



Centre for Sport
& Human Rights

HUMAN RIGHTS VOLUNTEERS

Introducing the programme

WHAT ARE HUMAN RIGHTS VOLUNTEERS?

Human Rights Volunteers is an innovative new initiative from the Centre for Sport and Human Rights to support major event owners and organisers at games time.

Human Rights Volunteers (HRVs) are members of an event's wider volunteer pool who undergo special training from recognised global human rights experts to act as independent observers, similar to election observers or demonstration monitors but specifically for sporting and other events. They monitor activities that arise during games time and report on their findings to event owners and organisers for internal feedback, intervention, follow-up or corrective action.

The programme can be implemented by event owners, hosts and organisers to support their wider human rights risk, compliance and legacy systems.

Through the programme, volunteers are trained to:

OBSERVE

Observe trends in behaviours and practices related to human rights

INTERVIEW

Conduct interviews with fans, workers and others on their experiences

DOCUMENT

Systematically report observations on human rights concerns for follow-up

REFER

Inform stakeholders about the availability of relevant complaints procedures

ESCALATE

Identify material concerns requiring swift intervention and follow-up



WHY DO EVENTS NEED HUMAN RIGHTS VOLUNTEERS?

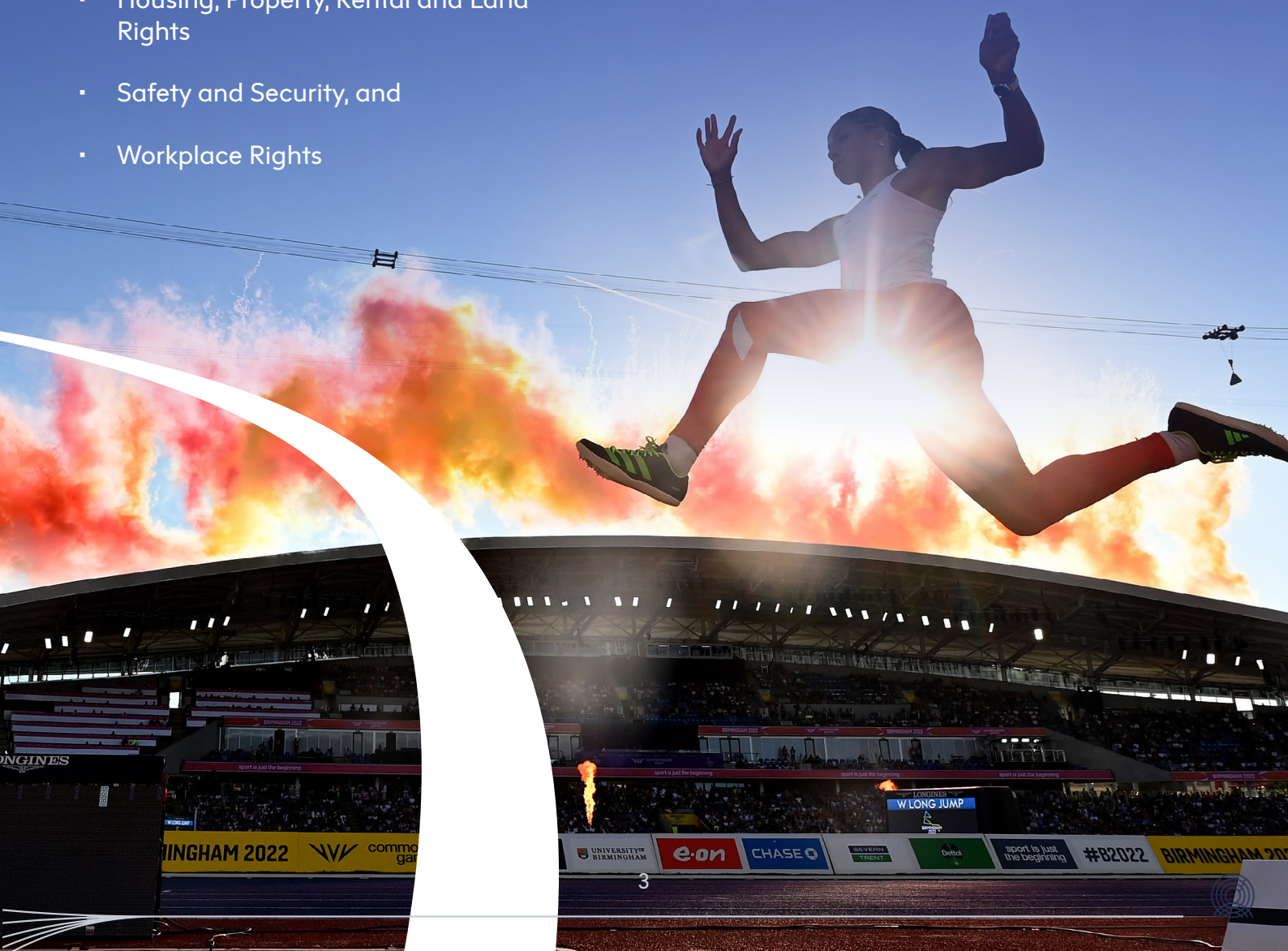
Sports events, including international tournaments and championships, have the power to change lives for the better, bring people together and create a sense of unity and pride.

These events can however also have a negative impact on human rights and people's lives in areas such as:

- Accessibility for People with Disabilities
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
- Freedom of Assembly, Expression and the Press
- Housing, Property, Rental and Land Rights
- Safety and Security, and
- Workplace Rights

To make sure that sports events live up to their potential to be a force for good, to avoid causing harm and to promote human rights and people's well-being, it is important to have policies and risk management systems, as well as eyes and ears on the ground so event organisers know what's working and isn't.

This is where HRVs come in.



HOW DOES THE PROGRAMME WORK?

The programme is designed to sit alongside existing event management systems and security protocols and provides a new layer to due diligence processes, information gathering and stakeholder input on human rights for owners and organisers.

The programme is recommended for all major sports events, including the Olympic Games, World Cups, major championship or league finals, and other global and regional sporting events, with potential to expand in the future for roll-out at cultural and other non-sporting events.

In practice, the HRV role is to:

BE HUMAN RIGHTS AWARE

Pay particular attention to vulnerabilities and monitor potential harm to at-risk individuals and groups

COLLECT DATA

Record human rights-related impacts arising with a view to improving systems over the long-term and providing evidence to support follow-up measures

MONITOR

Identify human rights risks and challenges on the ground in real-time

SHARE LEARNINGS AND EXPERIENCES

Form an informal human rights community contributing a legacy of human rights education and engagement for HRVs

SIGNPOST HUMAN RIGHTS RESOURCES

Direct fans, workers, volunteers and others to relevant grievance mechanisms so they can lodge concerns or make formal complaints



“

"I believe in my own small way, I contributed to improving the operations and organisation of the FIFA World Cup. Knowing that I might have impacted a person's life or future is a very rewarding experience for me."

Human Rights Volunteer, FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022

”



WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS FOR EVENT ORGANISERS?

There are several reasons why event owners, hosts and organisers should implement a HRV programme for their events.

The programme contributes to:

COMPREHENSIVE RISK MANAGEMENT

An early warning system to support ongoing human rights due diligence, identify and document risks in real-time, and support timely responses to issues and to make urgent system adjustments as needed

INCLUSIVE STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

A structured programme to engage and facilitate input and learning from civil society, human rights experts and fans, to collaboratively reduce event-related risks of harm, building trust with fans, workers, journalists and others stakeholders while enhancing the credibility of the event

ROBUST COMPLIANCE

A means to support owners and organisers' human rights responsibilities and implementation of effective due diligence, so enhancing the integrity and reputation of the event

IMPROVED ACCOUNTABILITY

A potentially significant mechanism through which commercial and sports actors and relevant authorities are more likely to be held accountable by deterring wrong-doing and feeding greater transparency

LASTING LEGACY

A vehicle for building human rights knowhow and experience in the volunteer pool and within the local community that will outlive the event lifecycle, and demonstrate a positive impact beyond the event.



EXAMPLES OF DATA GATHERED BY HUMAN RIGHTS VOLUNTEERS

From observations and interviews with fans/patrons and other event stakeholders, HRVs gather a rich body of information (including locations and times as needed) on how event systems are working in practice, including any trends that demand urgent action, and recommendations on the steps to take.

Examples include:

- If mobility services are meeting the needs of people with visible and invisible disabilities
- If the event is inclusive and fans/patrons off all backgrounds feel welcome
- If fans/patrons feel safe, and if security systems are meeting stakeholder needs (e.g. highlighting crowd control pinch points)

- If there are instances of racial profiling or other forms of discrimination on the part of security or workforce teams, and the nature of any common trends
- If workforce and volunteers feel taken care of or are experiencing harassment or abuse
- If fans and the media feel able to exercise their freedom of expression safely and responsibly



HOW CAN WE WORK TOGETHER?

The following elements can be delivered in partnership with the Centre for Sport and Human Rights via our Advisory Services function, which offers technical support, advice and collaboration on human rights projects in sport.

RECRUITMENT & SELECTION

HRVs recruited and selected broadly, including human rights experts and local civil society, with a focus on diversity and inclusion, integrating local knowledge and bringing a range of skills and perspectives. Resourcing and participation of HRVs from diverse communities and small Civil society organisations is included.

EDUCATION & TRAINING

Through our online Global Sport and Human Rights Academy, as well as virtual and face-to-face sessions, HRVs will be trained to effectively monitor human rights issues during the event. Training will cover human rights principles and games time risks, practical scenario-based activities on issues that may arise and venue-specific challenges. We will also support team bonding, peer-learning and regular HRV check-ins.

DUTY OF CARE

Event organisers will be helped to protect HRVs from harm and ensure officials / workforce personnel with whom HRVs interact are aware of their duties. HRVs can be at risk of human rights abuse, in part because the nature of their duties involves keeping others to account, so their well-being and safety must be planned.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Project management delivered, including allocating teams, fostering team culture,

ADVISORY SERVICES

liaison with HQ operations and relevant venue Functional Area leads and human resource functions, oversight of real-time problem solving, and Team Leader and HRV check-ins and information sharing.

REPORTING FRAMEWORK

Streamlined data collection and reporting systems created and operated for HRV findings to be escalated for immediate intervention, used to inform real-time pivots in operational protocols, or to provide evidence to support remedy. Under CSHR guidance the HRVs supply live / filtered data on issues at individual venues, trends across venues, and recommendations for appropriate and timely response.

ANALYSIS AND REPORTING

To help promote accountability and transparency, we will produce and publish an independent final report capturing learnings and key human rights substantive trends identified during games times, striving at all times for continuous improvement.

HRV LEGACY NETWORK

HRV alumni network set up and maintained employing social media platforms so HRVs can share learnings and insights before, during and after games-time, highlight new HRV training, pinpoint forthcoming volunteer opportunities, and explore ways to use human rights awareness to support community local needs.



"One of the groundbreaking and innovative aspects of the Human Rights Volunteer programme is that it enables real-time pivots to operational protocols for human rights-related risks or harms when a mega-sporting event goes live. When they go live these events always have bumps, despite rehearsals and test events. So being able to have a system in place to observe, escalate and provide real-time feedback on human rights, enabling the organisers to make changes quickly – is a major value add and helps everyone."

**Mary Harvey, Chief Executive,
Centre for Sport and Human Rights**



**Centre for Sport
& Human Rights**

"Independent observations, with access and a status protected by the organisers, are crucial to the accountability of tournament organisers and allow international sporting bodies to progress in their operations from one major sporting event to the other. Our engagement with the Human Rights Volunteers programme allowed Football Supporters Europe to promote the work of the volunteers amongst our member organisations, and to help volunteers to get a better understanding of the needs, expectations, and diversity of the supporters who travelled to Qatar."

**Ronan Evain
Executive Director
Football Supporters Europe**



HUMAN RIGHTS VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION

Read our case study reviewing the first ever Human Rights Volunteers programme at the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022.

sporthumanrights.org/volunteers

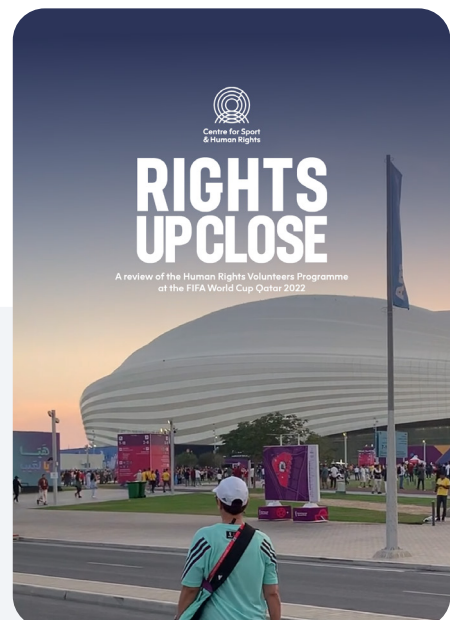
"The engagement of a diverse selection of volunteers, including LGBTI people, engaging as human right observers is critical to the success of Human Rights Volunteer programmes. Seasoned LGBTI advocates are equipped and experienced to ensure mega sporting events are safe and inclusive for all, including LGBTI people."

**Gurchaten Sandhu
Director of Programmes
ILGA World – the International Lesbian, Gay,
Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association**



"The FIFA Men's World Cup 2022 showed the potential and value of a human rights programme utilising the skills and expertise of human rights leaders alongside volunteer teams – this should be the starting point for a future staple of major sporting events worldwide."

**Joe White,
Co-Chair Three Lions Pride &
Representative of Football Supporters Europe
Human Rights Volunteer Team Leader,
FIFA Fan Festival**



"I got to deal with people from many cultures and many fields, and to feel that we are making a difference in a place where it is hard to be a human rights volunteer."

**Human Rights Volunteer,
FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022**



"Mega-sporting events are planetary stages where human rights messaging can resonate and amplify in unprecedented ways – for instance, messaging on the participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities, the promotion of children's rights, and opposition to racism and homophobia. This belief has driven the engagement of our office in this project and will continue to guide our efforts to strengthen human rights integration in mega-sporting events."

**Elena Ippoliti and Mara Steccazzini,
Office of the UN High Commission
for Human Rights**



"Any meaningful human rights due diligence process needs to constantly evaluate and enhance itself. This is even more important in relation to a mega-sporting event, where activities and therefore risks of adverse impact are concentrated during a relatively short and highly intensive period of time. The HRV programme implemented for the first time at a greater scale at the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 allowed us to hear directly from those the wider human rights efforts were designed to protect and provided an additional layer of data to learn about and reacting to issues."

"We are extremely grateful for the dedication and enthusiasm of the diverse group of HRVs at the FIFA World Cup in Qatar, and for the CSHR for its support throughout the process. We are pleased to see that other sports bodies are taking a close look at our experiences in Qatar and are contemplating implementing similar programmes at their events too."

**Andreas Graf
Head of Human Rights and
Anti-Discrimination, FIFA**



ABOUT THE CENTRE FOR SPORT AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The Centre for Sport and Human Rights is a human rights organisation for the world of sport.

Launched in June 2018, CSHR works towards a world of sport that fully respects human rights by sharing knowledge, building capacity, and strengthening the accountability of all actors in the sport ecosystem through collective action.

Get in touch for more details at info@sporthumanrights.org
or visit sporthumanrights.org/volunteers





Centre for Sport
& Human Rights

HUMAN RIGHTS VOLUNTEERS

sporthumanrights.org/volunteers