seafarers fit this mould, but the tendency is visible around port and fish landing areas, where there is usually a thriving bar scene and commercial sex trade. Not all seafarers want to 'party' when they go ashore, many like to phone their families and go shopping. Fishing crew interviewees, however, say partying is considered normal when in port, and if crew are living together in close quarters on vessels it can be hard to escape. There can be group pressure on colleagues to participate.

Tuna industries are only a small part of port life – ports also have freight and passenger vessels coming and going. The issues raised in this module are thus about port culture and administration as a whole, with tuna vessels and crews being just one piece.

It helps if there is a range of activities and places to go for seafarers. For example, Mission to Seafarers ('Flying Angel') charity hostels offer places to stay and recreational activities for seafarers who do not want to party, but unfortunately none are operating in the island Pacific. According to interviewees, seamen's centres used to be common around the Pacific. They sometimes included pool tables, food, counselling, sometimes financial literacy programmes. Sometimes they were just a shipping container office with a connected computer, phone and counselling for seafarers. At the time of writing, we are not aware that any of these centres are functioning, although the Anglican Church had plans to re-establish one in Fiji. Seafarers also like to visit shopping malls, movie theatres and sports grounds.

Even basic guidance about the social context of the port could be useful – in Palau there have been problems of visiting crew taking fruit and vegetables from local gardens, presumably because the crew were not fully aware that the fruit and vegetables had been planted by locals for their own food supplies, and were not free for anyone to take. Likewise, it is useful for residents of towns around ports to be aware of occurrences in the ports and the seafaring world. For example, the Fiji Times has a 'Shipping Times' section once a week with information relevant for Suva ports.

Noro – a tuna town

Noro in the Western Province of Solomon Islands is a major port for the country and hosts most of the domestic tuna fleet and a large tuna processing factory – SolTuna. Tuna activity around the port is a source of economic benefit and vibrancy – there are not only negative social impacts but positive ones too. The port brings employment and market-stall opportunities. It attracts people from all over the country. The tuna companies pay for infrastructure, like the local sports ground, and services such as relocation of the rubbish dump. Some of the challenges Noro faces include problems with home-brew alcohol (*kwaso*) and marijuana. The Double A Club nightclub generates a lot of activity.

¹ Allison E. H. (2013). A "provocation" on maritime masculinities – and why they matter for management. Presentation at the MARE People and the Sea Conference, University of Amsterdam, July 2013. <https://genderaquafish.files.wordpress.com/2013/08/04-allison-mare-maritime-masculinities.pdf>

Stakeholders involved in developing this handbook all note that sex is usually part of what some visiting seafarers want when they come to port, at the same time as restocking and refuelling. This is the case with industrial tuna fleets transshipping their catches in Tarawa lagoon in Kiribati, it happens in Fiji, it happens at ports all around the world.

The historical background and cultural context of people working in the tuna industry means there are multiple perspectives on relations between seafarers and local women or sometimes local men. There are probably also LGBTQIA+² relations, although we have no information about that. Some Pacific Islanders are strongly Christian and view sex out of marriage and transactional sex as morally wrong. Selling sexual services is illegal in most Pacific Island countries and territories. A complicating factor is that in some places there is a historical precedent whereby visiting seafarers, usually men trading ceremonial valuables, were offered local women or adolescent girls for sexual purposes as part of cultures of hospitality and reciprocity. Women and girls themselves, as well as their families, expected goods in return.³ In contemporary times, local men and women may be drawn to foreign fishing crew for access to alcohol and drugs. After initially befriending crew through drinking parties, young women may become involved in transactional sex, or they may continue partying with seafarers without it being explicit sex work.⁴

There is no verified data about these sensitive issues, but it seems the young people interacting with men from the ships are often from socially and economically marginalised backgrounds, who may have experienced neglect and/or abuse. They may be poor, rural youth with limited job opportunities in urban areas, or children from 'broken families'. They may accept payment for sex – such as a ride on a motorbike, or some cigarettes.

There have been rumours about 'sex for fish' trading with crew in the Pacific,⁵ but most of the trade with crews for reject fish is for fresh fruit and vegetables, cigarettes or other commodities. There is trade of sex for fish in some parts of Africa.⁶ Women sometimes engage in the sex industry because of lack of other opportunities for cash income.⁷

Transactional sex

The kinds of sexual arrangements between locals and visiting seafarers vary. On the one hand some may be very explicit transactions with an expectation that cash or other goods will be paid for services. On the other end of the spectrum, there may be more loose arrangements where locals have friends who work on tuna fishing vessels who give them gifts. Another spectrum is of people who enter into these relations very much of their own free will, and of people who have little choice about it, through lack of livelihood options. Power inequalities between people (women and men, older and younger people, people with and without money) are central to how transactional sex plays out. We should take care with the words we use to talk about these activities because of the stigma involved. People who need help may refuse to talk if they are shamed by the ones they reach out to.

'Transactional sex', 'prostitution' and 'sex work'

There is no single term that all people involved accept as the right one for transactional sex. The term 'sex work' was coined by people engaged in transactional sex in the 1970s as a term they preferred to the legalistic and negative term 'prostitute'. Most people do not like to be called prostitutes. 'Sex work' allows for all genders and highlights that the activity is a form of employment, and should have the rights and protections that other forms of work have, so some people involved in transactional sex prefer the term 'sex work'. On the other hand, some feminist organisations see that underlying discrimination against women is a root cause and the inherent risks of violence in transactional sex mean that it is not a free relationship of employment, so should not be called sex 'work'. Also, people whose relationships with seafarers are on the friendship end of the spectrum may not want to be called sex workers.

2 LGBTQIA+ means lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, intersex, asexual and any other sexual and gender identities beyond heterosexual and cisgender.

3 Crook T., Farran S., & Röell E. (2016). Understanding gender inequality actions in the Pacific: ethnographic case studies and policy options. European Commission, Luxembourg.

4 Unisea A. (2006a). Kiribati national tuna development and management plan – social and gender considerations. Noumea, New Caledonia: Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC).

5 Sullivan N., Warr T., Rainbubu J., Kunoko J., Akauna F., Angasa M., & Wenda Y. (2003). Tinpis Maror: A Social Impact Study of Proposed RD Tuna Cannery at Vidar Wharf, Madang. Madang, Papua New Guinea.

6 Béné C., & Merten S. (2008). Women and Fish-for-Sex: Transactional Sex, HIV/AIDS and Gender in African Fisheries. *World Development*, 36(5), 875–899. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2007.05.010>; Fiorella K. J., Camlin C. S., Salmen C. R., Omondi R., Hickey M. D., Omollo D. O., Milner E. M., Bukusi E. A., Fernald L. C. H., & Brashares J. S. (2015). Transactional Fish-for-Sex Relationships Amid Declining Fish Access in Kenya. *World Development*, 74, 323–332. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2015.05.015>.

7 World Health Organization. (n.d.). Sexual exploitation and abuse, prevent and protect, what you need to know and do. Zurich: World Health Organization (WHO). Retrieved from www.who.int/about/ethics



Transactional sex is a fact of life around port areas. For example, in Majuro there are reports of young Chinese women involved in transactional sex in motels near port areas.⁸ According to stakeholders consulted for this handbook, differences in whether transactional sex leads to negative social impacts include: (1) the quality of social leadership and governance in surrounding communities; (2) the existence of services regarding sexual health and violence prevention; and (3) economic empowerment such that people have viable alternatives to sex work.

For example, while women's service staff in Noro in Solomon Islands say transactional sex continues, according to long term Noro residents and visitors, it is much less visible and causes less social disruption than it did in the past. Noro has been a fishing port since the mid-1970s and has had a processing factory since 1990. Several interviewees said sex workers no longer go out to the vessels in Noro, whereas in Honiara sex workers take small vessels from outside the restricted port areas and travel out to the ships. Stakeholders interviewed for this handbook said that vessel masters who prefer not to have sex workers come to their vessels thus prefer to trans-ship in Noro rather than Honiara. In Vanuatu, even with strict security environment around ports, transactional sex continues. The Department of Women's Affairs, National Council of Women and the Health Department are working with vessel owners to promote awareness to reduce risks of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and stigma.

In some ports sex trafficking seems to be part of wider criminal activities around port areas including drug smuggling and dealing. It is important to note the crucial human rights difference between transactional sex that people engage in by choice, and sex trafficking. Trafficking is a human rights abuse while consensual sex work is not, even though both may be illegal and both may look the same from the perspective of clients. Also, if someone is in a desperate economic situation, they may feel forced to engage in transactional sex, so the line of 'choice' may be unclear.

Interviewees note that in Suva, with increases in security in port areas over the years, transactional sex is no longer feasible on vessels or within the port area. However, just outside the ports there are bars that seafarers know they can visit to find sex workers, and there are sex workers on the streets, even though it is illegal. Some of this business appears to be quite large scale and organised. In 2017 a large group of young Chinese women doing transactional sex were uncovered and deported.⁹ This incident was not near a fishing port but it is possible similar practices occur around ports. It is unclear from the media reports whether those women were trafficked or were willing sex workers. Studies have found that the reasons people go into sex work in Fiji are mainly economic, including unemployment, breakdown in marriage/de facto relationships and failure of husbands to pay maintenance, breakdown with extended family relationships, and inadequate government help. These factors are exacerbated by lack of education, childhood and maternal poverty, low wages for women, family violence, and the marginalisation of transgender people.¹⁰ Past estimates have suggested that the number of sex workers per capita in Fiji is similar to that in Thailand.¹¹

Public discourse around seafarers is often disapproving of transactional sex. The Republic of the Marshall Islands government has put in place regulations that specifically target trans-shipment activities, aiming to prevent human rights abuses such as human trafficking and sex with children. From a human rights perspective, transactional sex is a problem if people are forced into it, or if people too young to provide true consent are involved. But the criminalisation of sex work pushes it underground and often creates other human rights problems. It is usually sex workers – mainly women – who are targeted in legal crackdowns. For example, women have been arrested leaving tuna fishing vessels in Micronesian countries, but not the fishermen.¹² Transactional sex already has social stigma and when it is also illegal, it is driven further underground and makes people more vulnerable to rape and other forms of violence, and less able to seek help from health services or the justice system if they are attacked.

There are alternatives to criminalisation to address some of the gender equality and human rights problems that arise around transactional sex. In Fiji in the late 1990s, there was successful engagement through 'persistent and professional' youth volunteers from the Fiji AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome) Taskforce working on the streets with sex workers in a programme called 'Stepping Stone' that empowered them to protect themselves and help prevent the spread of STIs.¹³ The AIDS Taskforce and Stepping Stone training have both finished operating, but it could be useful to build on those learnings to think about ways to address social issues around ports.

8 Vunisea A. (2006b). Republic of the Marshall Islands national tuna development and management plan – social and gender considerations. Noumea, New Caledonia.

9 Cohen H., & Webb T. (2017, October 6). Chinese nationals deported from Fiji were sex workers, not fraudsters: source. ABC Radio National. Retrieved from <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-10-06/chinese-nationals-deported-from-fiji-sex-workers-not-fraudsters/9019666>

10 McMillan K., & Worth H. (2011). Sex Workers and HIV Prevention in Fiji - After the Fiji Crimes Decree 2009. In International HIV Research Group. International HIV Research Group. <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.14123.75049>

11 Ahlburg D. A., & Jensen, E. R. (1998). The economics of the commercial sex industry. In M. Ainsworth, L. Fransen, & M. Over (Eds.), *Confronting AIDS: Evidence from the Developing World*. European Commission, Brussels.

12 Vunisea A. (2006a). Kiribati national tuna development and management Plan – social and gender considerations. Noumea, New Caledonia: Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC); Vunisea A. (2006b). Republic of the Marshall Islands national tuna development and management plan – social and gender considerations. Secretariat of the Pacific Community, New Caledonia.

13 Arama and Associates. (2000). Gender impacts related to development of commercial tuna fisheries. Suva: Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), p.30.

Trading with crew in port areas

It should also be noted that Pacific Islanders frequently interact with visiting seafarers with no sex or substance abuse involved. When tuna fishing vessels are in port offloading their catch, many locals go out to the tuna boats in canoes or dinghies to sell fruit, vegetables, tobacco, soft drinks, and so on. One of the main objectives is to receive reject fish from the tuna fishing vessels, which can then be sold in local markets or taken home. When tuna vessels come to ports in Madang, Lae and Wewak in Papua New Guinea, women, men and children, go out to the vessels on canoes, selling coconuts, pawpaw, bananas and fresh vegetables, which they exchange with crew for fish.

The reject fish ('saltfish') from tuna fishing vessels is not necessarily of poor quality as long as it has been kept cold and is sold quickly. It may be rejected because it is damaged, or of the wrong species for the tuna processing facilities. Reject fish forms an important part of food systems in port areas where industrial tuna vessels trans-ship, such as South Tarawa in Kiribati. It may be sold direct, for example, in Honiara in the part of the market where pelagic fish are sold. Tuna from the industrial vessels are sold from cool boxes as 'saltfish'. The fish are preserved on the fishing vessels by freezing in brine, so they look brownish in colour and have a very salty flavour. Fish from the industrial vessels are also sold cooked by some vendors as fish and chips, or in curries or stews. Women make up a significant part of the value chain, making livelihoods from the reject fish coming from industrial vessels.¹⁴

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) around ports

The kinds of sexual liaisons that happen with seafarers in port tend to be quite risky – people may be under the influence of alcohol or other drugs and the interactions are likely to be casual. This means seafarers can be vectors for STIs, bringing them from one port to another. There is a particular problem around HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) and AIDS. In some island countries, almost all or all HIV and AIDS cases are linked to seafarers who have returned home and infected their wives, and, via their wives, newborn babies.

Case study: visiting seafarers and local women¹⁵



The Republic of the Marshall Islands is a major hub of tuna trans-shipment – where tuna are moved from fishing vessels to carrier vessels. Thousands of seafarers thus visit the small island of Majuro each year. Majuro has a population of 20,000 people. At sea, the seafarers are isolated from wider society, confined, and under strict rules, then once they get to port they are approached by sex workers and offered alcohol. The government has taken measures to curb activities involving minors. Many seafarers fear contracting sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and believe younger partners are safer. According to stakeholders talked to for this handbook, police interventions in recent years have enforced the age limit of 18, to prevent children from being involved. The issue is difficult to research so the Republic of Marshall Islands government lacks a thorough understanding of these activities. Government officials and women's organisations have called for analysis of sexual relations with visiting seafarers because STIs are having a major impact on reproductive health in the Republic of Marshall Islands.

¹⁴ McClean N., Barclay K., Fabinyi M., Adhuri D. S., Sulu R., & Indrabudi T. (2019). Assessing tuna fisheries governance for community wellbeing: case studies from Indonesia and Solomon Islands, summary report. Sydney: University of Technology Sydney. Retrieved from <https://www.uts.edu.au/about/faculty-arts-and-social-sciences/research/fass-research-projects/assessing-governance-tuna>

¹⁵ Vunisea A. (2006b). Republic of the Marshall Islands national tuna development and management plan – social and gender considerations. Secretariat of the Pacific Community, New Caledonia; Crook T., Farran S., & Röell E. (2016). Understanding gender inequality actions in the Pacific: ethnographic case studies and policy options. Luxembourg.



Case study: STIs in tuna town Noro

Noro in Solomon Islands has an active port and a large tuna processing factory. According to interviewees, Noro has higher rates of STIs than the average in Solomon Islands. This is due to the young population from all over the country living in an urban setting, as well as the activities of seafarers. Interviewees observed that there are quite a number of sex workers in town, many of whom are under 20 years of age, whose clients are seafarers. The tuna processing factory SolTuna has sexual health training for all workers. Nurses give workshops about using condoms and the health consequences if people are not careful. The company has an annual medical check. There is a Community Awareness team that talks to people about the issues associated with boarding ships for partying or transactional sex. This is relevant for all ships coming in and out of Noro, including freight and logging vessels as well as tuna boats. During COVID the contact between people from ships and the town was more strictly controlled.



Case study: HIV-AIDS from seafarers in Tuvalu¹⁶

There is not much research or analysis available on Tuvalu's HIV/AIDS situation. Figures vary year to year and there is no testing done for most people in the outer islands. According to Ministry of Health data in 2015, there were 12 people with HIV/AIDS living in Tuvalu; they were picked up during routine testing in antenatal care. Their identities are carefully guarded due to the risk of stigma and social exclusion in a small island setting where communal relationships are such a strong part of all aspects of life. There is no HIV treatment or anti-viral medication programme. In 2015 one of the children was found to be HIV-positive after birth.

Gender-based violence around ports

Seafaring masculinities, including in the tuna industry, can encourage violence and poor treatment of women by some men. Substance abuse that often occurs when visiting port, means that gender-based violence (GBV) may be heightened around port areas. Pacific Island countries and territories have on average very high rates of intimate partner violence; the statistics of Papua New Guinea are the highest with 47.6% of women experiencing violence from their intimate partners. For all forms of violence against women, including violence through trafficking or other exploitation, the figures are even higher, with 79% of all women in Tonga experiencing violence during their lifetime, and in Solomon Islands it is 64% of all women.¹⁷ Women having sex with visiting seafarers may be shamed by the rest of society, so they can be particularly vulnerable. The nature of these relations where seafarers are only in ports for certain periods, and may be drunk or on drugs, exacerbates the problem.

It is useful to have coordinated services for people who have suffered GBV, and many Pacific countries do have coordinated services. Women and children may need physical health services for injuries, as well as counselling for trauma, emergency housing, legal advice, and police protection. It is difficult for women who are coping with violence to travel around different parts of town and deal separately with different services. GBV services such as those in Fiji are sometimes concentrated in and around urban areas, and do not have specific considerations for those involved in maritime industries. Most services target general GBV abuse and those involved in providing services may have little knowledge of seafarers and related violence.

In Noro there is the SAFENet, a network that comprises both government and non-government frontline service providers. In a joint effort with relevant stakeholders – Church women's groups, Church elders and Church boards, the local Family Support Centre, Noro Town Council, the Ports Authority, the Police and health services – SAFENet coordinates support for women. It is challenging to work on GBV because of widespread beliefs that domestic violence is a private family matter, and for violence that occurs outside of the domestic space there is shame and fear of exclusion, so people are not willing to talk about it openly. SAFENet have been implementing

¹⁶ Tuvalu Ministry of Health. (2015). Health Report 2015. Government of Tuvalu.

¹⁷ United Nations Population Fund. (2021). Gender-based violence. Retrieved December 10, 2021, from <https://www.unfpa.org/gender-based-violence>; Pacific Women. (2017). Ending Violence Against Women - Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development. In Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development. Pacific Women. <https://pacificwomen.org/our-work/focus-areas/ending-violence-against-women/>



the Community Healing Program, with the aim of healing an individual who then influences others, so the whole community changes. As part of this program they talk about the Family Protection Act, about gender roles, about GBV definitions, and sexual exploitation. Sexual abuse around port areas can include 'human trafficking', whereby people are forced into doing sexual work and the person controlling them takes most or all of the money. Noro Family Support Centre has had clients that have been sex-trafficked, including women who were originally captured by being lured into taxis.



Definition of 'human trafficking'

"The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs."¹⁸

Sexual exploitation of children

Children from broken families, or from families who have migrated to town from rural areas seem to be most at risk of taking up sex work with visiting seafarers. Children without a stable home providing for their economic and/or emotional needs, may seek friendship or income from seafarers. Some rural migrant families struggle to make an income in town and may encourage their children to go to seafarers in exchange for fish or cash.¹⁹

Some of the local people interacting sexually with seafarers are young teenagers. Women arrested when returning from tuna fishing vessels in Kiribati and the Republic of Marshall Islands were aged from 14 to 26 years of age. The young age of these people has been seen as a particular concern, because children are more vulnerable to exploitation, and less able to give true consent. The WHO defines sexual relations with anyone under 18 as sexual abuse.²⁰

Organisations attempting to use legal means to prosecute the sexual exploitation of children by seafarers have faced problems. The Chuuk Women's Council, for example, has advocated to raise the legal age of consent for sexual intercourse to 18 years in Chuuk State as one way to try to address the problem of young teenagers being sexually exploited by visiting seafarers, amongst other reasons such as health concerns, combatting child marriage and teenage pregnancies. The age of consent for sexual intercourse was also raised from 16 to 18 years in Pohnpei State as a result of advocacy work by the local civil society organisation Care Micronesia.²¹ The Federated States of Micronesia ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1993, which creates state obligations across all four states to protect children from all forms of violence, including GBV.²²

As with transactional sex with seafarers more broadly, there is no verifiable data about whether or how many girls, and in some cases boys, are sexually exploited in ports. There is very limited reporting and no follow-up, so there is no evidence apart from anecdotal evidence. Verbal reports include parents taking their children to vessels in port for transactional sex, as a source of family income. With few or no income earning alternatives, families see these relationships as their girls having boyfriends who come into port at regular times and they become accustomed to these sorts of arrangements. It is hard to imagine the dire situation a family must be in to resort to these measures. It indicates that solutions to prevent the exploitation of children will have to range beyond just the tuna industry.

18 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children (Article 3, paragraph (a)), Pub. L. No. Resolution 55/25 (2003). Retrieved from <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/organized-crime/intro/UNTOC.html>

19 Walk Free. (2020). Murky waters: A qualitative assessment of modern slavery in the Pacific region. Minderoo Foundation.

20 World Health Organization. (n.d.). Sexual exploitation and abuse, prevent and protect, what you need to know and do. Zurich: World Health Organization (WHO). Retrieved from www.who.int/about/ethics

21 Jaynes B. (2019, May 17). Care Micronesia Foundation assists Pohnpei State to raise the age of consent to 18. The Kaselehlle Press.

22 Pacific Community. (2019). Gender analysis of the fisheries sector in Federated States of Micronesia. Noumea, New Caledonia; Vunisea A. (2006a). Kiribati national tuna development and management plan – social and gender considerations. Noumea, New Caledonia: Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC); Vunisea A. (2006b). Republic of the Marshall Islands national tuna development and management plan – social and gender considerations. Secretariat of the Pacific Community, New Caledonia; Crook T., Farran S., & Röell E. (2016). Understanding gender inequality actions in the Pacific: ethnographic case studies and policy options. Luxembourg.

Stigma for people in relations with seafarers

Related to the stigma of transactional sex, locals in relations with seafarers are often treated with great social stigma. This is indicated by the shaming names they may be called. For example, in Fiji the word is '*kabawaqa*', in PNG '*two kina meri*', in Solomon Islands '*dugong*'. The stigma can pass on to children who are born from these relationships. Experiencing social stigma means that when problems such as STIs or violence happen, these people may be unwilling to seek help, or if they do seek help, they may be judged rather than given assistance.



Case study: *Te korekoreas* in Tarawa, Kiribati²³

Many large tuna fishing vessels trans-ship their catch in Tarawa lagoon in Kiribati and purchase goods and services in town, including sex. Many people from the outer islands come to Tarawa seeking work, or a different life in town, but not all of them can find work. Tarawa is overcrowded and has serious unemployment problems. According to AMAK (Aia Maea Ainen Kiribati), the peak women's organisation in Kiribati, some families without good employment in the Betio area have made arrangements with Korean and Taiwanese crew on tuna fishing boats to make their daughters available for sex in exchange for fish, which the families can eat and sell. Other children and young women may seek contact with the crews independently. Because so many of the seafarers seeking sex in port were Korean, these young girls and women came to be called *te korekoreas*. This term has a degrading and humiliating tone.



Action points: what can fisheries management agencies do to improve HR and GESI in the seafarer scene around ports?

Data

The first stage in achieving anything to improve the situation is to understand what is going on. See Module 2 for some pointers on how to investigate impacts of the tuna industry on community well-being. It is important, however, to note that it is not easy to research activities that are illegal or have social stigma – because people are unwilling (for good reason) to speak openly about these activities. One possibility is through 'key informant' interviews with people who work with or around seafarers when they visit ports – such as fisheries observers, port monitoring staff, and health workers from clinics around port areas who may be treating people with STIs, and victims of violence. In Kiribati, the churches have been involved in work relating to the sex trade relating to the tuna industry. Churches and local NGOs are starting points to identify what is going on around ports. The UNAIDS Pacific Office in Fiji has information about sex work, including the tracing of sources and support systems for sex workers.²⁴

Multi-stakeholder forum

Another thing fisheries managers can do is similar to the multi-stakeholder forum suggested in Module 3 – collaborate with other organisations that are able to address some of the social problems that can arise around the seafarer scene. Fisheries agencies are in some way responsible for these issues, because they are a direct result of access agreements and may relate to port State obligations, but since they are social and health-related problems, fisheries managers do not have the expertise or resources to provide effective solutions. In many cases, there is little coordination between the various stakeholders who have interest in social issues for seafarers and around port areas. For example, health services try to deal with HIV, which is directly related to the tuna industry, but neither the fishing industry nor fisheries managers are part of the discussions.

One concrete action that could result from a multi-stakeholder approach is to design posters to display around port areas with telephone numbers of people to contact for help regarding STIs, GBV, and sexual exploitation. This would need to be in the local language, English, and key languages of seafarers and sex workers, such as Bahasa Indonesia, Tagalog, Korean and Chinese.

²³ Sullivan N., Ram-Bidesi V., Diffey S., & Gillett R. (2008). Gender Issues in Tuna Fisheries: Case Studies in Papua New Guinea, Fiji and Kiribati. Honiara, Solomon Islands: Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Pacific Community (SPC).

²⁴ McMillan K., & Worth H. (2011). Sex Workers and HIV Prevention in Fiji - After the Fiji Crimes Decree 2009. In International HIV Research Group. International HIV Research Group. <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.14123.75049>.

- Other collaborative activities that could be facilitated through a multi-stakeholder forum include: gender training for port security officers (recruit also women security officers) – especially around body searches of women entering port areas (to avoid inappropriate and unwelcome touching of private body parts);
- ensuring health services can be accessed by seafarers and their sexual partners;
- ensuring adequate treatment and educational services for prevention of STIs are available;
- providing care for ‘at risk’ youth so they have less interest in interacting with seafarers;
- ensuring adequate services for preventing and treating gender-based violence are accessible for people around port areas – a range of services is needed including health, counselling, safe-houses and police;
- providing alternative options of places to go and things to do for seafarers, such as religious organisations possibly providing hostel accommodation, sporting groups providing access to grounds and possibly social games for team sports;
- ensuring all people have access to livelihoods, so they have a choice about seeking income from transactional sex with visiting seafarers; and
- building respectful awareness of the social situations of seafarers and their sexual partners at community level, including local residents and people engaged in businesses at port areas such as heavy vehicle drivers, ship chandlers, police, shipping and fishing company agents, fisheries officers and port security staff.

‘Circle of Care’ for seafarers

Several of the points above could be addressed through providing a ‘one-stop-shop’ of facilities and services for seafarers in ports, building on some initiatives that have existed in the past, or exist elsewhere in the world. This could become a place seafarers want to visit because they know their concerns and needs will be addressed there. Establishing these facilities and services will take resources, and Pacific Island government Port Authorities are unlikely to be able to fund them alone. Port users (fishing and shipping companies) could potentially pay a fee towards funding these services, since the services are for their employees. The kinds of things that could be offered include:

- posters and brochures in relevant languages on topics of interest to seafarers, such as:
 - local cultural context, places of interest to visit
 - STI prevention
 - assistance with human rights or labour abuse complaints
 - correct process for handling deaths at sea;
- face-to-face seminars on topics of interest;
- phone and internet access;
- showers, toilets, and common spaces with chairs and tables, possibly cooking facilities;
- kiosk selling basic supplies of interest;
- easily accessible and affordable health clinic, with connections to doctors or hospitals as necessary;
- individual counselling services (could be offered by Church organisations or civil society organisations); and
- affordable transport service to other parts of town.

Acronyms

AIDS	acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
CRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
GBV	gender-based violence
HIV	human immunodeficiency virus
LGBTQIA+	lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, intersex, asexual, and other forms of sexuality and gender identity that are not heterosexual and cisgender
STI	sexually transmitted infection
WHO	World Health Organization



Pacific
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Pacific handbook for human rights, gender equity and social inclusion in tuna industries



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MODULE 5

HR and GESI in
onshore processing



Pacific handbook for

human rights, gender equity and social inclusion

in tuna industries

Module 5: HR and GESI in onshore processing

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Noumea, New Caledonia, 2023

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Key points

Onshore processing offers a valuable source of work in Pacific Island countries and territories, much of it for women and some of it in rural areas. Nevertheless, there are some areas for improvement in terms of HR and GESI for people working in seafood value chains.¹ In Pacific tuna processing some of the main areas to improve include the following.

■ Equal opportunity and social inclusion:

- Onshore processing is female-intensive, in that women make up the bulk of the workforce, but most leadership and higher paid roles are held by men.
- The juggle of paid work and family responsibilities can place unrealistically heavy expectations on women. This can be addressed by companies, families and communities.
- In some countries and companies the divide between expatriate managers and local employees is still discriminatory. For example, there may be few locals in management roles.

■ Housing: Work is needed to ensure workers' housing is safe and affordable.

■ Transport: Work is needed to ensure there is safe, affordable and timely transport to and from work.

■ Pay: Work is needed to ensure workers are able to live with dignity on their wages, which is about the amounts paid and workers' financial literacy.

■ Unions: Organisations representing labour, such as trade unions, face obstacles from governments and from companies.

Tuna processing factories in Fiji, American Samoa, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands and Kiribati have long provided jobs and career opportunities for women. Some of these are in and outside the major cities where cash work for women is scarce, so these employment opportunities are important. Having jobs helps with social inclusion because women can better integrate themselves and their families into society with access to financial services from banks, they become eligible for loans, and they gain access to social and other support networks and formal and informal training through their workplaces. Women doing paid work are better able to support family needs such as children's education and fulfil other social obligations that require financial contributions, such as for funerals and church fundraising. Pacific Island countries and territories are undergoing a transition, relying less on traditional forms of in-kind goods and service exchanges and heavily subsistence oriented lifestyles towards more cash-based lifestyles, so there is a growing need for cash-earning jobs to pay for goods and services. Many women around the region, and their families, have benefited from work in fish processing, accounting, administrative services, quality control and management.

Several studies over the years have identified a range of issues in the tuna processing sector in the Pacific Islands region relating to gender equality and human rights.² A key point to note is that for Pacific Island people, working for cash on an offshore fishing vessel or in a processing facility is a huge social and cultural shift for most of the workforce. Many will be the first generation in their family to have waged employment. The social rules are very different from the village where they have lived previously. Adjusting to modern life gives rise to a range of social problems. When women take up waged work there are adjustments in their family responsibilities. Women may end up working a 'double shift' or 'double burden' of paid work plus family work, leading to exhaustion. Men may take up some of women's family work to share the load, but men rarely share family work equally anywhere in the world. With this shift in women's responsibilities, and with men taking on roles conventionally taken by women, awareness work and support projects should also target husbands and other family members.

Some of the health problems identified for tuna factory workers in early studies from the 1980s included very hot working conditions on the processing lines and circulatory problems or joint pain from standing for long periods.³ These have improved over time, in part because of HACCP⁴ food safety standards. For key markets such as Europe, companies must ensure the workers touching the fish don't sweat on the fish, so air conditioning is now the norm on the processing lines. Workers touching the fish must also be free of disease, so many companies have programmes for health testing, vaccinations and other treatments. Other workplace health aspects have also improved over time. PAFCO at Levuka in Fiji now has three regulated breaks per shift, and workers who work standing at processing lines are provided with benches

1 Finkbeiner, E. M., Fitzpatrick, J., & Yadao-Evans, W. (2021). A call for protection of women's rights and economic, social, cultural (ESC) rights in seafood value chains. *Marine Policy*, 128(March), 104482. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2021.104482>

2 Tuara Demmke, P. (2006). Gender issues in the Pacific Islands Tuna Industry (DEVFISH Project). Honiara, Solomon Islands: Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC). Retrieved from [https://www.ffa.int/system/files/Gender issues in P.I. Tuna Industries 1_0.pdf](https://www.ffa.int/system/files/Gender%20issues%20in%20P.I.%20Tuna%20Industries_1_0.pdf); Sullivan, N., Ram-Bidesi, V., Diffey, S., & Gillett, R. (2008). Gender Issues in Tuna Fisheries: Case Studies in Papua New Guinea, Fiji and Kiribati. Honiara, Solomon Islands: Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Pacific Community (SPC); Emberson-Bain, A. (1994). Sustainable development or malignant growth? Perspectives of Pacific Island women. Suva, Fiji: Marama Publications.

3 Emberson-Bain, A. (1994). Sustainable development or malignant growth? Perspectives of Pacific Island women. Suva, Fiji: Marama Publications; Meltzoff, S. K., & LiPuma, E. S. (1983). A Japanese fishing joint venture: worker experience and national development in the Solomon Islands. Manila: International Center for Living Aquatic Resources Management (ICLARM).

4 HACCP – Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point – is a quality control system for food safety in food production and processing facilities.

for taking additional five-minute breaks to sit down. SolTuna at Noro in Solomon Islands has also made similar changes that make working conditions more comfortable in the factory. At SolTuna the meals provided for employees mid-shift are more nutritious than they were in earlier decades. Transport for workers had previously been in the back of open trucks, now they have buses, meaning workers are protected from the weather during their commute.

Turnover and absenteeism

One of the issues with the tuna processing sector in the Pacific Islands region is that of high rates of staff turnover and absenteeism, which reduces productivity.⁵ Using gender equity and human rights (GESI and HR) 'lenses' we can understand more about the social impacts of tuna factory work to the benefit of companies and employees. For example, high rates of absenteeism have been an issue for tuna processing factories throughout the Pacific, but no one had taken an in-depth look at the causes of the problem in terms of gender relations. Efforts with full attendance bonuses or flexible rosters had limited success in improving absenteeism. The case study below of a gender lens human resources study into absenteeism at SolTuna by gender specialists from the International Finance Corporation (IFC) resulted in benefits for employees, their families, and the company in terms of less absenteeism and happier, more loyal workers.

The important thing to note about this case study is that changes to improve working conditions do not always mean an additional cost to companies. Companies with happier workforces can be more profitable than companies with unhappy workforces!

Case study – improving productivity through improving working conditions at SolTuna



The conventional wisdom has been that tuna processing companies in the Pacific cannot significantly improve wages or working conditions because the margins in the industry are very low⁶. However, since 2015, managers at SolTuna in Solomon Islands, working with gender specialists from International Finance Corporation (IFC), have found that improving conditions has not been a cost – but an investment that improved productivity.

IFC's gender diagnostic found employees were running out of money before the end of the pay cycle and were taking time off work for market activities to raise money for food. Many of these employees were the first generation in their family living on a cash income rather than from gardening and fishing and so did not have experience in managing a household cash budget. Some wage earners also face demands from relatives to share their income. Financial literacy training (FLT) improved their capacity to live on cash wages, and even to save for housing and other improvements in their lives. The programme took a culturally embedded approach.

In Solomon Islands, families and communities have 'demand sharing', where relatives might appropriate cash income, making it difficult to use cash strategically. The FLT was therefore based on household planning of all income and discussing with family members the intended uses for income, reaching agreement on how much should go to school costs, food, items for the house, and recreation. In this way it is still sharing but with willing consent and planning. One worker said at first her husband resisted the budget and ripped it up, but after time he appreciated the benefits of saving and started helping.

Overall absenteeism dropped by 4%, and by 6% for the training cohort after implementing the FLT. Once the SolTuna management saw these benefits they looked for other changes they could make, using the IFC gender advisory. This resulted in many programmes, including grievance policies and training for managers in handling grievances, discipline procedures for harassment and bullying, and anonymous suggestion boxes. The Human Resources department reviews the boxes monthly, and publishes responses to all the suggestions in a newsletter. In the past, problems could only be reported through supervisors, which was hierarchical and possibly discouraged reporting.

5 Tuara Demmke, P. (2006). Gender issues in the Pacific Islands Tuna Industry (DEVFISH Project). Honiara, Solomon Islands: Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC). Retrieved from [https://www.ffa.int/system/files/Gender issues in P.I. Tuna Industries 1_0.pdf](https://www.ffa.int/system/files/Gender%20issues%20in%20P.I.%20Tuna%20Industries%200.pdf); Barclay, K., Mauli, S., & Payne, A. M. (2015). Gleaner, Fisher, Processor, Trader: Toward Gender-Equitable Fisheries Management in Solomon Islands. Sydney. Retrieved from <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/467721468187800125/pdf/98279-WP-P146728-Box385353B-PUBLIC-ACS.pdf>; Barclay, K., & Cartwright, I. (2007). Capturing wealth from tuna: case studies from the Pacific (pp. xiv, 268 p.). Canberra, Australia: ANU Press. There are reports that some companies create high turnover by dismissing staff and rehiring them so as to avoid having to pay benefits, such as long service leave, that accrue to staff who work long term.

6 Barclay, Kate, & Cartwright, I. (2008). Capturing wealth from tuna: case studies from the Pacific. In Capturing the Wealth From Tuna: case studies from the Pacific. https://doi.org/10.26530/oapen_458838.



IFC specialists worked with SolTuna managers on creating safe workplaces, and leadership training for women. According to management, the Respectful Workplaces programme was rolled out to all their employees and took measures against violators, both male and female, which made employees feel safer and more confident in the workplace. The benefits were visible in both predominantly male environments like Engineering, and predominantly female environments like Production. Employees were able to concentrate on their work rather than worrying about who will harass them. Managers say the women in the leadership programme led them to realise that men needed training as well, so they engaged a consultant to do leadership training for all the superintendents and supervisors across departments. The outcome was more respectful behaviour towards one another and towards women in leadership positions. Management and employees talk of a 'SolTuna wantok' culture in which everyone should be treated as important, and be included and respected. The benefits of the initiatives, therefore, go beyond women to all employees. Managers say there have been clear improvements to productivity over the period since the initiatives started, but it is hard to clearly say which initiatives have had most impact, since there have been many different initiatives taking place at the same time.

Salaries/wages are an important factor. In recent years SolTuna has seen three major changes to pay with corresponding increases in productivity: (1) a salary restructure in 2021 which brought responsibility in line with pay, with an overall positive effect especially on the mid-level plant workers; (2) one year the top third of earners in the company gave up their annual salary increase so that the line workers could have a bigger increase; and (3) the national minimum wage was increased. Management thought the minimum wage increase was too much and the company would have a hard time absorbing the cost, but the increase in productivity more than covered the added payroll costs.

There is no longer a formal engagement with IFC but SolTuna managers remain in contact with the gender specialists, calling them to brainstorm ideas for new schemes. SolTuna managers as well as external stakeholders have noticed that these initiatives have improved the attitude or 'mood' of staff. Reduced absenteeism is one indicator of the benefits of a more inclusive work culture, in which employees feel valued. In the words of a long-term Noro resident government employee – 'now they [SolTuna] are looking more into satisfying their workers'.

The SolTuna results have been so positive that the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) is supporting similar work with a 'gender lens' on labour issues for other tuna processing companies in the Pacific. This approach involves seeing where there are high rates of absenteeism, looking at whether it is higher among some groups than others, and why. In groups with lower absenteeism, what makes them turn up to work? Is it a sense of being in a team, or a sense of responsibility? Is it to do with timing or costs of transport to and from work, or fines for turning up late? Do childcare problems contribute? Those insights could form the basis of solutions for groups with high absenteeism.

Culture and gender norms in tuna processing work

The reasons behind high rates of turnover and absenteeism among women processing workers are heavily influenced by gender norms, such as expectations that women are responsible for domestic duties and child care even if they also work outside the home. Women who work in canneries are often expected within their families to also do all cooking, cleaning and caring jobs for the family. The prevalent norm of living in extended families means the expectations of women as caregivers may extend not only to children but also to ageing parents, grandparents, in-laws and terminally ill relatives. The social norm that women continue to do all this when they are working full time outside the home means women have a 'double burden' or 'double shift' of paid work plus family work. The norm that men do not care for children or disabled people or do housework is relevant here – because when women are working outside the home it is important for families that fathers and husbands share the caring work, cleaning and preparation of food. The tools at the end of this module – a time-use survey, and a gender division of labour tool – can help identify how gender norms and roles influence the work women and men do.

What are gender norms, or social norms about gender?

Social norms are shared ideals about how people should behave. Gender norms are the accepted attributes and characteristics of being a woman or a man (ideas of how men and women should be and act). They change over time (think of the 1960s compared to today), and they also vary across cultural groups (think of Fiji compared to Palau). These norms are taught to children from early in life as they grow up, so they become part of our accepted behaviours.

Gender role expectations can sometimes lead to violence if men believe that their wives are neglecting their domestic duties, or are undermining men's roles. As women shift from conventional gender roles to new ones in tuna factories it is important to seek expertise from gender and development specialists and community elders who can help navigate change in a culturally acceptable way, to build an enabling environment, and avoid conflict turning into violence.

Cultural context also affects the choices people make in relation to tuna processing work. For example, in PNG, tuna processing companies say they have a problem with employees not wanting to work more than a few weeks or months at a time. The companies believe this is because people have other community priorities, and are committed to multiple income sources including agriculture, so they prefer not to work long term in tuna processing. Some stakeholders therefore see local culture as an obstacle to business, and that culture must change for business to succeed. However, we can take a different perspective. It should be possible to accommodate cultural obligations without those obligations draining productivity, or as being seen as a 'bad thing' by management, and being treated in a way that causes unrest with staff. For example, there is flexibility in some companies' rostering, so that families or villagers supply a certain number of people each day, rather than each individual having to turn up to work, so that people can manage cultural obligations and companies still have sufficient staff to run a shift. However, there may be cases when an important person dies and whole communities may have to stay home. If companies try to oppose this, they are unlikely to succeed, with managers being frustrated and employees feeling resentful. Instead, companies could call a holiday, since the staff won't come anyway, this way they can avoid unrest with staff and build loyalty. Another example, SolTuna made a virtue of the cultural diversity that exists in Solomon Islands by inventing 'SolTuna wantok' culture. Could other Pacific tuna companies build on local culture instead of seeing culture as an obstacle to business?

The choices people make about working in tuna factories are also affected by economic considerations, rather than only gender or culture. For low income Papua New Guineans having multiple income streams including agriculture and cash work is an economically rational strategy, in case any one of those income sources collapses. Marshallese people have residency and work rights in the USA. Experienced tuna factory employees in RMI often move to places such as Arkansas to use skills learned in tuna factories in higher paid work in chicken factories.

Childcare

Since women are often the primary caregivers for children, childcare is very important for women who work outside the home and have young children. Most childcare in the Pacific is informal, it can be unpaid and provided by family members such as grandparents or aunts, who may live in with the family, sharing their home and food, or children may be sent to live with relatives in the village. Childcare can also be from a domestic worker 'house girl/boy', or it can be in a formal childcare centre. For women living away from family networks and earning a low income it can be difficult to afford even informal family-based childcare, because they can't afford to feed and house another person. A lack of affordable childcare is a key factor causing women to leave work in tuna processing.⁷

⁷ Barclay K., Mauli S. & Payne A. M. (2015). Gleaner, fisher, processor, trader: Toward gender-equitable fisheries management in Solomon Islands. <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/467721468187800125/pdf/98279-WP-P146728-Box385353B-PUBLIC-ACS.pdf>



Lack of childcare convenient to workplaces makes breastfeeding difficult. There is a role for governments to use taxation revenue to support the 'social good' of enabling working mothers to continue breastfeeding by developing suitable childcare facilities near tuna processing facilities. The Marshall Islands loining plant has no childcare services. PAFCO in Fiji has a day care centre with teachers for full-day sessions, but is for three- to five-year-olds, not breastfeeding infants. In March 2022 a new childcare centre for babies up to three years old is due to open near the SolTuna factory.

'Backlash' against women in paid work – PAFCO childcare example

Something that often happens when there is a change in women's roles is that people opposed to change find something wrong with the new situation to complain about. This is called 'backlash'. Often there is no factual basis to the complaints, but people spread them anyway, like 'fake news', as a way to oppose change in women's roles. Women PAFCO workers using the childcare centre in the 1990s experienced an example of backlash. A rumour spread that women using the childcare centre during their work shift, could then ask women relatives to look after their children in the evening, so the women workers could go out to bars. Childcare was described as a bad thing because it led to women going out drinking.⁸ According to stakeholder interviews for this handbook, women working at the factory have always mostly used their income for family expenses and did not have enough spare cash for entertainment such as drinking in bars. So it seems that the rumour was not based on good evidence. Also, this rumour shows a sexist 'double standard'. Men, who are usually not expected to be the main caregiver for children, could always rely on women relatives to look after children in the evenings if men wanted to go out for entertainment. The rumour implies it is OK for men to do this, but not OK for women.

Housing and transport to work

Many tuna processing facilities in the Pacific Islands region are affected by a wider problem of poor housing. Overcrowding and a lack of clean water and adequate showers and toilets can cause health problems that increase absenteeism. Noro in Solomon Islands has long struggled with housing problems⁹ and stakeholders say housing is still poor quality and overcrowded. As of 2021 there were plans to develop a SolTuna Village to improve housing.

Lack of frequent public transport can lengthen the working day by hours. Public transport may be expensive relative to wages. Public transport can also be unsafe for women because of sexual harassment or violence, especially for women whose shifts mean they travel during the dark. PAFCO in Fiji provides transport for its workers between 6:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. as there is no regular public transport during these hours, and shift workers need to travel then. SolTuna runs buses between the residential area of Noro and the factory.

Household divisions of labour and gender-based violence

Women experience high levels of violence in much of the Pacific Islands region, and managers of tuna processing facilities note it is one of many factors that contribute to absenteeism and low productivity. We tend to think of domestic violence as private, and not something to be raised to do with work, but managers in tuna companies are concerned about the impact of domestic violence on their employees. Interviewees from SolTuna (Solomon Islands) and PAFCO (Fiji) both raised domestic violence as something the companies are working on as a human resources issue.

In many Pacific cultures it is common for men to make decisions on how money is spent because it is considered (by women and men) a man's role or right as head of household. In some cases, men may take women family members' pay to spend it on alcohol, kava or other items for their own amusement. Women who try to keep their pay may be beaten or punished in other ways, for example, emotional violence through shaming or bullying, or financial violence by depriving the family of money to meet their needs. Families and communities need to work on sharing family work among men and women, on mutual consensual decision-making around household income, as well as the unequal power relations that can lead to violence in gender relations. These matters could also be addressed in schooling. For example, Fiji has material about traditional gender roles in the school curriculum, and could expand this to cover what happens as more women take up full-time paid work outside the home. The SolTuna example above shows how culturally sensitive financial literacy training with families of factory workers can be an effective tool in helping families adjust positively to the social change of women working for cash.

⁸ Emberson-Bain A. (1994). Sustainable development or malignant growth? Perspectives of Pacific Island women. Suva, Fiji: Marama Publications.

⁹ Barclay K. (2008). A Japanese Joint Venture in the Pacific: Foreign Bodies in Tinned Tuna. London: Routledge; Barclay, Kate, Mauli, S., & Payne, A. M. (2015). Gleaner, fisher, processor, trader: Toward gender-equitable fisheries management in Solomon Islands. <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/467721468187800125/pdf/98279-WP-P146728-Box385353B-PUBLIC-ACS.pdf>.

Gender roles and norms about male dominance and the social acceptance of violence as part of family life is part of the problem. It is common for both women and men to feel it is appropriate for men to use violence against their wives in some circumstances, especially in rural areas where many cannery workers come from. Norms about the roles of men and women and violence as part of gender relations are not something one group can address alone. This is something for families, communities, churches, elders and government to deal with, as well as tuna companies.

Many PAFCO (Fiji) workers have husbands who do not have paid work, but who still demand their wives do all the housework before they go to work. Women were coming to work late. PAFCO shifted the starting time and the HR Manager went to Provincial Council meetings to talk about the issue. She felt that initially her presentations were merely tolerated but over time she felt the message of husbands needing to do their part to contribute to family chores started to be heard. The company believes that instances of domestic abuse and violence in the homes of female workers who work overtime are decreasing. The HR Manager has continued to be invited to present at community Tikina meetings. This local platform for presenting concerns and allowing women's voices to be heard seems to be one fruitful method for Levuka and the PAFCO workforce.

Services for gender-based violence in Noro, Solomon Islands

In Noro there are two services for women experiencing violence, the Family Support Centre and SAFENet. SolTuna and the tuna fishing company NFD are stakeholders for both organisations. People visit every day, from Noro and surrounding communities. Some are badly hurt. It is run on a voluntary basis and the work is risky because perpetrators may be angry and violent. Clients may be given shelter housing for at most one week. Resources are tight, it is expensive to provide housing and food for women and children. The gender-based violence (GBV) services work with lawyers. One perpetrator from a tuna company was imprisoned in 2021. In addition to working with the tuna companies, the GBV services liaise with the town council, churches, civil society organisations, the Western Council of Women, police, and health services.

SolTuna managers have been working since 2019 to support employees experiencing domestic violence. This has involved a policy on domestic violence and a safe work place. It has taken much effort over several years for the Human Resources Department to make much progress on this issue because people are not comfortable to admit when violence is affecting them, nor to seek support. If a manager sees an employee with a black eye, they ask what happened, but people are reluctant to say. Managers might call the husband to talk about it. They refer staff to the Family Support Centre.

Government services to help improve HR and GESI in tuna processing

Matters such as housing, sanitation, childcare, transport and services for GBV are not solely the responsibility of tuna companies. These are also government responsibilities. Tuna fishing access fees bring in a significant amount of revenue to governments, and quite a lot of tax is paid by tuna processing operations, through payroll tax even if corporate taxes are low. Some of this could be used to invest in government services that help improve HR and GESI for processing workers. Donor assistance to Pacific Island countries and territories can also be useful. Australian Government assistance is being used to help fund the childcare centre for SolTuna staff in Noro, Solomon Islands. Governments can also encourage services to improve HR and GESI for tuna factory workers through regulatory frameworks and incentives.

Wages

Tuna processing work, like entry-level crew work on fishing vessels, pays very low wages. In human rights terms the minimum amount workers should be paid is a 'living wage'. In many countries there is a 'minimum wage' set by government; this is not the same as a living wage. The minimum wage is often lower than a living wage. The low wages paid to tuna processing workers also cause high turnover and absenteeism.



Definition: living wage

A living wage is the amount of money received by a worker to afford a decent standard of living for the worker and their family. Elements of a decent standard of living include access to food, water, housing, education, health care, transportation, clothing, and other essential needs, including provision for unexpected events.¹⁰

The wages paid by tuna processing companies vary across Pacific Island countries and territories, set by norms and minimum pay regulations in each state. According to stakeholders in Cook Islands, the processing plant workers are paid NZD 8.50 (USD 5.90) per hour. In Solomon Islands the minimum wage was set in 2019 at SBD 8 (USD 1) per hour, which is around the same as the minimum wage in PNG. There are various benefits that can increase this, such as bonuses for full attendance for a month (paid by SolTuna), or meal or transport allowances. However, some companies take the costs of company-provided meals and transport out of wages.

In future it will be easier to see GESI trends in salaries and wages due to a new annual pay audit being conducted by FFA. The Pay Audits will reveal gender pay inequities. The first pay audit covered only the industrial tuna companies. The second pay audit also included FFA and the Pacific Community. In future years it is hoped to include also the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC). National fisheries agencies in member countries have also been invited to be included. The reports will cover the tuna sector as a whole, and subsectors and each participating organisation will get their own private detailed report showing the findings regarding gender gaps and what can be done to address these.

Case study: tuna factory work and a living wage¹¹



The low wages paid to tuna processing workers are in many cases not a 'living wage', in that employees cannot cover costs of housing, food, education, transport, clothing and so on.

The case of financial literacy training at SolTuna shows that careful family budgeting can help turn tuna processing wages into a living wage. Most companies offer some benefits to employees that supplement wages. For example, SolTuna offers free transport to and from work, one free nutritionally balanced meal per work day, a school fee subsidy for up to four children from kindergarten to the end of high school, opportunities for training, company credit schemes, superannuation, free medical services via the company clinic, subsidised accommodation and health insurance for senior staff; meanwhile a childcare facility is being built. The low wages paid to tuna processing workers give rise to interesting patterns of employment among women working at tuna processing facilities in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. In both places women who have access to land for gardening or access to fish can make more money selling food at markets than by working at the factories. Many women start working at the tuna processing facility when they are young and want to try something different from village life, then leave when they have children and want more flexibility in income opportunities. Women who stay working on the processing lines may prefer working for the company to village life. Other women may stay working in tuna because they are not able to do market work – they may not have access to land for growing food, or not have family members catching fish they can cook and sell.

¹⁰ Global Living Wage Coalition (<https://www.globallivingwage.org/about/what-is-a-living-wage/>)

¹¹ Barclay, K. (2012). Social impacts. In Blomeyer & Sanz (Ed.), Application of the system of derogation to the rules of origin of fisheries products in Papua New Guinea and Fiji (p. 254). Brussels: European Parliament Directorate-General for Internal Policies; Havice, E., & Reed, K. (2012). Fishing for Development? Tuna Resource Access and Industrial Change in Papua New Guinea. *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 12(2–3), 413–435. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1471-0366.2011.00351.x>; Campbell, H. F. (2008). The shadow-price of labour and employment benefits in a developing economy. *Australian Economic Papers*, 47(4), 311–319. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8454.2008.00351.x>; Barclay, K., Mauli, S., & Payne, A. M. (2015). Gleaner, Fisher, Processor, Trader: Toward Gender-Equitable Fisheries Management in Solomon Islands. Sydney. Retrieved from <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/467721468187800125/pdf/98279-WP-P146728-Box385353B-PUBLIC-ACS.pdf>; Pacific Women. (2019). Facing gender inequality head-on helps SolTuna succeed - Pacific women shaping Pacific development. Suva, Fiji: Pacific Women. Retrieved from <https://pacificwomen.org/news/facing-gender-inequality-head-on-helps-SolTuna-succeed>

Sex-segregation in processing work

Mainly women are employed at tuna processing plants on the lines ‘cleaning’ cooked fish ready for it to be canned. In the early decades of Solomon Taiyo (now SolTuna), only men worked on the cannery lines, but when the company opened the Noro factory in 1990 they shifted to a female workforce.¹² For gender equity these roles should also be open to men, but the authors are not aware of a push to increase numbers of men working on fish cleaning lines. Women have also long been employed in office administrator roles. Other kinds of roles, such as driving vehicles, operating machinery, and the roles of mechanics, electricians, carpenters and plumbers have conventionally been done by men.

In recent years many of the tuna processing companies have opened up opportunities for women to do conventionally male roles. In 2012 RD Tuna in Madang (PNG) was employing women as forklift drivers, finding that they had fewer accidents than men drivers.¹³ From 2015 SolTuna opened up equal opportunities in roles such as forklift drivers, plumbers, mechanics, carpenters and drivers.¹⁴ SolTuna also experimented in having women operate the machines in the cannery. Previously women worked mainly on the cleaning lines, while the machines used to cook the fish, move the fish along the lines and handle the cans were run by men. SolTuna found that having women also involved in running the machines ‘helped the atmosphere in the work space’. The Noro-based tuna fishing company NFD employs women in their offloading crews and in the cold storage spaces. In the PAFCO tuna processing plant in Fiji, women have also been encouraged to join male-dominated technical spaces as electricians, welders, refrigeration and air conditioning technicians, forklift operators, and so on. Most of these are the younger generation of workers. PAFCO management says they prefer women in these positions as they take better care of company equipment, causing less damage.

Case study: Golden Ocean Company Ltd., Fiji



Golden Ocean operates in Suva with factories that are HACCP certified and have passed the strict food safety requirements for export to the EU. They process yellowfin and albacore tuna, swordfish, mahimahi, wahoo, marlin and sailfish and have exported to many parts of the world, as well as selling to local markets for high-end fish, such as for restaurants and hotels. During COVID their operations reduced in scale, because containment areas and port restrictions put in place by the government meant workers could not get to workplaces. Also hotels and restaurants closed, so demand was reduced. Golden Ocean was less hard hit than the Fijian fishing companies that relied on airfreight for fresh tuna exports, since the air freight flights disappeared when the borders closed. For example, Solander, which has 12 vessels, had only one of these operating during the worst period of COVID restriction. Golden Ocean, along with Hangton and others, has vessels with freezing capacity, so could continue exporting via freezer containers on ships. Golden Ocean also turned to new outlets, including local supermarkets, and remained open throughout the pandemic period.

Golden Ocean’s processing factory workers are 90% women, around 40 to 50 in total. Administration staff are 50% women (30 to 40), doing finances and other administration. Women working in the plant are provided with cold-weather gear to work in the freezer storage (socks, overalls, jackets, boots). The company has monthly training sessions on handling the machines and on food quality.

12 Barclay, Kate, & Cartwright, I. (2008). Capturing wealth from tuna: case studies from the Pacific. https://doi.org/10.26530/oapen_458838

13 Barclay, Kate. (2012). Social impacts. In Blomeyer & Sanz (Ed.), Application of the system of derogation to the rules of origin of fisheries products in Papua New Guinea and Fiji (p. 254). European Parliament Directorate-General for Internal Policies.

14 International Finance Corporation. (2019). Investing in Fisheries and People in Solomon Islands. In International Finance Corporation, World Bank Group (pp. 1–2). International Finance Corporation (IFC), World Bank Group. https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/news_ext_content/ifc_external_corporate_site/news+and+events/news/investing+in+fisheries+and+people+in+solomon+islands; International Finance Corporation. (2016). Case study: SolTuna – tuna processing, Solomon Islands. International Finance Corporation (IFC), World Bank Group. https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/3432dc32-806a-4830-81c4-e231eae8ba8c/SolTuna_updated_May2017.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CVID=IMod8jG



Table 5.1 Gender disaggregated employment in Fiji Fishing Industry Association member companies (63 vessels, 18 companies)

Fishing		Processing		Cold storage		Engineering workshop		Management/ Administration /Finance		TOTAL	
Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
1,032	5	212	69	22	2	64	0	99	50	1,429	126

Source: Fiji Fishing Industry Association (FFIA), 2020

Women in lower paid, less senior roles

There is not only a visible division between women and men in some areas of work in the tuna industry, there are also divisions within areas of work in terms of seniority. Women tend to be clustered around lower paid, less senior roles.¹⁵ This is not specific to the tuna industry in the Pacific Islands region, but occurs broadly across most societies internationally.

Differences between levels of schooling between boys and girls influence the gender balance in senior roles in the tuna industry. Low levels of schooling among 'unskilled' female and male workers in tuna processing reduces productivity.¹⁶ One study from 2005 found that just one additional year of schooling for a tuna cannery worker improved productivity by 5%.¹⁷

Case study: success story of a woman manager in a tuna processing factory¹⁸



Deborah Telek is a senior manager in the South Seas Tuna Corporation (SSTC) processing company in Wewak, Papua New Guinea. Deborah got her start in the industry because her father worked in tuna. Deborah left the tuna industry to try other opportunities for a few years but came back to fisheries. One of the things she likes best about working in the fishing industry is the wide range of different things she has to do and the variety of people that she interacts with, including different government agencies, companies that provide services to SSTC and staff. She also enjoys the opportunity to contribute to the future of the industry through international meetings such as WCPFC meetings. The fact that Deborah has succeeded as a manager in a tuna company shows that it is possible for women to work well in these companies. But the small number of women in senior management means there is still a lot of work to do in making the opportunities equal.

In PAFCO there is only one woman among seven senior managers. Women make up more than half of the administration staff, and 65% of the factory workers at PAFCO.¹⁹ SolTuna has been working to increase the numbers of women in more senior roles, supported by a national scheme to increase women in leadership called Waka Mere. The Waka Mere programme enabled SolTuna to promote several women to superintendent and manager level. Of 11 senior managers in 2021, five were women – the Operations Manager, the Human Resources Manager, the Quality Control Manager and two managers in Production.

15 Barclay, K., Mauli, S., & Payne, A. M. (2015). Gleaner, Fisher, Processor, Trader: Toward Gender-Equitable Fisheries Management in Solomon Islands. Sydney. Retrieved from <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/467721468187800125/pdf/98279-WP-P146728-Box385353B-PUBLIC-ACS.pdf>

16 Campbell, H. F. (2008). The shadow-price of labour and employment benefits in a developing economy. Australian Economic Papers, 47(4), 311–319. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8454.2008.00351.x>

17 Campbell, Harry F. (2009). Measuring the contribution of education to labour productivity in a developing economy. International Journal of Education Economics and Development, 1(2). <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJED.2009.029306>. As far as the authors are aware there are no more recent studies that examine this question regarding the connection between education level and productivity.

18 Forum Fisheries Agency. (2019). Manumatavai Tupou-Roosen leading the Pacific way. Moana Voices, (2), 1–32. Retrieved from <https://www.ffa.int/moanavoices>

19 Vunisea, A. (2021). Gender Mainstreaming in Fiji's Offshore Tuna Industry. https://wwfasia.awsassets.panda.org/downloads/gender_mainstreaming_in_fiji_s_offshore_tuna_industry_report.pdf

Expatriates and nationals in processing plants

Ever since the early days of tuna processing in the Pacific in the 1970s, the aim has been to localise the industry as much as possible, so that Pacific Islanders can gain the human resources development of senior and technical roles, and so wages and salaries can go into local communities.²⁰ Large scale tuna processing as a business, however, requires global trading connections, ‘deep pockets’ for finance for expensive investments in equipment and infrastructure, and specialist technical knowledge of food technology and manufacturing. Ownership and/or management of these companies has therefore remained wholly or partly in the hands of overseas companies. Management roles in the companies have correspondingly often been held by expatriates.

According to stakeholders, there are very few Papua New Guinean managers in any of the tuna processing companies. In other sectors in PNG, Papua New Guineans are production managers and information technology managers, but are rarely so in the tuna processing sector. Possibly this is because the pay in the tuna sector is less attractive than other sectors. Once managers have some experience they can move into other industries and get better conditions and opportunities to progress to senior management.²¹ The processing plant in Marshall Islands also employs many expatriates in management. When COVID hit, the expatriate managers were stuck outside the country, so the loining plant had to cut back production due to lack of supervisors.²² In the SolTuna workforce of over 2,200 people there are only 5–10 expatriates in senior positions. SolTuna shows that it is possible to localise management in tuna processing.

Unions

The right of workers to organise so as to be able to bargain collectively with management is an important labour right.²³ The industrial tuna processing plants in the Pacific generally have some form of organised labour, usually in the form of an in-house union. It is difficult for in-house unions to be independent of management, so workers may get better results if they are able to join national unions. Companies, however, usually prefer in-house unions. In several Pacific island countries mistakes or wrongdoing by national unions in the past have been used to exclude the national unions from tuna processing company workforces.²⁴ Both in-house and national unions struggle with resources due to employees being reluctant to pay union fees, which is a problem faced by unions all over the world.

Private sector social responsibility initiatives

There are several social auditing frameworks that are intended to reduce the risk of labour abuse in tuna processing. One is Social Accountability 8000 (SA8000). Several tuna firms in the Pacific undertook training and initial assessment for SA8000 in the early 2010s, but full certification with SA8000 is very difficult to achieve. Only a couple of tuna processing firms worldwide have SA8000 certification, such as Princes Tuna in Mauritius. Other relevant frameworks include: Business Social Compliance Initiative (BSCI); ISO 26000 Social Responsibility (part of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) management system standards); Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI); and Sedex Members Ethical Trade Audit (SMETA).

It is important to note that private sector social responsibility auditing in seafood industries is not perfect. Companies found by auditors to have acceptable working conditions have had deaths and injuries caused by negligence in the workplace.²⁵ Certification under one or more of these schemes is not adequate as due diligence for human rights.²⁶ Nevertheless, private sector auditing is one possible tool and is worth exploring, as long as governments also undertake their regulatory role in ensuring safe workplaces, and enabling unions to effectively advocate for workers.

Bolton Food, which since 2019 owns Tri Marine International and therefore owns NFD tuna fishing company and a controlling shareholding of SolTuna processing factory in Solomon Islands, has announced a partnership with Oxfam to improve social responsibility throughout its supply chains. The objective is to “build an increasingly equitable supply chain, where inclusion, elimination of inequality, gender equality, respect for human rights and safe and decent working

20 Barclay, Kate, & Cartwright, I. (2008). Capturing wealth from tuna: case studies from the Pacific. https://doi.org/10.26530/oapen_458838

21 Barclay, Kate, & Cartwright, I. (2008). Capturing wealth from tuna: case studies from the Pacific. https://doi.org/10.26530/oapen_458838; Barclay, Kate. (2012). Social impacts. In Blomeyer & Sanz (Ed.), Application of the system of derogation to the rules of origin of fisheries products in Papua New Guinea and Fiji (p. 254). European Parliament Directorate-General for Internal Policies.

22 Johnson, G. (2021). Majuro loining plant desperate for supervisors. Marianas Business Journal, 3 May. <https://www.mbjguam.com/2021/05/03/majuro-loining-plant-desperate-for-supervisors>

23 The right to organise labour is one of the fundamental rights under the International Labour Organization (ILO), enshrined in the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87).

24 Barclay, Kate. (2012). Social impacts. In Blomeyer & Sanz (Ed.), Application of the system of derogation to the rules of origin of fisheries products in Papua New Guinea and Fiji (p. 254). European Parliament Directorate-General for Internal Policies; Barclay, Kate. (2008). A Japanese Joint Venture in the Pacific: Foreign Bodies in Tinned Tuna. Routledge.

25 Nakamura, K., Ota, Y., & Blaha, F. (2022). A practical take on the duty to uphold human rights in seafood workplaces. Marine Policy, 135, 104844. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2021.104844>

26 MSI Integrity. (2020). Not Fit-for-Purpose - The Grand Experiment of Multi-Stakeholder Initiatives in Corporate Accountability, Human Rights and Global Governance. (Issue July). <http://www.msi-integrity.org/beyond-corporations/>

conditions are guaranteed for all people in the supply chain.”²⁷ All PNG tuna processors have BSCI or SMETA social compliance auditing.

The MSC has some minimal labour reporting mechanisms for processing companies certified under Chain of Custody (CoC) established 2019. This is not specifically for gender equity or social inclusion, but for child labour, bonded labour, inhumane treatment, and occupational health and safety. All the companies in the Pacific that purchase and/or process MSC certified fish need CoC certification, so that means all the main processing companies such as PAFCO, SolTuna, and also the Fiji longline companies that process certified product. It is therefore already in place in many relevant locations, and could be built on rather than ‘reinventing the wheel’.

The MSC CoC labour conditions cover more than the fishing crew labour statements (see Module 3), and CoC certified companies are subject to labour audits, but the audit reports are not publicly available due to commercial in confidence issues. There are some generic checklists used, because many European and North American buyers require labour audits in any case, regardless of whether a processor is certified by the MSC. Widely accepted third-party audits can be used, such as the SMETA audits by Sedex, or Social Accountability International (SAI). For more information see: <https://www.msc.org/standards-and-certification/chain-of-custody-standard>.

Action points: what can fisheries management agencies do to encourage gender equity and social inclusion in tuna processing factories?

Monitoring

A first step is to understand the social and economic benefits coming from tuna fishing and processing. Ideally the changes suggested in this module should be measurable, and then key performance indicators (KPIs) can be developed and applied to make people accountable for implementing changes. The first step in being able to measure change is to collect relevant data, and then to monitor change. For HR and GESI dimensions of tuna processing we do not yet have such monitoring frameworks or data.

We often assume that having onshore processing is a good thing for employment, especially for women. In countries with onshore processing (PNG, Solomon Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands) fisheries access agreements are usually tied to fishing companies investing in onshore tuna processing facilities. If we know more about the gender and human rights aspects of working in tuna processing, fisheries management agencies could adjust access agreements to obtain better social and economic benefits from tuna resources and increase decent employment opportunities for both women and men.

Cross-agency collaboration

It is important to note that fisheries managers alone do not have full control over the factors affecting gender equality in tuna processing facilities. For example, fisheries agencies do not set the minimum wage, but through liaising with other government agencies, fisheries managers can influence the level of the minimum wage for fisheries sector workers.

Fisheries managers can also collaborate with organisations looking after gender relations or women’s affairs to review and improve protections for gender equity and social safeguards in onshore processing. Housing, transport, childcare and health services are also important for HR and GESI peri-urban areas where tuna processing workers live, and fisheries managers can liaise with other organisations on these topics.

Gender lens human resources investigation, and training

The SolTuna case shows the benefits for both employees and companies of improving GESI in tuna processing workplaces. Each country with tuna processing factories could have gender lens human resources consultants investigate what kinds of measures will be appropriate for their context, and then implement training. For SolTuna the training included financial literacy training for factory workers, respectful workplace training for all supervisors and managers, and leadership training for women managers. The training could be provided through post-harvest training offered by fisheries colleges and the University of the South Pacific (USP). Funding for the gender lens consulting and training could be organised by the FFA and funded from processing companies, government (from tuna fishing access fees), and/or donor organisations. Following the success of SolTuna, FFA has arranged gender lens human resources consulting for PAFCO in Fiji. Fisheries managers can bring this up with their heads of department and ministers to express interest with the FFA and development partners, and to bring the programme to their country.

²⁷ White, C. (2020, December 16). Bolton Food partners with Oxfam to formulate human rights standards for its seafood supply chain. Seafood Source. <https://www.seafoodsource.com/news/environment-sustainability/bolton-food-partners-with-oxfam-to-formulate-human-rights-standards-for-its-seafood-supply-chain>

Tool: Time Use Survey

One of the main gender equity problems with the tuna processing work done by women is the unfair sharing of family work between husbands and wives when wives take up paid work outside the home. The Time Use Survey is one way to measure the balance of work between family members. It can help with family and community discussions about household duties. It could also highlight for companies and local government where delays with transport are adding hours to employees' work day.

Objective: To identify the daily tasks carried out by men and women and identify the differences or similarities in activities, workloads and roles.

WHY DO IT?

This tool facilitates the capturing of daily activities by men and women. Information obtained from this tool may be useful for identifying target groups for specific project activities and also for planning project activities to ensure that they do not add too much extra burden to men's and women's workloads. It is also a useful method of making everyone more aware of the different workloads borne by men and women.

WHEN TO DO IT?

This tool provides useful insights into the following questions: Who does what (roles)? When are different activities carried out? How much time is consumed by activities (household, community, individual)? It should be used as part of the situation and problem analysis to inform solution and design options.

STEPS

Step 1: Together with relevant stakeholders, distribute the time matrix to each participant or group.

Step 2: Ask participants to think of a typical family they are familiar with, or think of their own families.

Step 3: Ask them to think about the typical activities that men and women in the family would do in a typical day. Using the time matrix, indicate activities that each would carry out for each of the hours of a 24-hour day (such as getting children ready for school, washing, leisure time, sleeping etc.).

Step 4: Following this, ask participants to compare the two timetables and discuss the following questions:

- Are there commonalities and differences between the two timetables?
- Are activities the same or different?
- Is the same amount of time spent on activities that are common to both?
- Is there a distinct division of labour between men and women? Why do you think so?
- Are the activities of the man and the woman interchangeable?
- How can men and women assist each other with their respective workloads?

TIME USE SURVEY RESULTS

Different methods can be used to show the results of a time use survey; for example, you can use a table to list activities, or you can draw them.

Table 5.2 Time use survey table

Complete the survey table for a whole day (24 hours)

Time	Older women (60 years old +)	Women (26-59 years old)	Daughters (15-25 years old)	Older men (60 years old +)	Men (26-59 years old)	Sons (15-25 years old)
5.00 am	Prepare breakfast	Wake up and prepare children's school lunches and breakfast				
6.00 am		Wake children up and get them dressed for school	Help younger children to get dressed			
7.00 am		Family breakfast			Family breakfast	
8.00 am			Go to school		Leave for work in the nearby town	Go to school
				Go to the market		

Alternatively, you can illustrate activities done during the time use survey period, as in Figure 15.

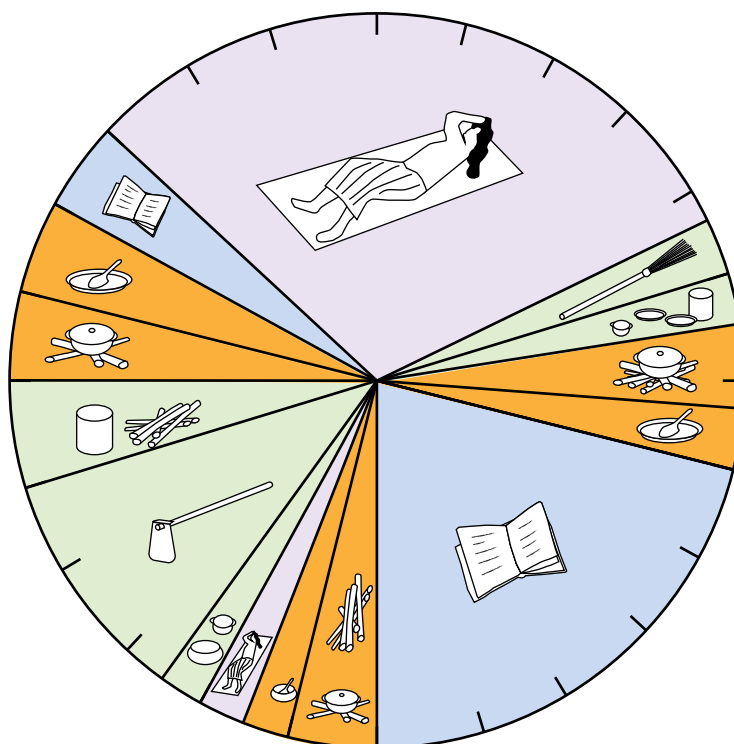


Figure 5.1. Time use survey clock diagram



Tool: gendered division of labour analysis²⁸

One of the main GESI problems with the tuna processing work is the stereotyping of people as suitable for some jobs and not suitable for other jobs based on their identity (gender, age, ethnicity, etc.), rather than their individual skills and interests. A gender division of analysis provides information about who is being given what roles. Divisions of work are often based on stereotyping of women and men and the roles and positions they can or cannot hold in a given society (it is context specific). That means that employers look for men or women for particular roles, and expect wages to be at certain levels for women and men; when it is more for men, this is called the gender wage gap.

What are the areas of interest in the division of labour analysis?

- The division of labour is always human made. Its forms are socially shaped, and thus shaped by gender roles.
- Division of labour concepts are mostly used in an economic context. This includes paid work (called 'productive') and unpaid family work (called 'reproductive').
- Division of labour concepts can also be used to understand constituency-based roles (political + advocacy, decision-making + voice).

Table 5.3 Tool 1 for gender division of labour analysis

Roles	Reproductive		Productive		Decision-making and voice	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
What roles/jobs do people have?						
What are the existing tasks and contributions of women and men in each role?						
What benefits, status do women and men get from each role?						

Interlinked with roles are the use and control of resources. Resources are things you can use to help you in a role. For example: money, equipment, education and training, and social networks with influential people.

Table 5.4 Tool 2 for gender division of labour analysis

Resources	Reproductive		Productive		Decision-making and voice	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
What resources do women and men have access to? have control over?						

The aim of this tool is to identify gender-based inequalities and different needs for each role/task.

These are some guiding questions for this exercise:

- What gender inequalities and needs are expressed in each role, by women/men?
- What gender inequalities and needs are not easily expressed by women/men?
- What inequalities/needs are directly linked to the programme/project (e.g. accessibility criteria)?
- What inequalities/needs are context-specific (e.g. cultural values, traditions)?

²⁸ The gender division of labour analysis tool has been adapted from a slideshow supplied by Natalie Makhoul, FAME, the Pacific Community.

Acronyms

CoC	chain of custody
ETI	Ethical Trading Initiative
EU	European Union
FAME	Fisheries, Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystems Division of the Pacific Community
FFA	Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency
FLT	financial literacy training
GBV	gender-based violence
GESI	gender equity and social inclusion (outside this Handbook the word 'equality' is usually used, rather than 'equity', in GESI)
HACCP	Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (a system for food safety)
HR	human rights
IFC	International Finance Corporation (part of the World Bank Group)
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
MSC	Marine Stewardship Council
NFD	National Fisheries Development (tuna fishing company in Solomon Islands)
NZD	New Zealand dollars
PAFCO	Pacific Fishery Company, a tuna processing company in Fiji
PNG	Papua New Guinea
RD Tuna	a Philippines-based tuna company operating in PNG. The R and D refer to personal names of family members of the company owner, and the company is always simply referred to as RD.
SA	Social Accountability, an auditing system
SBD	Solomon Islands dollars
SMETA	SEDEX Members Ethical Trade Audit
USD	United States dollars
USP	University of the South Pacific
WCPFC	Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission



Pacific
Community
Communauté
du Pacifique

Pacific handbook for human rights, gender equity and social inclusion in tuna industries



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MODULE 6

HR and GESI in the
informal small-scale
tuna sector



Pacific handbook for

human rights, gender equity and social inclusion

in tuna industries

Module 6: HR and GESI in the informal small-scale tuna sector

Kate Barclay



Noumea, New Caledonia, 2023

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Original text: English

Reference Note

This handbook has been adapted from the Pacific Handbook for Gender Equity and Social Inclusion in Coastal Fisheries and Aquaculture, with several of the authors involved in both pieces of work. Some of the text and graphics from the Coastal Handbook have been adapted for use in the Tuna Handbook.

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Key points

- Small-scale tuna fisheries are managed separately from offshore industrial tuna fisheries, but there are many connections between small- and large-scale tuna activities, so it is important to be thinking of the impacts (positive and negative) of large-scale tuna industries on small-scale fishing and marketing activities.
- Small-scale tuna activities are vital for food security and livelihood activities of many Pacific Islanders, so it is important to make sure small-scale actors continue to have access to tuna resources for fishing, for cooking or smoking and selling in markets, and as a source of affordable, high-quality protein.
- The rights of Pacific Islanders to tuna resources via small-scale activities can be viewed through a human rights-based approach (HRBA), such as the right to food, and freedom from discrimination.¹ A GESI lens is useful for ensuring that all people in communities benefit equally from small-scale tuna activities.

What is small-scale tuna fishing?²

There is no internationally or regionally shared technical definition of small-scale versus industrial fishing. Small-scale usually means vessels less than 12 m in length, although in some countries it could be less than 10 m or even 8 m, and some regional and international definitions are 15 m or 24 m. Small-scale vessels are open or partially undecked, use gear such as handlines, and are run and owned by families. In the Pacific, small-scale fishing is also called artisanal, coastal and nearshore fishing. For the purposes of this handbook, canoes with outboard motors and one or two crew are clearly small-scale, while purse seine and longline vessels are clearly industrial, and some of the larger Samoan '*alias*' could fall into either definition. Small-scale fishing includes both commercial fishing for cash sale, and more traditional fishing for food for communities. Small-scale tuna fisheries in the Pacific use trolling and other kinds of line fishing.

Trolling is a fishing method where one or more fishing lines – baited with lures or baitfish – are towed behind a vessel (Figure 6.1). Many different fish are targeted by trolling, including skipjack and yellowfin tuna and also mahimahi, rainbow runner, wahoo and shark. Trolling is the most commonly used surface fishing method in the majority of Pacific Islands, and its popularity has grown even more since the introduction of motorised boats. Trolling can be done from a paddling, or sailing canoe, or from a boat with either an inboard or outboard motor.

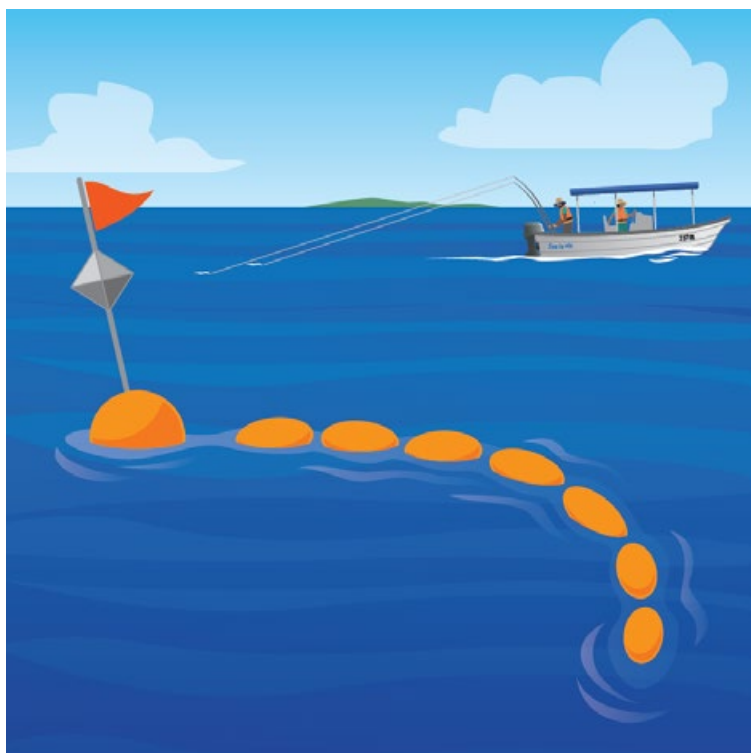


Figure 6.1 Trolling

¹ Pacific Community. (2021). Policy Brief: Gender and Human Rights in Coastal Fisheries and Aquaculture Law: Vol. No. 36. Pacific Community (SPC).

² The descriptions of fishing and figures in this section are sourced from Nearshore Fishing Techniques. A manual for community fishers in the Pacific Islands (2023) Pacific Community, Noumea.

In addition to trolling, other methods used in small-scale tuna fisheries in the Pacific include mid-water line fishing including techniques such as drop-stone and ika-shibi, as well as horizontal and vertical longlining (Figure 6.2). Handline is another method commonly used in small-scale fishing in the Pacific (see Figure 6.3). Longline and handline methods tend to take many of the same species as trolling, with the exception of skipjack, which is not common in mid-water (longline).

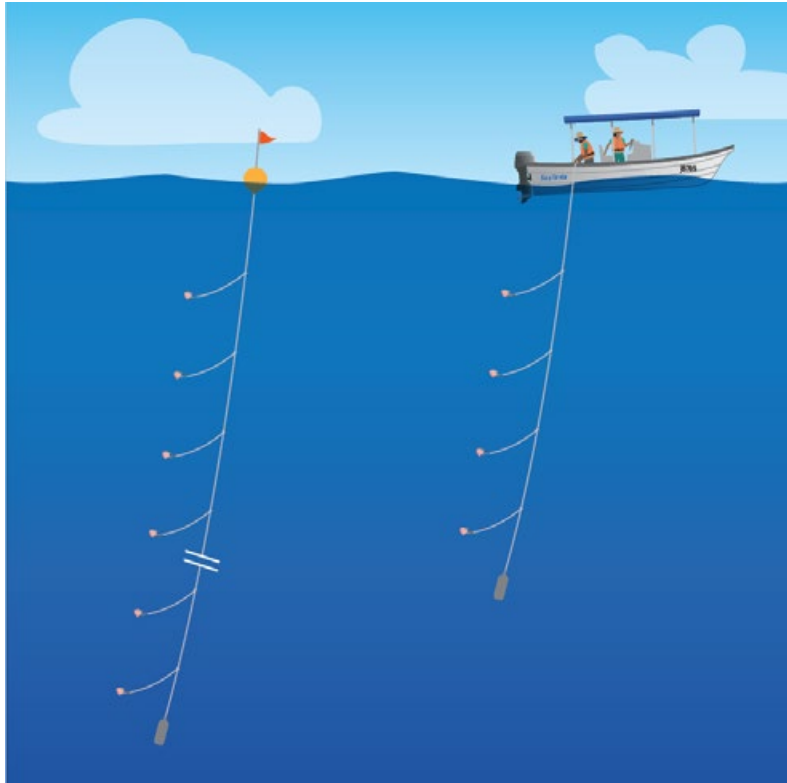


Figure 6.2 Vertical longlining



Figure 6.3. Handline troll fishing from a dinghy

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14b specifies providing access to small-scale fishers to fish resources and markets. There has long been interest in promoting small-scale tuna fishing in the Pacific. This is partly because the resources are so good and there are good domestic, regional and global markets for tuna. It is also because it is fairly easy to get into small-scale tuna fishing – the vessel and gear required is within reach of many fishing communities. It has also been hoped that if small-scale fishers can sell tuna at good prices this would be a way to have more Pacific Islanders share in the benefits of the huge global tuna market. Many Pacific Islanders feel they have missed out on the benefits of their resource being caught by industrial vessels.³

Why include small-scale tuna activities in this handbook?

Fisheries management agencies in the Pacific are usually divided into offshore, which deals mainly with the industrial tuna fisheries, and coastal or nearshore, in which small-scale locally owned and run tuna fishing businesses fit. Offshore industrial fishing is very different to coastal small-scale fishing, so it makes sense to split the administration this way, but in fact industrial fishing and processing on the one hand, and small-scale, informal fishing and marketing activities on the other are interconnected worlds. Large-scale tuna industries affect small-scale tuna activities in many ways, positive and negative. For example, large-scale fisheries can reduce the availability of fish for small-scale fishers. But industrial fisheries can also benefit small-scale fishers through providing infrastructure such as fuel supply, ice production and bait. Some small-scale fishers use anchored fish aggregating devices (FADs) deployed for the industrial fishery (see Figure 6.6 in the section on FADs). Large-scale and small-scale tuna activities are closely related, and if we always separate them we cannot see those connections. Covering both small- and large-scale fishing highlights the need to make sure the small players, not only the big players, have a fair share of the resources.

The human rights issues faced by small-scale fishers are quite different to those faced by crew on industrial fishing vessels. Human rights issues for small-scale fisheries have been explored internationally in the Voluntary Guidelines on Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries published by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in 2015.⁴ The Pacific Community has also published a report on Gender and Human Rights in Coastal Fisheries and Aquaculture.⁵

A relatively small number of small-scale tuna fisheries have proven to be commercially viable in the long term, despite government support over the decades all over the Pacific. The reasons for why small-scale tuna fisheries have not been commercially viable vary. One key point is that the most commonly used types of vessels with outboard motors in small-scale fishing in the region are very fuel intensive. When fishing for tuna, around twice as much fuel is used for small-scale fishing as for purse seine fishing.⁶ Many of the supports offered by governments – such as new vessel types, collector vessels and ice supplies – cannot be funded within business revenue and the government support is not sustained beyond project funding.⁷

These viability issues can be improved. One issue is that small boats are very vulnerable to sea conditions and can optimally operate in seas with swell below 1 m. The rougher the seas, the higher the fuel consumption and the more safety related issues fishers face. The fuel consumption of small-scale tuna fishers could be reduced through adjusting their fishing practices. Most tuna fishers only troll and only target schools of tuna. They could instead outfit their boats to also target larger midwater-size tuna and look at methods such as dangle fishing, vertical longlines and drift lines to reduce fuel consumption and increase catch rates. Small-scale fishers with outboard motors tend to either fish for deepwater snapper or troll for tuna, whereas they could be more viable if they varied their operations to match the availability of resources throughout the fishing seasons. For example, deepwater snapper fishers buy imported bait or bait caught by troll fishers, whereas if they also trolled they could catch their own bait to reduce costs and supplement

3 Gillett R., Blanc M., Cartwright I., Batty M., Savin, M., Albert J., ... Sokimi W. (2018). Forty Years of Small-Scale Tuna Fishery Development in the Pacific Islands: Lessons Learned. SPC Fisheries Newsletter, 157.

4 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (2015). Voluntary Guidelines on Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries. Rome: United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). <http://www.fao.org/docrep/field/003/ab825f/AB825F00.htm#TOC>

5 Graham A., D'Andrea A. (2021). Gender and human rights in coastal fisheries and aquaculture: A comparative analysis of legislation in Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. Pacific Community (SPC).

6 Wilson and McCoy 2009 as paraphrased in Gillett, R., Blanc, M., Cartwright, I., Batty, M., Savins, M., Albert, J., ... Sokimi, W. (2018). Forty Years of Small-Scale Tuna Fishery Development in the Pacific Islands: Lessons Learned. SPC Fisheries Newsletter, 157.

7 Gillett R., Blanc M., Cartwright I., Batty M., Savins M., Albert J., ... Sokimi W. (2018). Forty Years of Small-Scale Tuna Fishery Development in the Pacific Islands: Lessons Learned. SPC Fisheries Newsletter, 157.

their incomes. Most small-scale fishers have not been exposed to these kinds of ideas about varying methods, and do not know how to reorganise their boats to carry out these operations.

The size of small-scale tuna fisheries varies across Pacific Islands countries and territories. Much more fish is caught in Kiribati's small-scale tuna fisheries than any other Pacific Island country.⁸ Atoll island states on the whole rely more on fisheries, whereas higher and larger islands depend more on food gardens and less on the sea. For example, Vanuatu, with larger islands and very fertile land has less small-scale tuna fishing (see Table 6.1 in the section on Data).

There is also variation in the importance of industrial tuna fishing relative to small-scale fishing. For the equatorial countries with large purse seine fleets operating in their waters, industrial fishing is a huge presence. For countries further south, industrial fishing is less important. For example, Tonga has no offshore industrial tuna fishing fleet. Tonga's policy direction for tuna is to strengthen small-scale tuna fishing for economic development and food security needs.

⁸ Gillett R. (2011). Issues in Small-Scale Tuna Fisheries in FFA Member Countries. Honiara, Solomon Islands: Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA); Gillett R., Blanc M., Caertwright I., Batty M., Savin M., Alber J., ... Sokimi W. (2018). Forty Years of Small-Scale Tuna Fishery Development in the Pacific Islands: Lessons Learned. SPC Fisheries Newsletter, 157.



Data

In contrast to the comprehensive statistics on industrial tuna catches, small-scale fishing and post-harvest processing and market activities in the Pacific are not well covered by statistics systems.⁹ Small boats are not registered in the Pacific, which is the same in most developing countries worldwide. Since information on vessels and fish catches are often connected to the licensing of the vessel, the lack of registration is a key cause for the lack of data collected on small-scale fisheries. The International Maritime Organization (IMO) has been pushing to standardise training and regulate shipping around the world, including registration and monitoring of small crafts, but this is only just starting. In time, Pacific islands countries may implement regulation and registration for all boats with engines (probably not for sail or paddle).

A report commissioned by FFA on domestic tuna fisheries in 2019 found that while some Pacific islands states report they have small-scale catches of tuna and tuna-like species in their annual reports to the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), many do not estimate the amounts of those catches.¹⁰ That study pieced together the best available information, giving estimates of catches shown in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1 Small-scale catches of tuna, tuna-like and pelagic species 2016 (best available data)

Country	Best estimate of 2016 catch (MT)	Trend	Notes
Cook Islands	134 92MT YFT 42 MT OT	Trend hard to distinguish from improved data reporting	Price fluctuates, may be affected by tourism sector demand
Federates States of Micronesia	1,166	Local preference for reef fish	No price data obtained
Fiji	1,756	Local preference for reef fish	Price approx. US\$4/kg. SPC (2013) artisanal tuna catch is estimate used
Kiribati	3,085 1,743 tuna 1,342 Other pelagic species	Government programmes to increase artisanal effort on tuna may increase catches	Likely underestimate, no data for Line Islands. Small artisanal catch vol. exported via KFL
Marshall Islands	500 (Estimate)	No data on trends	US\$5 for "small bag" Preference for reef fish
Nauru	310	Fishery highly seasonal	US\$12-15/kg. Preference for yellowfin tuna
Niue	60 (Estimate)	Catches declining, large unmet local demand	NZ\$15/kg
Palau	100 (Estimate)	Catches are steady	Active game fishing sector looking to increase landings
Papua New Guinea	4,586	No data on trends	No price data obtained
Samoa	3,000 1,500 tunas 1,500 other pelagic (estimate)	No data on trends. Coastal catch high (est. 10,000 MT, Gillett 2016) with around 30% pelagic	Pelagic species prices 5-14 WST/kg, albacore (14WST) wahoo and bigeye (13WST) highest value
Solomon Islands	1,650	No data on trends	No price data obtained
Tokelau	83	19% decline in catches in 2017	Fish is traded without currency
Tonga	433	No data on trends	12-18 pa'anga per kg. Active game fishing sector but no catch data
Tuvalu	350	Hard to distinguish from improved data collection and reporting	Price around AU\$4/kg varies by species and rises in bad weather
Vanuatu	248 200 artisanal 48 game fishing (Estimate)	Shortage of fish in the local market	US\$4-10/kg
TOTAL	17,461		

Source: Tolvanen, S., Thomas, K., Lewis, T., & McCoy, M. (2019). FFA study: Assessing the contribution of landings from locally based commercial tuna fishing vessels to food security. Forum Fisheries Agency. [https://www.ffa.int/system/files/Local Tuna Landings Report May 2019.pdf](https://www.ffa.int/system/files/Local%20Tuna%20Landings%20Report%20May%202019.pdf)

9 Gillett R. (2011). Issues in Small-Scale Tuna Fisheries in FFA Member Countries. Honiara, Solomon Islands: Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA).

10 Tolvanen S., Thomas K., Lewis T. & McCoy M. (2019). FFA study: Assessing the contribution of landings from locally based commercial tuna fishing vessels to food security. Forum Fisheries Agency. [https://www.ffa.int/system/files/Local Tuna Landings Report May 2019.pdf](https://www.ffa.int/system/files/Local%20Tuna%20Landings%20Report%20May%202019.pdf)

The lack of data means it is difficult to be sure about what is going on, or to be able to track the effects of any interventions. For example, WCPFC Convention Article 30 specifies that industrial fisheries should not cause adverse impacts on small-scale fisheries, and that members should ensure small-scale fishers and fish workers have access to fish resources. Without data how can we tell if there are adverse impacts from industrial fisheries or that fishers and fish workers have good access? The lack of data extends also to HR and GESI matters, such as safety at sea, and the roles of women and migrant groups in small-scale fishing and market activities.

Good data on small-scale tuna catches could be collected via market surveys and by estimating from existing creel survey and Tails¹¹ data, and by using the knowledge and expertise of national fisheries agencies, and the Pacific Community Coastal Fisheries Programme staff.¹² This kind of approach has been used by Cook Islands. They merged the fisheries census into the national census for 2021 to improve data. Combining that with Tails data collected by the marine staff, Cook Islands now has a very good set of data about small-scale tuna fisheries.

Food supply

Annual production of small-scale tuna fisheries in all Pacific countries is less than 2% of the total tuna catch for all types of fishing gears including industrial fisheries.¹³ However, the nutritional importance of small-scale tuna fishing will increase with expanding urban populations and their demand for fish. It is important to support an increase in non-reef fisheries, such as small-scale tuna fisheries, to avoid the depletion of reef resources.

Tuna from coastal small-scale fisheries is important for food supplies and livelihoods in many Pacific Islands communities. In some places tuna is a very important part of the diet.

Welcoming the tuna catch in the central Caroline Islands

There is a strong heritage of tuna fishing at Satawal in the Central Caroline Islands (FSM). Taro and breadfruit make up most of the diet. There is no lagoon, so very little in the way of reef fish resources. When a sailing canoe arrives home with a catch of tuna “the crew pound their paddles with joy while waiting offshore, old women dance and sing on the beach, and the entire population is in a state of delightful anticipation of bone-free protein”.¹⁴

With small populations spread out over islands without cheap and easy transport or cold storage, it can be difficult getting small-scale fish catch to urban markets. In Cook Islands, the Ministry of Marine Resources is looking at standards for inshore fish processing so that fish caught in the outer islands can meet the “safe for human consumption” requirements and be sold in the Rarotonga market. In Solomon Islands fishers work with fish traders in Honiara to send cool boxes of fish on the inter-island ferry services to the urban market.

11 Tails is a mobile phone and tablet application supported by the Pacific Community to enable member country coastal fisheries staff to collect data and send it back to the main office, even in remote locations with limited data connections.

12 Tolvanen S., Thomas K., Lewis T., McCoy M. (2019). FFA study: Assessing the contribution of landings from locally based commercial tuna fishing vessels to food security. Forum Fisheries Agency. [https://www.ffa.int/system/files/Local Tuna Landings Report May 2019.pdf](https://www.ffa.int/system/files/Local%20Tuna%20Landings%20Report%20May%202019.pdf).

13 Gillett R. (2011). Issues in Small-Scale Tuna Fisheries in FFA Member Countries. Honiara, Solomon Islands: Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA).

14 Gillett 1987 as quoted in Gillett, R. (2011). Issues in Small-Scale Tuna Fisheries in FFA Member Countries. Honiara, Solomon Islands: Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA).



Figure 6.4 Selling small-scale catch as fish and chips at Noro market, Solomon Islands ©Kate Barclay



Figure 6.5 Filleting small-scale tuna catch for sale in Gizo market, Solomon Islands © Reuben Sulu

Catch from the industrial fleet also enters local food systems. In Fiji, the industrial fishing companies have outlets in the cities and at their base sites which sell frozen fish cutlets from fish that are not exported due to being undersize or not an export species, or not meeting export quality grade. Village market vendors come to the Golden Ocean processing plant each week to collect fish heads and tails and roe to take back to the village for sale. Bones are sold to local small-scale fishers for using the drop-line method, or as berley for catching sharks.

During trans-shipping of industrial tuna catch destined for canning, a certain amount is rejected because it is damaged or the wrong species. In most of the trans-shipping ports around the Pacific the reject fish is traded with local small-scale traders, who then sell it just like that, or may cook it and sell it. As long as the fish does not get too warm after coming out of brine freezers on the industrial vessels the quality of this fish is fine, even though it gets a brownish tinge from the brine. In Solomon Islands it is called 'saltfish' due to the salty flavour. See Module 4 for further discussion of potential social impacts of the trade for saltfish around port areas. Many women have small businesses using saltfish.



Case study: businesses selling saltfish in Solomon Islands

Salt fish is an important affordable source of protein in urban areas. The supply is not constant, but changes when there is more or less trans-shipping. In Honiara, the levels of trans-shipping vary seasonally and from year to year¹⁵ Many women trade for saltfish, take it home and cook it into meals like fried fish and sweet potato chips packaged in paper bags, which they sell in markets. Some women who run small 'kai bar' eateries also use saltfish for stews or curries. Women selling cooked saltfish in markets in Auki interviewed for a study in 2014 said their business was the primary income for their family.¹⁶ Market vendors of saltfish say when supplies are low their livelihoods suffer and they go into less profitable activities such as selling betel nuts around their neighbourhood.

Interactions between small-scale and industrial tuna fishing

WCPFC and FFA both specify that industrial tuna fishing should not disrupt or disadvantage small-scale fishing.¹⁷ However, the lack of ongoing monitoring of small-scale fisheries in the Pacific means that impacts from industrial fishing on small-scale tuna fisheries cannot be measured or assessed over time.

Small-scale fishers have consistently said for many years that industrial tuna fishing reduces the abundance of fish available to them. One study in the 1990s found that small-scale tuna fisheries in Kiribati suffered a 7% drop in catches due to purse seine operations.¹⁸ The monitoring of tuna stocks by the Pacific Community Offshore Fisheries Programme (OFP) and reporting to the WCPFC does not look at whether industrial fishing is affecting small-scale fishing. Some kind of monitoring should be implemented, especially in countries like Kiribati where the small-scale tuna fishery is important for livelihoods and as a source of food.

Another adverse impact from industrial fisheries is that when reject fish from industrial vessels enter local markets there can be a downward pressure on local tuna prices. The high fuel costs of small-scale fisheries using outboard motors mean small-scale tuna is always more expensive than purse seine tuna. The supply of cheap reject industrial tuna has mixed impacts, some positive and some negative. It competes against small-scale tuna in the market, but is an important affordable protein supply for low income people. In some cases, fresh tuna from local small-scale fishers can be sold at a higher price in markets than industrial reject fish.¹⁹ This depends on the quality of the fresh small-scale tuna. In many cases small-scale tuna fishers do not ice their fish or protect it from the sun after catching it, so the quality can be poor. Fresh tuna that has been kept on ice is attractive to consumers, if they can afford it. But when the choice is between industrial reject fish and poor-quality more expensive fresh fish, many choose the purse seine tuna. It is hard to be clear about the effects of industrial reject fish on domestic tuna markets because market data is not collected systematically, nationally or regionally.²⁰

15 Barclay K. & Cartwright I. (2008). Capturing wealth from tuna: case studies from the Pacific. https://doi.org/10.26530/oapen_458

16 Barclay K., Payne A. and Mauli S. 2015. Toward gender-equitable fisheries management in Solomon Islands. Washington: World Bank. Retrieved 21 November 2019, <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/467721468187800125/Toward-gender-equitable-fisheries-management-in-Solomon-Islands>.

17 WCPFC Convention – Articles 5, 10, 30 all refer to protecting the interests of small-scale fishers, communities relying on fishing, and small-scale fishworkers. 'Artisanal' is also mentioned in several conservation and management measures (CMMs), excluding them from catch restrictions. The FFA Strategic Plan notes that commercial opportunities for the industrial onshore and offshore developments should not come at the cost of coastal fisheries, and that Pacific Community coastal fisheries officers should collaborate with the FFA Secretariat to develop management for both inshore and offshore fisheries. Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency. (2019b). Strategic Plan 2020-2025. Honiara, Solomon Islands: Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA). Retrieved from <http://www.afpe.org.uk/physical-education/wp-content/uploads/afPE-Strategic-Plan-2016-2020.pdf>, pp. 12, 18.

18 Hampton J., Lawson T., Williams P., & Sibert, J. (1995). Interaction between small-scale fisheries in Kiribati and the industrial purse seine fishery in the western and central Pacific Ocean. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations. <https://www.fao.org/3/w3628e/w3628e0h.htm>

19 Gillett R., Blanc M., Cartwright I., Batty M., Savins M., Albert J., ... Sokimi W. (2018). Forty Years of Small-Scale Tuna Fishery Development in the Pacific Islands: Lessons Learned. SPC Fisheries Newsletter, 157.

20 There have been some short-term studies of prices in certain markets, for example, the Hapi Fis initiative in Solomon Islands. See: Pomeroy, R., & Yang, D. (2014). Selling and marketing fish in the Solomon Islands. SPC Fisheries Newsletter, 145.

The landings of fish from the industrial fleet into local markets varies and is quite small. It is highest in PNG and Solomon Islands, where about 1% of the total industrial catch enters local markets. Even in Kiribati, which requires local landings as part of fishing or trans-shipping agreements, about 0.3% of the total trans-shipped volume enters local markets.

The amounts of industrial tuna available in local markets vary a great deal from year to year according to the commercial needs of the industrial fleets, which follow the fish and move across the Pacific according to conditions such as El Niño.²¹

Trading is one of the positive interactions between industrial and small-scale tuna value chains. Communities barter fresh fish and vegetables, snacks, drinks and so on for reject fish from the industrial vessels. Small businesses take industrial reject fish and sell it raw, or cook it and sell it.

Another positive interaction is when small-scale fisheries 'piggyback' on industrial infrastructure, supplies and export markets, such as processing facilities, marketing connections, transport, mechanical services, gear shops, bait and ice. Some existing small-scale tuna fisheries like the Samoan '*alia*' fishery would not exist without the industrial fishery.²² Many small- to medium-scale operators in the Pacific depend on bait ordered for the industrial vessels to support their operations. Some small-scale operators use the rejects or offcuts from industrial fisheries and processing operations for bait. Small-scale tuna fishers from the villages of Titiana and Mbabanga who sell their catch in Gizo in Solomon Islands fish on FADs placed for the industrial fishery.

Industrial tuna fishing vessels often rescue people lost at sea, including small-scale fishers. In September 2021 a PNG-based purse seiner rescued a man in a canoe whose engine had failed and he had been dragged out to sea by strong currents.²³ Industrial fisheries also benefit small-scale fisheries when some portion of industrial access fees is used for schemes to support small-scale fisheries.

21 Tolvanen A. S., Thomas K., & Lewis T. (2021). Assessing the contribution of landings from in-port transshipment to food security in the Pacific. Honiara, Forum Fisheries Agency.

22 Gillett R., Blanc M., Cartwright I., Batty M., Savins M., Albert J., ... Sokimi W. (2018). Forty Years of Small-Scale Tuna Fishery Development in the Pacific Islands: Lessons Learned. SPC Fisheries Newsletter, 157.

23 A Fisherman and climate change activist rescued by a Tuna Purse Seiner in Papua New Guinea waters. (2021, October 7). Fishing Industry Association Papua New Guinea (FIA-PNG) Blog Post. Retrieved from <https://www.fia-png.com/post/a-fisherman-and-climate-change-activist-rescue-by-a-tuna-purse-seiner-in-papua-new-guinea-waters>



Fish aggregating devices (FADs)

Nearshore and lagoon anchored FADs (see Figure 6.6) consistently enable small-scale fishers to economically access tuna and other pelagic fish.²⁴ FADs can be low tech, made from materials such as bamboo, natural fibre rope and palm fronds, as well as hard plastic floats and synthetic ropes. Some of the industrial drifting FADs have GPS trackers and sonar and communications equipment. Importantly, FADs help reduce fuel consumption because fishers can go directly to the FAD to fish rather than move around looking for tuna. FADS can also improve safety for small-scale vessels by reducing the time needed to search for schools of fish out in the open sea. There is limited understanding of costs in relation to the benefits of FAD schemes.

It is important to note that FADs do not work in all locations, even within the one country. For example, if FADs are placed too close to reefs or the shore, they may be polluted by wash-off after heavy rain, and tuna will not stay in the dirty water. Some places are not suitable for anchoring FADs, such as areas with high currents, or bottom topography of cliffs, ridges or steep slopes. FADs are quickly lost in such locations.

There are also social reasons FADs lead to increased tuna catches, or not. In Fiji anchored subsurface FADs have been deployed in Ra province but have not led to increased landings of tuna by local small-scale fishers.²⁵ Game fishers from the surrounding resorts have had good results using these FADs, so the FADs are technically functioning, but local small-scale fishers are not using them. According to Pacific Community FAME staff, most fishers in Ra are reef fishers, not full-time tuna fishers. Because tuna fishing requires more fuel it is more expensive than reef fishing, so people need a strong reason to turn to tuna fishing. The FADs were deployed in Ra after Cyclone Winston so fishers could target tuna while the reef recovered, but it turned out the reef was not too badly damaged and fishers did not need to turn to tuna fishing.

Where the topography is not suitable for anchored FADs, there may be other natural features that cause tuna to aggregate. For example, upwellings and eddies attract tuna. These places can be used in the same way as FADs, to avoid having to move around looking for schools of fish.

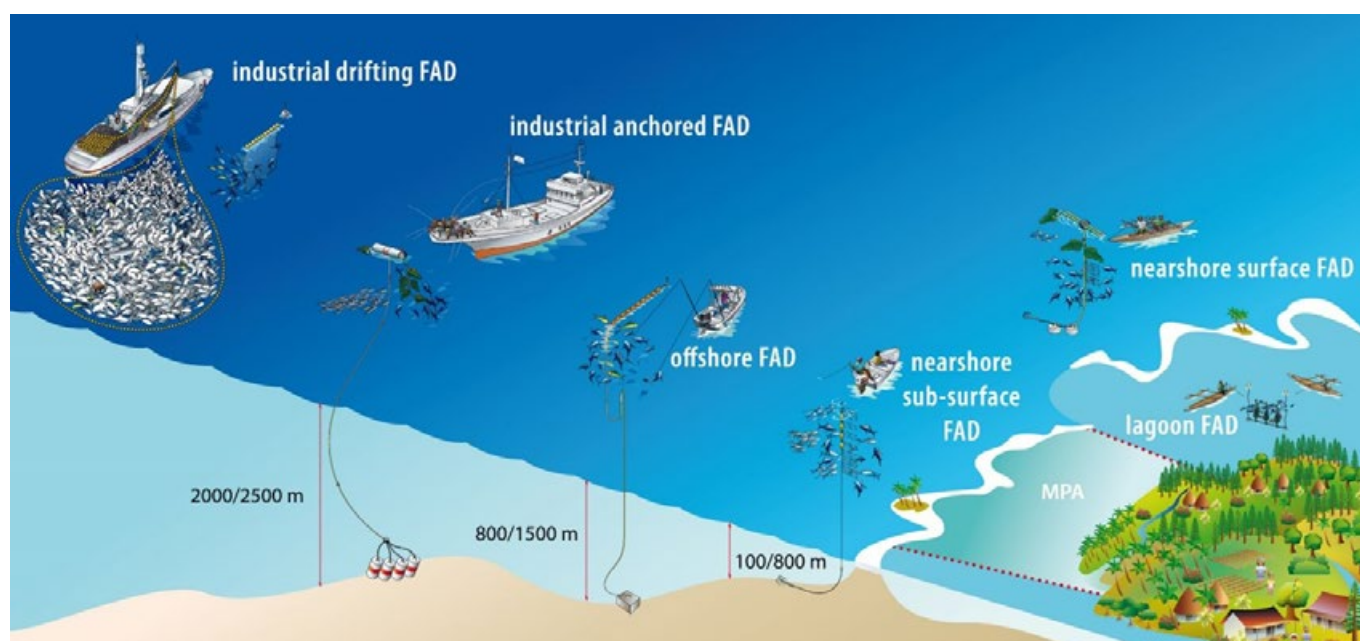


Figure 6.6 Different kinds of FADs used in Pacific Island countries and territories.

Source: William Sokimi, FAME, the Pacific Community (SPC)

²⁴ Sharp M. (2011). The Benefits of Fish Aggregating Devices in the Pacific. SPC Fisheries Newsletter, 135(August), 28–36.

²⁵ Gillett R., Blanc M., Cartwright I., Batty M., Savins M., Albert J., ... Sokimi W. (2018). Forty Years of Small-Scale Tuna Fishery Development in the Pacific Islands: Lessons Learned. SPC Fisheries Newsletter, 157.



Figure 6.7 Handlining from a canoe at a fish aggregating device (FAD)

Source: Ian Bertram, FAME, the Pacific Community (SPC)

Social dimensions are crucial for the success of FADs for small-scale tuna fishing

Stakeholder engagement and community level governance are crucial to the success of FADs.²⁶ One project found that communities felt that nearshore FADs used in small-scale fishing led to an increase in conflict between husbands and wives due to men spending more time fishing, and to reductions in fishers' participation in community activities.²⁷ Since inshore FADs in many Pacific Island countries and territories are placed in customary tenure areas, landowning groups could prevent non-landowning migrant groups from using FADs. This leads to inequities, because migrant and non-landowning groups are often already socially marginalised and may have restricted access to land for gardening. FADs have been the source of disputes in coastal communities, leading to sabotage, including cutting the ropes mooring the FADs, so no one can use them. Before deploying inshore FADs, as well as working out whether the location is good from a technical perspective, it is necessary to see whether the location is suitable for a FAD from a social perspective. For this it is necessary to do a social analysis (see Module 2) and effective stakeholder consultation (see Module 8). It is also important for fisheries agencies to co-manage FADs with fishers, so that sabotage of FADs is penalised. Coastal fisheries experts in FAME in the Pacific Community say pre-deployment groundwork including social dimensions is a prerequisite for FAD deployment. The deploying group should first consult with fishers on why and where they want the FADs. Second, there should be an awareness campaign to educate stakeholders on what the FADs are and on the stakeholders' roles and responsibilities regarding the FADs. The cases where FADs are most socially accepted are those where the awareness campaign starts well before the deployment and continues for a long period after the deployment.

²⁶ Gillett R., Blan, M., Cartwright I., Batty M., Savins M., Alber, J., ... Sokimi W. (2018). Forty Years of Small-Scale Tuna Fishery Development in the Pacific Islands: Lessons Learned. SPC Fisheries Newsletter, 157.

²⁷ Albert J. A., Beare D., Schwarz A., Albert S., Warren R., Teri J., ... Andrew N. L. (2014). The Contribution of Nearshore Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs) to Food Security and Livelihoods in Solomon Islands. PLoS ONE, 9(12), e115386. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0115386>

Safety of small boats

There is a significant safety issue with people going offshore seeking tuna in very small motor-powered vessels without safety equipment.²⁸ In general, small-scale vessels used in the Pacific are poorly constructed in terms of safety, and fishers frequently travel in the open sea with outboard motors in very poor condition. Many small-scale fishers are not very concerned about the significant risks involved in their offshore fishing activities, but accept these risks as normal, or necessary to sustain their livelihood. Many are lost at sea each year, mostly due to running out of fuel or the engine breaking down. A 2008 report found that the Pacific had some of the highest accident rates in the world for fisheries, and many of these accidents are in small-scale fishing, through people being lost at sea.²⁹ As with the other topics covered in this module, there is not ongoing monitoring and reporting of safety incidents in small-scale tuna fishing.

The lack of regulation of small boats is a problem, because safety could be improved through regulation. Countries where safety regulations have been introduced and strictly enforced have seen reductions in incidents.³⁰ Domestic legislation on small boat safety is patchy throughout the Pacific region, and not always fully implemented. Controls are in place for commercial fishing vessels (e.g. vessel registration, seaworthiness check, fishing licence) only if they are over the regulated length for that country (could be 8 m, 10 m or 12 m). Vessels in the informal sector have no safety regulations. The Pacific Community has published an overview of the legal situation regarding gender and human rights for small-scale fisheries in several Pacific Island countries.³¹

Regulations could require registration of fishers, boats and gear. Fishers could be required to pass safety training to be given registration. Departure and arrival notifications could be required. Boats of particular designs could be restricted from travelling in open waters and there could be a particular hull requirement for boats operating in open waters. Another way to improve safety is to have sails as a backup way to return home if fuel is contaminated or runs out. This means adding a keel board and sail as part of the boat's equipment, so requires adjusting existing boats, and adjusting the designs for new boats.

FAO and the Pacific Community have had numerous initiatives to improve the safety of small-scale fishing in the Pacific. These have included safety awareness education, vessel design, legislation and safety equipment (flares, beacon, radios). Safety equipment for small vessels is becoming cheaper, and the Pacific Community has promoted the use of 'grab bags' of such equipment, but there are still problems accessing safety equipment, especially on remote islands.

28 McClean N., Barclay K., Fabinyi M., Adhuri D. S., Sulu R. & Indrabudi T. (2019). Assessing tuna fisheries governance for community wellbeing: case studies from Indonesia and Solomon Islands, summary report. Sydney: University of Technology Sydney. Retrieved from: <https://www.uts.edu.au/about/faculty-arts-and-social-sciences/research/fass-research-projects/assessing-governance-tuna>

29 Gillett R. (2011). Issues in Small-Scale Tuna Fisheries in FFA Member Countries. Honiara, Solomon Islands: Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA).

30 Gillett R., Blanc M., Cartwright I., Batty M., Savins M., Albert J., ... Sokimi W. (2018). Forty Years of Small-Scale Tuna Fishery Development in the Pacific Islands: Lessons Learned. SPC Fisheries Newsletter, 157.

31 Graham A. & D'Andrea A. (2021). Gender and human rights in coastal fisheries and aquaculture: A comparative analysis of legislation in Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. Pacific Community (SPC).



Post-harvest

It is often hoped that small-scale fishery tuna can enter industrial export chains, as happens with the Samoa *‘alia* fishery. A key barrier to this is that industrial fishing methods have ‘economies of scale’, especially regarding fuel use, and so tuna caught by purse seine is much cheaper than small-scale caught tuna. Small-scale fishery tuna is usually not viable in cannery-oriented markets.³²

However, there are often good opportunities in domestic markets for both small-scale fishers and small-scale post-harvest businesses. Small-scale fishery tuna sales thrive in the urban markets in Solomon Islands. Tourism markets are also important. Hotels and resorts can offer small-scale fishers very good prices for sashimi fish. There are also post-harvest opportunities with small-scale processing.

Case study: small-scale tuna processing in Kiribati



As far back as the early 1990s, there were two groups making tuna jerky (savory dried tuna slices) and selling it in the domestic market: Outer Islands Fisheries Project (OIFP) and Teikabuti Fishing Company (TFC).³³ Tuna jerky production has continued on a small scale since then. There have been plans to export it, but exports have not taken off, although the domestic market remains. The idea is to add value and increase shelf life without refrigeration. Mainly yellowfin tuna (*Thunnus albacares*) above 15 kg has been used, as this size maximises return on yield. In recent years the FAO has supported training in techniques for improving quality and hygiene for tuna jerky and other small-scale tuna processing through its FishFAD project.³⁴ FAO sees small-scale tuna processing as a good way to support local livelihoods as well as increasing the supply of nutritious, convenient foods.

The training covered four tuna products: (1) tuna jerky, which is marinated and solar dried using a gentle process, shelf stable for up to 12 months; (2) tuna sausages, which capture the natural fish texture in a gourmet sausage, requiring storage in a domestic freezer; (3) lightly brined, smoked and cured tuna steak, dried to produce a shelf-stable tuna steak, which needs to be soaked in water for 20 minutes prior to cooking; and (4) micro canned tuna, a gourmet product available in a can or jar.

Reject saltfish from industrial fisheries is also an important part of the post-harvest tuna economy in trans-shipping areas, providing livelihoods for the traders and affordable protein in urban areas. Earlier in this module we mentioned saltfish businesses in Solomon Islands. In Vanuatu industrial tuna fishing vessels trans-ship at the wharf in Black Sands outside Port Vila. Raw or cooked saltfish is sold by women in roadside stalls.

32 Gillett R., Blanc M., Cartwright I., Batty M., Savins M., Albert J., ... Sokimi W. (2018). Forty Years of Small-Scale Tuna Fishery Development in the Pacific Islands: Lessons Learned. SPC Fisheries Newsletter, 157.

33 SPC (1994). Processing Novel Tuna Products in the Pacific. Secretariat of the Pacific Community, Noumea.

34 See the FAO website for further details on tuna processing livelihood activities in the FishFAD project (also known as *Enhancing livelihoods and food security through fisheries with nearshore fish aggregating devices in the Pacific*) <https://www.fao.org/asiapacific/news/detail-events/en/c/1310782/>

HRBA in small-scale fisheries internationally

A human rights-based approach (HRBA) has been promoted for small-scale fisheries, because they tend to lose out compared to industrial fisheries. The companies that own industrial fisheries are more easily able to liaise with government, and are given greater access to fisheries resources than the largely informal, lower income, less organised small-scale fisheries. The *Voluntary Guidelines on Securing Sustainable Small-scale Fisheries* published by the FAO in 2015 takes an HRBA.³⁵ Because of the informality of most small-scale fisheries and because the people involved in them are often from socially and economically marginalised groups in society, they are often ignored. Fisheries management usually focuses on industrial fisheries, with less attention given to small-scale fisheries.

We can see this in the Pacific, where the amount of resources put into managing offshore tuna industries far exceeds that put into coastal fisheries. Another possible reason the Pacific has been slower to establish management strategies for small-scale fisheries is that these fisheries are fully under national jurisdiction and entangled with social and cultural values. In contrast, because industrial fishing is further offshore, the social complications are smaller. Tuna stocks transcend national boundaries and the offshore fishing sector is global, so is governed by common principles of management already agreed at an international level.

An international network of fisheries researchers and NGOs supporting fishworkers has been created to highlight small-scale fisheries: Too Big To Ignore (TBTI) (see <http://toobigtoignore.net/>). With the 'blue economy' concept gaining so much policy attention in recent years, those in small-scale fisheries say there also needs to be a 'blue justice' movement, to ensure small-scale fishers are not further sidelined with all the ocean-related development going on. Supporters of small-scale fisheries point out that small-scale fisheries employ more people, receive lower subsidies, and use a larger proportion of the catch for human consumption than industrial fisheries, as shown in Figure 6.8.












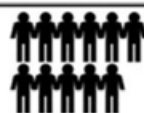
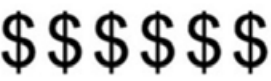

Fisheries Benefits		
	Large-scale	Small-scale
Annual catch for human consumption	 about 45 million tonnes	 about 28 million tonnes
Fish and other sealife discarded at sea	 10 million tonnes	 about none
Annual catch reduced to meals and oils	 30-35 million tonnes	 about none
Fuel consumption (t fuel per t fish)	 5-20 tonnes	 2-5 tonnes
Number of fishers employed	 about 1/2 million	 about 12 million
Government subsidies (billions of USD)	 25-30 billion USD	 5-7 billion USD

Figure 6.8 Benefits from small-scale versus large-scale fisheries globally

Source: Zeller D. & Pauly D. (2019). Viewpoint: Back to the future for fisheries, where will we choose to go? *Global Sustainability*, 2. <https://doi.org/10.1017/sus.2019.8> (graphic available for use under Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International)

³⁵ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (2017a). Exploring the human rights-based approach in the context of the implementation and monitoring of the SSF Guidelines. Retrieved from <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i6933e.pdf>; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (2015). *Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries*. Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication. United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Retrieved from <http://www.fao.org/docrep/field/003/ab825f/AB825F00.htm#TOC>

GESI in small-scale tuna enterprises

Women tend to participate less in small-scale tuna fishing than other kinds of small-scale fishing, because tuna are caught far from shore, usually from boats, and this kind of fishing is more commonly done by men. Not many women want to fish far from shore. This trend is slowly changing though, with more women going out with men on boats to do small-scale fishing than in the past. However, if we look at whole supply chains of small-scale fishing, including preparing for fishing trips with fuel, bait, water and food, and small-scale post-harvest activities, women make up at least half of the people involved. Because tuna fishing is deemed to be male only, many of the decisions about fishing are made without women's input, even though decisions about fishing have direct impacts on post-harvest businesses and thus directly affect many women.

Viewing fisheries in terms of whole supply chains, rather than just the fishing activity, is a good way to shift focus so that we notice the role of women in seafood industries, and remember to include women in decision-making and development programmes.³⁶ In Fiji, for example, looking at the whole supply chain means taking into account the women vendors who buy tuna from the outlet at the Suva wharf or sliced tuna from fishing companies, who then cook the tuna into fish and chips or other dishes and sell it at the Suva and Nausori markets and in small roadside outlets. A lack of data about post-harvest tuna activities in the Pacific is one reason women remain invisible in the tuna world and may be missing out on support to improve employment conditions in marketing.³⁷

Data is lacking on small-scale fisheries activities in general, and specifically on informal value chain activities, which is related to the bias towards industrial-scale and men in fisheries and fisheries management; this means that there is limited understanding of the value of women's post-harvest roles and relatively little support for them in terms of training and grants (see Modules 1 and 2 for discussion on bias and misconceptions related to gender and fisheries).

There are some supports for post-harvest activities targeting women, and it would be good to build on these. Papua New Guinea's National Fisheries College has long had post-harvest training courses, including for small-scale activities, and has collaborated with the Pacific Community small-scale fisheries trainers, in areas such as preserving the quality of fish. There is the potential to improve the value or markets for existing activities, and to explore new ones. For example, there is currently a project in Kiribati training women producing tuna jerky, continuing tuna jerky product development that has been ongoing for some years.³⁸ Fisheries experts have also suggested other small-scale tuna processing that could be developed with women entrepreneurs, such as salted tuna, bottled tuna, filleting for resorts and export markets or preparing lunch take-aways in markets, and so on.³⁹ So far many projects have focused on the technical production and food safety aspects of these initiatives. Equally important is the business planning and development, so it would be good to see more training in financial literacy and business plan skills for future small-scale tuna projects, for men and women. One example of a business-focused small-scale seafood training opportunity is the Certificate of Professional Development (CPD) in Establishing and Operating a Small Seafood Business, run by the University of the South Pacific (USP).⁴⁰

Generally, women have received less development support for small-scale tuna enterprises than men. Where development grants for small enterprises for tuna fishing or spin-off businesses associated with the tuna industry are going predominantly to men, the causes should be explored. If some form of gender bias is disadvantaging women, a quota system could be used to make sure women have access to training and funding opportunities.

Cook Islands has a programme to provide fuel, gear and equipment subsidies as annual grants for small-scale fishers in exchange for catch data. Women do not apply as often as men. In 2018, 20 out of 243 applications were from women. Sixteen women received funds, compared with 93 men. The fund does cover gleaning – an important form of fishing used by women – and covers ice for roadside stalls – another important activity done by women. The Cook Islands Ministry of Marine Resources is working on ways to encourage more people, especially women, to take up small-scale fishing and value-chain activities.

Finally, while women are not involved in large numbers in small-scale tuna fishing, some women do fish for tuna. It is important to give equal opportunity to those women who want to fish, rather than just assuming that none will want to. It is about supporting women who are interested to fish, who can benefit from training to maximise their

36 Finkbeiner E. M., Fitzpatrick J. & Yadao-Evans W. (2021). A call for protection of women's rights and economic, social, cultural (ESC) rights in seafood value chains. *Marine Policy*, 128 (March), 104482. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2021.104482>; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). (2015). Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries. Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication. United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Retrieved from <http://www.fao.org/docrep/field/003/ab825f/AB825F00.htm#TOC>

37 Tuara Demmke P. (2006). Gender issues in the Pacific Islands Tuna Industry (DEVFISH Project). Honiara, Solomon Islands: Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC). Retrieved from [https://www.ffa.int/system/files/Gender issues in P.I. Tuna Industries 1 0.pdf](https://www.ffa.int/system/files/Gender%20issues%20in%20P.I.%20Tuna%20Industries%201%20.pdf), p.42

38 Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2020, September 30). FishFAD: Improving livelihoods through sustainable nearshore fisheries in the Pacific - New initiative develops tuna products in Pacific Island countries. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Retrieved from <https://www.fao.org/in-action/sustainable-nearshore-fisheries-improves-livelihoods-pacific/news/details/en/c/1365506/>

39 Tuara Demmke, P. (2006). Gender issues in the Pacific Islands Tuna Industry (DEVFISH Project). Honiara, Solomon Islands: Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC). Retrieved from [https://www.ffa.int/system/files/Gender issues in P.I. Tuna Industries 1 0.pdf](https://www.ffa.int/system/files/Gender%20issues%20in%20P.I.%20Tuna%20Industries%201%20.pdf)

40 See here for information about the USP CPD for small seafood business development: <https://www.training.ac.fj/info/certificate-of-professional-development/cpd-in-establishing-and-operating-a-small-seafood-business/>

capacity. Currently most women lack access to the boats and outboard motors that are used for tuna fishing, and are not routinely included in tuna-oriented small-scale fisheries training. Improving gender equity in small-scale tuna fishing includes working towards women having equal access to fishing equipment.

Action points: what can fisheries managers do to support HR and GESI for small-scale tuna enterprises?

Stakeholder engagement

A key action fisheries agencies can do to improve HR and GESI for small-scale tuna fisheries is to engage more with small-scale fisheries (see Module 8). This could be through improving data on small-scale fisheries, having more consultative processes with small-scale fishers, and including small-scale fisher associations in tuna advisory bodies.

If an industrial fishing vessel causes a problem for small scale fishers, especially in remote areas, do the fishers have a good way to make a report to their national fisheries agency and have the problem investigated, and, if necessary, dealt with? Industrial vessels operating under FFA's mandate have an electronic Vessel Monitoring System so the fisheries agency can check the industrial vessels' movements. But do village-based fishers have a way of reporting suspected wrongdoing and having the results of an investigation reported back to them? Currently many small-scale tuna fishers probably feel they have no voice regarding industrial tuna fishing. Small-scale fishers are usually not included as a stakeholder group for consultation regarding tuna fisheries management – usually only the tuna companies and environmental NGOs are consulted.

A second important point is to work across the institutional divide between offshore and coastal fisheries that exists in most national fisheries agencies and regionally within the Pacific Community. FFA conventionally deals only with industrial tuna fisheries, not small-scale fisheries.

Strengthen small-scale fisher associations

In some countries there are co-operatives or other fisher groups that support small-scale fishers. Often such organisations have limited resources because of the relatively low value and informality of small-scale fisheries. In PNG the Fishing Industry Association (FIA) has broad membership including cooperatives that work with small-scale fishers. In other countries, if there is an industry association it is dominated by the industrial offshore sector. Fisheries agencies could consider using a portion of industrial tuna access fees to support small-scale fisher industry organisations.

Collaboration

Because addressing HR and GESI goes beyond the normal skillset of fisheries managers, it is vital for fisheries agencies to collaborate with other experts and the stakeholders themselves for small-scale tuna activities. Collaborating with people from other government agencies, NGOs, industry organisations and others with expertise in HRBA and GESI-sensitive business development can help. These experts can diagnose root causes of socio-economic issues and reveal potential losses for various stakeholders, enabling everyone to benefit equitably from small-scale fisheries. Fisheries managers cannot address these problems or identify opportunities in isolation, even if they are fisheries related. Furthermore, one solution will not work to 'fix' the same problems in different communities, because the problem may not be technical in nature but social.

Data

Fisheries managers can establish ongoing monitoring of catches from small-scale tuna fisheries, building on existing cost-effective initiatives such as Tails, an app on mobile devices for easy data collection and reporting.⁴¹ Data on catches will enable understanding of impacts on abundance from industrial fleets, as well as contributing to understanding the economic scale of small-scale tuna enterprises. It is important to establish ongoing monitoring of the impacts of industrial fleets on small-scale tuna catches.

In addition to data on catches, other data is also important for understanding the HR and GESI dimensions of small-scale tuna activities. Market data on prices and volumes is important, as is gender disaggregated data on small-scale fishing households, fish vendors and people doing value-adding activities. What contributions do small-scale tuna activities make to livelihoods? This kind of data is not currently collected, but could potentially be generated through amendments to regional Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) data collection, and/or through add-ons to the Tails system. Data on safety incidents is also important.

⁴¹ For further information on the Tails mobile phone and tablet application for collecting small-scale fisheries data in the Pacific see: <https://oceanfish.spc.int/en/ofpsection/data-management/spc-members/dd/505-tails-application>

Education

Fisheries agencies can promote awareness of the risks of offshore fishing in small boats and how to reduce the risks. They can facilitate access to safety equipment for small-scale vessels, and mandate or facilitate access to safety training through fisheries and maritime training institutes.

Fisheries agencies can also facilitate broader access to post-harvest training modules for small-scale enterprises, for example, those run by the PNG National Fisheries College, the Pacific Community coastal fisheries training team, USP, and national projects.

Regulation

Several forms of regulation could improve HR and GESI in small-scale tuna fisheries. When instituting new regulations, communications campaigns are needed to ensure communities are aware of the new rules, and the new measures need to be adopted and implemented (not just stay ‘on paper’). Suggested measures could:

- introduce a binding conservation and management measure (CMM) in the WCPFC that protects small-scale fishers from negative impacts of industrial fishing;
- consider national regulation to protect small-scale fishers from negative impacts from industrial fishing;
 - by introducing fishing exclusion zones (for example, Solomon Islands excludes some industrial fishing from their Main Group Archipelago);
 - by introducing other regulations around seasons, gear, catches;
- develop and enforce national regulations on small fishing vessel safety and equipment. The Pacific Community has attempted to harmonise certain rules (e.g. GEM’s model regulations on small boat registration; FAME’s sea safety guidelines). The Pacific Community could propose a charter for small-scale fishers to be adopted nationally with Pacific Community support. Inter-agency collaboration between fisheries agencies, maritime and labour authorities will be important to define the measures to be adopted at the national level;
- put in place measures to protect prices for small-scale fishers where industrial fisheries’ reject fish are damaging the viability of small-scale fisheries markets.

Development

HR and GESI in small-scale tuna fisheries and post-harvest activities can be improved through sustainable development, which includes social sustainability as well as ecological and economic. Possible activities would be to:

- continue using nearshore FADs to increase accessibility to compensate for catch declines, based on lessons learned regarding factors affecting effectiveness – both biophysical and socio-economic;
- support initiatives for post-harvest improved transport, handling and processing, including measures for quality of fresh fish (e.g. ice) and preservation such as smoking and drying (e.g. tuna jerky);
- in decision-making about small-scale tuna fisheries, and in allocating training and other support, shift from including only fishers as relevant stakeholders, to more realistically include fisher businesses (usually families), and include people from the value chain. This will allow more involvement of women as well as being more realistic about who the stakeholders are;
- seek advice from the Pacific Community FAME Coastal Fisheries Programme staff on initiatives. FAME has extensive historical experience across the region. Advice may increase the chance of success and decrease the chance of repeating past failures;
- undertake a baseline study on the small-scale tuna enterprises currently existing and their sources of finance, to see where women and men and other social groups are engaged and not, and where support could improve HR and GESI.

Tool: gender division of labour analysis⁴²

A gender division of labour analysis provides information about the separation of activities and specialised allocation of tasks to women and men, including looking at their age, ethnicity, and so on. Divisions of work are often based on stereotyping of women and men and the roles and positions they can or cannot hold in a given society (which are context specific). These are based on unequal roles and status relations, and they become embedded in structures, including labour markets and small-scale fishing activities. This means that men or women do particular roles, and harvest in some spaces and not others. For example, men travel further out to harvest deep water snappers and tuna while women are more concentrated along the reefs where they glean for invertebrates, molluscs and shellfish.

What are the areas of interest in the division of labour analysis?

- The division of labour is always **human made**. Its forms are socially shaped, thus shaped by gender roles.
- Division of labour concepts are mostly used in an **economic context** (productive and reproductive roles) but can also be used to understand **constituency-based roles** (political + advocacy)

Table 6.2 Tool 1 for gender division of labour analysis

Roles	Reproductive		Productive		Decision-making and voice	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
What are the existing tasks and contributions of women and men in each role?						
What benefits and status do women and men get from each role?						

Interlinked with roles of men and women when harvesting are the use and control of **resources**. What are the differences in resources available to women and men, and how are they related to their roles and responsibilities in fisheries activities?

Table 6.3 Tool 2 for gender division of labour analysis

Resources	Reproductive		Productive		Decision-making and voice	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
What resources do women and men:						
have access to?						
have control over?						

The aim of this tool is to identify gender-based inequalities and different needs for each role/task.

These are some guiding questions for this exercise:

- What gender inequalities and needs are expressed in each role, by women/men?
- What gender inequalities and needs are not easily expressed by women/men?
- What inequalities/needs are directly linked to the programme/project (e.g. accessibility criteria)?
- What inequalities/needs are context-specific (e.g. cultural values, traditions)?

⁴² The gender division of labour analysis tool has been adapted from materials developed by Natalie Makhoul, FAME, the Pacific Community (SPC).

Tool: gendered value chain analysis

The tool for gendered value chain analysis presented in Module 2 can help reveal which part of small-scale tuna value chains are most relevant for improving HR and GESI.

Acronyms

CMM	Conservation and management measure (from the WCPFC)
CPD	Certificate of professional development
FAD	fish aggregating device
FAME	Fisheries, Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystems Division within the Pacific Community
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
FFA	Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency
FIA	PNG Fishing Industry Association
GEM	Geoscience, Energy and Maritime Division of the Pacific Community
GESI	gender equity and social inclusion (outside this handbook the word 'equality' is usually used, rather than 'equity', in GESI)
HR	human rights
HRBA	human rights-based approach
IMO	International Maritime Organization
NGO	non-governmental organisation
OFFP	Offshore Fisheries Programme in the Pacific Community
PICTs	Pacific Island countries and territories
PNG	Papua New Guinea
SDGs	United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
SPC	the Pacific Community (formerly the Secretariat of the Pacific Community)
USP	University of the South Pacific
WCPFC	Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission



Pacific
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Pacific handbook for human rights, gender equity and social inclusion in tuna industries



MODULE 7

HR and GESI in fisheries
management and science



Pacific handbook for

human rights, gender equity and social inclusion

in tuna industries

Module 7: HR and GESI in fisheries management and science

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Noumea, New Caledonia, 2023

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Reference Note

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Key points

- There are many more women involved in fisheries management in the Pacific now than there were in previous decades. But having more women employed is only one part of promoting GESI.
- We can see continuing bias in the relatively small proportions of Pacific Islanders and women in tuna fisheries management science, both as employees in national and regional agencies, and as consultants contracted for scientific and technical work.
- There are continuing inequities in opportunities for women in Monitoring Control and Surveillance (MCS) work, due to factors such as the heavier burden of family caring responsibilities given to women versus men employees, and stereotypes that women do not belong on fishing vessels.

The main human rights (HR) issue for people working in fisheries management and science is that of freedom from discrimination based on gender, ethnicity and so on. In this module, therefore, we focus on gender equity and social inclusion (GESI), which includes dismantling discrimination as a key goal.

Government responsibilities in fisheries management

The national Fisheries Management Acts are the main legislation guiding fisheries management. These invariably task fisheries agencies with managing fisheries resources for the benefit of the people. In the field of fisheries management we have focused on the first part of that – managing fish stocks as a natural resource – without as much thought into the second part – about the benefits to people. Governments have a responsibility to ensure management of ocean resources is in line with the idea of a healthy blue Pacific that can sustain people's needs for food and livelihoods for generations to come. This means negotiating a fair and equal platform with big industrial players so that there are fair returns from access and license fees, minimising risks of bribery and corruption, combating illegal fishing and creating frameworks for decent work in seafood industries. Promoting HR and GESI in line with international commitments (Module 1 Annex 1) helps fisheries agencies meet their responsibility to ensure fisheries resources are used for the benefit of all people.

GESI in tuna fisheries management and science

Just as industrial commercial tuna fishing has been a very male-dominated area of work, fisheries management was also in the past predominantly a male field. Women generally worked in administrative roles. This has changed a lot in the Pacific Islands region since the 1990s. In 2019 the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) appointed their first female Director General, Dr Manumatavai Tupou-Roosen. One interviewee noted that in the early 1990s at regional tuna meetings there were only ever one or two women in the room. Now it is the norm that there are many women in the room, including at the most senior levels, although at the top and second tier levels there are still more men than women. The numbers of men and women are more equal in lower level roles. A high number of women working in fisheries management enrol in the University of the South Pacific (USP) Pacific European Union Marine Partnership (PEUMP) training programmes for coastal and offshore Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) and postgraduate research. In the words of one stakeholder who works with fisheries agencies on tuna management, “the Pacific is blessed with a lot of really talented women”.

This pattern follows through in national fisheries agencies, although it varies from country to country. Interviewees noted that in countries such as Palau, Kiribati, Marshall Islands and Cook Islands there are a lot of experienced women fisheries managers at all levels. In other countries it is more male dominated. Twenty years ago in the Fisheries Department in Vanuatu nearly all staff were male; in 2021, 27 of 67 staff were women (23 permanent, four project staff). Nine women are in relatively high level roles, one is a manager, while 18 women are in junior positions. In PNG's National Fisheries Authority (NFA) the senior Executive Manager roles are mainly men, with the Principal Legal Counsel and Director of Corporate Services being women. Many more Pacific Island countries and territories have a similar trend. Interviewees noted that with a mixed gender workforce the culture of the organisation has improved.

Case study: Berry Muller, Deputy Director, Marshall Islands Marine Resources Authority (MIMRA)¹



Berry Muller studied marine science and her career has progressed through many of the most important organisations for tuna fisheries management and science in the Pacific Islands region. Berry has had a professional attachment in the Oceanic Fisheries Programme in the Pacific Community. She has also worked with the subsidiary bodies of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), as well as Parties to the Nauru Agreement and FFA committees. She has really appreciated being able to work alongside other women in fisheries who now also hold senior positions in their respective national fisheries agencies. Berry has also had valuable mentorship from senior men in fisheries management. Berry wants more young Pacific Islanders to pursue careers in fisheries because there are a lot of different areas to work in, so most people can find a good fit.

Improving gender equity in fisheries management and science, however, is about more than just increasing the numbers of women employed in various roles. For example, one long-term tuna fisheries manager said that, through the years, she has witnessed some unacceptable interactions in regional tuna meetings, with senior men, such as Heads of Delegations, disrespecting their female support staff. It is not clear if such behaviour was because the support staff were junior or because they were women – either way, disrespecting staff is against the principle of social inclusion.

Improving gender equity is about changing the structures and cultures of organisations so that diversity is recognised, valued, accommodated and can improve the work of the organisations. In the Pacific Islands region, this goal has been pursued through *gender mainstreaming* work in the public service and regional organisations.

Gender mainstreaming²

Gender mainstreaming is being pursued as the main way to achieve gender equality in government and regional agencies throughout the Pacific Islands. Gender mainstreaming means assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels (Figure 7.1). It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not continued. Mainstreaming itself is not a goal, it is a means to achieve equitable outcomes.

Mainstreaming gender equity requires the following actions.

- Before we make decisions, we think about the needs and concerns of women and men of all diversities and look at how our decisions are likely to affect them (Figure 7.1).
- When we design programmes or services, we think about the likely impacts on women and men of all diversities from all segments of the population.
- When we implement programmes and services, we make sure that women and men of all diversities can access them and benefit from them.



Figure 7.1 Gender mainstreaming - putting gender at the centre of everything we do

¹ Forum Fisheries Agency. (2019). Manumatavai Tupou-Roosen leading the Pacific way. Moana Voices, (2), 1–32. Retrieved from <https://www.ffa.int/moanavoices>
² For a definition of gender mainstreaming see: ECOSOC. 1997. Mainstreaming the gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system. Chapter IV, Coordination Segment. Report of the Economic and Social Council of the 1997 General Assembly, Fifty-second Session. New York: United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/GMS.PDF>

Organisational practices around balancing work with family commitments is a key area for gender equity, since it is more common for women to have caring commitments as well as paid work. Government departments generally have paid maternity leave, but things can become more complex when women return to work. Some women note that travel for work can be really difficult in terms of arranging suitable childcare while they are gone. However, other women say that since work travel comes with an allowance, which means a net financial benefit, they can cover any additional costs related to childcare. In many Pacific Island countries and territories, relatives from the village come to help with housework and childcare, so if the income is good enough women can continue paid work once they have children, and the home duties will still be covered. Another option for Pacific women with paid work is to send small children to their home village to be cared for by grandparents and other relatives, which is seen as helping ground the children in culture and tradition and their extended family in a wholesome natural environment. In sum, there are a range of different ways Pacific women doing paid work arrange childcare, and one model does not fit all, but it remains an important GESI principle for workplaces to support people to make the arrangements that suit them. For example, flexibility in when and where staff perform their work – rather than expecting all staff will work from the office during set working hours – is commonly appreciated by staff as enabling them to meet both home and paid work responsibilities. Having childcare facilities in the workplace is another useful measure.

The FFA made progress in inclusive practices during the COVID pandemic, when some people needed to work remotely from their home countries. The FFA has a Gender Equity Framework that shows what oceanic fisheries management organisations can do to promote gender equality.

- In FFA's internal work there is a commitment to gender mainstreaming, including through building capacity for gender awareness, and improving recruitment processes.
- Progress towards improving gender equality will be measured and reported on regularly.
- A senior manager, the Director General of Corporate Services, will be held responsible for improving gender equality in FFA.
- In FFA's external-facing work there is a commitment to understanding and improving gender issues in the sector, including in fishing, processing, trading, management and anti-IUU (illegal, unregulated, unreported) activities.
- FFA will encourage the establishment of gender analysis and sex-disaggregated statistics for the sector.

There are also broader issues of social inclusion relevant for tuna fisheries management and science. For example, the tuna stock assessment team in the Pacific Community (SPC) has largely been expatriate men. As with all SPC divisions, the aim is to have positions filled by nationals of member countries, and that is part of the recruitment and human resources strategy for the Offshore Fisheries Programme. The principle is that there should be at least one woman and at least one Pacific Islander on any recruitment panel, and if two candidates score equally against the recruitment criteria, the Pacific Islander candidates should be preferred. However, there is only a small pool of Pacific Islander nationals with the mathematical or statistical quantitative science skills needed for stock-assessment science. Universities in the Pacific often do not offer the right quantitative science courses needed for stock assessment, so SPC has recruited graduates from universities in the Americas, Europe, Australia and New Zealand. SPC has also worked to build skills through programmes for SPC and member country staff, such as the Pacific Islander Junior Professionals Programme, which involves a 12-month secondment to SPC to work on a project related to WCPFC Scientific Committee work. This experience often boosts the careers of people after their assignment, although it can lead to their recruitment to a regional organisation, meaning the national fisheries agency loses the skilled-up staff member.

Case study: Titilia Taito, research degree student at the University of the South Pacific



Titilia Taito is currently pursuing a Master of Science at the University of the South Pacific (USP) in Suva, with a scholarship from the PEUMP programme. She is in a cohort of four students, three females and one male, from the Pacific region. Due to setbacks from COVID-19, she was given an extension for her studies and should be finishing in early 2023. Her research focus is on coastal fisheries, with a particular lens on how gender can be tied to climate change adaptation measures.

Ms Taito encountered difficulties with her studies from COVID-19. During the lockdown period in Fiji (April–October 2021) she was not able to do the fieldwork needed for her studies. She communicated with her research supervisor from the university, and prepared for fieldwork once the lockdown period was over. She also had to change her supervisors, and had difficulties finding a reliable babysitter to care for the children while she was trying to study from home. This took a toll on her mental health, one challenge we are not accustomed to speaking out about. We ignore our feelings and just ‘bottle it up’. Ms Taito says, “I had the opportunity to share my experiences with some helpful USP teachers, it was very helpful to share with them how I was feeling. Also reading about mental health on social media did help. I was also able to get the help I needed online, including using positive self-talk and mediation”. USP lecturer Cherie Whippy-Morris says women with young children doing research training face particular challenges. University staff often have to give focused mentorship, including sometimes talking with the family, to encourage fathers to help share family duties. Ms Taito said that her husband has been very supportive, and he cared for the children during the two weeks she was out in the field. “In the city, the extended family support is not practised like in the communities, so with good support from my husband I was able to complete my fieldwork”.

Ms Taito’s fieldwork was working with communities on collecting data. One of the key highlights of her findings is “we live in the city with so many resources, and when you are out in the communities it is humbling to see what people are experiencing. They have day-to-day challenges with the environment and with the limited resources they have, life goes on”. She’s really enjoyed the experiences of working with communities, where she is collecting data during the day and in the evenings the invitation for kava is a must. “Kava sessions are integral when connecting to people in our communities. But it is very tiring because every night you have to consume kava, then the next morning get up early each day to make rounds around the village to conduct house-to-house



surveys, then go snorkelling or hiking for pictures.” In working with communities Ms Taito has found that women are more financially driven than when she was growing up, when women usually waited for their husband to provide for them. Women she has interviewed are more involved in creating income, so as to be able to support their children, and they do so much for their communities too. In contrast Ms Taito found that the men she interviewed tend to use the money they earn for their own use.

Figure 7.2 Titilia Taito’s family © Titilia Taito

Historically women and Pacific Islanders have been less visible than expatriate men in the field of fish stock assessment, but there are now some junior women entering the SPC Oceanic Fisheries Programme (OFP) team. We can see the demographic shift in a comparison of photographs from regional technical meetings of fisheries scientists hosted by the Pacific Community from the early 1980s (Figure 7.3) and a recent one from 2022 (Figure 7.4).



Figure 7.3 Regional technical meeting for fisheries, South Pacific Commission (now the Pacific Community), 1982
Source: photo supplied by Meryl Williams.

Note: Meryl was the only woman scientist in this photo. Other women in the photo include the secretary for the tuna programme, an interpreter, the head of publications and one other person who worked in communication or administration.



Figure 7.4 - Regional technical meeting on fisheries in 2022 showing the demographic change with more women in technical roles with SPC and some Pacific women from national fisheries agencies representing their country. © SPC

The bias towards expatriate men also exists in fisheries management consulting for tuna in the Pacific. This is another aspect of fisheries management and science, where work not done in-house by national agencies or regional bodies, is contracted out to consultants. 'Non-Anglo' people who have stepped into the field of fisheries consulting in the Pacific have experienced bias against them, with the assumption that they do not have the required skills and knowledge for this work, and an expectation that they will be paid less.³

In addition to fisheries science as such, the other kinds of careers available in national fisheries agencies and regional fisheries organisations include legal advice, public policy planning, economics, and monitoring evaluation and learning (MEL) (see Module 2).

The ideas presented in this module on improving GESI in fisheries management are quite basic. For a more thorough approach to including gender in fisheries management see:

Mangubhai S. & Lawless S. (2021). Exploring gender inclusion in small-scale fisheries management and development in Melanesia. *Marine Policy*, 123, 104287. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2020.104287>

HR and GESI in Monitoring Control and Surveillance (MCS)

MCS is one area of oceanic fisheries management that historically has been seen as particularly unsuited to women, because of the enforcement tasks involved, and because it involves onboard observer activities. One of the people interviewed for this handbook said when she worked with observer teams and boarded vessels she received 'catcalls' from crew. Because she was part of a team, however, she did not feel unsafe. Catcalls and similar 'compliments' to women can be experienced by women as threatening, especially in an all-male or mostly male environment. Experiencing catcalls in working environments can also make women feel like they are being singled out as a sexual object, which undermines their professional role.

It has been thought that the job of an oceanic fisheries observer is not right for women because observers live and work alongside all male crew for weeks or months at a time, with objections around sharing sleeping, bathing and toilet facilities. These concerns are similar to those for women working as fishing crew. Another reason why there are fewer women in MCS than other areas of fisheries management is because promotion to higher management level in MCS has often depended on having experience as an onboard observer. There are, however, non-observer roles that give equally valid experience for MCS, such as port monitoring, so the essential criteria for promotion are being expanded in some organisations, with the result that more women are taking up management roles.

Many women do want to work in MCS, as shown in intakes for the Certificate IV Fisheries Enforcement and Compliance Course, in which 33% of participants were women in 2018.⁴ Online observer training in MCS hosted by FFA has seen more women applying. As of 2021 the FFA MCS programme air surveillance staff were all male. The patrol boats staff were mixed, but there were still more women doing shore-side tasks and more men going to sea. Part of this may be due to women preferring to work on shore for family reasons (see the point about flexibility raised earlier). It is important to understand the GESI factors underlying such preferences and to avoid reinforcing gender inequities by assuming all women will want to, or should, stay ashore.

³ Blaha F., Gonelevu S. & Katafono K. (2021). Being Non-Anglo Fisheries Consultants in the Pacific. Poplar & Ivy. Retrieved from <https://www.shackletontrust.org/being-non-anglo-fisheries-consultants-in-the-pacific>

⁴ FCG ANZDEC. (2018). Review of Certificate IV Fisheries Enforcement and Compliance Course, report for Forum Fisheries Agency. Auckland: FCG ANZDEC.

Case study: women observers on fishing vessels⁵



Only a small percentage of fisheries observers in the Pacific Islands region are women, but they do exist. Rachael Luru from Papua New Guinea has worked as an observer on tuna fishing vessels for many years. It is tough work for anyone, staying for weeks or months on tuna fishing vessels out at sea. It is particularly difficult for women because of the all-male environment onboard tuna fishing vessels where bathrooms and sleeping arrangements are shared, and men may watch or touch women. Purse seine vessels generally have better facilities than longline vessels. Rachael continued with observer work even after she had children. In a video interview with Rachael she says it was hard to leave her children to return to work at sea, but providing for her family is important, and observer work is an important service to the Pacific Islands region. Plus, she loves her job.

Presumably men also find it hard to continue with observer work once they start a family. Observer work on fishing vessels can be risky for women, but it is also risky for men. The Human Rights on Fishing Vessels section of this handbook (Module 3) shows that men fisheries observers have been beaten up and/or have disappeared, presumed murdered. It has been proposed that fisheries observers should work in pairs for safety. It is also likely that the work of onboard observers will be increasingly replaced by automated video surveillance on vessels. Then the observer work would be onshore – monitoring the video transmissions. Onshore observer work would be safer for women and men and possibly make it easier to offer equal opportunities in observer work. Until then, observer work can be a springboard for fisheries management careers, and is vital work, so it is important to support women and men to work safely as onboard observers.

The Tuvalu Maritime Training Institute trained the first Tuvaluan woman fisheries observer in 2021. The same year, the Marshall Islands Marine Resources Authority had one woman among their observers. Several women have been through the Cook Islands observer training programme. Although none were working as observers in 2021, the manager of the Cook Islands Observer Programme was a woman. Vanuatu Fisheries Department has three or four women observers working on purse seine or carrier vessels, not on longliners because these are seen as unsafe for women due to hard working and living conditions, and the lack of separate facilities for women. Longliners are difficult for men observers also, so the Fisheries Department is working on e-monitoring for longliners, with 16 currently fitted. A 'dry' observer working onshore with video surveillance material will conduct the monitoring. This work could be done by women as easily as by men.

Case study – First Fijian female fisheries shiprider helps combat IUU⁶



In 2018 Fiji signed a Shiprider Agreement that allows Fijian defence and law enforcement officers to join US Coast Guard and Navy vessels for monitoring and enforcement activities in relation to illegal fishing and other maritime concerns. This is one of several international partnerships that help Pacific Island countries and territories protect their huge maritime territories from illegal fishing. In February 2022 fisheries officer Sereana Logavatu was the first Fijian woman to be a Shiprider, participating in a seven-day mission on board the USCGC Stratton. There were female US Coast Guard officers aboard as well.

5 Pacific Community. (2020). Rachael Luru, balancing being an at-sea observer and a mum. Pacific Community Website. Retrieved from <https://www.spc.int/updates/blog/2020/01/rachael-luru-balancing-being-an-at-sea-observer-and-a-mum>; FCG ANZDEC. (2018). Review of Certificate IV Fisheries Enforcement and Compliance Course, report for Forum Fisheries Agency. Auckland: FCG ANZDEC.

6 Fiji Sun. (2022, March 7). First Fijian Female Fisheries Shiprider Helps Combat IUU. Fiji Sun, 19. <https://www.facebook.com/fisheriesfiji/photos/sereana-logavatu-is-the-first-female-from-the-ministry-to-be-a-shiprider-onboard/4840584032724120/>





Case study – shaming women who go to sea

One of the factors discouraging women from working at sea is stereotypes about women's behaviour whereby a woman going onboard a fishing vessel may be seen as shameful.

The woman may be seen as inviting trouble, by going to work with men away from land. Some people say women have no business leaving their homes to work on vessels out at sea, surrounded by men, so they should not complain if something bad happens to them.

In 2021 a woman government employee who worked on a Fijian fishing vessel out at sea was sexually harassed by crew on the fishing vessel. She talked about her experiences with one of the daily newspapers, as part of a discussion about human rights problems in the offshore fishing industry. However, after the interview was published, there was backlash against this woman expressed on the Fiji Seafarers Facebook page. Many of the abusive posts were from women, in Fijian language. The posts blamed the woman for the harassment she experienced, saying that it was her fault for going on a fishing vessel. Some posts accused her of going on the fishing vessel specifically to seek sexual advances, and shamed her for being promiscuous, or called her a prostitute. People said that 'good women' stay at home with their husbands and children, and fish only inside the reef, and if women chose to go on offshore fishing vessels they are to blame if something bad happens to them.

There were hundreds of posts like this, and none of the leaders in the Facebook community, including captains, spoke out against the shaming. If people, including leaders, allow such shaming to go unchallenged it can imply they agree with it. This case shows the huge gap in understanding gender equity in offshore fishing. Working on fishing vessels as crew or as an observer is important work, and this work should be open to everyone who has passion for or an interest in the job. If the job has stigma, and women doing this work are publicly shamed for it, women are less likely to take up work on fishing vessels. Families are less willing to support their daughters to pursue work on fishing vessels because of the safety issues both on board and being out in the open sea for extended periods of time. As people become more familiar with the idea of women working on fishing vessels, such as with the SeaQuest training initiative of an all-women fishing vessel, hopefully the stigma will subside.

Addressing this kind of shaming is part of the work needed to reach the stage where women can work safely alongside men on fishing vessels. A lot of preparation, training and goodwill is needed. For example, everyone in companies needs specifically targeted courses on social inclusion, and reducing gender based violence and workplace harassment. Captains and officers of vessels need training to ensure a safe working environment. Women need upskilling to handle the physical and mental stresses of working on a fishing vessel. Company managers need to be prepared to support all this training and put in place safeguards to protect both women and men on board vessels, for example, by having separate logbooks for women crew to ensure all grievances are addressed, or a safe space for discussing abuses. Community leaders also need to undergo training that addresses gender rights, sexual harassment and human trafficking in the industry. A community approach to work on such abusive shaming requires all stakeholders to have a shared understanding of gender equity and to work together.

GESI in food safety management and science

Women are firmly established at all levels of food safety science in Pacific tuna industries. Women are managers in the Competent Authorities (CAs) for regulating food safety for exports to the EU in Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Fiji, and Marshall Islands. In Marshall Islands all of the Competent Authority staff are women. In PNG's CA women are involved in management, policy development, review of standards and operating procedures. Competent Authority staff from inspector level up have university degrees in applied chemistry or food technology.

Women are also prominent in food safety in the Quality Assurance or Quality Control sections of large tuna processing plants in the Pacific. SolTuna's Quality Assurance Manager is a Solomon Islander woman.

Action points: checklist of things fisheries managers can do to improve GESI in tuna fisheries management and science

Embrace the gender mainstreaming activities being rolled out in member country public service administrations in fisheries agencies.

- Aim to achieve gender parity in numbers of women and men at senior levels – this is one indicator for mainstreaming, but GESI requires more than just the presence of women. Achieving mainstreaming means changing the culture of organisations to be inclusive. See Module 1 for further details on GESI mainstreaming.
- Ensure there is no pay discrimination between women and men doing the same jobs in fisheries agencies.
- Ensure women and men have equal access to education, training and other forms of skills development needed to progress in the workforce. This means considering how to include people with carer responsibilities (usually women) in skills development if travel away from home is required. Flexibility is important.
- Put a spotlight on women role models in fisheries management and science, like the FFA's Moana Voices pieces,⁷ so that women and men can more easily see women as senior in fisheries management and science.
- Provide mentorship opportunities for women and other underrepresented social groups to improve equity in workplaces.
- Include recruits with social science backgrounds relevant for fisheries management, to help promote changes in values, behaviours, beliefs and norms in fisheries management. For example:
 - GESI can be improved through transparent discussions on the impact of on-board and onshore tuna industry activities on women – fisheries managers with social science training rather than biology training will be better placed to generate these discussions.

Improve GESI in tuna fisheries science and technical consulting

Approach 1: improve the public image of fisheries as a career area with diverse opportunities for women

- Schools, colleges and training organisations could target women and girls in careers fairs to show the range of different careers possible, from at-sea observers to fisheries management and science. For example, the Maritime Training College in Kiribati has been targeting school careers counsellors to spread the word.
- Make opportunities for women working in fishery roles to give talks at public occasions, about their career paths, to give personally positive examples for young women.
- In all of the above, focus on removing the stigma that exists around women working in offshore fisheries – lift the idea of this area of work, show it as worthy of respect and an honourable career.

⁷ <https://www.ffa.int/moanavoices>

Approach 2: increase practical opportunities to enter fisheries science and technical consulting

- Establish scholarships for nationals of Pacific island countries to do graduate degrees in the applied mathematics and statistics courses needed for fisheries science.
- Boost the capacity to teach applied mathematics and statistics in Pacific universities.
- Ensure these opportunities are distributed in a gender equitable manner. For example, gender quotas could be applied in scholarships and internships created for fisheries science.
- Strengthen the pool of experienced technical consultants from Pacific Island countries and territories. Contracting agencies should strengthen their recognition of these consultants' skills. For example:
 - FFA and the Pacific Community could call for expressions of interest from suitably qualified Pacific Islander consultants to form a list of preferred consultants. National fisheries agencies could do this with local citizens.
 - Where there is no suitable Pacific Islander consultant available, regional or national fisheries agencies could require non-Pacific Islander consultants to collaborate with junior Pacific Islander consultants, to build their experience.
- Increase GESI expertise among fisheries scientists and technical consultants by encouraging them to take the post-graduate course on Gender and Environment, with a component on Gender and Fisheries offered at USP.

Improve HR and GESI in MCS activities.

- Ensure MCS career pathways are based on all of the kinds of MCS work that builds relevant expertise, and not only onboard observer work, which can act to discriminate against women and other people less willing or able to spend long periods at sea.
- Develop e-monitoring as an inclusive approach to MCS activities, alongside more conventional on-board observation.
- Actively discourage the shaming of women who work on fishing vessels, for example, through stakeholder engagement activities (see Module 8). This includes leaders making public statements condemning such shaming if it emerges on social media.
- To protect the human rights of fisheries observers, both men and women, pursue the implementation of the FFA Harmonised Minimum Terms and Conditions (HMTTC) for Access by Fishing Vessels section 9 on observer safety. Improving HR and GESI on fishing vessels in general will also improve these issues for fisheries agency staff who board vessels in the course of their work (see Module 3).



Tip: making sure checklists are effective by using MEL

Sometimes checklists do not work very well. For example, we say people are taking a 'tick box approach' when they do what the checklist says in a shallow way, rather than deeply working to achieve the goal behind the checklist. This is why MEL is necessary – to reveal whether activities are achieving the intended goals, and, if not, to adapt the activities to be more effective (see Module 2). For example, one objective of implementing items from this checklist might be: 'achieve equality of opportunity for Pacific Islanders and women in fisheries management and science work, including as employees and as contracted consultants'. What indicators would reveal whether that objective is being achieved? What data is required for those indicators?

Acronyms

CA	Competent Authority, agency responsible for food safety for seafood exports.
FFA	Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency
GESI	gender equity and social inclusion (outside this handbook the word 'equality' is usually used, rather than 'equity', in GESI)
HR	human rights
HMTC	Harmonised Minimum Terms and Conditions for Access by Fishing Vessels
MCS	Monitoring Control and Surveillance
MEL	Monitoring Evaluation and Learning
MSC	Marine Stewardship Council
OFF	Offshore Fisheries Programme that does tuna stock assessments at the Pacific Community
PEUMP	Pacific European Union Marine Partnership
SPC	Pacific Community (formerly Secretariat of the Pacific Community)
USP	University of the South Pacific



Pacific
Community
Communauté
du Pacifique

Pacific handbook for human rights, gender equity and social inclusion in tuna industries



MODULE 8

Stakeholder engagement for HR
and GESI in tuna industries



Pacific handbook for

human rights, gender equity and social inclusion

in tuna industries

Module 8: Stakeholder engagement for HR and GESI in tuna industries

Kate Barclay and Aliti Vunisea



Noumea, New Caledonia, 2023

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Original text: English

Reference Note

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Key points

- Stakeholders relate to tuna industries in different ways – as consumers of raw, cooked or canned tuna, as industrial fishing vessel crew, as processing plant workers, as unions, as small-scale fishers, processors or traders, as people who live near fishing ports or canneries, as environmental conservation groups and as fishery managers. Development of tuna industries and changes in fisheries management can have different effects for women and men, young and old people, people from different ethnic groups and people with disabilities.
- Reasons human rights (HR) and gender equity and social inclusion (GESI) are important for stakeholder engagement:
 - Some groups of people, such as women, have less influence and voice, which limits their ability to be active stakeholders in decision-making. There are also diversity and power differences within groups. Not all women, and not all men, are the same. An Indonesian fishing crew member has less ability to protect their own interests than a Korean vessel captain, and possibly less voice than a woman cannery worker in Solomon Islands. These differences are because of power inequalities and customs within societies and within the fishing industry.
 - Being inclusive means all voices are heard and different interests are identified. Inequalities can be made worse if power imbalances are not addressed effectively during stakeholder engagement processes. Power imbalances are difficult to break down; however, people with expertise in local culture, community development, and gender equality can do stakeholder engagement in ways that support HR and GESI goals.

Pacific tuna industry stakeholders

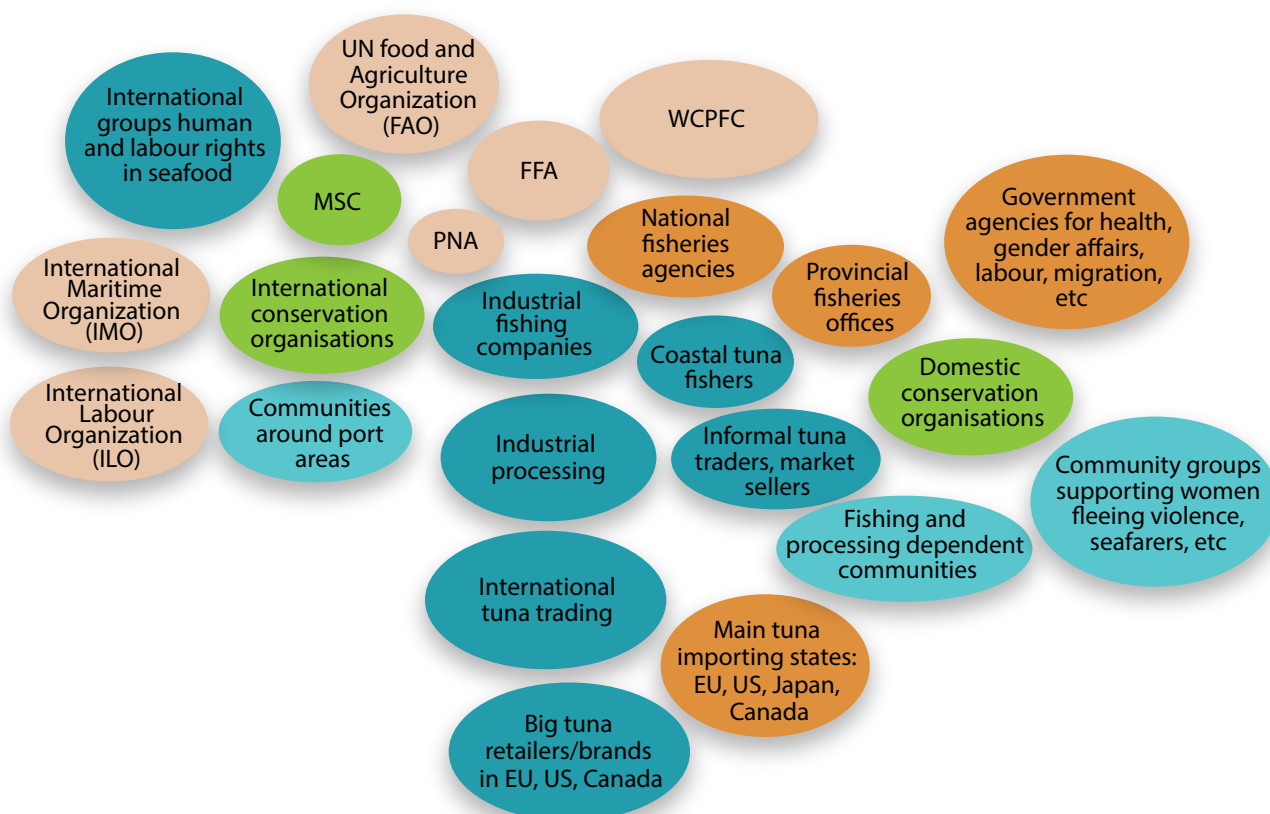


Figure 8.1. Stakeholders in Pacific tuna industries

If you were to map out the stakeholders relevant for your work in Pacific tuna industries, which of the stakeholder groups in Figure 8.1 would be most important? How are the stakeholders related to each other? Which ones can influence the activities of others? Which ones can make decisions for tuna industries? Which ones depend on others? Which can help solve problems for others? Which ones are directly involved in tuna industries, or are less directly connected? What roles/needs/interests do different groups have? If you were trying to change something in a tuna industry, which groups would you need to engage? How would you engage them?

- Engagement needs to consider how to balance all the different types of stakeholders. See the Tools at the end of this module for how to understand the differences between stakeholders.
- Different types of stakeholders – from community groups to big companies to government agencies – require different engagement strategies. See the Tools at the end of this Module for a checklist on lobbying for engaging government decision-makers.
- There are communication pathways between international and local non-governmental or civil society organisations (NGOs/CSOs) working in similar areas, such as WWF or The Nature Conservancy (TNC). As well as engaging with conservation organisations, you can contact human rights organisations (Human Rights at Sea – HRAS), or gender equality organisations. You may be able to engage with international organisations through engaging with their local branches.

Stakeholder engagement as good governance

Stakeholder engagement is how fisheries management agencies include tuna companies and other groups into governance. It is very important to have participation from all relevant stakeholder groups in decision-making about tuna industries. Participation serves an awareness-raising function, so that stakeholder groups have accurate understanding about tuna industries. There are roles for many different organisations in stakeholder engagement for tuna industries in the Pacific, including government agencies for fisheries, labour and gender equality, tuna companies, small-scale tuna enterprises, media outlets, environmental organisations, unions, human rights organisations, women's groups, and so on. There are several different forms of stakeholder engagement that are important for Pacific tuna industries, all of which have 'room for improvement'.

Collaboration and communication between government agencies is a vital form of stakeholder engagement for HR and GESI in tuna industries. Often it is easy to start engagement between the Ministry of Fisheries and industry stakeholders. It can be harder to establish engagement between Ministries of Fisheries and other relevant line ministries, such as for Labour, Gender Affairs, Justice, and so on. Inter-agency coordination is difficult, staff are busy and may not see tuna industries as their core business. However, as noted in Modules 3, 4, 5 and 6, a multi-stakeholder forum in each country seems to be a necessary foundation for improving HR and GESI in tuna industries. This is because the issues are cross cutting and require capacities and knowledge that does not exist in any one organisation, but across several organisations.

Case study: establishing a multi-stakeholder forum for tuna industries in Fiji



Fiji's Offshore Fisheries Management Act (2012) calls for the establishment of a multi-stakeholder forum – the Offshore Fisheries Advisory Council – to facilitate the kinds of stakeholder engagement needed for good governance. The tuna industry and interested NGOs have been calling on the government to convene the multi-stakeholder forum to address HR and GESI topics for some years. As of 2022 the Fijian Ministry of Fisheries had not convened the forum. Industry and NGO representatives are now thinking about how they can engage with government constructively to 'push things along'.

Engaging with people in positions of power can also be difficult. Members of Parliament or company CEOs are very busy and are responsible for many different things. It is hard to get their attention. Some topics require engagement with high-level decision-makers such as Permanent Secretaries, who may not be aware of how serious a problem is.

For example, if you need to change legislation then it is necessary to engage with senior public servants and politicians. There is a resource available for groups in the Pacific wanting to know how to create change through government processes: *Changing Laws: A Legislative Lobbying Toolkit for Understanding Law-Making, Parliamentary Procedures and Advocacy for Legislative Change*.¹ See also the checklist Tool at the end of this module for engaging with government decision-makers.

Some things you can do to help government decision-makers engage with your topic are to:

- identify your topic of interest with their policy priorities (this means doing some research on what their policy priorities are);
- present yourself as available to help them. For example, if the government has signed an agreement you

¹ <https://hrsdc.spc.int/node/819>

want implemented and the government has not yet implemented it, you can say ‘we are here to help with implementation’;

- as well as formal processes of government, it is also possible to influence decision-makers via informal *talanoa* conversations. You could involve decision-makers in a roundtable discussion on your topic;
- think about what possibilities you have for personal influence and professional influence on the decision-makers. What relationships and networks are you part of that can help you engage with decision-makers?

Case study: engaging with decision-makers to change fisheries management



In 2017 the Fijian Government declared a ban on harvesting and trading beche-de-mer (sea cucumber) due to severe overfishing of the resource. This decision was made after a strong engagement campaign by stakeholders led by community-based fisheries resource management and conservation group Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS). What can we learn from this case about how to successfully engage with decision-makers? There were several key elements to the campaign that can be replicated by stakeholders wanting to engage with government to achieve change.

Research – There were several different research projects on the decline in beche-de-mer stocks and the social costs of the ‘boom and bust’ unsustainability of the fishery. This research was a strong evidence base to convince senior public servants and politicians that action was needed.

Media strategy – The stakeholder coalition included several groups, including NGOs and CSOs, who raised awareness in the media about the ecological and social costs of the unsustainable fishery. Public support for the campaign to have sustainable management of the resource helped build political will to address the issue.

Buy-in by government – Stakeholders seeking the policy change involved the Ministry of Fisheries in developing and publishing research on the fishery.² The science report was then launched by the Minister for Fisheries as part of a national beche-de-mer forum.³ This form of engagement means plenty of dialogue to help ensure the stakeholders fully understand each other’s positions and the topic. It also helps get ‘buy-in’ from government.

Assisting government – WCS staff developed a four-page policy brief on beche-de-mer, summarising research findings and proposing management measures. The brief was reviewed by the Director of Fisheries before being submitted to the Minister. Policy briefs are very helpful for busy government officials, making their work easier.

Timing – Building on public awareness and the new research findings, the timing of the beche-de-mer forum and the policy brief helped make the topic a pressing one for government. Three months after the forum and policy brief the Minister banned underwater breathing apparatus in the fishery, and one month later closed the fishery entirely.

Financial backing – Campaigns like this require resources. Research and workshops to bring stakeholders together for discussion can be expensive. Some of the research on beche-de-mer stock status and value chains used in this campaign was supported by the Australian Government through an ACIAR research project. Support for research and workshop costs was also provided by the David and Lucile Packard Foundation.

Engagement is about making decisions together. Engagement works to build collaborative relationships. There are different types of participation and inclusion, and some do not actively include everyone in decision-making (see Figure 8.2). Engagement takes specific steps to create inclusion in the decision-making process (e.g. ensuring decisions are made together with the widest possible involvement).

2 Mangubhai S., Lalavanua W. and Purcell S.W. (eds) (2017). Fiji’s Sea Cucumber Fishery: Advances in Science for Improved Management. Wildlife Conservation Society. Report No. 01/17. Suva, Fiji.

3 Arturo C. and Lalavanua W. (eds) (2017) Fiji Beche-de-Mer Forum 2017: Summary Report. Fiji Ministry of Fisheries and Forests and Wildlife Conservation Society, Suva, Fiji.

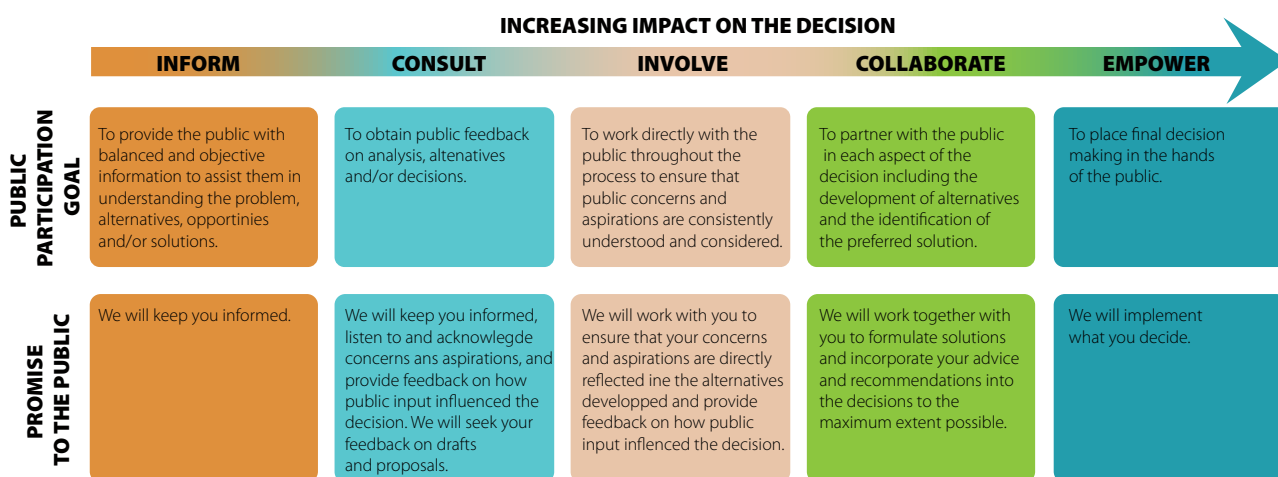


Figure 8.2. IAP Public Participation Spectrum

Allowing stakeholder involvement towards the ‘collaborate’ and ‘empower’ end of the spectrum in Figure 8.2 requires government to share decision-making power with stakeholders. This can be uncomfortable for government. Previous experiences with public–private partnerships and including NGOs into government dialogues may influence government perceptions against sharing decision-making power. Sharing power can be ‘messy’. However, because of the cross-cutting nature of HR and GESI in tuna industries, collaboration with industry, labour and community groups seems the only possible way to address these problems. Do assumptions made because of past experience still hold true in the current context/situation? Are we prepared to test those assumptions and make changes so it works better this time?

During the engagement process, not everyone has to agree. However, the process should find ways for everyone to work together, and acknowledge and respect other people’s views. In other words, the right to participation means ensuring everyone has access to the engagement process and creating a platform that upholds this fundamental human right.

The main way in which engagement currently occurs for tuna industries is through fisheries agencies seeking stakeholder input, usually from tuna fishing or processing companies, and sometimes from environmental NGOs. Governments have stakeholder participation requirements for all areas of public policy, and fisheries agencies’ versions of these include, at a minimum, some form of engagement with industry associations.

Stakeholder engagement at the national level does not always work as well as it could. Staff from one of the industry associations interviewed for this handbook say they are unable to secure meetings with government staff, and that despite repeated requests to have input into new draft regulations they still have not seen the draft. On the other hand, interviewees from a fisheries agency said that in their country the fishing companies send locally based agents to the stakeholder meetings who have no authority to make agreements. This means the government does not know the company view, or does not find out until after the meeting, which makes effective engagement difficult.

We can think of stakeholder engagement for tuna industries as occurring both at the national level and at the regional level. In regional stakeholder engagement, such as in processes around the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA), and Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) Pacific Island countries can be a bloc voice against the big global fishing interests. Individual country governments might be in a weak power position regarding some of the big companies or the bigger flag states, but working together in regional blocs gives Pacific Island countries greater bargaining power.

In addition to tuna companies, environmental NGOs – both small local ones and the big international ones such as Greenpeace and WWF – are also engaged in tuna fisheries management. This happens at a national level, and also regionally at WCPFC meetings. In addition to industry organisations and environmental groups, there is also sometimes a small presence of groups with other interests, such as crew welfare.

The stakeholder engagement in the WCPFC is not very deep – WCPFC is mainly for member governments to engage with each other. Observer organisations are not encouraged to speak up. Many of the most controversial discussions are in closed heads of delegations sessions which observer groups are not allowed to attend. WCPFC meetings are not fully open to the media. Moreover, it is expensive and difficult to be registered as observer organisations for the WCPFC. WWF Pacific has been facilitating the attendance of smaller NGOs.



Case Study – CSO/NGO engagement on tuna issues

The World Wild Fund for Nature (WWF) is one of the environmental conservation non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that is most engaged in tuna issues in the Pacific. WWF, along with several other conservation NGOs, has long joined the yearly WCPFC meetings. It is expensive to join WCPFC meetings, so in recent years WWF has enabled smaller local NGOs and CSOs to also join the WCPFC meetings. The objective is to engage CSOs in the Tuna Commission meetings and provide an opportunity to discuss issues of concern that can be addressed together in a joint statement which is submitted to the Tuna Commission. In 2021 WCPFC18 was held virtually, and several CSOs based in the Pacific region participated as part of the WWF delegation. One of the many recurring issues that CSOs continue to push on is the safety and well-being of crew and fisheries observers on longline fishing vessels. Since the 2020 Tuna Commission meeting, a group of states has been drafting a binding conservation and management measure (CMM) on crew safety. Hopefully, this CMM will be adopted in the 2022 Tuna Commission meeting.

Other activities regarding the human dimensions of tuna fisheries that WWF-Pacific (Fiji Office) has engaged on include:

- a Working Group led by FFA to develop an agenda for a workshop on human rights and gender equity scheduled for February 2023. It will involve government heads, CSOs, fishing and processing industries and other relevant stakeholders in the Pacific;
- a Pacific Community (SPC) workshop held in April 2022 to socialise and give feedback on this handbook. The workshop included representatives from Pacific Islands fisheries management agencies, CSOs and the private sector, so they could contribute to the development of the draft handbook;
- engaging a gender specialist to research gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) and human rights (HR) issues in Fiji's offshore fisheries sector. This involved a series of meetings and workshops in late 2020 and early 2021 which engaged with various stakeholders to provide insights to issues happening within the sector. The published report can assist the Fijian Government to address issues in the offshore fisheries space with particular reference to women and rights of workers. That report formed the basis of the Fiji case study (Module 9) in this handbook.

Ideally, stakeholder engagement should also include worker voice, such as trade unions, enabling grievances to come to fisheries agencies where relevant. Labour agencies have a role to play in engagement for HR and GESI in tuna industries.

Other important groups currently left out of most stakeholder engagement are the communities affected by industrial tuna operations, small-scale fishers, people living near ports and fishing grounds, and people making a living selling fish in markets.

Engagement with Pacific coastal communities on tuna industries

Most national and regional tuna fisheries management agencies have not engaged with coastal communities about tuna industries. It is difficult for coastal communities to engage because most consultations happen in urban centres. This means coastal communities are marginalised. Another factor making it hard for coastal communities to engage is that they may be unfamiliar with the fishing activities involved. For example, in Fiji, communities have a say regarding fishing activities within their *qoliqoli* area and in the types of fish species and fishing gear people are familiar with. The tuna industry usually engages in areas outside the *qoliqoli* and with fish species people are not familiar with. There is a perception that commercial vessels operate outside the 12 nautical mile zone so coastal fishers are not affected. However, as noted in Module 6, there are impacts from industrial fisheries on small-scale fishers and local markets. Engaging more effectively with coastal communities is vital for ensuring the equitable distribution of benefits from tuna resources and minimising negative impacts – especially if targets are to ease fishing effort in coastal waters for reef fish stocks to recover.

According to the fisheries management legislation in Pacific island countries, fisheries management should be about social and economic benefits, not just biological sustainability. This is another reason it is important for tuna fisheries management to include effective engagement with communities dependent on tuna resources.

Community engagement on tuna resource management in Niue

Resource management advisory committees are the main forum for stakeholder consultations. With such a small population in Niue, these committees are really inclusive of all voices, with participation by women who are village council representatives, women from the private sector, women members of parliament, and women from the Niue Oceanwide Board. Women lead many discussions within the committees, working side-by-side with men. The dynamics within the group are positive between younger and older generations – the slow merging of new knowledge gained by young graduates with the experience-based knowledge of older men contributes to youth development. Skilful facilitation is needed to bring out the quieter voices within smaller groups.

When should coastal communities be engaged as stakeholders in tuna industries? Certainly whenever something important is being planned, such as a change in fisheries management, or a new development such as a tuna processing plant. Engagement with affected communities should happen in the planning phase, and throughout the project. There should also be regular engagement. This could happen as part of the preparatory work for big meetings, such as the Forum Fisheries Committee (FFC) or the WCPFC meetings.

Achieving active, free, effective and meaningful engagement requires:

- considering any cultural barriers that may affect people's ability to engage, such as traditions against women or youth speaking up in public meetings;
- supporting people's individual right to participate and be included, while also considering power imbalances between people, especially socially excluded voices (see the definition of social exclusion in Module 1);
- working with socially excluded groups in the larger community context, and not just working with them in isolation;
- working with men, women and other community members who are well respected, who behave in moral and ethical ways, and who hold influential roles (such as Chiefs), to help facilitate the inclusion of those who are excluded or marginalised and
- achieving a balance between inclusion and respect for individual versus community rights.⁴

There are significant challenges in engaging with people in rural areas, and it is even harder to reach the marginalised groups most relevant for HR and GESI topics. For example, women affected by violence may be very reluctant to talk. It is a long process to involve them in focus groups, and they suffer psychological effects from participating, so need support for that.

⁴ The principles of individual versus community or wider society rights are enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948).

Communication and engagement around HR and labour rights on fishing vessels

There needs to be much greater awareness of HR and GESI for crew working on industrial fishing vessels, and employees in processing plants. Part of this is due to a lack of broad community awareness in Pacific islands countries. This includes senior men and women in communities who are gatekeepers of culture and tradition, who may shame women working on fishing vessels, or uphold expectations of gender division of labour in households that place heavy burdens on women who do paid work. This happens all over the world, not just in the Pacific.

Then there is more specific awareness needed by crew and land-based workers so they know what their rights are, and what is abuse of their rights. For example, workers need to know what modern slavery and human trafficking are. The Papua New Guinea Fishing Industry Association (PNG FIA) is doing some communication work along these lines through posters in the company canteens about the seven principles of human rights and labour rights the FIA is implementing. The posters use plain language English and *Tok Pisin*, following a model the FIA used previously for raising employee awareness about the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) requirements, marine litter and plastics.

In addition to raising awareness among existing employees, it is also important to raise awareness within the broader community. Rights education in an environment where people feel comfortable and safe can help them make sound decisions about taking up employment offers, and what kind of working conditions they can expect. It is also important for spouses, children and other relatives of workers to have a good understanding of worker rights. When incidents occur it may be family members who have evidence about what has happened and can make claims. Active and outspoken relatives, especially those with high levels of schooling or experience working in government, can be really helpful for workers who are being abused or socially excluded.

Foreign fishing companies and captains/masters also often lack awareness of their legal obligations around human and labour rights. This is particularly the case for fishing company owners and captains or fishing masters who may be from outside the Pacific region. They may not have the English or local language skills, and they may work across several countries, each with slightly different legal frameworks. Fishing company managers and executive crew on fishing vessels are a stakeholder group that should be engaged to make them more aware of their legal obligations regarding working conditions of crew on their vessels – for example, training, qualification and recruitment requirements. There are complex obligations for port States, flag states and labour recruiting states. Engagement may require a process of dialogue before settling on what the key messages are.

Where people know their rights and understand what constitutes abuse, the problem may be with enforcement systems used by the police, fisheries agency, labour agency, and so on, and how victims can be protected from abuse if they report it is important to set up a good process for crew to be able to lodge complaints or grievances and to have these effectively handled by company management and any government agencies where necessary. This is where a multi-stakeholder forum can be a really useful tool for engagement. Networks of organisations that can help with HR and GESI issues would also be useful in ports, to help provide a circle of care for fishing crew and other seafarers, as discussed in Module 4. The multi-stakeholder forums mentioned in Module 3 – for collaboration between industry, government agencies for fisheries, labour and gender equality, NGOs, CSOs and religious organisations, and international organisations like the International Labour Organization (ILO) – could enable networks of stakeholders for collaborative problem solving.

Another issue where dialogue and engagement is needed is that of crew having access to their identity documents (passports, ID cards). In Pacific tuna fishing it is normal practice for captains to hold the passports and identity documents of crew, for safe keeping and for immigration paperwork purposes. However, an employer holding identity documents is an internationally recognised risk factor for human trafficking or forced labour, because it makes it very difficult for employees to flee an abusive situation. A study of basic requirements to protect the human rights of seafood workers recommends that fishing crew should be provided 24/7 access to their identity documents.⁵ Problem-solving dialogue between stakeholders is needed here to find a workable way to keep important documents safe and border control paperwork manageable, while also protecting the human rights of crew by allowing them direct access to those documents at any time, without having to ask the captain.

5 Nakamura K., Ota Y. & Blaha F. (2022). A practical take on the duty to uphold human rights in seafood workplaces. *Marine Policy*, 135, 104844. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.marpol.2021.104844>

Stakeholder engagement by tuna companies

Engaging with stakeholders can be a really useful way for tuna company managers to problem-solve around social issues with the workforce. Social issues are difficult for company managers to solve by themselves, because most managers do not have all the necessary skills and knowledge. For example, one of the tuna company manager interviewees for this handbook says when she has attempted to help staff dealing with family violence that happened at home, not on company premises, she needed to reach out to other organisations to see what she could do; this meant contacting government organisations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) with skills in addressing domestic violence. It is difficult to 'start from scratch' and work this out individually, so it is good when stakeholder engagement for the tuna industry includes networks of related organisations working on social issues, so that industry people can see a clear path of who to contact to address HR and GESI problems.

Case study: more communication needed between stakeholders



One of the key problems fishing company managers face in engaging with other stakeholders is that they often have different advice or information. One of the interviewees for this handbook gave an example: she had a case of a problem with crew working conditions and compliance. She reached out to find information from the Maritime Authority and the Ministry of Fisheries, but they gave her different information. When she went online to search for documents to help with her case, the information she found online was different again. It is the same problem with information from NGOs. Better communication between all the stakeholder groups will enable them to coordinate information more effectively, and that will be a more useful support to industry for improving crewing conditions than the current situation.

Just as governments need to engage as part of good governance, tuna companies also need to do stakeholder engagement as part of their due diligence.

Case study: Stakeholder engagement for PNG FIA's Responsible Sourcing Policy



The PNG Fishing Industry Association (FIA) decided to implement a strong corporate social responsibility (CSR) platform that they call their Responsible Sourcing Policy. This policy has four pillars: (1) environmental sustainability (MSC third-party certification); (2) traceability; (3) reducing marine debris; and (4) human rights at sea. Building and implementing this Responsible Sourcing Policy required a great deal of engagement: with government to assist in implementing some parts of the policies, with buyer companies to see what kinds of CSR are important to them, and with NGOs and certifying bodies to have verification that the FIA CSR systems are robust.

The Responsible Sourcing Policy uses the MSC certification as evidence that the fishery is environmentally sustainable. For traceability they use the IFIMS data system used by all Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA), and are part of the Global Dialogue on Seafood Traceability (GDST). FIA has a strategy for reducing marine litter and debris thrown by crew from fishing vessels, there is a fish aggregating device management plan in place, and FIA members have had marine debris training.

Working on human rights at sea has involved engagement between the fishing industry and NGOs and certifying bodies. In order to decide what route to take in promoting human rights for crew, FIA talked with many organisations working on HR at sea and social accountability, such as Human Rights at Sea (HRAS), Conservation International (CI), WWF, Fishwise and the NGO Tuna Forum convened by industry group the International Sustainable Seafood Foundation (ISSF). FIA also talked with various tuna industry groups and the sustainability directors of supermarkets. It was a big job that took one and a half years to reach the point where the FIA decided on a path for human rights at sea. In 2019 FIA started seeking accreditation from the Fairness Integrity Safety and Health (FISH) Standard for Crew.

It should be noted that various human rights organisations such as Human Rights at Sea (HRAS) and the Environmental Justice Foundation (EJF) released statements in 2021 asserting that the FISH Standard does not adequately protect crew, saying it is voluntary and ineffective and calling on buyers to instead require their suppliers to implement a mandatory, transparent and comprehensive standard. Nevertheless, buyers with reputations for strong CSR requirements, such as Tesco and Sainsbury's, and NGOs such as WWF, are accepting FIA's social responsibility approach, including the FISH Standard.

FIA's FISH Standard audit process went on hold during COVID as FISH auditors visit and inspect in person, and could not do that when travel restrictions were in place. Early in 2022 the first FISH inspection was held, but FIA did not pass, because the recruiting companies were not all looking after human rights as well as they should. For example, the phone lines for crew to call if they have a question or complaint about labour rights was not answered when called, and the recruitment company did not respond to a message that was left. Because FIA is committed to securing FISH accreditation they told the recruiting companies they need to comply, or FIA will not continue using them. According to FIA, the recruiting companies fixed the problems and FIA hoped to pass the second FISH inspection later in 2022.

The level of engagement and dialogue with different stakeholder groups in developing the Responsible Sourcing Policy has required a change in thinking by FIA industry members. Fishing company managers were worried that if they are too open with information about their activities that green groups will use the information in anti-fishing campaigns. But these days, to sell in markets in the EU and North America, more open engagement is needed. In the words of one interviewee, "we need to walk alongside stakeholders, to open our books."

The PNG tuna industry is much larger than that in other Pacific Island countries and territories. Other industry associations may not have the resources for the same scale of stakeholder engagement. Perhaps there is a role for regional organisations such as the FFA to support this kind of stakeholder engagement that serves the purpose of both improving HR and improving market access.

The big onshore tuna processing companies have various kinds of community relations. SolTuna has a Community Connect Team that works with NGOs, the churches, and the town councils. The PNG tuna processing companies have community relations officers or teams, similar to those in large companies in other sectors.

Case study: PAFCO community engagement, Levuka, Fiji



The Human Resources Manager at PAFCO has a community relations activity to help change household dynamics that make it hard for women to do paid work in tuna processing. She had noticed a trend that before the start of a new school year, many women workers asked the company to buy their annual leave so that they could afford stationery and uniforms for children. The Human Resources Manager started attending and speaking at local community meetings, requesting husbands to do their part in contributing to household income for the needs of their children. She also discussed issues to do with absenteeism and domestic violence. At first this was not well received, but she persevered and came to feel that attending these meetings was having some success. Some women still ask to have their leave bought out for school costs, but less than before. Some staff are still unable to cover school-related costs and ask the company to cover costs such as school bus fares, uniforms and stationery. Although there is a preschool used by employees with children from three to five years old, some husbands of women PAFCO employees say the husband's childcare responsibilities make it impossible for them to seek work outside their village. Stakeholder engagement between tuna companies and employees could help address these problems, possibly with social analysis and gender lens human resources expertise (as was used for similar problems in SolTuna, see Module 5).

Public communication for GESI in tuna industries

FFA's publication *Moana Voices*⁶ is a form of community engagement. *Moana Voices* profiles women doing well in tuna industries and offshore fisheries management as a way of building the confidence of other women in the region, by giving them role models so they can imagine their own career progression. There have been some obstacles along the way, showing there is still a way to go for GESI to be fully accepted as important in the tuna world. One of the funding bodies whose funding was used for the magazine tried to prevent its funding being used, and only accepted it when *Moana Voices* was presented as 'fisheries management' work rather than as 'community engagement'. When the first publication came out, one of the member country representatives said there should also be a version for men. This representative didn't understand that existing media about tuna already showcases men leaders. It is not difficult for men to see a role for themselves in tuna industries or fisheries management and science because most of the public figures are men – fishermen, tuna company owners, senior public servants and government ministers. The only widely visible female role model in Pacific tuna industries has been the processing plant line worker. Not all stakeholders understand that women in tuna industries are not visible, so there is a need to make women more visible.

Why does GESI matter when it comes to stakeholder engagement?⁷

In many societies, women have less ability to influence and participate in decision-making processes than men, but this is not always the case. Some women – such as those with senior roles in companies or government – hold significantly more power than some men in tuna industries. Young men might not have the courage or self-confidence to express their views because they feel that the hierarchy of elders needs to be respected. A gender equity and social inclusion (GESI) analysis (see Module 2) might identify issues around women's participation in consultation within tuna companies and in fisheries management meetings, compared to men. For instance, 'unconscious bias' may make fisheries managers and practitioners see all women as more vulnerable while all men are seen as self-sufficient and confident enough in speaking up (unconscious bias is defined in the Glossary at the start of this handbook).

Stakeholder engagement approaches that are gender aware consider women's and men's differing gender roles, needs and capacity to participate in decision-making and in planning and implementing new projects or ongoing activities. These approaches allow for the different ways that men, women and other groups relate to each other, and how they contribute individually and collectively to their household incomes.

⁶ Forum Fisheries Agency. (2019). *Moana Voices*. Retrieved from <https://www.ffa.int/moanavoices>

⁷ This section on GESI in stakeholder engagement has been adapted from Delisle A., Mangubhai S. & Kleiber D. (2021). Module 6: Community engagement. In Barclay K., Mangubhai S., Leduc B., Donato-Hunt C., Makhoul N., Kinch J. & Kalsuak J. (Eds.), *Pacific handbook for gender and social inclusion in small-scale fisheries and aquaculture* (2nd ed.). Pacific Community, Noumea.

Misconception: gender sensitive engagement = 50:50 male:female representation

Sometimes people assume that a GESI approach to community engagement means having equal numbers of women and men at meetings. However, even if they are present, women or other marginalised groups may not feel comfortable speaking in front of the men in the meeting due to cultural protocols. Enforcing attendance quotas (i.e. making numbers equal) may be a culturally insensitive and ineffective engagement approach. Instead, practitioners who apply good gender practice when engaging with communities understand that it is more about the process of finding culturally sensitive ways to give all groups an equal opportunity to engage, be heard and have their interests and aspirations considered in decisions. Community engagement processes that include a GESI lens might require (more) time and investment of resources depending on the social and cultural norms at any given place. For example: consulting with local authorities to explain the importance of diverse participation in meetings to gain their support; mapping who is considered more marginalised in that context/place; choosing an open and accessible venue; or considering separate meetings with women, youth, and other groups.

At the same time, since GESI is our goal, it is important also to think about cultural practices and values that make it harder for women, youth and other social groups to engage, and consider challenging the status quo. If we just work around the cultural barriers to engagement that is 'accommodative' (see Figure 8.3), we could aspire to move towards 'transformative' engagement.

This is why it is important to track participation beyond simple attendance at meetings, and to understand (1) how household and community relations and dynamics might prevent women, youth or other members from taking advantage of new opportunities; and (2) how benefits may only flow to a small subset of the community. Tuna industry roles that *benefit* women (e.g. by improving incomes or nutrition) might not necessarily *empower* them (e.g. to have a voice in how income is used in the household). It is equally important to understand that projects designed for, and focused exclusively on women, without considering appropriate roles for men, may fail because they lack support from men.⁸

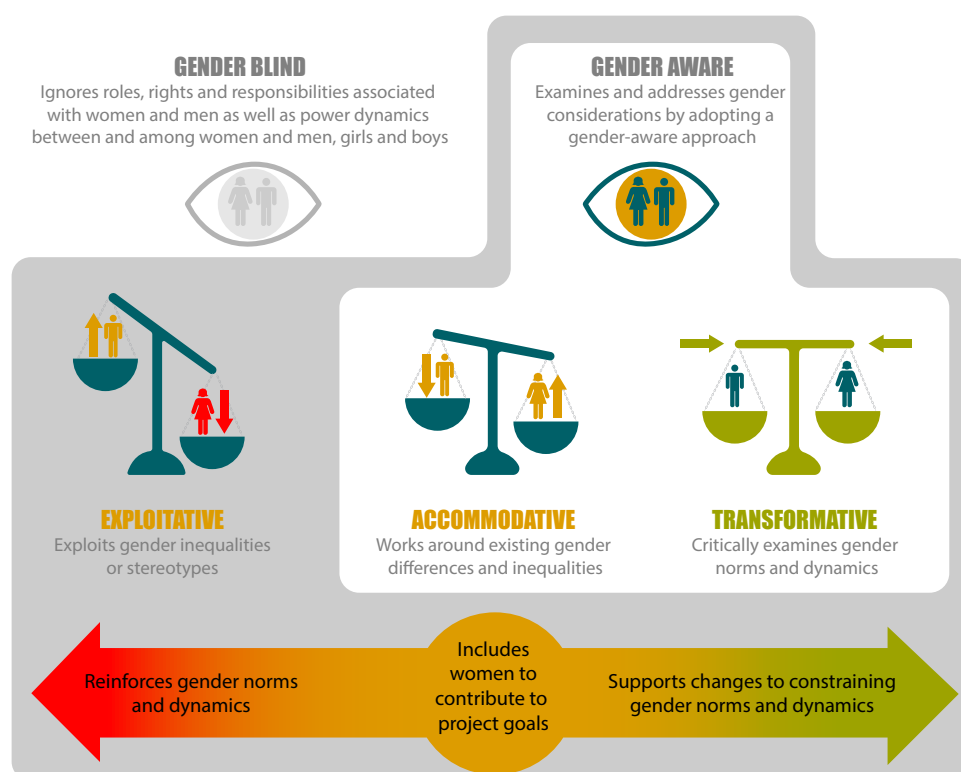


Figure 8.3 Defining gender approaches.⁹

- ⁸ Eves R. and Crawford J. 2014. Do no harm: The relationship between violence against women and women's economic empowerment in the Pacific. Canberra: Australian National University, State, Society and Governance in Melanesia (SSGM).
- ⁹ This figure has been sourced from Delisle A., Mangubhai S. & Kleiber D. (2021). Module 6: Community engagement. In Barclay K., Mangubhai S., Leduc B., Donato-Hunt C., Makhoul N., Kinch J. & Kalsuak J. (Eds.), Pacific handbook for gender and social inclusion in small-scale fisheries and aquaculture (2nd ed.). Pacific Community, Noumea. It was adapted from Kleiber D., Cohen P., Gomese C. and McDougall C. 2019a. Gender-integrated research for development in Pacific coastal fisheries. Penang, Malaysia: CGIAR Research Program on Fish Agri-Food Systems. Program brief: FISH-2019-02; CGIAR Research Program on Fish Agri-Food Systems. 2017. Gender strategy. Penang, Malaysia: CGIAR Research Program on Fish Agri-Food Systems. Strategy: FISH-2017-13.

Approaches that take advantage of gender stereotypes to simply achieve fisheries development or management outcomes are considered exploitative as they reinforce or further exploit gender norms and dynamics (Figure 8.3). For example, a ‘gender-exploitative’ engagement process might assume that women stakeholders’ interests in engagement can be represented by male leaders.

‘Gender accommodative’ approaches work around the barriers to women’s or men’s participation in meetings and try to acknowledge and compensate for gender differences, norms, relations and inequalities. While accommodative approaches – such as holding meetings in a place children can also attend because many women have caring responsibilities – can be an important first step towards promoting gender equality, they often do not address underlying structures that perpetuate inequalities in a community. This is because they do not address the underlying causes of the difficulty women have in attending meetings, such as women’s disproportionate responsibility for care duties in their home. In other words, gender-accommodative approaches often do not achieve substantial changes in equity and fair engagement.

A ‘transformative’ approach aims to transform harmful social and gender norms, change power imbalances and eliminate gender-based discrimination. It encourages people to question existing gender and social norms, attitudes, beliefs, structures and power dynamics that impede the achievement of their life goals. It encourages them to take a more people-centred approach that values all stakeholders’ contribution and participation. A transformative approach addresses underlying inequalities, and ensures everyone’s voice and situation is taken into consideration. This is the difference between focusing on the symptoms of inequality and tackling the actual root causes. For example, a project could use a time use survey tool (Module 5) and a gender division of labour tool (Module 6) to assist women and men to identify their roles and responsibilities in tuna industries and home duties and then discuss whether these roles could be fairly shared and how.

Cultural change in gender-equitable community engagement

In Kiribati, historically community decision-making in the maneaba also involved women sitting behind the men to protect them from any violence that may have arisen, and not participating in the discussion except to listen to what is being decided by the men. Many say that women speaking in the maneaba is not part of Kiribati culture. At the same time, more and more young women graduate from universities and want to use their knowledge to help their communities. Some younger women have found a way to contribute to community discussions without eroding the Kiribati culture by first seeking permission from elders to speak in the village meeting at the maneaba. ‘If I pay respect to the village elders and seek their permission to speak in the maneaba, then together we can maintain our cultural values while also enabling me as a young woman to contribute my education for community benefit’ says Maiango Teimarane of the Kiribati Islands Conservation Society.¹⁰

The concepts in Figure 8.3 can also apply to the social inclusion of other marginalised groups, such as youth, the elderly and people living with disabilities (see Module 1 on how to identify socially excluded groups in a community). Some key marginalised groups in the tuna industries are the small-scale fishers, women doing small-scale value chain activities, those without access to fishing gear or boats to fish for tuna, and people engaged in transactional sex around port areas.

¹⁰ Barclay, K., Leduc, B., Mangubhai, S., Vunisea, A., Namakin, B., Teimarane, M., & Leweniqila, L. (2021). Module 1: Introduction. In K. Barclay, S. Mangubhai, B. Leduc, C. Donato-Hunt, N. Makhoul, J. Kinch, & J. Kalsuak (Eds.), *Pacific handbook for gender equity and social inclusion in coastal fisheries and aquaculture* (2nd ed., p. 20). Noumea, New Caledonia: Pacific Community, p. 8.

Monitoring inclusive stakeholder engagement¹¹

Stakeholder engagement should be monitored and evaluated to ensure: (1) equitable participation for all community group members; and (2) that intended outcomes of engagement are being achieved, and if not, the activities are adapted. Module 2 provides more detailed and practical guidance on monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL).

Key steps in evaluating stakeholder engagement

1. Set the **objectives** of the stakeholder engagement. It might be to ensure that small-scale fishers and post-harvest value chain businesses have access to tuna resources. Another good objective: stakeholder participation is equitable.
2. Select **indicators** that help measure progress towards the objectives. Indicators might be catch per unit of effort (CPUE) of small-scale fishers, volumes of fish available in markets, the profit (sale price minus input costs) on market sales of tuna. For equitable participation, the gender of participants in meetings would be one possible indicator, but it is not enough. Other indicators could be whether there were separate meetings for different social groupings, or a small anonymous survey asking participants how satisfied they were that their interests had been raised and heard.
 - Indicators should be SMART (i.e. specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, time-bound)
3. Collect **data** needed for the indicators. Social scientists can develop creative and effective forms of data for indicators. For example, in addition to conventional kinds of data like surveys, we can also use story-telling methods. Using interviews, stakeholders can tell the story of their journey of engagement and how it changes over time. It can include what the stakeholder feels have been the most significant changes, as well as the changes relevant for the objectives and indicators.
4. Monitor the data.
5. Analyse the monitored data and **evaluate** whether the engagement process is meeting its objectives.
6. If it is, keep going with engagement activities and, if not, use the **learning** to adapt the activities to try to better achieve the objectives.
7. **Report** back the results of the MEL process to stakeholders. They will then be able to see how well their engagement is influencing targeted outcomes in tuna industries, and also see how equitable the engagement is.
 - Storytelling can be a good method of reporting. Stories can be an effective way of communicating how the data collected has been used for learning.

Action points: what can fisheries managers do to improve stakeholder engagement for HR and GESI in tuna industries?

Multi-stakeholder forums are vital for stakeholder engagement for HR and GESI in tuna industries. Their benefits can be maximised if organisations include these actions.

- Ensure multi-stakeholder forums exist in each country to facilitate engagement for tuna industry development and regulation. See Modules 3, 4 and 5 for why multi-stakeholder engagement is important for improving HR and GESI at sea, around port areas, and in onshore processing. Stakeholder analysis and mapping is needed to identify ways to effectively enable different types of stakeholders to engage, such as less powerful groups like small-scale fishers, women; more powerful groups like international NGOs, big tuna companies, fisheries agencies; influential groups that are indirectly related, such as government agencies for gender equality, labour and justice.
- Ensure engagement between the fisheries agency and tuna industry associations/companies is functional.
- Ensure environmental NGOs are effectively engaged.
- Broaden NGO engagement to also include women's groups, human rights groups, and so on.

¹¹ This section on monitoring inclusive stakeholder engagement has been adapted from Delisle, A., Mangubhai, S., & Kleiber, D. (2021). Module 6: Community engagement. In K. Barclay, S. Mangubhai, B. Leduc, C. Donato-Hunt, N. Makhoul, J. Kinch, & J. Kalsuak (Eds.), *Pacific handbook for gender and social inclusion in small-scale fisheries and aquaculture* (2nd ed.). Pacific Community, Noumea.

- Include relevant intergovernmental organisations such as the International Labour Organization (ILO), and the national United Nations (UN) coordinator.
- Broaden stakeholder participation to include coastal communities dependent on tuna resources, for small-scale fishing, for food, and for small-scale post-harvest value chain businesses.
- Include unions (worker voice) in stakeholder engagement.

GESI can be incorporated into public communication about tuna industries with these actions.

- Contribute tuna stories to the Pacific Community *Women in Fisheries Information Bulletin*.
- Fisheries agencies and tuna companies could undertake mentoring activities to build diversity in tuna workplaces through awareness about careers in fisheries management or tuna companies, such as:
 - work experience or intern placements
 - talks for school and university students, such as on open days
 - poster campaigns on successful Pacific women in marine science
 - tuna stall at career expos
 - International Women's Day (IWD) events or human rights days to channel messages related to the social dimensions of tuna industries.

Tool: stakeholder analysis¹²

When undertaking stakeholder engagement, it is first important to understand which key groups and individuals to involve. Stakeholder analysis can assess who will be affected positively or negatively by the engagement topic – whose interests will be affected. Anyone who has a 'stake' or interest in the topic is a stakeholder. Stakeholders can be businesses, individuals, communities, civil society organisations or government agencies.

Not everyone's interests are affected equally, so we can divide stakeholders into primary, secondary and external groups. We can also rank stakeholders according to how important the engagement topic is to their **interests**, and how **influential** they are over the engagement topic.

Interests of groups/individuals/organisations are indicated by:

- their potential to lose or gain something in tuna industries, meaning they might want to either block or support an initiative;
- the resources and skills they could contribute, or roles they could play.

Influence of groups/individuals/organisations is indicated by:

- the decision-making ability they have, or their power to influence decisions made by others, or their power to influence the outcomes of the initiative;
- the extent of cooperation or conflict they can generate around the initiative;
- the capacity to assist in solving problems that arise.

If it turns out that a group of people is heavily affected but has very little influence, then it will be important to try to give these stakeholders greater say in the engagement process.

¹² Adapted from Harvey, P., Baghri, S., & Reed, B. (2002). Community Participation. In *Emergency Sanitation: Assessment and Programme Design* (pp. 177–188). Water Engineering and Development Centre, Loughborough University and from LATSA Training and Consulting materials on PM4NGOs Foundations course prepared for the Pacific Community in 2022.

Table 8.1. Stakeholder analysis 1 – tuna processing factory example

Stakeholders	Interests at stake	Effect on interests	Importance of tuna processing for stakeholders*	Influence of stakeholder over tuna processing
Primary stakeholders				
Tuna processing companies	Core business	+	1	1
Women	Employment opportunities	+	1	4
Men	Employment opportunities	+	1	3
Children	Parents have paid work, parents may have less time for caring work, town educational facilities may improve	–	1	5
Tuna fishing companies	Opportunities to sell fish to processing company	+	Varies, for some 1, for others 5	Varies, but big suppliers may be 1
Local environment	Potential negative impacts, particularly pollution, good practices needed	–	1	5
Secondary stakeholders				
Local suppliers	Business opportunities	+	1	3
Local government	Political power/control, increase in local economy, increase in population, complex social issues	–	2	2
Community leader	Respect and influence, well-being of communities	–	3	3
National government agencies	Increase in size of seafood sector, economic and employment opportunities, social and environmental regulation	–	1	1
External stakeholders				
Donors	Opportunities to support development, to support prevention of negative impacts	+	3	2
Surrounding villages	Employment opportunities, influx of outsiders, social change	–	2	4
Local fishers	Increased markets, potential competition for fish stocks or pollution effects on fish	–	2	5
NGOs in local area	Well-being of local communities and environment	–	2	3

* Scale of 1–5, 1 = very important, 5 = not important at all.

Scale of 1–5, 1 = very influential, 5 = not influential at all.

Another important element of stakeholder analysis is to consider the different categories of stakeholder. Having only one strategy for engaging will not be effective, because different types of stakeholders need to be engaged with differently. Categories of stakeholder include:

- users – direct beneficiaries like benefiting businesses/communities
- governors – government bodies, steering groups, auditors, and funders
- providers – partnering organisations and contractors
- influencers – both positive and negative, local media, government officials, business interests, community leaders
- dependents – other projects or functional units dependent on the outcome e.g. supplier businesses
- sustainers – organisations that support outcomes after a project is completed.

Table 8.2 Stakeholder analysis 2 – fishing regulation example¹³

Stakeholder description	Stakeholder category	Interest in the initiative	Power/influence	Relationships
Industrial tuna fishing companies	Users	To fish profitably, maintain access to fish.	Potential sustainer, can overfish, or fish sustainably	Well connected to government decision-makers, commercial relationship with processing companies, and informal tuna traders
Coastal fishers	Users	Have fish for their livelihoods and food needs, maintain access to fish	Not much power, but also not regulated (informal)	Poorly connected to government decision-makers, sell to informal traders
Ministry of Fisheries	Governors	Sustainably manage the resources, promote fisheries development	Provider of the initiative, decision-maker	Well connected to fishing businesses
Tuna processing companies	Influencers	To have enough fish of the right quality and price	Capable of advocating for or against the fishing initiative in government circle	Well connected to government decision-makers, commercial relationship with fishing companies, not much connection to coastal fishers or informal traders
Informal tuna traders	Users	To have enough fish of the right quality and price	Not much power, but also not regulated (informal)	Poorly connected to government decision-makers, rely on coastal fishers/fishing companies for raw materials

¹³ Adapted from LATSA Training and Consulting materials on PM4NGOs Foundations course prepared for the Pacific Community in 2022.

Tool: checklist for engaging with government decision-makers

This checklist was adapted from *Changing Laws: A Legislative Lobbying Toolkit for Understanding Law-Making, Parliamentary Procedures and Advocacy for Legislative Change* available at: <https://hrsd.spc.int/node/819>. This booklet has lots of useful information, so please look it up if you want further details on any of the points in this checklist.

- **Clearly identify the problem**

- **Research the problem** (See also Module 2)

What exactly is the issue you are interested in? What is ‘wrong’?

Who is being harmed? Who or what is causing the harm – that is, is it the responsibility of the government to fix the problem or someone else’s responsibility?

Does the problem require a change in a policy, law, practice or something else?

If the problem involves a legal issue, do any relevant laws already exist? What are the exact provisions that are relevant? Are they helpful or harmful to your issue?

What is the problem with the current law? Do the provisions provide adequate protection or clarity? Do they violate rights or contradict the constitutional Bill of Rights? Do they contradict international human rights standards?

Is the existing law incorrectly drafted? If so, how? Be specific about the changes needed. Do you need amendments, a new law or repeal of an old law?

Is the existing law not being properly enforced or even enforced at all? If not, why?

Does an appropriate law exist at all?

Who will benefit from changes to the law? Who may be threatened by your proposed changes to the law and may become a potential opponent to your lobbying?

Which other stakeholders will need to be involved, including national and local government agencies, MPs, industry groups, other CSOs, churches, peer groups, informal groups and so on?

- **Identify your campaign objectives**

Long term objectives – for example, comprehensive legislation to protect human rights in tuna industries

Short term objectives – for example, increased public awareness that current legislation does not protect against human rights abuses in tuna industries

Which legislation needs to change? Fisheries Management Act? Labour law?

- **Mobilise your network** to build awareness and push for change. Make the most of influential people in your network, such as community or church leaders, people with media exposure, business leaders, people with personal relationships with decision-makers. International bodies like the Pacific Community, Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Bank, and so on can also be helpful as part of networks for lobbying.

- **Select your target groups.** Who will you target with your lobbying activity? Cabinet Ministers? Permanent Secretaries? Parliamentary Committees?

- **Select your lobbying methods.** Will you write letters? Organise individual face-to-face meetings, or large public meetings? You could also produce factsheets, run a petition, write a policy brief.

- **Make a communications strategy** for media activities.

- **Delegate roles and responsibilities** among your network for the tasks in your lobbying plan.

- **Monitor your progress**

How will you evaluate how successful your lobbying is?

Will your monitoring be ongoing or will you stop to take stock of your successes and failures at given intervals?

Will you amend your lobbying plan accordingly if you find that particular lobbying methods are not as successful as you hoped they would be?

Do you need to apply to a donor for funds to conduct more thorough research or to support your lobbying efforts?

Do you need to rewrite your lobbying plan to allow yourselves more time?

Tool: stakeholder participation matrix

Use the table below to think about what groups of stakeholders you need to engage with, at what stages of a project or programme, and what kind of engagement. Are you informing them only? Or consulting with them, partnering them, so that they will have some decision-making role? Which groups have some control over the project/programme?

Table 8.3 Stakeholder participation matrix¹⁴

Type of engagement	Inform	Consult	Partnership	Control
Stage of engagement				
Initial planning				
Project/programme design				
Implementation				
Monitoring and evaluation				

Types of stakeholders to consider for this matrix:

- tuna fishing companies
- tuna processing companies
- other government line ministries (labour, health, police, gender, conservation, etc)
- communities living near the project/programme
- communities dependent on industrial tuna fishing or processing income
- small-scale tuna fishers
- informal tuna traders, processors, market sellers
- donors
- intergovernmental organisations (ILO, FAO, etc)
- regional organisations (FFA, Pacific Community)
- community groups (seafarers, family violence, conservation)
- international conservation organisations.

¹⁴ Adapted from Harvey, P., Baghri, S., & Reed, B. (2002). Community Participation. In Emergency Sanitation: Assessment and Programme Design (pp. 177–188). Water Engineering and Development Centre, Loughborough University.

Acronyms

CSO	civil society organization
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
FFA	(Pacific Islands) Forum Fisheries Agency
GESI	gender equity and social inclusion (outside this Handbook the word 'equality' is usually used, rather than 'equity', in GESI)
HR	human rights
ILO	International Labour Organization
MEL	Monitoring, evaluation and learning
MSC	Marine Stewardship Council certification for sustainable fisheries
NGO	non-government organisation
PAFCO	tuna processing company based in Fiji
PNA	Parties to the Nauru Agreement
PNG FIA	Papua New Guinea Fishing Industry Association
WCPFC	Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission



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Pacific handbook for human rights, gender equity and social inclusion in tuna industries



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MODULE 9

Fiji Case Study



Pacific handbook for

human rights, gender equity and social inclusion

in tuna industries

Module 9: Fiji Case Study

Kate Barclay and Aliti Vunisea



Noumea, New Caledonia, 2023

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Key points

- Fiji's long-running commercial fishing industry has provided business and employment for over five decades. However, there are serious HR and labour conditions issues on some fishing vessels.
- Likewise, PAFCO and other companies have provided tuna processing opportunities to generations of people. Current 'gender lens' human resources work on absenteeism could develop ideas on how to improve GESI in processing work.
- A multi-stakeholder forum to enable various relevant government agencies, international organisations, industry and NGOs to collaborate seems a necessary foundation for addressing HR and GESI issues in Fiji's tuna industries.

What is the current situation regarding HR and GESI in Fiji's tuna industries? What level of social analysis and monitoring occurs to identify issues and track progress towards improvement? This section looks at labour conditions including gender equity in Fiji's tuna industries, and considers what can be done to improve HR and GESI and by whom.

Early writings on tuna industries in Fiji highlighted that most initiatives concentrated on supporting men's activities in development and management of fisheries in the region.¹ Early studies on PAFCO highlighted the poor working conditions and low salaries of women as major concerns.² Similar sentiments were raised later by Vina Ram Bidesi, who stated that, despite policies aimed at creating employment, women's labour continued to be marginalised in tuna industries.³ In spite of some progress towards employing women in offshore fisheries, the conditions on longline fishing vessels and the length of fishing trips, which may be from a couple of weeks up to three months, usually deter women from joining as crew members or as observers in fishing vessels. Patricia Tuara Demmke highlighted the impacts, costs, benefits, and constraints of women's participation in the tuna industry.⁴ However, the recommendations from these studies have yet to be implemented.

Issues relating to gender equality in Fiji are the responsibility of the Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation. The work of the Ministry is guided by the Fiji National Gender Policy (2014). Despite the general assumption that the Ministry of Women is solely responsible, mainstreaming policy means that gender equality is the responsibility of all ministries. Gender equality is cross-cutting⁵ and is a human right. The Ministry of Women is not adequately resourced and lacks the sector-specific knowledge to be able to cover gender equality in all sectors. Gender equality in fisheries, therefore, is also the responsibility of the Ministry of Fisheries.

Fiji has ratified several human rights- and gender rights-related international instruments (see Annex 1 in Module 1). Legal frameworks are described below.

- Human rights conventions that Fiji is party to include:⁶
 - Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination (since 1973)
 - Convention on the Rights of the Child (since 1993)
 - Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) (since 1995)
 - Convention Against Torture (since 2016)
 - International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (since 2018)
 - International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (since 2018)
 - International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (since 2019)
- The National Gender Policy for Fiji (2014) calls for gender inclusion in all areas of employment.
- The Ministry of Employment, Productivity and Industrial Relations (MEPIR) controls the Employment Relations Act 2007 (which is the national code of minimum employment standards) and the various regulations and orders made under it.

1 Vunisea A., 2016. The participation of women in fishing activities in Fiji. SPC Women in Fisheries Information Bulletin, 27, 19–28.

2 Emberson-Bain A. (ed.). 1994. Sustainable development or malignant growth? Perspectives of Pacific Island Women. Suva, Fiji: Marama Publications.

3 Bidesi V. 2008. Recognizing women in fisheries: Policy and considerations for developing countries. Yemaya, ICSF's Newsletter on Gender and Fisheries 28:12–13.

4 Demmke P. 2006. Development of tuna fisheries in the Pacific ACP countries (DEVFISH) Project. Gender issues in the Pacific Islands Tuna Industry. Forum Fisheries Agency, Honiara. Noumea: Secretariat of the Pacific Community.

5 Cross-cutting issues are relevant to all aspects of development and need to be considered and integrated into all stages of development initiatives, including project/programme cycles from planning to closing phase. Gender Equality is a development goal in its own right, and is widely recognised as a cross-cutting topic to achieve all 17 Sustainable Development Goals: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>.

6 Graham A. and D'Andrea A. (2021). Gender and human rights in coastal fisheries and aquaculture: A comparative analysis of legislation in Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu. Noumea, New Caledonia: Pacific Community (SPC).

- Fiji ratified the Maritime Labour Convention (2006) in 2014, and the draft law encompassing its provisions has been going through the process of national consultation with stakeholders since 2017.
- The Fiji Fishing Industry Association (FFIA) has requested that the Fiji MEPIR ratify the International Labour Organization's Work in Fishing Convention – C188.

There are various mechanisms by which the Fijian Government can enforce legal protections for workers at sea. The Offshore Fisheries Management Act (2012) Decree (Section 49) authorises fisheries officers to travel with the Navy to investigate suspected illegal fishing incidents, and they are empowered to inspect, detail, seize product, question people and arrest without warrant if they have reasonable grounds.

Social analysis and monitoring of HR and GESI

Statistical data needed for human rights and GESI analysis in Fiji are 'sparse, sometimes of poor quality, and often out of date'.⁷ The WWF report on *Gender Mainstreaming in Fiji's Offshore Tuna Industry*⁸ and stakeholders consulted for this handbook note the lack of data available to understand the social dimensions of tuna industries. There have been studies over the years that provide snapshots,⁹ but some of these are now quite old. A monitoring programme could establish baselines, and with ongoing data collection issues could be tracked over time to see whether the issues are improving.

For example, one of the industry associations said that in order to be able to properly consider mandating improved labour and living conditions of crew on longline vessels, or enabling equal participation of women in offshore fishing, a cost–benefit analysis would be useful. Another form of analysis that would be really useful for understanding the social dimensions of Fiji's tuna industries would be to evaluate the costs and benefits to families and communities involved with offshore fishing.¹⁰

The current situation, with a lack of data about HR and GESI makes it difficult to raise human rights abuse issues. The lack of data acts to protect companies, and leaves employees without their human rights fully protected.

HR and GESI at sea

Human rights and labour rights in offshore fishing

Fiji's tuna fishing is mainly longlining. Not all tuna fisheries operating in Fijian waters are the same – there are Fiji-flagged vessels and foreign-flagged vessels operating in Fiji's exclusive economic zone (EEZ). There are also foreign-flagged vessels operating outside national waters carrying Fijian crew or observers. As with tuna fisheries elsewhere, there are human rights and labour rights problems on tuna vessels in Fijian waters. Stakeholders pointed out that while longlining in general has very long working hours, and living conditions are usually not as comfortable as those on purse seine vessels, some companies do provide working conditions crew are happy with, such as Fijian food. Industry stakeholders assert that the worst problems occur on the foreign-flagged vessels, rather than on the domestic fleet.

For example, Fiji is on the US Government Tier 2 Watch List because it does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of human trafficking.¹¹ As a result of being Tier 2 the Fijian Government is under pressure to make policies in line with international laws and have high compliance. In order to protect their industry the FFIA approached the Ministry of Employment in 2019 to ratify the International Labour Organization (ILO) Work In Fishing Convention 188 (C188). If Fiji ratifies and enforces laws like C188 this is a way for the industry to explain to international buyers that their crews' rights are being protected. The Ministries of Labour, Immigration, Maritime Safety, Transport and Fisheries are in discussion to progress C188. Since it will take a long time for the government to ratify and implement C188, FFIA has asked the Ministry of Fisheries to put in place a crewing policy, but as of 2022 the crewing policy was not in place. Another way the Fijian Government is seeking to strengthen legal protections for fishing crew is by being part of the regional approach through the FFA Harmonised Minimum Terms and Conditions (HMTTC) (2019), with requirements about observer and crew recruitment and onboard conditions. Fiji also has a National Action Plan (NAP) framework for collaborating and managing data to address forced labour, human

7 Unisea A. (2016). The participation of women in fishing activities in Fiji. SPC Women in Fisheries Information Bulletin, 27, 19–28, p.9

8 Unisea A. (2021). Gender Mainstreaming in Fiji's Offshore Tuna Industry. Suva, Fiji. Retrieved from <https://www.fasia.awsassets.panda.org/downloads/gender-mainstreaming-in-fiji-s-offshore-tuna-industry-report.pdf>.

9 Emberson-Bain A. (1994). Sustainable development or malignant growth? Perspectives of Pacific Island women. Suva, Fiji: Marama Publications; Tuara Demmke, P. (2006). Gender issues in the Pacific Islands Tuna Industry (DEVFISH Project). Honiara, Solomon Islands: Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC). Retrieved from [https://www.ffa.int/system/files/Gender issues in P. I. Tuna Industries 1_0.pdf](https://www.ffa.int/system/files/Gender%20issues%20in%20P.I.%20Tuna%20Industries%201%20.pdf); Sullivan, Nancy, Ram-Bidesi, V., Diffey, S., & Gillett, R. (2008). Gender Issues in Tuna Fisheries: Case Studies in Papua New Guinea, Fiji and Kiribati. Honiara, Solomon Islands: Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Pacific Community (SPC); Barclay K. and Cartwright I. (2008). Capturing wealth from tuna: case studies from the Pacific. Capturing the Wealth From Tuna: case studies from the Pacific. https://doi.org/10.26530/oapen_458838

10 Unisea A. (2021). Gender Mainstreaming in Fiji's Offshore Tuna Industry. Suva, Fiji. Retrieved from <https://www.fasia.awsassets.panda.org/downloads/gender-mainstreaming-in-fiji-s-offshore-tuna-industry-report.pdf>.

11 Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons. (n.d.). 2020 Trafficking in Persons Report: Fiji. Washington D.C. Retrieved from state.gov/reports/2020-trafficking-in-persons-report/fiji



Traceability verification at PAFCO, Levuka, Fiji. © WWF-Pacific / Adriu lene

trafficking and modern slavery.¹² In 2013 the Fijian Government committed to a society free from child labour through reforming labour legislation in the Constitution.

In 2021 the US Customs and Border Protection put a ‘withhold release order’ on a Fijian tuna longline fishing vessel, due to claims that forced labour may have been used on the vessel.¹³ The vessel is suspected of having an employment environment where crew are subject to withholding of wages, debt bondage and retention of identity documents – all of which are indicators of forced labour/human trafficking/modern slavery (see Module 1 for definitions, and Module 3 for discussion on HR on tuna fishing vessels across the Pacific). Representatives from the fishing company associated with the vessel said the claims had not yet been properly investigated and that the vessel involved did not actually use forced labour.¹⁴ The problem remains, however, that many tuna fishing companies come under suspicion of slavery because common practices in the offshore fishing industry can be indicators for slavery, including:

- unclear processes for employees to report grievances
- very long working hours and short rest periods
- not having effective union representation
- the practice of captains holding crew passports
- labour contracting processes that are not transparent or accountable.

¹² Developing a Joint Roadmap for Fiji as a Pathfinder Country to Achieve SDG Target 8.7 (Fiji, August 22-23, 2019). Retrieved from: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/-/asia/-/ro-bangkok/-/ilo-suva/documents/publication/wcms_726134.pdf.

¹³ White, C. (2021b, September 22). US action shines spotlight on labor issues in Fijian fishing fleet. Seafood Source, pp. 1–4. Retrieved from <https://www.seafoodsource.com/news/environment-sustainability/us-action-shines-spotlight-on-labor-issues-in-fijian-fishing-fleet>

¹⁴ White, C. (2021b, September 22). US action shines spotlight on labor issues in Fijian fishing fleet. Seafood Source, pp. 1–4. Retrieved from <https://www.seafoodsource.com/news/environment-sustainability/us-action-shines-spotlight-on-labor-issues-in-fijian-fishing-fleet>

Many of the existing practices in the fleet have emerged incidentally from the historical development of the industry, or are the result of the industry being global. That is, vessels are often owned by businesses in other countries, crew are often made up of people from several countries and they may be recruited by companies based in other countries. The Fijian Government is responsible for fishing conducted in Fijian waters, but when companies involved are based overseas it becomes more difficult. The common practices that can be indicators for slavery or enable labour abuses must be changed if the offshore fishing industry is to 'clean up its act' and actively prevent human and labour rights abuses.

A key point to remember is that for many crew members the fishing life is better than the alternative for them. For crew who have not finished school or have few or no employment opportunities at home, fishing is an opportunity. Many crew members are improving their lives and those of their families through fishing work. Some people love working at sea. So there is a broader social development issue here, for societies and governments to work towards everyone having access to education and to decent work, so that they do not feel forced to accept poor conditions in fishing work.

Given that stakeholders agree that human rights and labour abuses occur more frequently on distant water vessels, it is important to point out that all flag states should take responsibility for conditions on the vessels flagged to them. Distant water fishing states, which include some large and wealthy countries such as the USA, European countries, Taiwan, Japan and China, are not all adequately meeting their flag state responsibilities regarding labour conditions.

Working conditions and contracts for fishing crew

When Fijian fishing companies recruit Indonesian fishers from Indonesian recruiting agents, the fishing company pays a fee to the agent, return airfares for the crew members and provides the transit and immigration paperwork, including work permits. Indonesian crew are usually on two-year contracts. According to stakeholders who work with fishing crews, when Indonesian crew are not at sea they live in houses in Suva with other overseas seafarers, or stay on vessels in Suva Harbour.

According to the FFIA, government regulation of labour is quite strict. They say every fishing voyage requires approved clearance of the Crew Manifest from the MSAF. Clearance is given by an MSAF Marine Checker who is physically on the wharf at time of sailing. Some interviewees for this handbook, however, say that MSAF does not check all voyages. FFIA say MEPIR staff visit companies to verify that wages and salaries are paid as they should be. Child labour is prevented by all recruits having to show their birth certificate, FNPF (Fiji National Provident Fund) account and other identity documents.

For Fiji-based fishing companies, Sections 37 and 38 of the Fiji Employment Relations Act (2007) requires all employment contracts of longer than one month's duration, including Fijians working overseas and foreigners working in Fiji, to be in writing and to contain the minimum particulars set out in Schedule 2 of the Act. All written contracts are to be in the English language and it is the responsibility of all employers to have all work terms and conditions on the contracts clearly explained to the employees prior to them signing.

According to the FFIA, most Fijian tuna fishing crew are engaged on short term (monthly) verbal contracts, or very short written contracts without details about conditions. Some are 'contracts *of* service' (normal employment contracts), others are 'contracts *for* service', which means the crew is engaged as a self-employed 'share fisher'. Rather than being on a wage or salary, payment is a specified portion of the profits or gross earnings of the vessel that they work on. One company interviewed for this handbook says their 'share fisher' remuneration is made up of an allowance for each trip and a percentage of the catch value.

Most of the foreigners working in the Fiji tuna industry are Indonesian crew, with a smaller proportion of other Asian nationalities and Filipino crew. Foreign crew members have a longer tenure under written contracts consistent with the duration of their work permit, but the industry avoids having those foreign crew under employment contracts, preferring them to work as share fishers.

Fijian crew are usually paid a daily wage, perhaps with a bonus related to the value of the catch, although interviewees indicate that bonuses have not been paid for several years. One of the interviewees for this handbook remembers a fishing crew member showing them his payslip, which showed payment for an 8-hour work day, but the crew said he always worked around 16 hours a day, and was never paid overtime.

Case study – Auntie concerned about her nephew's fishing crew contract



A young Fijian man was working on fishing vessels owned and run by Korean and Taiwanese companies. One of his aunties was concerned to make sure he was well covered and offered to look at his contract for him, but he was not provided with a contract before he boarded the vessel. She was concerned because of some of the bad cases reported in the media, so kept asking him for a copy of his contract even after he went on board. He said he signed a contract that was kept in the office of the company, but that he wasn't given a copy. His aunt is concerned about what happens if something goes wrong, because his family have virtually no details of his employment or who to contact. She says he is not concerned. He is young and is willing to go ahead without checking his contract before getting on board or making sure copies are with his family. Most crew and their family think that this is normal and do not realise it is a problem. But this young man's aunt has some questions. Is the company paying money to the Provident Fund as it should be, and paying legal wage rates? Is there enough rest allowed, and overtime paid?

According to stakeholders working with fishing crews, even the few Fijian crew who do work under full written contracts are not usually given a copy of the contract, especially before they board the vessel. Fishing companies say that they cannot issue full contracts ahead of time because crew who have agreed to work on a vessel simply do not turn up in time for the vessel leaving, so the vessels are forced to take on last minute hires, meaning a proper contract process in line with the Employment Relations Act is not possible. Interviewees who work with crew say the reason crew may fail to turn up is due to poor wages and conditions and better opportunities elsewhere. Moreover, they say that even if crews do turn up on time they are rarely offered a copy of the contract, usually the company records the crew's names and collects their signatures but does not give them a copy of the contract. These interviewees say crew are not usually informed about the wage rate before leaving.

According to the fishing companies, rest periods are rotated among the crew so they are doing the heavy physical work of fishing for about six hours before they rest. In a 48-hr period, therefore, there are different shifts for work, relaxation and rest. According to interviewees who work with crew, however, the practice of rotating to enable enough rest is rare. The normal pattern of work is to set the line from around 5 a.m. to 11 a.m., then rest for 3–4 hours. Then work starts again to pull the line in, and wash, gut and store the catch. Work for a light catch might finish at midnight, for a heavy catch at 4 a.m. This indicates that the normal working day for crews is 16–19 hours. There are few or no days off till the end of a voyage.

With exhaustion, the risk of injury or falling overboard increases. Crew are issued with emergency position indicating radio beacon (EPIRB) personal locator devices that are activated in water, as falling overboard is always a risk during fishing activity. Companies pay for the EPIRB but not everyone who falls overboard is wearing a device.¹⁵

In addition to the statutory prohibition on forced labour, Part 6 section 47 of the Employment Relations Act (2007) restricts the amount and purposes of deductions that can be made from worker's pay. Under the section, deductions can only be made for loans where the money has been paid by the employer to the worker and there is a signed memorandum recording the terms of repayment. According to interviewees who work with crew, the crew are never asked to sign such documents. The Employment Relations Act stipulates that personal protective equipment (PPE) such as raincoats and boots should be provided by the employer at no cost, but fishing companies routinely charge workers for these (around FJD 80–90 each). Moreover, interviewees said that the raincoats and boots provided by companies are often too small for Fijian crew and are of poor quality so they tear easily. Deductions may only be made for articles and provisions purchased on credit if sold at the same price as would apply to the public, but it is not easy for crew to check these prices.

Particular problems for foreign fishing crews

Some of the most serious human rights and labour abuses occur against Indonesian crew members, who make up a large proportion of the offshore tuna fishing workforce in the Pacific. Interviewees related stories of when Indonesian crew members being abused on vessels 'jump ship' in port, run to the police station and ask for help. Crew passports are kept by the captain, so a fleeing crew member cannot collect their passport before they jump ship. If the crew member has no documentation the police may be unwilling to help, and apparently police even sometimes return fleeing crew members to the ship they fled from, without further investigation. Clearly, if a crew member has fled in fear of violence or death, returning that crew member to the vessel is an unacceptable response. For migrant workers who cannot speak the local language, and do not have their passport, trying to leave an abusive situation must be incredibly stressful. They are in a highly vulnerable situation.

¹⁵ 1 News. (2021, May 22). Fishermen handed over to police after alleged beheading on boat near Fiji. TVNZ. Retrieved from <https://www.tvnz.co.nz/one-news/world/fishermen-handed-over-police-after-alleged-beheading-boat-near-fiji>

This is where the cross-jurisdictional complexity of industrial tuna fishing raises problems – addressing the problem of a fleeing non-Fijian crew member comes under the purview of Labour, Police, Immigration, Foreign Affairs and Fisheries. This could be solved through action by a multi-stakeholder forum – to clarify what the process should be for handling fleeing crew members, and then make that process understood by all staff who might come into contact with fleeing crew. The process should, at the minimum, involve checking the complainant's work contract and interviewing them privately. The captain or a representative of the fishing company should not be present for the interview. The interview process should be informed by organisations with expertise so that it effectively gets to the truth of a situation. In the current situation, claims by crew may be countered by claims by companies, and it is difficult to distinguish between a difference of opinion and forced labour.

Even though most crew do not suffer human rights abuses, the way overseas crew members are recruited is part of the problem that enables labour and human rights abuses in the fishing industries. The agencies that recruit Indonesian or Filipino crew are based in those countries and so are not bound by Fijian law (see Module 3 for further details about issues with labour recruiting agencies). Fishing companies correspond with recruiting agencies in third countries by email and phone about their crew requirements. The agent sends curriculum vitae of recommended crew to the fishing company human resources staff. The fishing company then tells the recruiter which applicants they want to hire and all required documentation for that crew member is then sent by the recruiting agents to the fishing company and submitted to the Fiji Immigration Department for a work permit application. When the work permit is issued the fishing company advises the recruiting agent. The air tickets are paid for by the fishing company for the crew to travel to Fiji to start work once this notification on work permit is provided.¹⁶

According to the FFIA, existing crew can recommend friends, but they still need to go through a recruiting agent. The length of contract depends on the rank of the job, usually 12–18 months with the possibility of extension based on mutual agreement and a request from the crew member. Some contracts have been renewed multiple times with the foreign nationals employed at companies for more than 15 years. Long-serving officers and crew are seen as 'loyal members of the company family'. There are also shorter-term hires who work for only one or two trips.

¹⁶ Fiji Fishing Industry Association (FFIA) MSC Group. (2019). Fiji Albacore and Yellowfin Tuna Longline Fishery Certificate Holder Forced and Child Labour Policies, Practices and Measures. Suva, Fiji: Marine Stewardship Council fisheries assessments. Retrieved from <https://cert.msc.org/FileLoader/FileLinkDownload.aspx/GetFile?encryptedKey=XtFGewlBfn6btmI8Zuh7Nos2gslk4u3L4ZW8mZ7LIJlU0rU4hVteddlH+hkVBu0F>

Fishing crew (L-R) Livini Buca, Sereana Cakacaka, Vaseva Dale and Joana Kasani offloading a Yellowfin at Fiji Fish Ltd. © WWF-Pacific



Some agencies look after crew well, but some exploit crew badly. The problems of withholding wages and identity documents claimed in the ‘withhold release order’ from the US Government against a Fijian longliner mentioned earlier occurred with the recruiting agent rather than the fishing company. The recruiter was accused of retaining identity documents and withholding remuneration in a way that looks like debt bondage.¹⁷ ‘Debt bondage’ means the recruiting company seemed to be withholding crew wages to cover recruitment costs. According to the FFIA all costs associated with recruiting should be covered by the employers, including recruitment fees, travel costs, medical exams, police clearance, visa applications, and so on.¹⁸

In 2021 there were media articles of several Filipino seafarers (merchant marine, not fishing crew) who were given a bad contract by their recruiter. They were not paid at the rate they had agreed to, and when they sought union help they were fired. The shipping company tried to take their passports away, and failed to repatriate them so they were stuck in Fiji, unemployed and unable to return home for months.¹⁹ Although this case is not a fishing case, overseas fishing crew are vulnerable to the same risks.

In Fijian tuna fisheries, as in tuna fisheries around the region, there is a mismatch between the usual practice of captains retaining identity documents for the duration of voyages, and the human rights protection requirement that crew should have direct access to their own identity documents. If an employer unreasonably withholds identity documents a complaint could be made to MEPIR, MSAF, the Department of Immigration or the Fiji Police.²⁰ This does not apparently prevent access problems, however, because there have been a couple of cases of Indonesian crew fleeing their vessels while in port with no identity documents. It seems logical that if a crew member feels unsafe enough to want to flee their vessel, they are unlikely to feel comfortable to ask the captain for their identity documents.

Sometimes the system of the work permit, the work contract, and the required bond for repatriation (paid by the employer) breaks down, and overseas seafarers are left stranded in Fiji. Sections 40 and 41 of the Employment Relations Act (2007) require an employer to repatriate the body if a worker dies, and to provide a worker with a right of repatriation if a contract cannot be fulfilled by the employer or, if owing to sickness or accident, the contract cannot be fulfilled by the worker. It is a condition of all work permits that the employer deposit a bond with the Department of Immigration to cover the return airfare of the foreign worker for whom the permit has been granted. If the employer does not pay the worker’s repatriation costs, the Department can draw on the bond to repatriate the worker. According to FFIA, the bond can be deposited as an amount per crew member or up to a certain amount per company, because the repatriation funds are usually used sporadically rather than all foreign nationals having to be flown home in one go (although with COVID-19 whole crews were repatriated at the same time).

The main problem is with foreign flagged vessels based in Fiji, or those visiting for trans-shipping or servicing – they are not required to pay such a bond. The merchant marine employer mentioned above who left Filipino employees stranded in Fiji had not placed a bond and didn’t pay the return air fares for most of the men. No penalty was applied for this failure, and the company was not charged with human trafficking. Most of the cases of stranded crew are from merchant vessels rather than fishing vessels, but sometimes tuna fishing crew are involved. Interviewees who have worked in a voluntary capacity to support stranded overseas seafarers have related stories of Indonesian crew hired to work in Fiji where the recruiting agents ‘disappear’ and so cannot be forced to fulfil their obligations to repatriate crew. When complaints are made to MEPIR, the Indonesian or Filipino workers are considered non-residents, which, according to the interviewees, means MEPIR staff see it as outside their responsibility. There are also concerns about stranded seafarers being deported once their work permits have expired, and whether the seafarers themselves will be held responsible for the cost – which they cannot pay.

Most foreign crew had to be repatriated in response to the COVID-19 pandemic travel restrictions. The Fiji tuna longline industry suffered greatly during the pandemic, mostly due to freight route disappearance and lost markets. The pandemic situation meant Fijian companies with foreign officers and crew had to repatriate them all at the same time, even long-serving staff who had worked in Fiji for ten or more years. As industries recover, the problems of stranded foreign crew may rise again.

Some Fijian tuna fishing companies say they would prefer to hire local crew and avoid the kinds of problems described here to do with foreign crew, but say they are unable to find enough local people with experience and qualifications for higher ranking crew positions, and not enough people willing to do the lower-level crew roles. These companies say they have no choice but to recruit overseas crew as well as Fijians. This story is common among tuna fishing companies across the Pacific. However, it is disproven by National Fisheries Development (NFD) in Solomon Islands, which has

17 White C. (2021b, September 22). US action shines spotlight on labor issues in Fijian fishing fleet. Seafood Source, pp. 1–4. Retrieved from <https://www.seafoodsource.com/news/environment-sustainability/us-action-shines-spotlight-on-labor-issues-in-fijian-fishing-fleet>

18 Fiji Fishing Industry Association (FFIA) MSC Group. (2019). Fiji Albacore and Yellowfin Tuna Longline Fishery Certificate Holder Forced and Child Labour Policies, Practices and Measures. Suva, Fiji: Marine Stewardship Council fisheries assessments. Retrieved from <https://cert.msc.org/FileLoader/FileLinkDownload.aspx/GetFile?encryptedKey=XtFGewlBfn6btm18Zuh7Nos2gslk4u3L4ZW8mZ7LJlU0rU4hVteddlH+hkVBu0F>

19 Torib Y. (2021, June 30). Stranded Filipino seafarer shares ordeal in Fiji. The Manila Times. Retrieved from <https://www.manilatimes.net/2021/06/30/business/maritime/stranded-filipino-seafarer-shares-ordeal-in-fiji/1805141>; Islands Business. (2021, March 3). Filipino seafarers’ fate to be discussed today. Islands Business. Retrieved from <https://islandsbusiness.com/news-break/filipino-seafarers-fate-to-be-discussed-today/>

20 Fiji Fishing Industry Association (FFIA) MSC Group. (2019). Fiji Albacore and Yellowfin Tuna Longline Fishery Certificate Holder Forced and Child Labour Policies, Practices and Measures. Suva, Fiji: Marine Stewardship Council fisheries assessments. Retrieved from <https://cert.msc.org/FileLoader/FileLinkDownload.aspx/GetFile?encryptedKey=XtFGewlBfn6btm18Zuh7Nos2gslk4u3L4ZW8mZ7LJlU0rU4hVteddlH+hkVBu0F>



Loading of tuna into a freezer truck at Mua-i-Walu Port in Suva, Fiji. © WWF-Pacific / Jason Chute

Fiji Maritime Academy's Offshore Fishing Skipper Programme. © WWF-Pacific / Ravai Vafo'ou



trained up numerous local crew to high ranking positions and has had almost fully localised crews since the 1990s. It seems clear that when the pay is reasonable, food is good, accommodation comfortable and training is offered, Pacific Islanders can crew fishing vessels profitably. Possibly it is harder to turn a profit in the tuna longline industry than in purse seining (NFD uses purse seining with some pole-and-line). However, purse seine companies in PNG have long insisted that they need foreign crew from overseas recruiting agencies, so purse seine companies also use the same excuses for continuing to recruit mostly expatriate crew.²¹

When foreign nationals with qualifications from another country are recruited into Fiji, MSAF must provide a certificate of recognition of their seafaring qualifications before they are permitted to work on board vessels. MSAF requires a Memorandum of Understanding with foreign nationals' seafaring qualification organisations so that the qualifications can be recognised before they can work, as per the International Maritime Organization (IMO) Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping (STCW) for the general maritime industry (merchant shipping and ferries). There is no such MoU with Indonesia or the Philippines, the main countries of interest for tuna fishing. This is now being enforced, and is quite onerous for the industry, so they are seeking advice from MSAF.

Grievance process

Not having a clear grievance process, which is understood and accessible by employees, is a risk factor for labour rights abuse. The tuna fishing industry must make sure all crew know how to make complaints, have the process accessible to them, and have problems dealt with effectively. A multi-stakeholder forum would enable this within the complex cross-jurisdictional, multi-lingual environment of the offshore fishing industry.

In principle, if crew members are being abused they can report grievances to MEPIR, although MEPIR staff usually ask to see contracts in pursuing cases, and, as we have seen, crew usually do not have contracts. MEPIR also has no jurisdiction over 'share fishers' who are on independent contracts, although, according to FFIA, in practice MEPIR accepts complaints from share fishers and seeks to resolve them.²² According to FFIA, if a complaint is made, labour inspectors will visit the company to verify the grievances and check all the labour-related company books. They may prosecute offenders in the courts. According to members of seafarer support NGO Human Dignity Group, labour inspectors rarely interview crew members, so it appears that evidence about complaints is mostly gathered from company human resources departments and company managers. When Human Dignity Group members have asked crew to report their grievances to MEPIR, crew have replied "it's no use, they [MEPIR] don't do anything". Possibly crew worry if they report their company they will not be hired again, and some fishing crew are not easily able to find other work – they need their fishing work. The nearest MEPIR office is some kilometres away from the wharf where most tuna longline fishing vessels dock, so it costs bus fare to make the trip, and crew are not guaranteed to be able to talk to a labour inspector at the time they visit. Crew who seek support from the Human Dignity Group say labour inspectors do not make unannounced visits to company offices or check records of fishing vessels. MEPIR has very few staff to cover the whole Suva area, so the lack of coverage of labour issues in fishing may reflect lack of resources and capacity.

MSAF controls the Maritime Transport Decree (MTD) of 2013 and regulations made under it (MTD 2013). The MTD deals more specifically with seafarers. Complaints in the seafaring context are investigated by MSAF, which may prosecute offenders in the courts. Around three to four grievances are sent to MSAF each year, on issues such as seawater entering the sleeping area, or blocked freshwater tanks (after the voyage). But MSAF can only address issues on Fiji-flagged vessels, not on the non-Fiji vessels on which Fijian nationals are crew.

Crew can also seek help from Fijian Ports officials, or the police. Indonesian crew can go to the Indonesian Embassy and Filipino workers can appeal to the Filipino Overseas Employment Agency. Both of these organisations, however, are based in Suva, some distance from the port the longline vessels use. Moreover, the Indonesian Embassy has been known to take fleeing crew back to the vessel they have escaped from, which puts them back in harm's way. The MEPIR office is more than a kilometre away from the port. Crew would have no easy way of finding out how to get there, they do not have money to travel by bus, they may not be able to schedule an appointment. Crew tend to have low levels of schooling and some are very shy, and foreign crew may also not have good enough English language to negotiate a Fijian bureaucracy.²³

Crew may also seek help from the police, and when physical violence is involved the police may be the right agency. However, as fishing company interviewees pointed out, the police seem not to have an appropriate protocol for dealing with cases of alleged abuse from fishing vessels. That is, police have returned crew to the vessels from which they have fled. Crew do not know where to go for help, so in many cases they do not lodge a grievance case.

21 Barclay K. (2012). Social Impacts. In Blomeyer & Sanz (Ed.), Application of the system of derogation to the rules of origin of fisheries products in Papua New Guinea and Fiji (pp. 155–188). Brussels: Requested by the European Parliament's Committee on Fisheries. Retrieved from <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/e5267b1e-c511-4f94-8863-b6d83b2769c3/language-en>

22 Fiji Fishing Industry Association (FFIA) MSC Group. (2019). Fiji Albacore and Yellowfin Tuna Longline Fishery Certificate Holder Forced and Child Labour Policies, Practices and Measures. Suva, Fiji: Marine Stewardship Council fisheries assessments. Retrieved from <https://cert.msc.org/FileLoader/FileLinkDownload.aspx/GetFile?encryptedKey=XtFGewlBfn6btm18Zuh7Nos2gslk4u3l4ZW8mZ7lJlul0rU4hVteddIH+hkVBu0E>

23 White C. (2021b, September 22). US action shines spotlight on labor issues in Fijian fishing fleet. Seafood Source, pp. 1–4. Retrieved from <https://www.seafoodsource.com/news/environment-sustainability/us-action-shines-spotlight-on-labor-issues-in-fijian-fishing-fleet>



Female graduates with Fiji Maritime Academy's CEO Mahesa Abeynayake and WWF Pacific's Duncan Williams and Adriu Iene. The ladies graduated from FMA's Deck Hand Fishing Programme. © WWF-Pacific / Ravai Vafo'ou

Worker representation

Many issues to do with decent work and protection of workers at sea, in processing plants, and in government work, can be progressed through labour organisations such as unions. Workers such as fishing crew who don't fully understand what their conditions of work should be are vulnerable and need a collective organisation, such as a union, to support them. Fijian and foreign crew have the legal right to union membership, but some issues have weakened the union movement in Fiji. In 2011 a complaint about union leaders being harassed and imprisoned was raised to the ILO, which sent a committee to Fiji to investigate. The outcome reached in 2015 was that national problems should be sorted out in a national tripartite (government, employers and unions) body – the Employment Relations Tribunal; this, however, had not been convened as of 2021.

The tribunal would be a good forum for collaboration to protect labour rights for tuna industries because it is whole-of-government. The Ministry of Women is involved, as is the Ministry of Economy. The Ministry of Fisheries could be brought in when necessary. The tribunal can co-opt subcommittees, which might be a more practical, quicker process than the full tribunal, for collaborating specifically on offshore fishing and seafaring activities.

One of the problems for union effectiveness in Fiji in recent years is that the government disallowed pre-salary deduction of union fees for a period. Eventually this rule was dropped, and unions could again deduct fees direct before salaries were paid, but while the rule was in place unions lost many members, and membership rates have not yet recovered. When union membership drops, unions have less income and therefore reduced capacity. Another problem was that the government created a list of 'essential services' job types, where employees are not allowed to strike. This list has gradually been expanded and it is an obstacle to union effectiveness – unions have much less bargaining power if the workers involved cannot strike. Unions are upset with government that the agreement from Geneva regarding establishing the Employment Relations Tribunal is not being honoured, so this is a breach of trust and an administrative blockage for the unions' ability to support workers.

There are some positive things the Ministry of Labour has achieved, which could be built on for the tuna fishing industry. The ministry set up a 24/7 helpline for reporting abuse at work or answering questions about labour relations – possibly this helpline number could be publicised around port areas, in relevant languages. MEPIR has a mediation system and a system for lodging a complaint and having it addressed. Could the mediation system be

used more effectively for grievances for the fishing industry? It would help if MEPIR had some kind of presence at the port used by longliners, an easy way for fishing crew to contact them from the port.

It is even more difficult for foreign workers to have effective union representation while they are in Fiji. There are international seafarer union peak bodies such as the International Transport Workers' Federation. According to stakeholders, in the past there was a seafarers' union with a presence at the wharf which included international seafarers, but not anymore.

According to interviewees, in the past the union representing fishers in Fiji was strong in protecting their rights, but has weakened over time. It is easy for unions to be deregistered if they do not have enough members, or do not complete their bureaucratic obligations, such as having an auditor report done. Once a union is deregistered it is hard to revive; they need to have members paying subscriptions in order to afford staff to undertake union activities.

Private regulation

Fiji's tuna longline fishery is MSC certified, and many of the longline fishing vessels operating in Fiji are covered by that certification. MSC does not certify labour practices, but due to the documented human and labour rights problems in offshore tuna fisheries they do have some forms that certified companies are required to fill out, including one on forced and child labour on fishing vessels.²⁴ At the same time international certifying bodies like Intertek and others also conduct inspections on some of the Units of Certification (companies) to ensure that they comply with standards for their certification requirements. The company that was subject to an import ban by the US is part of Fiji's MSC certified longline fishery²⁵ – so the MSC process for labour did not prevent that problem arising.

The FFIA in partnership with the Fiji Ministry of Fisheries is working with its development partners for the formulation of a code of practice based on international legal frameworks on decent work practices on fishing vessels, such as the FFA HMTTC and the Fiji crewing policy (still under development).

Health checks

Some human rights and labour abuse problems in the offshore fishing industry could potentially be prevented through mandated health-related checks. For example, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, vessels now require approval from the Ministry of Health before going to sea, with negative swab tests from all crew. Fiji's Maritime (STCW Convention) Regulations (2014) under the Maritime Transport Decree 2013 outlines the responsibilities of owners and masters regarding fitness for duty, fatigue, hours of rest, alcohol and drug abuse, manning requirements, training, minimum age, and so on. So far these apply only to merchant vessels, not fishing vessels, but it seems appropriate that similar responsibilities should be required for fishing vessels. Drug, alcohol, physical and mental health checks for the tuna fishing industry would be useful.

Drug abuse is a problem in international seafaring generally, in part because of the opportunities for smuggling, and in part because of the difficult living conditions away from the public gaze, especially on the high seas. Crew members say drug abuse happens in the tuna fishing industry but “no one speaks about it”.

Gender equity and offshore tuna fishing

Fiji's National Anti-Human Trafficking Strategies and Action Plan, launched in 2021, highlights forced labour and sexual exploitation linked to seafaring in general, including the tuna fishing industry. There are national maritime regulations and sexual harassment policies for workplaces that could be used to address these issues within Fiji's EEZ but they are not implemented or enforced effectively.²⁶

As for the Pacific region generally, in Fiji there are gendered negative social impacts from offshore fishing. This includes increased workload for women when men are at sea for long periods, and seafarer men missing out on family life. Men experience most of the labour or human rights abuses on vessels, with the few numbers of women working at sea as observers, quality control officers or crew possibly being even more exposed to such abuses. Both men and women suffer from the high rates of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) among fishing crew, and the high rates of alcohol and drug abuse that are associated with offshore fishing.²⁷

24 Fiji Fishing Industry Association (FFIA) MSC Group. (2019). Fiji Albacore and Yellowfin Tuna Longline Fishery Certificate Holder Forced and Child Labour Policies, Practices and Measures. Suva, Fiji: Marine Stewardship Council fisheries assessments. Retrieved from <https://cert.msc.org/FileLoader/FileLinkDownload.aspx/GetFile?encryptedKey=XtFGewlBfn6btm18Zuh7Nos2gslk4u3L4ZW8mZ7LlJl0rU4hVteddlH+hkVBu0F>

25 White, C. (2021b, September 22). US action shines spotlight on labor issues in Fijian fishing fleet. Seafood Source, pp. 1–4. Retrieved from <https://www.seafoodsource.com/news/environment-sustainability/us-action-shines-spotlight-on-labor-issues-in-fijian-fishing-fleet>

26–27 Vunisea, A. (2021). Gender Mainstreaming in Fiji's Offshore Tuna Industry. Suva, Fiji. Retrieved from <https://wwfasia.awsassets.panda.org/downloads/gender-mainstreaming-in-fiji-s-offshore-tuna-industry-report.pdf>

In 2020 the Fijian tuna longline tuna industry employed 1,429 men and 126 women in all its activities, including fishing, processing, cold storage, engineering workshop, and administration, finance and management. In the fishing part of operations 1,032 men and five women were employed.²⁸ Women who work for the tuna longline fishing companies based in Fiji almost all work in the onshore facilities, particularly in office work and processing facilities, including in management roles, with only a handful working on fishing vessels.²⁹ Women working as crew on Fijian fishing vessels have been supported by New Zealand Government-funded training of future women seafarers at the Fiji Maritime Academy (FMA). In Fiji, women have long been working in shipping as crew and officers with merchant marine vessels, tourist catamarans and fishing charters and the Navy, but they have not been a presence on tuna fishing vessels. The outcomes of the initiative to train more women in longline fishing had yet to be assessed as of 2022.

There is a labour shortage, so companies would prefer to be able to recruit women as well as men, according to the industry association Pacific Islands Tuna Industry Association (PITIA). Some companies have encouraged women to train and qualify as crew and officers. However, most companies have old vessels with cramped living conditions, and managers believe these vessels are not well suited to mixed gender crews.

Case study: women working in Solander Pacific



In Fiji tuna longline fishing company Solander Pacific, the General Manager and Human Resources manager are both women. Solander has had 10 women working on vessels over a period of some years, and has found no problems from an operational perspective. The wives of male crew sometimes complain about mixed gender crews. Solander vessels are more than 40 years old, so the bunks are not separated, and the toilet and shower facilities are not very private. Crew themselves worked out a way to use the facilities with privacy. New vessels will enable more privacy for mixed gender crews. One of the women who worked with Solander for some years has been taking further training to become Fiji's first woman captain and fishing master.

27–28 Vunisea, A. (2021). Gender Mainstreaming in Fiji's Offshore Tuna Industry. Suva, Fiji. Retrieved from <https://www.fasia.awsassets.panda.org/downloads/gender-mainstreaming-in-fiji-s-offshore-tuna-industry-report.pdf>

Workers processing the paperwork for tuna export at Golden Ocean Fish Limited's processing facility in Suva, Fiji. © WWF-Pacific / Jason Chute.



Some of the barriers to women working as fishing crew are cultural beliefs, social and religious norms and gender stereotypes. Some people judge women who work on fishing vessels as being ‘bad women’ and sometimes stigmatise women fishing crew publicly (see the case study in Module 7 on shaming women who go to sea).³⁰ Traditional perceptions of women’s roles are that women should perform domestic duties and caregiving around the home. Women’s conventional fishing roles are confined to gleaning, line fishing, netting and other methods of coastal fishing. Offshore fishing and work on vessels is seen as men’s domain. Women who go to sea may be portrayed as ‘living with men’ with open bunk areas, washing and toilet facilities. Some people – both women and men – frown upon women who go to sea. Some of the comments made in interviews for a study published in 2021 included:³¹

- What are these women doing going off on vessels for weeks or months leaving men or relatives to do their traditional chores at home?
- Why are we trying to engage women in this industry when they can be usefully engaged elsewhere?
- These women will just get themselves pregnant.
- There are cases of drunken brawls and mutiny against the captain on vessels – this is no environment for women.
- It is an added burden to fishing industries to address sexual harassment or put in place new reporting and enforcement mechanisms. Companies do not want to be responsible when women are badly abused, raped, and so on.

The important thing to remember here is that rape, sexual harassment, drunken brawls and other violence are already occurring on some fishing vessels. The presence of women on board has not created these problems, and these problems exist whether women are there or not. Pregnancies do not occur between men, but sexually transmitted infections do, so condoms and sexual health education should be part of crew life even if there are no women crew. Rather than shaming people who are going into a new area of work, the response could be to improve shipside working and living conditions and organisational culture for everyone. Women working on offshore fishing vessels do not have to be seen as ‘going against culture’. Pacific cultural traditions can promote HR and GESI (see Module 1 section on Pacific cultures and gender for more details of HR and GESI in Pacific cultural traditions).

HR and GESI in port areas

The social concerns around port areas exist in Fiji as they do in other ports in the Pacific (see Module 4). These include high rates of alcohol use and transactional sex, with negative consequences on health, rates of violence, including gender based violence, and STIs. Stakeholders involved in developing this handbook say that things have changed over time. Twenty or thirty years ago transactional sex happened on the boats while they were in port. But with increased security around ports since the early 2000s this is no longer possible. Sex activities moved away from the port areas to motels in town. This means the transactional sex has moved farther underground and the port-related activities are spread over a wider geographical area.

The fact that Nadi in Fiji is a regional air transportation hub means some of these problems occur also around Nadi. For example, I-Kiribati and Tuvaluan seafarers transit through Nadi to get home. Most of these are from merchant vessels, but some are tuna fishing crew. Transactional sex appears to be part of the recreation of transiting seafarers in Nadi. According to interviewees, the hotels where seafarers stopover facilitate transactional sex.

The services offered in and around port areas for seafarers are crucial to improving HR and GESI. The Anglican Church NGO Mission to Seafarers has had a presence at the Kings Wharf in Suva in the past. According to interviewees, it is currently not operating, although websites still list a range of services including: internet, telephones, billiards, table tennis, small shop selling snacks and communication equipment (USBs, SIMs, phone recharge cards) and a top-up service for phones with local SIMs, even while vessels are at sea.³² These kinds of services make a big difference to the well-being of seafarers, so it would be beneficial to offer them.

Mission to Seafarers also supports stranded foreign seafarers and works with the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF) and other organisations to repatriate them, and to raise public awareness about seafarer grievances when employers fail to respond satisfactorily.³³

30 Vunisea, A. (2021). Gender Mainstreaming in Fiji’s Offshore Tuna Industry. Suva, Fiji. Retrieved from <https://www.fasia.awsassets.panda.org/downloads/gender-mainstreaming-in-fiji-s-offshore-tuna-industry-report.pdf>

31 Vunisea, A. (2021). Gender Mainstreaming in Fiji’s Offshore Tuna Industry. Suva, Fiji. Retrieved from <https://www.fasia.awsassets.panda.org/downloads/gender-mainstreaming-in-fiji-s-offshore-tuna-industry-report.pdf>

32 <https://www.missiontoseafarers.org/suva/>; <https://www.wellnessatsea.org/seafarer-centres/the-mission-to-seafarers-suva/>

33 International Transport Workers’ Federation. (2021b, October 15). Filipino seafarers exploited by Fiji’s Goundar finally make it home. International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITF) Media Release. Retrieved from <https://www.itfseafarers.org/en/news/filipino-seafarers-exploited-fijis-goundar-finally-make-it-home>

Case Study – CSOs supporting seafarers – Mrs Viti Whippy

Viti Whippy has long been involved in supporting seafarers visiting Fiji. She has been an active member of the Anglican Church regional Pacific Mission to Seafarers for 30 years.

In 2005 Mrs Whippy was employed by the then Secretariat to the Pacific Community (SPC) in their HIV programme. At that time the Asian Development Bank (ADB) funded seafarer drop-in centres in Tuvalu, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. The centres were to provide a supportive environment for seafarers and their families, for information and assistance on HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. When the ADB opened a new centre in Fiji, Mrs Whippy managed it.

The Anglican Church House of Sarah has provided housing for seafarers and families, with assistance from Mrs Whippy, but she has now retired from actively working with seafarers. As of 2022 there was a Mission to Seafarers Centre situated at the Kings Wharf in Suva, and it is the first point seafarers visit to pray when they get off their vessels. The Centre works with the Fiji Ports Corporation Limited.

A new Seafarers Centre is being constructed near Walu Bay in Suva. This will be part of the Institute of Marine Officers Guild, and will offer psychological support to crew with mental health problems, and accommodation for visiting seafarers.

HR and GESI in onshore processing

PAFCO is one of the Pacific's medium-scale tuna loin processing and tuna canning plants for local and overseas markets. The main processing plant is based in Levuka, with the executive headquarters located in Suva. PAFCO is owned by the Fijian Government but the processing plant is managed by Bumble Bee Foods, which is a USA canned tuna brand, owned by Taiwanese FCF Co, which is a fishing and tuna supply chain company that supplies the fish for the factory.

Women make up the majority of workers in PACFO's processing section, however they are also employed in all operational sections and in maintenance. They are forklift drivers, they work in finance, human resources, prepare raw materials and do quality assessment. Most workers in the processing section are casual workers from the villages around Levuka and Motoriki Island.

There has been on-the-job training for all workers, and women are encouraged to do further studies and to engage in other activities to ensure there are other sources of livelihood for their families. PAFCO has been engaged with the International Finance Corporation (IFC, World Bank Group), with support from FFA, to conduct an analysis for causes of absenteeism and generate solutions to improve attendance. This follows the successes from similar work undertaken by SolTuna in Solomon Islands with IFC consultants. As of 2021 the work was ongoing but had been delayed and changed due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Worker voice

According to the ILO, National Union of Workers' (NUW) rights have been largely curbed by the Fiji Government over a period of years and as of 2021, the union was not fully functioning, however it is slowly improving.³⁴ This has had impacts on worker voice for all industries in Fiji, including the tuna industry.

According to management 60% of PAFCO workers are NUW members as of 2023, including casual workers. NUW is also affiliated with the National Union of Factory and Commercial Workers (NUFCW) and some PAFCO workers are also members of NUFCW. PAFCO's in-house staff association is called the Workers' Association which is not affiliated with a national union. According to the company's management the Worker's Association has only a small number of members and while it had gone defunct, management confirmed that it has been revived in 2023. All log of claims is raised by the Union members with the National Union that they are part of. These claims are then negotiated between the management and Union representatives which includes both PAFCO workers' representatives and the Unions' national representatives.³⁵ Processing lines require long hours of standing on wet concrete, which has been associated with knee and lower back pain and numbness in feet. Processing line workers now have breaks to take a rest in their hours of work. In the past workers have raised complaints about allowance payments not paid, long hours of standing, maternity leave, leave arrangements not honoured, overtime pay not

34 International Labour Organization. (2011). ILO Director-General's expressed concern on trade union developments in Fiji. Retrieved from [https://www.amnesty.org/fr/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/asa180032011en.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_160472/lang-en/index.htm#:~:text=The%20ILO%20Director%20General%2C%20Juan,decree%20concerning%20Essential%20National%20Industries%20;AmnestyInternational.(2011).WarningonFijigovernmentplan to severely restrict worker's rights. Retrieved from <a href=).

35 PAFCO management statement, 2023.

paid, and disputes about meal allowances and pay.³⁶ According to PAFCO human resources department, “working conditions have improved, although there remain some worker issues that need to be addressed”.³⁷ Management confirmed zero unresolved employee grievance issues as of 2023 and mentioned that night shift workers and those working overtime are being provided free transportation while protective clothing, equipment and footwear is provided. In addition, management highlighted their vision towards the promotion of an “all-inclusive approach for workers”³⁸ to further improve working conditions. PAFCO management has been working with the International Finance Corporation (IFC) on gender lens human resources projects including financial literacy training for staff on low incomes.

After a strike by PAFCO workers in 2003, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the company and the Workers’ Association. PAFCO also works closely with the Provincial Council. PAFCO workers are represented at district and community meetings when issues arise around domestic violence-related absenteeism, or perceptions that some communities are being prioritised over others for worker recruitment.

Gender equity

As of 2021 PAFCO had two women among seven senior managers. The President of the Workers Association was a woman. Fifty percent of all middle management positions were held by women.³⁹ PAFCO’s workforce was 66.5 percent women. Women work mainly in the processing part of operations (88 percent of processing department employees were women in 2021). Around half of support workers are women (see Table 9.1).⁴⁰

Table 9.1 Gender disaggregated employment in PAFCO 2020–2021

Department	Male	Female	Totals
Butchering	53	12	65
Wet process	70	444	514
Mould/plate	27	55	82
Canning	7	11	18
Labelling	2	11	13
Fishmeal	6	0	6
Totals processing workers	165	533	698
Quality assurance	28	31	59
Automotive	7	0	7
Raw materials and logistics	53	18	71
Plant maintenance	36	1	37
Human resources	14	19	33
Finance	2	3	5
Totals support workers	140	72	212
Totals all workers	305	605	910

Source: Vunisea, A. (2021). Gender Mainstreaming in Fiji’s Offshore Tuna Industry. Suva, Fiji. Retrieved from https://wwfasia.awsassets.panda.org/downloads/gender_mainstreaming_in_fiji_s_offshore_tuna_industry_report.pdf, p. 8.

36 Vunisea, A. (2021). Gender Mainstreaming in Fiji’s Offshore Tuna Industry. Suva, Fiji. Retrieved from https://wwfasia.awsassets.panda.org/downloads/gender_mainstreaming_in_fiji_s_offshore_tuna_industry_report.pdf

37 Vunisea, A. (2021). Gender Mainstreaming in Fiji’s Offshore Tuna Industry. Suva, Fiji. Retrieved from https://wwfasia.awsassets.panda.org/downloads/gender_mainstreaming_in_fiji_s_offshore_tuna_industry_report.pdf

38 PAFCO management statement, 2023.

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Fishing crew of fishing vessel Captain Van about to embark on a fishing trip. © WWF-Pacific

Action points: how can HR and GESI be improved in Fiji's tuna industries?

National regulation of crewing conditions

Good international and regional frameworks exist for conditions for fishing crew that could protect against HR and labour abuses, such as the FFA HMTTC Section 9, and the ILO C188 Work in Fishing Convention. In addition, the WCPFC is working on a binding measure for labour conditions. These international and regional measures need to be legislated for and implemented nationally. Fishing industry stakeholders want the Fijian Government to ratify and implement domestically the STCW-F and the ILO C188, to help ensure Fijian crew are treated fairly at sea. They also want the government to speed up progress on the national crewing policy.

In addition, there are already national regulations in place that could help address crewing conditions right now. Distant water fishing nations such as the USA and Taiwan could make sure that their domestic labour regulations are applied to crew working on fishing vessels flagged in their countries and operating in Fijian waters. Some of the problems that occur on Fiji-flagged fishing vessels can already be addressed if Fiji government agencies were to act on existing legislation. These problems include: lack of or inadequate contracts, hiring of uncertified crew, unsafe working conditions, charging crew for personal protective equipment, and low wages. The relevant government agencies are: MEPIR, Ministry of Fisheries, Immigration Department, and the Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji.

Multi-stakeholder forum

A key action the Fijian Government can take to improve HR and GESI in tuna industries is to establish and convene a multi-stakeholder forum for offshore fisheries, as is required by the Offshore Fisheries Management Act (2012). According to interviewees, in 2019 the Ministry of Fisheries convened a workshop with WWF-Pacific and FFIA to look at social responsibility requirements. Participants found it very helpful and the aim was then to establish the multi-stakeholder platform, which could include human and labour rights and other cross-sectoral issues, but as of 2021 the platform had not been convened. It could be something like an Advisory Board, to inform government. This kind of forum would be ideal for working out a protocol for handling grievances and distressed seafarers, both of which currently often 'fall between the cracks' between jurisdictional bodies. For example, the forum could oversee development and placement of multi-lingual posters in the port and wharf areas on labour rights and who to contact in case of problems. The forum could investigate the possibility of having a MEPIR presence in wharf areas so crew can easily ask questions and make complaints.

A multi-stakeholder forum would also be useful for working on other social issues, like those around port areas, where cross-sectoral issues come up. For these topics, membership should include representatives of services around port areas, such as support for sexual health and gender-based violence. The forum should also include women's organisations, NGOs representing seafarers and their families, and unions.

Employment Relations Tribunal

If the Fijian Government were to establish and convene the tripartite Employment Relations Tribunal as agreed in 2015, unions might be strengthened in their work to address labour rights abuses.

Gender-lens business solutions for absenteeism in tuna processing

It should be possible to build on learning from the ongoing IFC work on absenteeism in PAFCO for ideas that improve the working lives of processing workers. These learnings could be applied in other tuna processing businesses in Fiji.

HRBA-lens business solutions for absenteeism in fishing crews

The Ministry of Fisheries could contract social researchers to investigate the problem of crew failing to turn up at their vessel, creating the need for last-minute hires. Which crew do turn up, what makes them willing to turn up? Which crew fail to turn up to the vessel, and what are the factors causing them to fail to turn up? What can be done to improve the situation? What are the problems associated with last-minute hires, and can anything be done to make this system work better for both industry and last-minute hire crew? What lessons can be learned from NFD in Solomon Islands, which has had almost fully localised crew, including qualified senior crew, since the 1990s? Are crew joining because of the lack of employment alternatives, or are they actively seeking careers as fishing crew members, with a passion for ocean work? If not the latter, why not?

The solutions may include raising awareness and capacity building around contracts in communities from which crew are recruited. Information about the industry – what working as crew entails, the hardships, the requirements, the sacrifices one has to make – is necessary information that young people thinking about working in offshore fishing and their families need to know to be able to adjust to seafaring life.

Acronyms

C188	International Labour Organization (ILO) Work in Fishing Convention No. 188 (2007)
CSO	civil society organisation
FFA HMTc	(Pacific Islands) Forum Fisheries Agency Harmonised Minimum Terms and Conditions for Access By Fishing Vessels
FFIA	Fiji Fishing Industry Association
GESI	gender equity and social inclusion (outside this handbook the word 'equality' is usually used, rather than 'equity', in GESI)
HIV	human immunodeficiency virus
HR	human rights
HRBA	human rights-based approaches
ILO	International Labour Organization
MEPIR	Ministry of Employment Productivity and Industrial Relations
MSAF	Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji
MSC	Marine Stewardship Council
MTD	Maritime Transport Decree (2013)
NFD	National Fisheries Development, a tuna fishing company in Solomon Islands
NGO	non-governmental organisation
PPE	personal protective equipment
SPC	Pacific Community
STCW	Convention – International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (1978)
STI	sexually transmitted infections
WCPFC	Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission



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