

# Migrant Workers Who Are Citizens of The Republic of Indonesia in The Fisheries Sector Working on Foreign-Flagged Vessels from a Legal and Economic Perspective

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## Abstract.

*The exploitation and human trafficking practices against Indonesian migrant workers employed on foreign-flagged fishing vessels demonstrate the weakness of cross-jurisdictional legal protection. This study aims to analyze the regulatory framework governing legal protection for migrant workers in the fisheries sector; to examine the legal strategies and policies that may be developed to strengthen such protection. The research employs a normative juridical method, incorporating statutory, conceptual, and case approaches, and uses qualitative descriptive analysis of primary, secondary, and tertiary legal materials. The findings indicate that Law No. 18 of 2017 and Government Regulation No. 22 of 2022 provide a strong legal basis in Indonesia; however, inter-agency coordination gaps and limited cross-border supervision hinder their effective implementation. To reinforce both legal and economic protection, institutional synergy, consistent supervision, and the ratification of the ILO Convention No. 188 of 2007 and the Cape Town Agreement of 2012 as supporting international legal instruments are required. This study contributes to the strengthening of institutional and cross-jurisdictional policy synergy to ensure the protection of Indonesian migrant workers in the fisheries sector through an integrated legal and economic approach.*

**Keywords:** Anonymous Accounts; Social Media; Online Self Presentation; Anonymous Account Users and Self Concept Clarity.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Indonesian migrant workers (PMI) are an important component in the global labor dynamics of both the national and international economies [1]. In recent decades, the fishing sector has become one of the main sectors that absorbs Indonesian migrant workers, particularly as crew members on foreign-flagged fishing vessels. The placement of Indonesian migrant workers on foreign vessels operating in the high seas or outside Indonesian jurisdiction opens up employment opportunities while also presenting various vulnerabilities and potential violations of their basic rights [2]. Working conditions in the fishing sector are known to be very harsh, involving long and unpredictable working hours, a dangerous working environment given the nature of work at sea, and high physical and mental or psychological stress. These conditions are exacerbated by the fact that workers are often located far from ports and have minimal access to communication, leaving them geographically and socially isolated. In this situation, many Indonesian migrant workers experience exploitation, forced labor, physical and verbal abuse, document withholding, and even become victims of human trafficking [2], [3]. In some extreme cases, these violations have even led to the death or unjustifiable loss of life of workers [2].

Data from the International Labor Organization (ILO) shows that the fishing sector is one of the sectors with the highest rate of labor violations, especially against migrant workers. Investigative reports from international organizations such as Greenpeace Southeast Asia and Migrant CARE have also highlighted various forms of inhumane working practices experienced by Indonesian fishing crew on foreign-flagged vessels, especially in the waters of the Asian and Pacific oceans. The tragedy or case of forced labor at sea involving the deaths of a number of Indonesian crew members on Chinese-flagged vessels in 2020 is a concrete and tragic example of the state's weak protection of its citizens in this sector [4]. In

addition to legal protection, the economic protection of migrant workers is also very important, including efforts to ensure that their economic rights are fulfilled during the migration process, from before, during, to after working abroad. This includes wage protection, social security, and so on.

Furthermore, comprehensive economic protection for migrant workers not only guarantees their welfare, but also contributes positively to the economy of both their country of origin and their destination country. As stated by progressive legal experts, such as Satjipto Rahardjo, law is not only understood as written norms, but must also be viewed from the context of social and substantive justice in society [5]. Therefore, it is important to critically examine the legal protection of PMI in the context of globalization and the complexity of the fisheries sector. This study aims to examine the effectiveness of existing regulations, identify implementation barriers, and formulate a more adaptive legal approach to the reality of cross-border work. Based on the above explanation, this study aims to examine the extent to which the government optimally regulates legal protection for Indonesian migrant workers employed on foreign vessels in the fisheries sector. In addition, this study also aims to analyze legal strategies and policies that can be developed to strengthen the protection of migrant workers in the fisheries sector abroad, and to analyze the protection of Indonesian migrant workers from an economic perspective.

## II. METHODS

This research is normative research, which uses secondary data or reference materials. The purpose of normative research is to examine and analyze laws by reviewing relevant reference materials or secondary data, such as legislation, legal documents, and other scientific research on legal protection for Indonesian migrant workers (MIGRANT WORKERS) working on foreign-flagged ships. This normative research was conducted using a statute approach. The statute approach aims to evaluate various relevant laws and regulations to provide protection to Indonesian migrant workers working in the fisheries sector. This study also uses two other approaches, namely the conceptual approach, which studies the legal concepts contained in laws and regulations that protect migrant workers in the fisheries sector; and the case approach, which analyzes legal cases related to issues of migrant workers in the fisheries sector, such as exploitation and human trafficking, as well as law enforcement efforts involving migrant workers on foreign-flagged vessels [6]. This research is descriptive in nature, where the purpose of this research is to describe, analyze, and present data systematically, so that the facts regarding the effectiveness of legal norms, legal elements, and economic components for Indonesian migrant workers (MIGRANT WORKERS) in the fisheries sector working on foreign-flagged vessels can be revealed.

## III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### **Optimal Legal Protection Regulations for Indonesian Migrant Workers Employed on Foreign Vessels in the Fishing Sector**

#### *Migrant Workers in the Fishing Sector*

According to Article 1 paragraph 2 of Law Number 18 of 2017 concerning the Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers, “Indonesian migrant workers are defined as any Indonesian citizen who will, is, or has been working for wages outside the territory of the Republic of Indonesia” [7]. In this law, the category of Indonesian migrant workers includes ship crew members and fishing crew members. Article 22 of Government Regulation Number 22 of 2022 concerning the Placement and Protection of Migrant Commercial Ship Crews distinguishes migrant workers who work on foreign ships into two categories, namely: First, Migrant Commercial Ship Crew are “Indonesian migrant workers who are employed or work on foreign-flagged commercial ships by ship owners or operators to perform duties on board in accordance with their positions as stated in their certificates”; and Second, Migrant Fishing Ship Crew. “Migrant Fishing Crew are Indonesian migrant workers who are employed or work on foreign-flagged fishing vessels by the vessel owner or operator to perform duties on board in accordance with their positions as stated in their certificate” [8].

### ***Government Regulations Related to Indonesian Migrant Workers in the Fishing Sector Working on Foreign Vessels***

The Republic of Indonesia has issued legislation and implementing regulations in the form of government regulations and ministerial regulations related to migrant workers in general and migrant workers in the fisheries sector. First, Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 6 of 2012 Concerning the Ratification of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. This law is the result of the ratification of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, which essentially “aims to achieve international protection of the rights of all migrant workers and members of their families, reaffirming and establishing basic norms in a comprehensive convention that can be applied universally.”[9]. Second, Law No. 18 of 2017 concerning the Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers (hereinafter referred to as the MIGRANT WORKERS LAW). This law replaces Law Number 39 of 2004 concerning the Placement and Protection of Indonesian Workers Abroad, which is no longer valid. This Migrant Worker Law emphasizes a paradigm shift from a labor placement orientation to a comprehensive migrant worker protection orientation before, during, and after working abroad [7]. Third, Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 6 of 2023 Concerning the Stipulation of Government Regulation in Lieu of Law Number 2 of 2022 Concerning Job Creation into Law [10].

This Law amends Articles 51 and 57 of Law No. 18 of 2018 concerning the License for Indonesian Migrant Worker Placement Companies (P3MI) and inserts Article 89a concerning the Adjustment of Business Licensing. Fourth, Government Regulation No. 59 of 2021 concerning the Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers, is an implementing regulation of Law No. 18 of 2017 concerning the Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers. This regulation helps the central and regional governments regulate the placement and protection of Indonesian citizens working abroad, including commercial ship workers and migrant fishing crew. PP No. 59 of 2021 is an implementing regulation of Law No. 18 of 2018 [11]. Fifth, Government Regulation No. 22 of 2022 concerning the Placement and Protection of Migrant Merchant Ship Crews and Migrant Fishing Vessel Crews, is an implementing regulation of Law No. 18 of 2017 concerning the Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers, which specifically regulates the protection of Indonesian citizens working in the maritime sector, including the fishing sector on foreign-flagged vessels [12]. Sixth, Regulation of the Minister of Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers/Indonesian Migrant Workers Protection Agency of the Republic of Indonesia Number 4 of 2025 concerning Procedures for Imposing Administrative Sanctions in the Placement and Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers.

This regulation establishes a legal framework and procedures for the Agency (BP2MI) to impose administrative sanctions on placement implementers, which explicitly includes Indonesian Migrant Worker Placement Companies (P3MI) that place Migrant Fishing Crews. This regulation specifies the types of violations related to the placement and protection of migrant workers as well as preventive (protective) and curative (enforcement) measures [13]. Seventh, Regulation of the Minister of Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers/Indonesian Migrant Workers Protection Agency of the Republic of Indonesia Number 3 of 2025 concerning the Termination and Prohibition of the Placement of Indonesian Migrant Workers. This regulation provides a legal umbrella for the state through BP2MI to temporarily suspend or permanently prohibit the placement of Indonesian migrant workers, including Migrant Fishery Crews, to certain countries or to certain Employers/Principals or even to certain P3MI (Migrant Worker Placement Agencies). This regulation is used as an emergency protection mechanism, whereby suspension can be imposed if a situation is identified that endangers the safety, security, and human rights of Indonesian migrant workers, such as natural disasters, armed conflict, or gross and systematic violations of workers' rights in the destination country (Republic of Indonesia, 2017) [14].

Normatively, Indonesian migrant workers have a legal system that adequately protects them, including migrant workers employed in the fisheries sector on foreign-flagged vessels. With implementing regulations below the level of law, the legal framework is hierarchical and complementary. However, considering migrant workers and, in particular, the implementation of work in the foreign-flagged vessel fisheries sector, an assessment of the Republic of Indonesia's national regulations is not sufficient. The

analysis also needs to cover international law, international agreements, and international conventions in the field of migrant workers in the fishing sector. The government's lack of action in protecting migrant workers from an international law perspective is reflected in Article 39 of Law No. 18 of 2017. Of the 15 (fifteen) duties and responsibilities of the central government, none are related to cooperation between countries, active participation in international conventions and international agreements, or strengthening diplomatic relations related to migrant workers.

#### ***International Convention Rules on the Protection of Migrant Workers in the Fishing Sector***

In the international sphere, the protection of fishery workers is regulated, among others, in: First, United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), 1982. UNCLOS is the basis of international law that regulates all aspects of maritime law, including jurisdiction over ships and workers on the high seas (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, 1982). UNCLOS regulates important principles in the context of ships subject to flag state jurisdiction (Articles 92 and 94), whereby the flag state is responsible for the safety, welfare, and working conditions of the ship's crew. The port state also has the authority to inspect violations of human rights and labor laws [15].

Second, International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Fishing Vessel Personnel (STCW-F), 1995. This convention was issued by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to regulate training and certification standards for fishing vessel personnel (International Maritime Organization, 1995). The focus of STCW-F is to ensure that all fishing vessel crew members have sufficient technical competence to work safely and professionally (Republic of Indonesia, 2019). Indonesia ratified this convention through Presidential Regulation (Perpres) Number 18 of 2019 concerning the Ratification of the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Fishing Vessel Personnel, 1995 [16].

Third, Work in Fishing Convention, 2007 (ILO Convention No. 188), which is the main instrument of the International Labor Organization (ILO) that specifically regulates working conditions in the fisheries sector. This convention regulates the requirement for a written and fair fishing work agreement, the right to occupational safety and health, including access to medical care, reasonable working hours, the right to rest, and basic social protection. Indonesia has not yet ratified ILO Convention No. 188 [17], [18].

Fourth, The Cape Town Agreement (CTA) 2012, is an international instrument developed by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in an effort to establish safety and seaworthiness standards for fishing vessels, with the main objective of improving safety at sea and reducing accidents and fatalities in the fisheries sector [19]. The CTA 2012 can be seen as the counterpart to The International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), but is specifically intended for fishing vessels, which until now have not had comprehensive safety instruments at the international level. This agreement regulates various important technical aspects related to fishing vessel construction, watertight equipment (watertight integrity), vessel electrical installations, and safety equipment for crew members [20].

Fifth, ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers January 13, 2007 12th ASEAN summit in the Philippines. Countries that send migrant workers must include the following: 1) Improve the protection of migrant workers' rights; 2. Ensure that their citizens have access to employment opportunities and welfare as a sustainable alternative to labor migration; 3. Regulate policies and procedures to facilitate various aspects of labor migration, such as recruitment, preparation for deployment and protection of migrant workers abroad, as well as repatriation and reintegration into their countries of origin; and 4. Establishing and promoting legal practices to regulate the recruitment of migrant workers, including valid and enforceable contracts, regulations and accreditation of recruitment agencies and employers, and a blacklist of unauthorized or illegal organizations .

#### **Legal Strategies and Policies That Can Be Developed to Strengthen Protection for Migrant Workers in the Fishing Sector Abroad**

##### ***Recruitment of Migrant Workers in the Fishing Sector to Work on Foreign Vessels***

Government Regulation No. 22 of 2022 concerning the Placement and Protection of Migrant Commercial Vessel Crews and Migrant Fishing Vessel Crews regulates the recruitment of migrant fishing vessel crews, According to Article 3 paragraphs (1) to (5) of PP No. 22 of 2022, recruitment is carried out

collectively through placement and/or individually. Placement refers to “through the government itself, in this case the Indonesian Migrant Workers Protection Agency (formerly known as the Indonesian Migrant Workers Protection Agency/BP2MI) or an agency/institution, in this case an Indonesian migrant worker placement company (P3MI), or directly by a company that places crew for its own interests.” In addition, migrant commercial ship crew or migrant fishing ship crew can work individually, namely by submitting an application and following the worker recruitment process on their own initiative, but the employer must be a legal entity, not an individual [8].

An interesting point regarding the consequences of prohibiting migrant fishery workers from working independently with employers that are not legal entities as stated in Article 3 paragraphs (5) and (6) is that the employment risks become their own responsibility and the employment relationship is in accordance with the maritime employment agreement between the migrant worker and the individual principal. Criticism of Article 3 paragraphs (3), (4), (5) and (6) of PP 22 of 2022 is related to the personal risk of migrant workers who work for individual employers. It should be noted that migrant workers in the fisheries sector are workers with relatively low education and insufficient knowledge, especially since they work on foreign ships sailing in foreign territorial waters. The government should not, in its regulations, apply self-risk to these violations, which reflects the government's neglect of protecting its own migrant workers. The occurrence of violations should be addressed by establishing rules on prevention and protection, considering that migrant workers in the fishing sector are not conventional workers or ordinary migrant workers such as domestic helpers or nurses in other countries who are easy to supervise.

### ***The Recruitment of Migrant Workers in The Fishing Sector Often Leads to Slavery and Human Trafficking***

Migrant workers in the fishing sector who work on foreign fishing vessels are prone to slavery and human trafficking, given the risky nature of their work in the middle of the sea, which is very difficult to supervise by both the country of origin of the vessel and the country where its citizens work as fishermen. This is especially true for migrant workers who depart and work illegally without the recruitment and placement procedures regulated by the government. As a result, the supervision and recording of worker status is not recorded by the Ministry of Migrant Worker Protection. A case that attracted public attention in 2020 was that of the Long Xing 629, where Indonesian migrant fishing crew members were exploited. This case shows how weak legal protection is for migrant workers in the fishing sector who work on foreign-flagged vessels [4], [21]. This case came to light in 2020 after South Korean media aired a documentary video showing the inhumane working conditions experienced by Indonesian crew members. The video recorded the process of dumping the bodies of Indonesian crew members who died at sea, as well as the testimonies of other workers regarding cruel treatment, excessive working hours, and working conditions that were far from humane standards [22].

Reflecting on the Long Xing 629 case, the legal aspects of protecting migrant workers in the fishing sector are not only related to government regulations, but also concern the government's ability to implement and supervise cross-border issues where Indonesian migrant workers are employed on foreign ships. The Long Xing 629 operated in international waters, while the flagged vessel and the exploited workers were Indonesian citizens. This means that three jurisdictions are involved (international waters, a Chinese vessel, and Indonesian migrant workers). Based on the principle of territoriality, Indonesian criminal law cannot prosecute perpetrators of slavery; criminal charges can only be applied to perpetrators within the country, such as labor recruitment agencies. It is this cross-jurisdictional situation that often hinders law enforcement and creates loopholes for the exploitation of migrant ship crews. A preventive measure to prevent the slavery of migrant workers in the fishing sector is to promote bilateral agreements between Indonesia and other countries whose ships fly their flags to regulate legal aspects of prevention and prosecution related to indications of slavery and human trafficking.

In addition, the Indonesian government needs to ratify international conventions related to the protection of migrant workers in the fishing sector. With bilateral agreements and the ratification of international conventions, initial preventive measures can be taken, such as prohibiting the recruitment of workers if companies from foreign countries do not have bilateral agreements related to cooperation in the

protection of migrant workers and prohibiting recruitment for countries that have not ratified international conventions related to the protection of migrant workers in the fishing sector. Empirical studies such as the Long Xing 629 case show that gaps in legal protection stem from regulatory weaknesses, limitations in protection diplomacy, and weak cross-jurisdictional oversight mechanisms. Based on the framework of transnational labor governance, strengthening protection strategies needs to include bilateral agreements based on mutual enforcement, in which sending and receiving countries are responsible for fulfilling human rights and labor standards. This approach is more progressive than the “one-way protection” pattern that is still common practice in Indonesia.

***The Government Has Not Ratified ILO Convention C188 of 2007 on the Protection of Migrant Workers in the Fishing Sector and Evaluation of the Adequacy of Legal Protection for Migrant Workers in the Fishing Sector***

Although Indonesian government regulations are adequate to protect migrant workers in the fishing sector, there are still several obstacles to their implementation and enforcement. The protection of Indonesian migrant workers, especially those working on foreign-flagged vessels, requires greater efforts in terms of supervision and implementation of regulations, particularly in relation to bilateral agreements, international cooperation, and the active role of the government in ratifying international conventions that can bind other member countries of the convention. Bilateral cooperation agreements between countries are necessary to strengthen protection for migrant workers in the fisheries sector, given the nature of this work, which involves international jurisdiction and cross-regional issues. In addition, it is very important to ensure that the countries where migrant workers are employed have also ratified international conventions on the protection of migrant workers. Countries that have ratified international conventions, such as ILO C188 and the Cape Town Agreement (CTA 2012), will have a similar legal framework, thereby facilitating joint implementation and supervision in the protection of migrant workers in the fishing sector. Therefore, bilateral cooperation and ratification of international conventions are very important.

In addition to implementation factors, there are still normative gaps in the regulations governing the protection of MIGRANT WORKERS in the fishing sector. To date, Indonesia has not ratified the Work in Fishing Convention (ILO C188), which specifically regulates working conditions and safety for fishing vessel crews. In fact, this convention could serve as an international legal basis that strengthens the position of migrant workers in this sector and provides stronger legitimacy for the Indonesian government to demand fair treatment for its citizens abroad [5], [23]. The absence of ratification makes Indonesia's position relatively weak in negotiating the responsibilities of flag states and foreign companies for the welfare and safety of Indonesian crew members. Why is it that even though the regulations made by the government are adequate, the lack of protection for migrant workers is still rampant? In terms of law, migrant workers cannot be governed solely by national law because even though they are Indonesian citizens who are subject to Indonesian laws and regulations, these do not apply considering that their work is located and carried out abroad, which is certainly subject to the laws of the country where the migrant workers are located. Therefore, research on international legal principles is needed for the government to formulate policies and establish comprehensive employment contract standards based on international law.

Based on this research, it is clear that the problem of the lack of protection for migrant workers is due to a lack of supervision, the activation of diplomatic channels, the establishment of cooperation in bilateral agreements between countries, and Indonesia's participation in international conventions related to migrant workers and the ratification of the results of the convention. When selecting or requesting migrant workers from the destination country or placing them through employment agencies, the following should be considered: Bilateral agreements between Indonesia and the destination country regarding the protection of Indonesian migrant workers, and whether the destination country is also a member of international conventions and whether each country (Indonesia and the destination country) has ratified the results of these conventions into their positive law. One of the results of this research is a criticism of Article 5 paragraph (1) of Government Regulation No. 22 of 2022, which states, “The placement of migrant commercial ship crews by BP2MI is carried out based on a written agreement between: a. The Government of the Republic of Indonesia and the government of the destination country; or b.

The Government of the Republic of Indonesia and a legal entity employer or principal in the destination country.” This article does not mention the criteria for the destination country, for example, that it must be a member of the convention on migrant workers in the fishing sector. Even though there is a bilateral agreement between countries, the criteria for the destination country must be taken into account. From the perspective of compliance and harmonization theory, the fact that Indonesia has not ratified ILO C188 and CTA 2012 reflects an imbalance in compliance between international commitments and the implementation of national law [17], [19]. The academic implication is that Indonesia lacks a strong legal basis to demand flag state responsibility. The ratification of these two conventions is a strategic step to strengthen Indonesia's diplomatic position in the framework of global maritime cooperation. In addition, the harmonization of national laws with international standards will strengthen the legitimacy of the migrant worker protection system in the fisheries sector.

### **Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers in the Fishing Sector from an Economic Perspective**

From an institutional economics perspective, the economic protection of migrant workers is the result of institutional governance that is able to balance the interests of the state, companies, and individual workers. A strong legal and regulatory system reduces transaction costs and the risk of economic exploitation. Article 67 paragraph (2) of the Appendix to Law Number 6 of 2012, which is the law ratifying the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, states that. “With regard to the economic protection of migrant workers and members of their families who are in a regular situation, the States Parties concerned shall cooperate, if necessary, on the basis of mutually agreed terms, with a view to promoting the economic conditions for their resettlement and facilitating their social and cultural reintegration in a sustainable manner in their country of origin.” Article 67 paragraph (2) of the Appendix to Law Number 6 of 2012 has been formulated in relation to the economic protection of migrant workers and their families in their country of origin, where it is hoped that the results of their work as migrant workers will lead to improved and sustainable economic conditions, with this article requiring the state to play a role and facilitate the economic protection of migrant workers and their families.

This clause emphasizes the importance of a sustainable economic reintegration approach (ILO, 2022), in which the country of origin is not only responsible for repatriating migrant workers but also ensuring their economic transition through entrepreneurship programs, financial training, and access to capital. Thus, the economic protection of migrant workers is part of an inclusive economic development policy that has a direct impact on regional economic stability. In addition, Article 35 of Law No. 18 of 2017 states, “The Central Government and Regional Governments, in accordance with their authorities, are obliged to provide economic protection for Prospective Indonesian Migrant Workers and/or Indonesian Migrant Workers through: a. remittance management by involving domestic and foreign banking or non-bank financial institutions in the destination country; b. financial education so that Indonesian migrant workers and their families can manage their remittances; and c. entrepreneurship education.” This policy approach is in line with the theory of human security, which places economic welfare as part of human security (economic security as human security). Thus, remittances are not merely viewed as a transfer of funds, but as a form of social investment by families to create long-term economic independence. Therefore, financial literacy and entrepreneurship training are important tools to avoid economic dependence after the end of employment.

#### ***Economic Protection and Its Positive Impact on Families and Communities***

First, Remittance Management. In practice, remittances or money transfers from migrant workers to their families in their home countries contribute significantly to the country's economic growth. According to Bank Indonesia data, migrant worker remittances reach billions of dollars annually, making them one of the country's sources of foreign exchange [24]. However, without proper management, remittances are often spent on short-term consumption and are not allocated for productive activities. Therefore, the involvement of banking and non-banking financial institutions, both domestically and in the destination countries, is a strategic step to ensure security, efficiency, and transparency in the fund transfer process. Through the formal banking system, migrant workers can gain access to a wider range of financial services, such as

savings, micro-investments, and insurance, all of which have the potential to strengthen the economic resilience of migrant workers' families [23]. If remittances are used more for investment in capital goods than for consumption, they can have a positive impact on economic growth. This means that remittances can increase productivity and impact economic growth. From a microeconomic perspective, the returns on remittance investments can improve the welfare of migrant workers and their families because the money can be used to manage businesses or investment assets. In macroeconomic terms, remittance receipts, which are a component of the country's financial system alongside taxes, export earnings, oil and gas, and other state revenues, have a positive effect on economic growth. Data from Bank Indonesia (2024) shows that total remittances from Indonesian migrant workers reached USD 10.98 billion per year, with around 13% coming from the fisheries and maritime sectors. However, more than 60% of remittance funds are still used for short-term consumption, not productive investment. This shows that economic protection does not only depend on the amount of remittances, but also on the financial literacy capacity of workers and their families.

Second, Financial education, as stipulated in Article 35 letter (b) of Law No. 18 of 2017, is a preventive measure to prevent economic vulnerability among migrant workers and their families. This education includes improving financial literacy so that migrant workers have the ability to manage their expenses, save, and invest their earnings wisely. Financial literacy programs also serve to reduce informal lending practices that often burden migrant workers with high interest rates, as well as help migrant workers' families manage household finances during the placement period. Thus, financial education plays an important role in creating financial independence and reducing the risk of poverty after migrant workers return home [2], [25].

Third, Entrepreneurship education. Entrepreneurship education as stipulated in Article 35 letter (c) is a follow-up step in efforts to build long-term economic independence. The government has an obligation to provide entrepreneurship training for migrant workers and their families so that they are able to manage remittances into productive businesses after their period of work abroad ends [23]. This entrepreneurship education not only covers technical skills in starting a business, but also provides knowledge in business management, access to capital, and risk management [19]. With entrepreneurship education, it is hoped that migrant workers will not only depend on work abroad, but can also become independent economic actors in their home regions.

### ***The Importance of the Role of the Government, Especially Local Governments, in the Economic Protection of Migrant Workers and Their Families***

The government apparatus that is closest to providing economic protection for migrant workers and their families in the form of concrete regulations, facilitation, protection, and empowerment is the local government, in this case the regency/city. In addition, local governments must be able to provide facilities for starting and developing businesses in the form of economic empowerment for migrant workers' families, business training, access to small business credit specifically for migrant workers (KUR for migrant workers), and assistance in accessing markets. According to the theory of multi-level governance, the effectiveness of migrant worker policies increases when local governments are given autonomy to adapt economic programs to local social conditions. An example studied by the author is the policy regulations of the Sumbawa Regency government, particularly in the area of economic protection and family welfare. As is well known, Sumbawa Regency is one of the pockets of migrant workers. The Sumbawa Regency Government issued Sumbawa Regency Regulation Number 6 of 2023 concerning the protection of Indonesian migrant workers in Sumbawa Regency, in which Article 28 states, "The Sumbawa Regency

Government, in accordance with its authority, is obliged to provide economic protection for prospective migrant workers and/or migrant workers, through: the management of remittances by involving domestic and foreign banking or non-bank financial institutions in the destination country; financial education so that migrant workers and their families can manage their remittances; and assistance and entrepreneurship education by involving the business world and universities." The concrete form of economic protection is regulated in Article 21 letters g to k. The Sumbawa Regional Government provides protection to the families of migrant workers through: empowerment of migrant workers' families; management of remittances by involving domestic non-bank financial institutions and institutions in the destination country;

financial education so that migrant workers' families can obtain their remittances; entrepreneurship education; and protection policies for female and child migrant workers. The role of the Sumbawa Regional Government in the economic protection of migrant workers is regulated in Article 24, one of the forms of implementation of which is the establishment of local-based migrant worker business centers with the involvement of the village government.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Although Indonesian government regulations are adequate for the protection of migrant workers in the fisheries sector, their application and implementation still face various obstacles. The protection of Indonesian migrant workers, especially those working on foreign-flagged vessels, requires greater efforts in terms of supervision and implementation of regulations. Given the nature of this work, which involves cross-border and international jurisdictions, it is necessary to strengthen bilateral cooperation agreements between countries in order to enhance the protection of migrant workers in the fishing sector. In addition, it is important to ensure that the countries recruiting migrant workers have also ratified international conventions related to the protection of migrant workers. Countries that have ratified international conventions, such as ILO C188 and the Cape Town Agreement (CTA 2012), will have a similar legal framework, thereby facilitating joint implementation and supervision in the protection of migrant workers in the fisheries sector. Therefore, bilateral cooperation and ratification of international conventions are very important. Migrant workers in the fishing sector who work on foreign fishing vessels are highly vulnerable to exploitation, slavery, and human trafficking.

This situation is exacerbated by weak oversight, especially on the high seas and in countries that do not have adequate labor regulations. Many migrant workers are recruited illegally, without clear procedures and registration with the Ministry of Migrant Worker Protection, which means they are not recorded in the national monitoring system. Slavery occurs through excessive working hours, inadequate wages, and inhumane working conditions on ships. In addition, human trafficking is also a problem, where migrant workers are often sold or transferred between foreign ship owners. Therefore, strengthening bilateral and multilateral cooperation between countries is very important in ensuring better supervision and effective law enforcement against violations of migrant workers' rights in this sector. The economic protection of Indonesian migrant workers also needs to be strengthened through transparent remittance management, financial education, and sustainable entrepreneurship development so that protection is not only legal but also has a real impact on improving the welfare of migrant workers and their families.

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