

Fact Sheet: FIFA's Human Rights approach

April 2016

Introduction

FIFA is committed to the respect of human rights. FIFA is 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 addressing human rights-related issues for many years. Some examples:

- Already **in 1960, the first anti-discrimination resolution was passed** by the FIFA Congress as a reaction to the apartheid regime in South Africa. We now have a comprehensive framework to tackle discrimination in all its forms.
- Back **in 1997**, FIFA established, in collaboration with ILO/IPEC, a **due diligence process to combat child labour** in the soccer-ball industry.
- **FIFA licensees** must fully comply with the World Federation of the Sporting Goods Industry Code of Conduct with regards to topics 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 & safety, prevention of child and slave labour, inclusion of informal traders, accessibility and anti-discrimination**.

As the governing body of the most popular sport in the world, we have a **responsibility for how we go about developing the game of football and organising our competitions**. FIFA upholds the respect for human rights and the application of international standards of behaviour as a principle and as part of all its activities. Furthermore, FIFA has been engaging with a series of stakeholders to find the best ways of addressing human rights risks related 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, its events and its competitions, including the FWC:

- **FIFA policies & 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 FWC**. The international human rights expert and Harvard Kennedy School Professor, **John Ruggie, has been asked to assist FIFA and provide advice for further integrating human rights aspects into FIFA's policies and practices**. Professor Ruggie has published an **independent, public [report](#)** setting out recommendations for FIFA to embed respect for human rights across its operations and business relationships.

- **FIFA statutes:** FIFA has included an **additional article on human rights in the new FIFA Statutes** 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 FWC** 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 FWC Sustainability Strategy](#)). FIFA and the LOC have launched a **project to monitoring working conditions at construction sites of FWC stadiums** (see [press release](#)).
- **2022 FIFA World Cup™ Qatar:** FIFA is fully aware of the situation with regards to 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** to ensure fair working conditions on FWC construction sites. The Supreme Committee has developed and is implementing **comprehensive Workers Welfare Standards for the FWC which meet international standards and best practice for working conditions and accommodation**. FIFA will continue working 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 continuous improvement of its processes, **FIFA decided in early 2012 to review its FWC 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 been seeking guidance from the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs)** and in the development of the respective sections of the bidding and hosting documents. To that end, FIFA **received technical assistance from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)** in early 2015 and as well as further input from Professor Ruggie.

History of human rights issue at FIFA & related initiatives

FIFA has been addressing human rights-related issues for many years. A brief historic review of our main activities related to the topic of human rights can be found below.

- Already in **1960**, the **first anti-discrimination resolution** was passed by the FIFA Congress as a reaction to the apartheid regime in South Africa. We now have a comprehensive framework to tackle discrimination in all its forms.
- Back in **1997**, FIFA established, **in collaboration with ILO/IPEC**, a **due diligence process to combat child labour in the soccer-ball industry**, complemented by substantial investments 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 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 also accounts for ethical standards as laid down in the **code of conduct of the World Federation of Sporting Goods Industry (WFSGI)**. The code of conduct considers social responsibility as an integral part of the certification criteria and assures 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 towards planning and delivering its events for quite some time. Since the start of the event lifecycle of the 2014 FIFA World Cup, we developed **comprehensive sustainability strategies, based on international standards such as ISO 26000 and ISO 20121**. Those strategies addressed – and continue to address – material issues linked to human rights. As part of those strategies, we developed **concrete initiatives to enhance the positive and reduce the negative social impact of the FWC**, including: assessment of labour standards including health & safety of workers, the prevention of child and slave labour throughout FIFA's supply chain, integration of informal traders as official sellers, as well as the promotion of accessibility, job creation, skill development, anti-discrimination and social development in underprivileged communities. As an integral part of these strategies, we 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 governmental 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.