The hidden crime of Human Trafficking in the Pacific Islands region

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Introduction

◆ A regional story (crewman)

◆ Pacific Dialogue’s approach (recently endorsed by IOM).

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Presentation outline

Section One
- Definition
- Pacific examples; how much
- How easy; how hidden – what we identified

Section Two
- Pacific regional resolve (from 1992 to present)
- International resolve – conventions, score card, assistance

Section Three
- Implications for the region - social, economic
- Evidences
- Governments not hiding any more – reputation, global partner, social & economic well-being
S.1 – the Basics

◆ What IS human trafficking?

◆ What does it involve?
  
  (a) **Acts** (what is done) – recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring, receipt of person(s)

  (b) **Means** (how it is done) – force, threatening the use of force, other coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power over vulnerable person, giving/receiving payment/benefits to secure consent from/to control a person

  (c) **Purpose** (why it is done) – sexual exploitation, forced labour/services, slavery, servitude, organ removal

◆ How does it affect people?

◆ Detection, prosecution – time (**victims**)
Pacific examples

- **Source** *(USTIP)* — Nakasi woman
- **Destination** *(USTIP)* — American Samoa; Tonga
- **Transit** *(USTIP)* — Asian ladies; Pacific circular route
- **Domestic** — Sr Doreen’s story; Fiji’s 3rd prosecution; yachts; domestic workers
- **At sea** — Burmese; other Asians
- **Children** — exiting with tourists; Indo-Fj boys on farm; kept at home; child *roti* sellers?; overseas marriage? *(cf CSECTT; CSA)*
How much; how easy– what we identified

How much? – no stats, but warnings. HT industry = huge profits + low risk: vulnerable people + businesses looking for low costs

How easy? – targets are developing countries w. poor social/economic system, high rates of poverty, under-resourced judiciary & govt agencies, inadequate laws; tourism = key source of country’s revenue; ‘kick-backs’ at top and below; low risk of being caught; weak laws, penalties

What we found? - it is ‘new’; PI people’s friendliness/innocence; modesty; (espec. young) people looking for work, friendship
S.2 - resolve

Pacific resolve

- Honiara Declaration 2000
- Nasonini Declaration on Regional Security 2002
- Leaders’ vision 2004
- Pacific Plan 2005
- Model Law (Forum) 2007
- Human Security Framework for the Pacific 2012-15
International resolve

- **UNCTOC**, incl. ‘Palermo’ Protocol
- **UNOHCHR** conventions & optional protocols
- **UNODC** – advice & database; support
- **US Department of State** - annual TIP score card
- **IOM** (ILO, Interpol, others)
- **Regional neighbours** – Australia (AFP, AIC, Bali Process), New Zealand, USA, Canada, Indonesia, (WCPFC - FFA)
S.3 – implications; future

Effect of TNC /HT

- **Black market** – when sophisticated, is most difficult to control (money laundering is one off-shoot)

- Illegal working population upsets general **labour rights** (undermines regulation & better worker conditions)

- Upsets economies - **impedes** national and international economic growth

- Negative **social & cultural** effects – on person, community, nation; MDG’s not attainable
Evidences

- **Benefit-cost** frameworks – sex industry (Minnesota study)

- **Push-Pull** (emigrants, immigrants, asylum seekers)

- **Demand** for cheap labour in face of rising costs

- **Globalisation** -> interdependence between States for commerce & facilitates transfer of commodities — including people!
PI governments must bite-the-bullet

First – **acknowledge** it (that it’s not going away): Human trafficking as a human development issue

Second - **awareness-raising**;
- **training** of judges, legal officers, relevant gov’t officers;
- **better resourcing** of law-enforcing agencies
- freeing up **court** dates; witness **protection**
- link up better/share with other PICs, agencies, CSOs, businesses
Third – access available resources better – espec. international support;
  - ratify global treaties (such as Palermo, CTOC)
    - develop stand-alone HT laws (e.g. Palau) & stiff penalties

Fourth – turn regional ‘soft’ laws into ‘hard’ laws

Fifth – more attention to home (jobs, education, health, people’s well-being; enhance birth registers)

Sixth – more attention to national & regional markets & migrant workers
Finally

**Sound political (regional) will** fundamental to stopping the tide: *resources, strong laws, awareness, victim support, using international support better*

**At stake** is not only the regional economy and the social and cultural characteristics of the Pacific Islands region.

**Just as important is the region’s reputation** - safe holiday & work destinations, better living & wage conditions, being responsible member of global community, and ‘slave-free’ canned Pacific tuna.