

# Fact Sheet: FIFA's work on Human Rights

November 2016

## Introduction

As the governing body of the most popular sport in the world, FIFA has a **responsibility for how it goes about developing the game of football and organising its competitions**. In accordance with article 3 of its Statutes,

*FIFA is committed to respecting all internationally recognised human rights and shall strive to promote the protection of these rights.*

Drawing on this statutory commitment, FIFA is constantly working on its policies and processes as well as on its organisational and event management systems to identify and address risks of involvement in adverse human rights impacts. FIFA thereby follows guidance from the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and other relevant internationally recognised standards and closely engages with relevant stakeholders.

## Recent and current activities in relation to human rights

In recent months, FIFA has significantly expanded its activities in relation to human rights:

- **Report by Professor John Ruggie:** 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. His independent report including a **set of concrete recommendations** was published in April 2016 (see [press release](#)).
- **Human Rights as key aspect of FIFA's new strategy:** FIFA President Infantino in October 2016 presented a strategic road map for the organisation (see [press release](#)). An important element of this strategic outlook is FIFA's ambition to "**champion human rights**" throughout its global operations.
- **Development of a Human Rights Policy Commitment:** FIFA is currently developing its Human Rights Policy Commitment in accordance with principle 16 of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and international best practice.
- **2018 FIFA World Cup™ Russia:** The **Sustainability Strategy of the 2018 FWC** covers various aspects of human rights, in particular in relation to 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](#)) and signed a [Memorandum of Understanding](#) with the Building and Wood Workers' International (BWI), and the Russian

Construction Workers Union (RBWU) to collaborate in ensuring decent and safe working conditions for the construction and renovation of the 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia™ stadiums.

- **2022 FIFA World Cup™ Qatar:** FIFA is fully aware of the situation with regards to labour conditions in Qatar and is 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** (see [statement](#) by FIFA on 1.12.2015). In November 2016, the Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy signed a [Memorandum of Understanding](#) with the Building and Wood Workers' International outlining their collaboration including joint inspections on construction sites, training and a review of existing grievance mechanisms.
- **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. 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.
- **Development of a Human Rights Advisory Board:** FIFA is in the process of setting up a Human Rights Advisory Board, which shall provide FIFA with **independent expert advice** on its efforts to implement Article 3 of its Statutes. The creation of this new body was initially announced by the FIFA President in Doha on 22 April 2016.
- **Employment of a Human Rights Manager:** In September 2016, FIFA has employed, as the first International Sports Federation, a human rights specialist to coordinate and further develop its human rights-related work.

## 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 the 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.