



Licencing and Registration of small artisanal fishing vessels in the United Republic of Tanzania

Background

Fish are of fundamental importance to the social and economic wellbeing of the inhabitants of Tanzania. The small-scale fishery of Tanzania is one of the important economic sub sectors of the economy that makes valuable economic contribution to the coastal communities and provides rich protein food, employment, income thus contribute to their livelihood for Tanzanians, however there is growing concern of unregulated fishing in Tanzania.

An initial survey of the financial support provided by the LGAs to the District Fisheries Officers (DFOs) suggested that while the DFO operational expenses are included in the annual Local Government Authorities (LGA) operational budgets, the funding was rarely forthcoming. Indeed, in 2013 only 8 – 53 percent of the proposed annual budgets that were initially allocated to fisheries management were provided to the DFOs

Currently, licenses are valid for a calendar year irrespective of when in the year they were issued. Thus, all fishing licenses expire on 31st December, and they need to be renewed by 1st January. Historically, a grace period of three months has been given to the fishers (January to March) in which the vessel owners are allowed to license their vessels without being fined for not being in possession of a valid license. The DFOs usually go to the villages in December to inform the BMUs or Village Committees that the vessels and fishers need to be licensed for the coming year. Having been informed of the need to renew licenses, the DFOs usually wait for the fisheries / vessel owners to come to their offices to buy their permits, or depending upon the financial resources available, they may visit the landing sites to actively solicit license fees.

Main Issue and challenges

In 2009 it was estimated that just 26% of the 7,399 vessels operating in the marine small pelagic fishery were compliant to the registration and licencing regulations. In 2009 alone, the low level of compliance to these regulations resulted in an estimated loss of US\$128,200 to the fiscus. The majority of the vessels (>95%) in operation in the marine small pelagic fishery are under 11m in length, and thus according to the Fisheries Regulations (2009), the responsibility for the collection of the vessel licence and registration fees falls to the DFOs, with the collected revenues being allocated to the LGA. In turn, the LGAs are tasked with financially supporting DFOs activities within their respective districts.

Unregistered and non-licence vessels are classified as Illegal Unreported and Unregulated fishing vessels.

The SmartFish Intervention

Since 2013, IOC SmartFish has been supporting a pilot vessel registration and licencing programme in Tanzania. The rationale for the intervention was to address the low level of compliance to vessel registration and licencing which significantly impacts both national and local government revenue streams accruing from the fisheries sector. Indeed, its objective was to;

- **Develop a harmonised Action Plan for Government (District and Central) to increase registration / licencing rates in the small pelagic fishery;**
- **Assist government to implement the plan in Tanga and Dar es Salaam (pilot implementation); and**
- **Assist in the development of tamper proof vessel marking (registration and annual licencing)**

A cost effective solution was sought to achieve the expected results. An inexpensive, tamperproof and non-transferable coloured plastic security tags (US\$0.05 per tag) were deemed an appropriate. The tags can be individually marked with an alphanumeric that conforms to those required for vessel registrations in the Fisheries Regulations (2009). The tag markings ensure that the vessel owners can be individually identified. Based on the current licencing and registration procedures, two tags are required

- the first tag denotes the vessel registration; and
- the second tag being used to show that the vessel is compliant to the annual licence.

The tags that were affixed to the vessels and used to identify those vessels that are registered and licensed, and those that are not. Once affixed to the vessels it is not possible to remove them without breaking them. Effectively this means that the tags are non-transferable, and cannot be moved from vessel to vessel (Figure 1).

Seven district were involve in the pilot project that took place in Tanga and Dar es Salaam and the vessel identification marks and tag requirements are listed below;

Region	District	Estimated Number of vessels	Vessel identification mark	Tags required (number)	
				Registration (purple)	License (orange)
Dar es Salaam	Ilala	400	TZXIL	600	600
	Kinondoni	600	TZXKI	900	900
	Temeke	500	TZXTK	750	750
Tanga	Muheza	250	TZTMZ	400	400
	Mkinga	450	TZTMK	700	700
	Pangani	350	TZTPA	550	550
	Tanga city	600	TZTTA	900	900
	Total			4800	4800

Drivers

The main drivers are the low level of compliant to the registration and licencing regulations, hence low level of income generated for licence and registration process, plus non registered and non-licence vessels are unregulated vessels hence classified as IUU fishing vessel.

Results

At the end of the tagging period;

- a total of 16 new vessels had been registered;
- 1152 vessel licences issued;
- These figures compare favourably with those of the previous year during which 11 vessels had been registered and 556 vessels licenced (Table 5);
- Revenue streams accruing to the vessel and licensing operation had increased from Tsh 911,000 to Tsh 2,244,000, representing an increase of 256% over the previous year;

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Activity	2014		2015	
	Number	Value (Tsh)	Number	Value (Tsh)
Vessel registration	11	176,000	16	272,000
Vessel licences	556	735,000	1152	1,972,000
Total revenue collection		911,000		2,244,000

- Additionally a total of 93 fishers had paid their fishing licences for the year, increasing the revenue stream by a further Tsh 1,488,000. Thus the total revenue collected during the pilot period totalled Tsh 3,732,000.

Lessons learned

- the tagging system use is simple and cost effective;
- compliance operation using the Marine Police had a significant impact on the rates of licencing and registration, and it is unlikely that attaining a licencing rate of 91% of vessels would have been possible in the absence of the compliance operation;
- the travel by fishers from remote area are costly and discourage fishers to register and licence their vessel; and
- revenue streams derived from fisheries could be significantly increased through improved levels of vessel registration and licencing.
- The purse seine vessels in the inshore fishery are over 11 metres and the responsibility for their registration and licencing falls to the Director of Fisheries and not the Local Government Authorities. The DFOs facilitate the registration and licencing process. These vessels were not tagged during the pilot registration process. However, all vessel should be included in the registration and licencing programme, no matter who benefit from the income since the primary objective is to curb IUU fishing.

Conclusions/Recommendations

The programme resulted in the following Recommendations:

1. It was established that the vessel owners are well aware of the Fisheries Regulations (2009) and their legal obligations to have their vessels registered and licenced.
2. Compliance operational should be adequately plan and budgeted annually to serve as a deterrent factor and ensure compliance to registration and licencing.
3. The validity and jurisdiction of a licence should be agreed upon by all partners as stipulated in section 13 (Fisheries Regulations, 2009) stipulates that "a fishing licence issued by a local government authority shall be valid within the jurisdiction of that authority". Thus, in future, multiple licences should be issued according to the number of districts in which a vessel operates.
4. Additional funding generated by the compliance activities can be allocated to the under resourced DFOs, with a view to improving their capacity to manage the fishery, notably their Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) operations.
5. Tanzania must look into the possibility of a Smart Licencing mechanism using a telephonic vessel licencing and registration system based on an Unstructured Supplementary Service Data System (USSD) linked to a service provider payment platform could be developed to enable fishers to pay for their licence through that system.