

Fact sheet: FIFA's human rights approach

February 2016

Introduction

FIFA is committed to respecting human rights, constantly working on its policies and processes as well as on its organisational and event management systems to ensure that human rights risks are better addressed.

The organisation has been tackling human rights-related issues for many years. Here are some examples:

- As far back as **1960, the first anti-discrimination resolution was passed** by the FIFA Congress in response to the apartheid regime then in place in South Africa.
- **In 1997**, FIFA established, in collaboration with the ILO and its IPEC programme, a **due-diligence process to combat child labour** in the football production industry.
- **FIFA licensees** must fully comply with the World Federation of the Sporting Goods Industry's code of conduct in areas such as **working conditions, the environment and community engagement**.
- The Sustainability Strategies for the **2014 and 2018 FIFA World Cups™** both include issues linked to human rights, such as **working conditions, health and safety, the prevention of child and slave labour, including informal traders, accessibility and anti-discrimination**.

As the governing body of the most popular sport in the world, we have a **responsibility in terms of how we go about developing the game of football and organising our competitions**. FIFA upholds respect for human rights and the application of international standards of behaviour as a fundamental principle and as part of all its activities. It has also been engaging with a range of stakeholders to find the best ways of addressing human-rights risks relating to its programmes and tournaments.

Current FIFA activities in relation to human rights:

FIFA is currently engaging in the following activities to strengthen its approach to human rights in relation to its organisation, events and competitions, including the FIFA World Cup™:

- **FIFA policies and practices:** following a decision taken by the FIFA Executive Committee in July 2015, **FIFA has committed to further incorporate human rights in the bidding and hosting process of the 2026 FIFA World Cup™**. The international human rights expert and Harvard Kennedy School Professor, **John Ruggie, has been asked to assist FIFA and provide advice for strengthening the integration of human rights aspects into FIFA's policies and practices**. Professor Ruggie will publish an **independent, public report** setting out recommendations for FIFA to embed respect for human rights across its operations and business relationships (see [press release](#)).

- **FIFA Statutes:** FIFA has included an **additional article on human rights in the new FIFA Statutes** as approved at the FIFA Extraordinary Congress on 26 February 2016 (see article 3 of the [draft Statutes](#)).
- **2018 FIFA World Cup Russia™:** the **Sustainability Strategy of the 2018 FIFA World Cup™** covers various aspects of human rights, in particular “Decent work” (key issue II), “Inclusivity and equality” (key issue III) and “Ethical business practices” (key issue VII) (see [2018 FIFA World Cup™ Sustainability Strategy](#)). FIFA and the LOC have launched a **project to monitor working conditions at FIFA World Cup™ stadium construction sites** (see [press release](#)).
- **2022 FIFA World Cup Qatar™:** FIFA is fully aware of the situation with regard to the labour conditions in Qatar. We are convinced that the unique attraction and visibility of the **FIFA World Cup™ is a strong catalyst for positive change**. FIFA is **working closely with the Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy** in Qatar to ensure fair working conditions at FIFA World Cup™ construction sites. The Supreme Committee has developed and is implementing **comprehensive workers’ welfare standards for the FIFA World Cup™ that meet international standards and best practices for working conditions and accommodation** (see [statement](#) by FIFA on 1 December 2015). FIFA will continue to work closely with the Supreme Committee and all other relevant authorities and stakeholders in order to ensure that such standards become the benchmark for all construction projects in Qatar.
- **Bidding process for 2026 FIFA World Cup™:** as part of the ongoing improvement of its processes, **FIFA decided in early 2012 to review its FIFA World Cup™ bidding process with respect to human rights and anti-corruption**. In this process, a number of key measures were integrated into the agreements based on international guidance and frameworks of the United Nations and informal consultation with external experts. **FIFA has sought guidance from the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPR)** and in the development of the respective sections of the bidding and hosting documents. To this end, FIFA **received technical assistance from the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)** in early 2015 as well as further input from Professor Ruggie.

History of human rights issues at FIFA and related initiatives

FIFA has been addressing human rights-related issues for many years. A brief review of our main activities in this area can be found below:

- As far back as **1960**, the **first anti-discrimination resolution** was passed by the FIFA Congress in response to the apartheid regime then in place in South Africa. We now have a comprehensive framework to tackle discrimination in all its forms.
- In **1997**, FIFA established, **in collaboration with the ILO and its IPEC programme**, a **due-diligence process to combat child labour in the football production industry**, complemented by substantial investment in social development projects in Pakistan. Today, FIFA licensees for balls and artificial turf are contractually bound to ensure fair labour practices and prevent child labour in their production processes.

- FIFA has a **longstanding cooperation agreement with the World Federation of the Sporting Goods Industry (WFSGI)**. As the world governing body for the sporting goods industry, the WFSGI strives to promote fair and environmentally friendly working conditions. The cooperation between FIFA and the WFSGI focuses on the **fight against child labour and forced labour**, as well as on **improving working conditions and environmental protection**. As one concrete example, the FIFA Quality Programme takes into account ethical standards as laid down in the **WFSGI's code of conduct**, which includes social responsibility as an integral part of the certification criteria and requires compliance with ethical business practices in terms of child labour, working hours, health and safety requirements, and environmental responsibility.
- The concept of sustainability has been guiding FIFA's efforts in terms of planning and delivering its events for some time now. Since the start of the event lifecycle of the 2014 FIFA World Cup™, we have developed **comprehensive sustainability strategies, based on international standards such as ISO 26000 and ISO 20121**. These strategies address key issues linked to human rights and have resulted in **concrete initiatives to enhance the positive social impact of the FIFA World Cup™ and reduce its negative effects**. These initiatives include the assessment of labour standards including the health and safety of workers, the prevention of child and slave labour throughout FIFA's supply chain, integration of informal traders as official sellers, promoting accessibility, job creation, skills development, anti-discrimination and social development in underprivileged communities. As an integral part of these strategies, we have [reported](#) on challenges and achievements in the implementation of these initiatives as well as on lessons learned for future events.
- FIFA has been regularly engaging with all relevant authorities** in the host countries of its flagship competition and organisations such as **Amnesty International, the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), the Building and Wood Workers' International (BWI)** as well government authorities and political institutions **to discuss human rights issues related to the hosting of its major competitions**. The overall objective of FIFA has always been to identify possible synergies and work on solutions involving all relevant and competent stakeholders and authorities.