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## HUMAN RIGHTS AND LABOR STANDARDS



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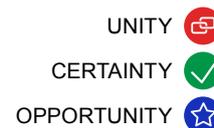
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23 Human Rights and Labor Standards



# 23 Human Rights and Labor Standards



**The United Bid has woven its commitment to human rights into the fabric of the bid submission and plans for hosting the 2026 FIFA World Cup™.**

The human rights requirements outlined by FIFA for the 2026 FIFA World Cup™ are the most extensive ever contemplated for a mega-sporting event. The United Bid is committed to working with FIFA to pursue those ambitious objectives, and to establish a model that future FIFA World Cup™ organizers, and others across the global sports landscape, can follow and use to promote human rights and social development.

## 23.1 Our United Commitment

The United Bid fully commits to respecting human rights in all aspects of our work before, during, and after the staging of the 2026 FIFA World Cup™, in accordance with the UN Guiding Principles (UNGPs) on Business and Human Rights.

Our commitment embraces all Internationally Recognized Human Rights, including those contained in the International Bill of Human Rights (consisting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights) and the principles set out in the International Labor Organization (ILO) Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.

Where we identify potentially adverse impacts on the human rights of people belonging to specific groups or populations, or in specific circumstances, we have considered other international standards and principles that elaborate on the rights of such individuals, including standards concerning indigenous peoples, migrant workers and their families, national, ethnic and religious minorities, people with disabilities, women, race, LGBTQI+, journalists, and human rights defenders.

In line with the UNGPs, we are committed to taking measures, based on in-depth due diligence, to avoid causing or contributing to adverse human rights impacts through our own activities and those of partners and to remediate such impacts when they occur. We will seek to prevent or mitigate adverse human rights impacts that are directly linked to our operations, products, or services by our business relationships, even if we have not caused or contributed to those impacts. Further, we will exercise our leverage, and seek to increase our leverage where necessary, in connection with adverse human rights impacts arising through our business relationships.

Our commitment based on the Competition lifecycle, and salient human rights risks, includes:

- **Equality of Opportunity and Inclusivity:** Within our organization, throughout all our activities, and the activities of our business partners, we will prohibit discrimination of

any kind. Furthermore, we will place particular emphasis on promoting gender equality and preventing all forms of harassment, including sexual harassment.

- **Child Safeguarding:** We will strive to develop policies and procedures to safeguard children, and strive to provide development and educational opportunities to youth as part of our volunteer programs.
- **Freedom of Expression and Assembly:** We commit to protecting the right to free speech, putting in place policies and procedures to ensure the safety and protection of journalists, and to support the right to peaceful protest.
- **Labor Rights:** We are committed to upholding and promoting international labor standards, in particular the principles enshrined in the ILO Core Labor standards. We will ensure minimum wage levels are effectively enforced and will implement relevant procedures to ensure respect for labor standards by our staff and business partners, and in all aspects of our operations.
- **Land Acquisition and Housing Rights:** While no new stadiums will be constructed, we will respect international human rights standards where temporary land usage related to the staging of the Competition involves expropriations or temporary displacement.
- **International Travel and Movement:** All three countries have principles of due process and equal protection which apply to

every person. We will work with government leaders at all levels to provide an inclusive atmosphere that celebrates diversity and welcomes players and officials, fans, media, volunteers, and other key stakeholders. We will advocate to ensure that everyone who safely wants to be part of the 2026 FIFA World Cup™ will be able to do so without discrimination or undue hindrance.

- **Privacy Rights:** We will strive to ensure that the personal and financial information of players and officials, fans, media, volunteers, and others involved in the staging of the tournament will be safeguarded, particularly with regard to ticketing, event-related apps, social media channels, and public WiFi networks in event-related spaces.
- **Security:** Providing for the safety of millions of players and officials, fans, staff, volunteers, media, and others attending, otherwise involved in, or affected by the 2026 FIFA World Cup™, may impact certain human rights, such as freedom of movement, expression, and assembly. We will work with FIFA, government officials at all levels, and all partners and vendors to minimize any such impact, ensuring it is necessary and proportionate, while taking into account legitimate security concerns. We will strive to use our leverage with relevant authorities to ensure all security personnel receive appropriate training so as to perform their duties in line with international standards on human rights.

Furthermore, we will include such standards in our relationships with private security companies that are contracted to provide such services.

Guided by the approach outlined in our human rights strategy, we will:

- Embed our commitment to respect human rights throughout our activities and engage in ongoing due diligence to assess actual and potential human rights impacts, integrating and acting on credible findings, tracking responses, and communicating how impacts have been addressed.
- Provide for or enable access to appropriate, effective mechanisms to identify and address grievances for those whose human rights may have been impacted by our own activities or those of our partners.
- Commit to processes of remediation of adverse human rights impacts in connection with the hosting and staging of the Competition. Where national laws and regulations and international human rights standards differ, or are in conflict with each other, we will follow the higher standard where we can do so without infringing on domestic laws and regulations. Where national context risks undermine our ability to ensure respect for Internationally Recognized Human Rights, we will constructively engage with the relevant authorities and other stakeholders and make every effort to uphold our international human rights responsibilities.

We will fulfill this commitment by engaging stakeholders in the governance, strategy development, and operations processes, and abiding by the principles of inclusivity, materiality, and responsiveness as set out in the AA1000 Stakeholder Engagement Standard.

### **Delivering on our Commitments**

Embedding respect for human rights is a fundamental part of our proposed Sustainable Event Management (SEM) system. Key elements of the SEM system related to our human rights strategy include, but are not limited to:

- Ensuring our human rights commitment, including our commitment to non-discrimination and diversity, is communicated to everyone associated with our activities, from the Board of Directors down to human rights stakeholders.
- Embedding transparency and respect for human rights and prohibition of discrimination, in all its forms, in all contracts and policies in our sustainable procurement policy and supplier code of conduct.
- Building understanding and capacity to act in a way which both respects and promotes human rights for all United 2026 board members, staff, volunteers, contractors, suppliers, and service providers.
- Integrating stakeholder engagement and communication into the governance, strategy, and operational processes of United 2026 and Host City activities.

**23.2 Our Human Rights Strategy**

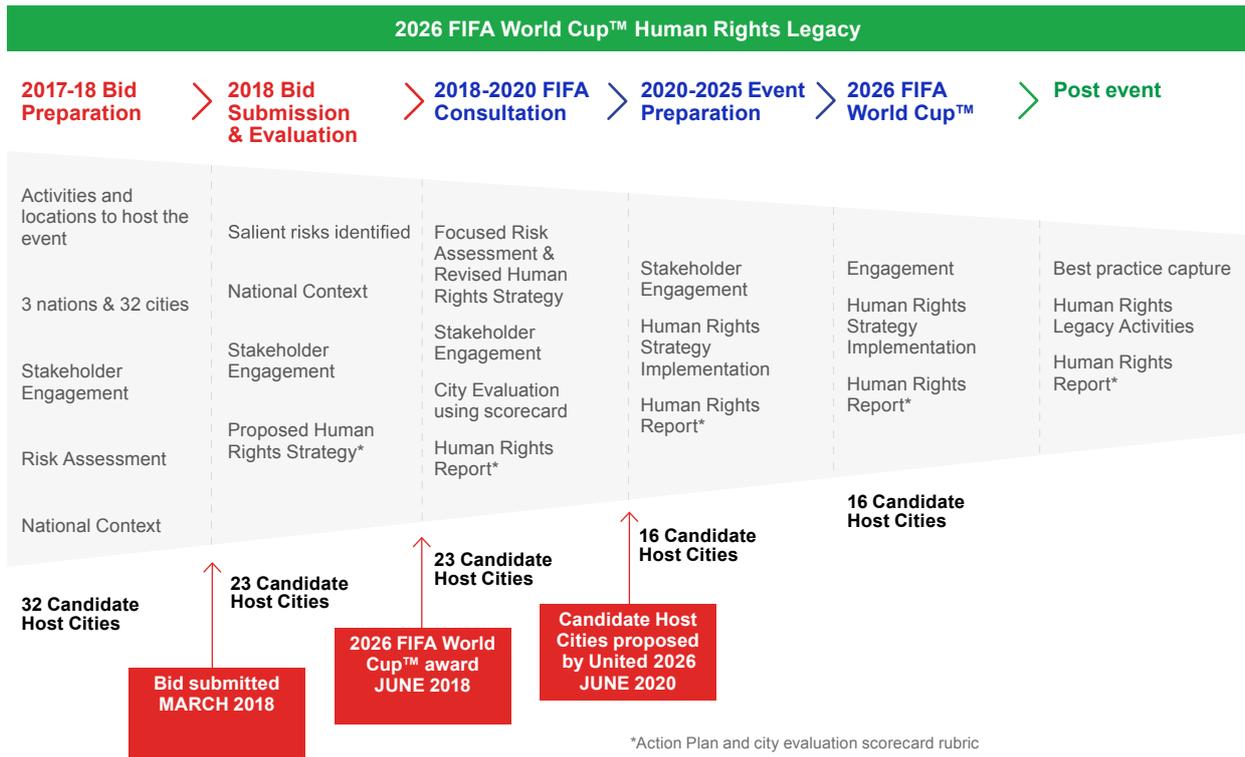
The human rights at risk due to activities and business relationships occurring through planning and staging of the 2026 FIFA World Cup™ will be the focus of our strategy. We anticipate that by addressing these risks there will be significant legacies for human rights in contexts not directly associated with the Competition. The United Bid’s human rights strategy features several core principles:

- **We will build on existing protections.** All three Host Countries are stable constitutional democracies with a strong commitment to the rule of law and established legal protections for human rights. There is also a strong civil society that advocates for protection of human rights. We will strive to support our governments, cities, and civil society partners

in their efforts, wherever possible. The aim is to complement, rather than duplicate.

- **We will create leverage through competition and performance.** The United Bid offers more Candidate Host Cities than required, a tremendous source of leverage in embedding respect for human rights into FIFA’s plans for staging the Competition. During the Initial Operational Phase, we will work with FIFA to provide a scorecard to help assess Candidate Host City performance on human rights and measure progress throughout the lifecycle of the event.
- **We will work together.** We will earn the trust of and engage stakeholders across our three Host Countries, thereby enrolling hundreds of agents of change to stage an inclusive, tolerant, and diverse Competition.

**United 2026 Human Rights Strategy Process**



- **We will measure impact and continue to improve.** We are committed to systematically tracking, measuring, and reviewing our performance, and incorporating what we've learned to achieve the greatest possible impact.

**Identifying and Assessing Risk:** In identifying and assessing risks to human rights, we examined: (1) risks associated with activities and locations (stadiums, cities, airports, factories in the supply chain, social media, etc.) related to the staging of the Competition; (2) risks associated with national, state/provincial, and municipal

context of laws and practice; and (3) risks to people from activities, locations, and geographic context. We also commissioned an independent study of our three countries to identify any potential gaps in their human rights protections. This report informed our thinking around the most likely salient risks related to human rights in the context of organizing and hosting the 2026 FIFA World Cup™.



These salient risks and a summary of legal protections provided in our three countries are detailed in Table 1 (below), as well as in Annex 1 of the United Human Rights Strategy, and in the independent study by Ergon Associates.

**Table 1: Legal protections of human rights in the national context**

Human rights risks identified	Canada	Mexico	US
Right to life, liberty and security of the person	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓
Right to due process	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓
Freedom of expression and assembly	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓
Freedom of movement and travel	✓✓	✓✓	✓
Non-discrimination	✓✓	✓✓	✓
Disability access	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓
Privacy	✓	✓	✓
Labor rights	✓✓	✓	✓
Land and property rights	✓	✓	✓✓
Housing	X	✓✓	X
Participation in conduct of public affairs	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓
Trafficking	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓

#### Legend

✓✓	Protections exist and are aligned with international standards, or broadly aligned with minor gaps
✓	Protections exist but with some gaps
X	Substantial gaps or no legal protections

**Action Plan for Our Human Rights Strategy:**

Our proposed strategy addresses the salient risks we have identified by providing a roadmap for each area. Specifically, our plan includes:

- Steps to embed protections into operational policies and procedures concerning the area of risk, for both our activities and that of our partners.
- Guiding Candidate Host Cities on how they can engage with human rights stakeholders to construct effective and local due diligence processes to identify, prevent, and remedy areas of risk as part of their candidature, and afterwards if selected as Host Cities.
- Creating and exercising leverage to ensure respect for human rights in all aspects of planning and executing the event.
- Tracking, verifying, and accounting for effectiveness of measures taken and standards upheld, as well as reporting publicly on any adverse impacts to human rights and how they are handled.
- Ensuring grievance mechanisms are in place to address negative impacts and ensure fulfillment of the effectiveness criteria set out in principle 31 of the UNGPs.



The full action plan can be found in Section V of the United Human Rights Strategy.

**Monitoring:** In cooperation with partners and stakeholders, we will monitor progress of all those involved in preparing for and hosting the Competition relating to human rights issues. The monitoring process will vary depending on the context, however, key components will include: a program and scorecard whereby cities are asked to compete on their human rights performance using metrics addressing a range of human rights issues, leveraging best practice from the private sector, as well as multi-stakeholder monitoring.



For additional information on monitoring in each risk area, please see Section V of our United Human Rights Strategy.

**Grievance Mechanism:** Our goal is to create, with FIFA, mechanisms for all of those who have been negatively impacted by activities related to the staging of the 2026 FIFA World Cup™ to both know about their potential routes for complaint and grievance and have trust in their use. We will work with FIFA to develop a framework to ensure existing mechanisms are aligned with any public or state-based judicial and non-judicial mechanisms, fortified (as needed), and gaps filled. Grievance mechanisms to fill gaps would be designed to ensure fulfillment of the effectiveness criteria set out in principle 31 of the UNGPs.



For more information on our approach to addressing grievances, please see Sections IV and V of our United Human Rights Strategy.

**Response to Grievances Raised:** Where specific grievances are raised we will take relevant steps to ensure that, to the extent possible, such negative impacts are remedied.



For more information, please see our United Human Rights Strategy.

### 23.3 Stakeholder Engagement for Human Rights Strategy Summary

The United Bid employed a robust stakeholder engagement process in line with the AA1000 Stakeholder Engagement Standard in the course of developing our proposed human rights strategy.

**Purpose and Scope:** Our purpose for engaging with human rights stakeholders was to help develop key aspects of our human rights strategy as prescribed in the bidding requirements. The scope of engagement focused on potential risks to human rights associated with the staging and hosting of the tournament in the Candidate Host Cities across our three countries, including risks associated with security, land rights and usage, labor rights, including human trafficking, the rights of children, protections against

discrimination in all its forms, and ensuring freedom of expression and peaceful assembly and right to privacy. Actions to protect human rights covered all aspects of the operations related to the Competition. The time frame of issues undertaken by stakeholders included current concerns as well as ones over the lifecycle of the Competition.

#### Mapping and Identifying Stakeholders:

The process of mapping and identifying stakeholders included the following steps:

- Engaging with individuals, groups, and organizations active in human rights globally, the international Mega Sporting Events (MSE) platform for human rights, and through national stakeholders.
- Contacting human rights experts, groups, and organizations at the national level for Canada, Mexico, and the United States referred to by those active in the MSE platform.
- Engaging with leadership in each of the Candidate Host Cities.
- Identifying any gaps in representation in the three countries and seeking referrals.



A full list of stakeholders engaged is found in Annex 3 of the United Human Rights Strategy.

**Stakeholder Engagement Activities:**

Stakeholder engagement for the bidding process included: (1) one-on-one consultations with those active in the MSE platform or civil rights at the national and international level; (2) consultations with Candidate Host Cities to inform them of human rights requirements, answer questions or concerns they have, and solicit specific information for use in the proposed human rights strategy; and (3) involvement in facilitated multi-stakeholder forums in January 2018 (Washington, DC and New York City), and March 2018 (Mexico City) with over 60 representatives from more than 30 organizations and all three Host Country governments.

**Engagement, Outputs and Action Plans:**

The outputs of our stakeholder engagement included: (1) a refined list of risk areas for the national context of all three countries; (2) specific information regarding risks, existing due diligence processes, and grievance mechanisms in Candidate Host Cities; and (3) stakeholder-provided assessment of risks and proposals – all of which were integrated into our human rights strategy.



Please see Annexes 3 and 4 of the United Human Rights Strategy for more information.

**23.4 Human Rights and Social Legacy Youth and Social Development**

The United Bid proposes a new blueprint for social impact through football, which embeds our commitment to human rights and the development of the sport. It incorporates science-based approaches, technology, and partnerships across sectors to maximize impact. Starting in North America to then expand worldwide, this blueprint addresses FIFA's 2.0 vision and the scope of Football for Hope.

The United Bid has identified physical and mental health, gender equality, inclusion (ensuring all children have access to the sport of football for their personal and community development), education (including the development of curricula integrating football and school disciplines), and healthier lifestyles generally as the most critical issues we will address with our youth and social legacy, prioritizing underserved communities.

Past efforts to implement football and development programs have found mixed results around the world due to a variety of both local and structural challenges. Our model addresses these challenges by ensuring our initiatives are viable, financially sustainable, and scalable while also delivering meaningful, measurable effects.

### Minutes from Football

The centerpiece of our youth/social legacy is the creation of “Minutes from Football”, an initiative to link existing and newly developed mini-pitches, and other safe spaces to play, to systematic programming. This blueprint will also be enabled by technology, allowing real-time monitoring of usage and conditions to deliver greater results and efficiency.

Working closely with FIFA, we will encourage and enable the development of 2,026 mini-pitches and other safe spaces to play across North America in honor of the 2026 FIFA World Cup™. We recognize that the development of mini-pitches linked to social programs on their own is not a new concept which is why, consistent with our overall hosting strategy, we will invest our energy and resources towards improving existing and to-be-developed spaces and enhanced programming, rather than building new infrastructure. We will ensure that all play spaces built are connected to programming with proven results.

We will begin by engaging with successful efforts in each of our three Host Countries, including Canada’s Soccer Pathway and Active Start Soccer Fests programs, Grassroots Mexico and Abrazos por el Futbol (Unite by Football) of the

Mexican Football Federation, and in the United States, the U.S. Soccer Foundation’s flagship programs: Soccer for Success and Safe Places to Play.

Our concept includes:

- Using science-based approaches and applied research to maximize impact of football programming on key social issues such as health, education, and other sustainable development goals.
- Improving the utility of the programs through urban design-based models to strategically locate and develop/select football pitches and safe places to play.
- Applying the latest technology to enable effective program management, evaluation and ability to scale-up and replicate.

As required by FIFA, the United Bid will propose three potential sites for the Football for Hope Festival (or other sustainability related events) for exclusive use by FIFA for one month during the 2026 FIFA World Cup. Each of our Candidate Host Cities offers qualified locations for these events, and we expect many of them will be part of the Minutes From Football network, once activated. We will work with FIFA to determine which of the qualified locations is best suited for these events as part of the planning phase.

**Priority Issues in Each Country:** The United Bid will prioritize specific target issues and underserved populations, consistent with our commitment to inclusivity and promoting wellbeing in each of our three Host Countries. They include:

- Canada: Social inclusion and life-long health, focusing on indigenous groups and other minorities.
- Mexico: Advancing gender equality and promoting youth health.
- United States: Supporting underserved communities, focusing on education, social harmony, and healthier lifestyles.

**Commitment and Funding Model:** The United Bid will collaborate with FIFA to secure the necessary funding for this program. We have allocated USD \$20 million in our budget for this initiative.

The optimal funding level for these programs is greater than what is budgeted, but the difference can be addressed through various public/private financing concepts. We have begun to explore options to be reviewed with FIFA at the appropriate time.

The U.S. Soccer Foundation has committed to build 1,000 pitches between now and 2026, and local efforts in Canada and Mexico are being considered. The United Bid discussed these initiatives with our Candidate Host Cities, and other communities and organizations across North America, and they are already motivated to ensure community development through football. We anticipate the program will directly benefit at least one million girls and boys in each of our three countries before 2026.

**Impact Valuation:** The United Bid proposes to team with FIFA on a transformative approach for impact valuation, to identify, measure, and communicate the social positive impact of the game.



More details on this approach and the “Minutes from Football” initiative can be found in Annex 5 of the United Human Rights Strategy.