

**Labor Trafficking
on the
Global Sporting Stage**

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PREFACE

Mega-sporting events are a globalized function that blends sports business with the larger global phenomenon of national pride, economic development, cultural pride, legacy, and international politics (MacRury, 2015, 24-25). Mega sporting events, such as the FIFA World Cup and the Olympic Games, which drew 3.05 billion spectators for the 2020 Tokyo Summer Games (Richer, 2022) and 5.4 billion views for the 2022 FIFA World Cup (BeIn Sports), aim to leave a legacy of international peace and comradery. These events focused the world's attention on the host country, allowing it to convey its national culture, identity, scenery, and other aspects it wishes to share. However, the hosting privilege comes with increased criticism of the game's preparation as well as the nation's current issues with social fairness, political structure, and economic systems.

Global athletic events are inherently linked to politics (Boykoff, 2019, 1). The confluence of sports and nation-states highlights national and international issues such as the economy, social structure, environmental concerns, and human rights (MacRury, 2015, 24). The entrance of international attention and legislation does not reduce these difficulties; rather, it exacerbates them. Furthermore, mega-sporting events share a mutualistic relationship with the geography of a region. In other words, mega-sporting events adapt to the political, economic, and social landscapes of their surroundings while the characteristics of a region are influenced in return.

For my thesis research, I present a regional view of the relationship between labor trafficking and mega-sporting events. Mega-events, such as the FIFA World Cup and the Olympic Games, have the potential to transform space and impact human rights in consequential ways. The worldwide strain on these events exacerbates pre-existing social inequities in the regions where they take place. Mega-sporting events have the potential to drive change and

confront human rights violations. The attention drawn by international media frequently leads to criticism of a country's current economic, political, and social imbalances. However, the presence of huge sporting events puts the host country under significant pressure and requires extensive planning. Thus, mega-sporting events frequently amplify societal inequality and human rights breaches.

ABSTRACT

The goal of major athletic events is to promote global harmony and goodwill. The host nation was able to showcase its national culture, identity, landscape, and other desired elements by drawing attention to itself from around the globe through these events. The honor of hosting the event is accompanied by heightened criticism of the nation's existing problems with social justice, politics, and the economy. Mega-sporting events have a natural geographic connection and adjust to the political, social, and economic environments of the areas they are held in, which in turn shapes the local character. These occurrences have the power to fundamentally alter space and have an impact on human rights. Although there is hope that mega-sporting events will positively transform the host country, oftentimes, they elevate existing social, political, and economic structures.

Three chapters of this study investigate the geographical relationship between mega-sporting events and people trafficking. Chapter 1 investigates human trafficking as a concept and how it connects to mega-sporting events. The chapter concludes with a literature review on labor trafficking and migratory workers, as well as a discussion of regional geography and how it affects human rights issues. Chapter 2 is a case study about Qatar's hosting of the 2022 FIFA World Cup. The World Cup, held every four years, draws global attention to the premier event in the most popular sport. With this popularity comes numerous sponsors, media attention, and unwavering national pride. However, the love of the game and the billions of spectators who attended the event did not keep the media from critiquing Qatar's history and ongoing human rights breaches. With what I uncover studying Qatar, chapter 3 will look ahead to Los Angeles and its preparations for the 2026 FIFA World Cup and the 2028 Summer Olympic Games.

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Chapter 1

Mega-Sporting Events and Human Trafficking

Introduction

Modern slavery, known better as “human trafficking,” circulates the Western media. Although the term is used often, there is often confusion about what exactly human trafficking is and how it is different from slavery. In this chapter, I will analyze the history of the term “trafficking,” its nature regarding geography, as well as the difficulties in studying the phenomenon. Chapter 1 outlines the concept of human trafficking, a literature review of studies of trafficking in mega-sporting events, labor trafficking, and migrant workers, and concludes with a discussion of geography as a key concept of understanding trafficking.

Concept of Human Trafficking

The first recorded use of the term "trafficking" regarding people is in the English Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885 (Venson, 2013, 61). This amendment mentioned the trafficking of women for prostitution, introducing us to the ideology of sex trafficking that continues today. However, the Act does not provide any official legislation on potential solutions to the problem. It wouldn't be until the turn of the 20th century that trafficking was mentioned in official legislation.

The first use of the term is around the same time that slavery was abolished around the globe, the last being Brazil in 1888. There is some sentiment that the term “trafficking” arose in the late 19th and early 20th century to replace the use of the word “slavery” due to the emotions and politics surrounding the term. With this theory, trafficking is just a replacement for slavery. However, many non-profits argue that trafficking, in the modern sense, is an umbrella term in

which “modern day slavery” falls under. Love164, a nonprofit, states that not all trafficking victims experience slavery and that the use of the term should not be used to identify trafficking survivors. They argue that identifying victims as “slaves” dehumanized them. The organization also states, “We also understand that using this terminology may make it harder for some who have been trafficked to recognize and acknowledge the exploitation perpetrated against them” (Love146, 2021). Love 146 further explains that depicting victims in chains and bondage across the media, which are objects associated with chattel slavery, do not accurately depict the nature of human trafficking (Love146, 2021). Therefore, it is important to distinguish between the two terms. Trafficking, as an umbrella term, encompasses a wider range of human rights abuses outside of just slavery (Dang, 2014).

In 1905, The International Agreement for the Suppression of the White Slave Traffic was ratified in Paris by twelve European nations and their colonies (UN Treaty Collections, 1905, Chapter VII). Western Powers looked to suppress the exploitation of white women and white children in the sex trade. The treaty expressed the immorality of sex work and explained that women and children in this area of work have no choice. Prostitution, according to the agreement, is a threat to the body, a threat to marriage, a threat to property, and is considered a disease (Veneson, 2013, 62). It wouldn't be until the feminist movement of the 1980s that sex work would be referred to as a freedom of choice, body, and work, not a forced lifestyle like sex trafficking. In 1996, the UN redefined sex work as "living and working conditions (Veneson, 2013, 71)."

The International Agreement for the Suppression of the White Slave Traffic was included in the UN's Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic of Persons and the Exploitation and Prostitution of Others in 1949 (UN, General Assembly Resolution 317, 1949, IV). The creation

of the convention led to what we have today, the Palermo Protocol. Passed in 2000, the Palermo Protocol has three objectives:

- a.) To prevent, and combat trafficking in persons, paying attention to women and children.
 - b.) To protect and assist the victims of such trafficking, with full respect for their human rights; and
 - c.) To promote cooperation among State Parties to meet those objectives.
- The Palermo Protocol further provides methods of criminalization, the protection of victims of trafficking in persons, as well as legislation for the prevention and cooperation of member states. (UN, General Assembly Resolution 55/25)

This history of legislation and concern for human trafficking is traditionally aimed at the protection of women and children. Trafficking violations and protective measures against men are not necessarily ignored, but language throughout the examples above provides emphasis on the vulnerability of women and children in trafficking. This is due to the traditional focus on sex trafficking, in which victims are more likely to be women at 74% (Statista, 2023). However, these legislation amendments were less aimed at the extermination of trafficking and more at the prevention of women from partaking in sex work. As Chandre Gould explains in research on the 2010 World Cup in South Africa, sex work and prostitution were seen as morally evil and a plague to society (Gould, 2010, 37). Historical legislation wording suggests that there is no difference between sex work and sex trafficking, and the theoretical separation of these two different situations did not appear until the feminist movement in the 1980s (Veneson, 2013, 70). However, the discussion of men as a major target of human trafficking has become more apparent in academic and statistical studies since 2004 with a change of emphasis on forced labor. Since 2004, the total percentage of trafficked women has dropped from 74% to 42% in 2020. On the other hand, the trafficking of men rose from 3% in 2004 to 23% in 2020 while boys have jumped from 10% to 18% (Statista, 2023). Although women are still disproportionately

affected by human trafficking, male victims are increasingly being brought to light with a rise in focus of labor trafficking. This is not to say that sex-trafficked victims are solely female, and labor-trafficked victims are male. Both sexes are affected in each category.

Today, most countries look to the U.S. and its policies for human trafficking standards (Morrow, 2008, 249). The Trafficking Victims Protection Act, passed in 2000, provides "financial assistance, protection, benefits, services, and education in the victims of the United States and abroad" (UN, General Assembly Resolution 55/25, 2000) to improve worldwide trafficking legislation and policies. Per the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, the Department of State releases an annual Trafficking in Persons Report. The Trafficking in Persons Report releases data on the efforts of other countries to combat Human Trafficking and uses ratings of Tier 1, Tier 2, Tier 2 Watch List, and Tier 3 (Trafficking in Persons Report, 2022).

Tier 1: Countries whose governments fully meet the TVPA's minimum standards for eliminating trafficking.

Tier 2: Countries whose governments do not fully meet the TVPA's minimum standards but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards.

Tier 2 Watch List (added in 2004): Countries whose governments do not fully meet the TVPA's minimum standards but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance with those standards, and for which:

- the estimated number of victims of severe forms of trafficking is very significant or is significantly increasing and the country is not taking proportional concrete actions; or
- there is a failure to provide evidence of increasing efforts to combat severe forms of trafficking in persons from the previous year, including increased investigations, prosecutions, and convictions of trafficking crimes, increased assistance to victims, and decreasing evidence of complicity in severe forms of trafficking by government officials.

Tier 3: Countries whose governments do not fully meet the TVPA's minimum standards and are not making significant efforts to do so. The TVPA, as amended, lists additional factors to determine whether a country should be on Tier 2 (or Tier 2 Watch List) versus Tier 3:

- the extent to which the country is a country of origin, transit, or destination for severe forms of trafficking;
- the extent to which the country's government does not meet the TVPA's minimum standards and, in particular, the extent to which officials or government employees have been complicit in severe forms of trafficking;
- reasonable measures that the government would need to undertake to comply with the minimum standards in light of the government's resources and capabilities to address and eliminate severe forms of trafficking in persons;
- the extent to which the government is devoting sufficient budgetary resources to investigate and prosecute human trafficking, convict and sentence traffickers; and obtain restitution for victims of human trafficking; and
- the extent to which the government is devoting sufficient budgetary resources to protect victims and prevent the crime from occurring. (Trafficking in Persons Report, 2022)

The importance of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act and the Trafficking in Persons Report is universal. International governments have shown to take the rankings provided by the United States seriously and the ratings prove to be an effective tool in the fight against trafficking (Morrow, 2008, 249). The Department of State's tier ranking is stricter than the UN's policies related to human trafficking and most countries prefer higher or improving rankings due to investment opportunities. A low grading or a drop in tiers can bring "international investment impacts for companies concerned about their supply chains and the potential for loss of certain foreign assistance funding from the United States" (Gehring, 2022).

Literature Review

Although the concept of human trafficking has over a century of application and revision, it wasn't until recently that academics and human rights activists started to look at the concept in relation to mega-sporting events. In this section, I will construct a literature review to help better understand the historical focus of human trafficking in association to mega-sporting events. The literature review will include an inquiry of the brief history of human trafficking studies in mega-

sporting events, labor trafficking, as well as migrant workers and the role they play in the nature of human trafficking.

I. Human Trafficking in Mega-Sporting Events

The hosting nation or country of mega sporting events also brings upon international criticism of human rights issues. The Olympics and the World Cup have always been stages of human rights promotions (1936 Jesse Owens, 1960 South Africa Ban, 1968 Medal Stand Protest). The stress of constructing deadlines and the international pressure of the event seem to further exploit a system's previous problems in crime and abuse of human rights. The mission to successfully provide internationally approved games places pressures on governments to undertake drastic changes in social policies. Talbot states this has led to the militarization of public spaces to provide a safe environment, the removal of local people to advance the construction of facilities, and the overlooking of human rights policies in order to complete construction problems (Talbot, 2018, 83).

Boykoff explains that the International Olympic Committee officially started working with the UN in 1990 (Boykoff, 2019, 5) and has routinely conversed with Human Rights Watch. The official Olympic Charter expresses the importance of the events in promoting Human Rights.

"The practice of sport is a human right. Every individual must have the possibility of practicing sport, without discrimination of any kind and in the Olympic spirit, which requires mutual understanding with a spirit of friendship, solidarity, and fair play." (Olympic Charter, 2021, 8)

The reality of global sporting events is that they are naturally intertwined with politics (Boykoff, 1). MacRury expresses concern that the combination of sports with nation-states brings a spotlight on national and international issues related to economics, social structure, environmental concerns, and human rights (MacRury, 24). The mission to successfully provide

internationally approved games pressures governments to undertake drastic changes in social policies. This has led to the militarization of public spaces to provide a safe environment, the removal of local people for the construction of facilities, and the overlooking of human rights policies to complete construction problems (Talbot, 83). The international spotlight on the host nation or city, theoretically, benefits its international standing in global politics and the economy, allows for the expression of national culture and history, and was originally believed to boost the regional economy. The hopes of benefits and international recognition for host nations have, for years, made the task of hosting a mega sporting event a privilege. However, in the 21st century, the realization of hosting these events as a double-edged sword has never been more prevalent. More and more countries are refusing the bid due to environmental, economic, and political issues that come along with the games. Boykoff believes this is due to heightened awareness of "the grizzled underbelly" of the Olympics and World Cup (Boykoff, 6).

Morrow (2008) covers the history of trafficking in mega-sporting events in *Soccer, Sex, and Slavery: Human Trafficking in the World Cup*. In her work, Morrow (2008) writes that the first time the concept of human trafficking became a global issue at a sporting event was the 2006 World Cup in Germany. Previously, the concept had, in part, been presented as an issue in the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens, Greece. That discussion, however, took part after the Olympic Games had concluded, which didn't allow the Greek state and the IOC time to take preventable measures (Morrow, 2008, 255). The 2004 Olympic Games was the first time an attempt to produce credible empirical data on trafficking was performed. However, the fear of a correlation between mega sporting events and human trafficking was not a recorded concern (Morrow, 2008, 255).

Gould emphasizes that the 2006 World Cup was plagued with fear over high human trafficking numbers. Numerous reports expressed the expectation that the World Cup to be attended by 20 million fans and that 40,000 women were trafficked for sex work (Gould, 2010, 39). It's not clear where this 40,000-figure originated, but the media took it and ran with it. Numerous human rights and anti-trafficking campaigns used the 40,000 predictions to spread awareness of the correlation between sports events and sex trafficking. Further worries circulated in the media on the state of Germany and its ability to combat human trafficking. Germany did not ratify the Trafficking Protocol until one month before the start of the World Cup. Furthermore, Germany was one of the few states where prostitution was legal. These two reasons caused discomfort on the global stage, regarding what could happen as far as sex trafficking, in the World Cup. However, through mass campaigning and raising sex trafficking awareness, a total of 33 cases were brought to the attention of the German Police. Only 5 of those cases proved to be sex trafficking related (Morrow, 2008, 258).

Matheson suggests the "moral panic" around the perceived correlation between mega sporting events and sex trafficking continued into the 2010 World Cup in South Africa and to the 2010 Winter Olympic Games in Vancouver (Matheson, 2012, 614). Again, the events contained numerous campaigns and international cooperation in addressing the issue. Worries mounted about Vancouver as a destination for trafficked people from Asia while South Africa's high criminal numbers circulated in the media. Calls for preventative measures and legislation addressing the concerns emerged (the Canadian government itself did very little). However, again, the cases at the end of the event were far lower than expected. Discussions on the failure of FIFA, the IOC, and host nations to differentiate between sex workers and sex trafficked victims occurred.

These organizations were attacked for using the Olympics and the World Cup to launch campaigns against sex workers rather than trafficked victims. One sex worker from Vancouver expressed her concerns on campaigns: "Sure, during the Games, once all those people are here, yeah, I can imagine us [sex workers] making some money off the security staff and all that sort of thing. But those three weeks are going to be nothing compared to the years in the lead-up to the construction. If people want to do something to prevent trafficking, that's when it should happen." (Matheson, 2012, 620).

II. Labor Trafficking

Labor trafficking is a type of human trafficking in which people are forced or duped into working in exploitative and cruel situations. In most nations, it is a serious violation of human rights and a criminal act. This form of human trafficking uses force, fraud, or coercion to compel persons to perform labor or services against their will (ILO, 2012b, 1). The International Labor Organization (ILO) estimates that 20.9 million people have been victims of forced labor or sexual exploitation over ten years (ILO, 2012b, 1). Of these, 18.7 million, or about 90%, were in the private economy, and 14.2 million, or approximately 68%, were forced to work in activities such as agriculture, construction, manufacturing, and domestic labor (Zhang, 2012, 470).

Victims are frequently targeted by labor traffickers who make false promises of employment, a better life, or other chances. These victims may be enticed away from their home nations with the promise of high-paying occupations, only to become stuck in exploitative settings.

Traffickers use a variety of methods to control their victims. Physical violence, threats of damage to the victim or their family, confiscation of personal identifying documents, and debt bondage are examples of these (Weiss, 2015, 3).

Forced labor and labor trafficking are defined by a lack of worker flexibility to quit or change occupations, as well as the victim's isolation from the labor market (Weiss, 2015, 4). Labor trafficking impacts a wide spectrum of vulnerable communities. This includes migrant workers, refugees, and low-income individuals. People who lack legal documentation or have restricted access to social assistance are more likely to be victims of labor trafficking. In recent decades, economic crises, conflicts, and globalized business have all contributed to large-scale irregular movement around the world, subjecting millions to unscrupulous employers' intent on profiting from abundant and cheap human labor (Pope, 2010, 1852). Bales 2007 concludes that the growth of labor trafficking on a global scale is due to the enormous growth in global population, particularly in developing countries, which increases competition for jobs and lowers the cost of human labor, and rapid social and economic development in developing countries, upending traditional livelihood and social support structures (Bales, 2007, 26).

Almost all academic work on the topic of labor trafficking has been about either two topics: the need for greater focus on the issue or the hardships of collecting data and determining the scale of the problem. Zhang (2012) states, "Much of current literature on human trafficking in the U.S. has focused on the sexual exploitation of women and children" (Zhang, 2012, 469). He goes on to explain that as a result, most government financing has gone toward law enforcement and efforts to locate and rescue victims. Most human trafficking organizations focus their attention and resources on sex trafficking, even if labor trafficking is the more prominent. A 2009 report found that of 110 sites that gave a census or estimate of human trafficking, the vast majority dealt with sex trafficking or child sexual exploitation. Only 17 sources supplied enough information to deduce a count or estimate of labor trafficking (Zhang, 2012, 470). Zhang expresses concern over the fact that labor trafficking has received little attention from the

academic community. He raises questions over the fact that despite the growing grievances and conclusions of the prevalence of labor trafficking in the greater anti-trafficking fight, sex trafficking has remained front and center (Zhang, 2012, 479).

Marsh (2023) further evaluates the neglect of labor trafficking in his work *Understanding and Pursuing Labor Trafficking Cases Collaboratively*. He explains that since the TVPA was enacted in the United States in 2000, there has been a considerable disparity in the frequency of federal convictions for labor and sex trafficking. Most local law enforcement agencies do not pursue labor trafficking investigations (Marsh, 2023, 2). Banks (2011) states that despite data showing that labor trafficking is far more prevalent than sex trafficking, political and social organizations against human trafficking still overwhelmingly focus on sex trafficking at expense of examining labor trafficking (Banks, 2011, 3). According to a 2011 Department of Justice (DOJ) special report on human trafficking investigations conducted by federally funded task forces from 2008 to 2010, 82% of the cases investigated were sex trafficking, 14% were labor trafficking, and the rest were potential or unknown trafficking investigations. Smith (2009) believes that academics should start the process of bringing labor trafficking awareness. As she puts it, "Remove the Labor Trafficking Eclipse" caused by the misconception that human trafficking is solely sex trafficking (Smith, 2009, 504). My thesis research seeks to answer this call for greater attention on labor trafficking.

Many of these researchers believe that the greatest challenge to the study and prevention of labor trafficking is not the overwhelming dominance of sex-trafficking focus in academic study, but the difficulties of finding reliable empirical data (Zhang, 2012, Bracy 2019, & Smith, 2009). This is due to a variety of factors, including the nature of trafficking. Labor trafficking is frequently carried out in hidden or underground businesses, making it difficult to identify and

research. Victims are frequently isolated, frightened, and fearful of authorities, complicating efforts to detect and report incidents of human trafficking. Furthermore, many people, especially potential victims, may be unaware of their rights or the warning indications of labor exploitation. Because of this lack of understanding, victims may be hesitant to come forward, making it harder for researchers to detect incidents. However, the greatest obstacle to accurate measures and studies on labor trafficking is the availability of data itself.

Labor trafficking data can be fragmented and inconsistent, with many cases going unreported. This leaves us with a piece of the complete scope of the problem. Furthermore, different countries and areas have different definitions and data collection methods with regard to human trafficking (ILO, 2012, 11). Human trafficking is a global operation with fluid and rapid patterns that knows no national boundaries or limitations (United States Department of State, 2022, 8). This, along with the trickiness in identifying trafficking and the study of a hidden population of victims, limits the quantitative data available (Bowersox, 2016, 202). The International Labor Organization also shares the same concern, expressing that most current knowledge about human trafficking is based on individual cases reported by government agencies and social services, leaving an incomplete scope of the issue (ILO, 2012, 100). While much may be learned about the nature and method of trafficking activities, it is impossible to derive solid estimations about the scale of the problem from these reported incidents.

The debate amongst the international community to define human trafficking in a universal sense provides a problem with the nature of trafficking itself. Labor trafficking is an international operation that exceeds political boundaries. However, the definition and approach to the issue are defined differently depending on the country (ILO, 2012, 100). Zhang explains that countries dealing with labor trafficking issues will continue to use different interpretations of

these legal frameworks while coping with their own social and political realities (Zhang, 2012, 473). Human trafficking will most likely be defined as a broad or restricted interpretation of a legal framework (Trafficking in Persons Report, 2022, 8). In other words, research on the issue is limited even further by geography, namely the fact that where you are affects the definition and criminal approach to labor trafficking.

Works already published do not leave us without suggestions on how to tackle this issue. Jones and Lutz (2016) state that being proactive in labor trafficking cases necessitates employing a victim-centered, trauma-informed approach, and establishing rapport with relevant, multi-jurisdictional agencies (Jones & Lutz, 2016, 156). Moreover, Rijken states the first barrier to overcome is the creation and control of identity documents, which is required for job recruiting and placement companies to place victims with employers (Rijken, 2013, 20). These suggestions have begun to make their way into UNES- CO's Trafficking Statistics Project, the IOM's Counter-Trafficking Module Database, and the Database on Human Trafficking Trends under the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (Polaris Project, 2021, 28). However, the promotion of the issue of labor trafficking and the accessibility of data has a long way to go if we are to eliminate and prevent this global human rights issue.

III. Migrant Workers

Migrant workers are often a key part of labor trafficking due to their high vulnerability around the global economy. With the introduction of mega-sporting events into the global economy, migrant workers become increasingly endangered to labor trafficking. Migrant workers are individuals who migrate from one region or country to another in search of jobs or better economic prospects. These workers frequently leave their homes and families behind to take up temporary or seasonal occupations in other locales, both inside and outside of their own

country. Migrant workers play a crucial role in a variety of industries, including agriculture, construction, domestic work, and hospitality (Sassen, 2019, 82-83). Significant push factors behind migration include poverty-level salaries, low pay in rural regions, and a lack of employment prospects in poor countries, in contrast to better wages and greater job chances in urban areas and rich countries (Sassen, 2019, 133). Overall, the general trend of global migratory patterns is a south-to-north flow. Migrants move from poorer, underdeveloped regions like South Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America to the more developed regions of North America, Western Europe, East Asia, and Oceania (Sassen, 2019, 147-148).

The effects of globalization and market liberalization on the increase of migrant workers are strengthened by other factors as well. Wickramasekara (2008) presents demographic trends in developed nations and points to an aging and declining population. He shows these trends correlate to a decrease in the available workforce (Wickramasekara, 2008, 1250). He follows this up with a 2050 Eurostat demographic projection, which signals that the working-age population of the European Union will decrease to 56.7% in 2050 from 67.2% in 2004 (Wickramasekara, 2008, 1250). Therefore, migration occurs to the benefit of the host country and the migrant worker. Pritchett furthers this point, suggesting the worker finds better working conditions and higher pay while the host country fills labor holes. This can already be observed in aging nations such as Germany and Japan. In these nations, a limited workforce is aided by an influx of migratory populations from the Philippines in Japan and Turkey and Eastern Europe in Germany (Pritchett, 2006, 30). Pritchett agrees with this analysis, referencing the U.S. Department of Labor and their statistics. She explains that this increase in demand for low-skill laborers in developed nations is further backed by the U.S. Department of Labor, predicting that more than

50% of new jobs from 2020 to 2050 will fit in this sector of the economy (Pritchett, 2006, 6).

These sectors of work are currently dominated by migratory laborers.

As previously stated, migration fails to be understood without the context of globalization and the liberalization of worldwide markets. Globalization has created new economic prospects for migratory workers in host countries. Foreign groups can find work in industries such as manufacturing, construction, agriculture, and services, which may pay more than in their home nations. The liberalization of the global market in the 1980s allows migrants to seek work in countries with the overall best situations for them, not just regional or internal opportunities (Sassen, 2019, 82). These factors have not only led to the free movement of labor but also the free movement of finance. For instance, migrant workers often come by themselves and send money to their families in their home nations.

Even with their positives, globalization, and liberalization have also brought new threats to the migrant worker. Chuang believes that despite its overall economic benefits, globalization has widened the wealth gap between countries and between rural and urban areas within countries (Chuang, 2006, 138). The new force of migrant workers faces increased exploitation, social isolation, economic displacement, and legal challenges. Misra (2007) adds to this, suggesting global economic policies are important contributors to the income and employment gap, removing workers from their local livelihoods (Misra, 2007, 2). These are built by market liberalization and the World Bank and IMF's structural adjustment policies (Misra, 2007, 2). The ILO supports Chuang and Misra's assertions, claiming that globalization is linked to the widespread abuse and exploitation of migrant workers (ILO, 2023, 13). This includes increased irregular migration, human trafficking and smuggling, brain drain from developing countries,

limited avenues for low-skilled worker migration, poor integration of migrants and their families in host societies, rising racism, and a lack of credible migration policies (ILO, 2023, 15).

Migrant workers frequently fill positions that domestic workers refuse to fill due to poor wages or difficult working conditions. Belser states that most incidents of forced labor involve migrant workers in economic areas such as agriculture and construction, where labor costs are a major factor in a company's competitiveness (Belser, 2005, 6-7). Other industrial sectors exhibit a similar pattern of increased demand for inexpensive migrant labor coupled with deteriorating salaries, benefits, and labor and safety norms in other regions of the world. Chuang ties low-wage professions to an increase in worker exploitation, suggesting when a sector employs mostly migrant workers, the employers' profit potential is substantially larger than if local labor was used, especially in the case of trafficking people (Chuang, 2007, 4). Because of their vulnerability and lack of choice because of their foreign status, migrant workers are favored by employers over local workers. Their status as foreign restrains them from being granted the full rights domestic workers enjoy, resulting in limited wages, long working hours, and the possibility of holding papers or wages.

The nature of migrant workers makes them increasingly susceptible to labor trafficking. A study on 122 labor trafficking cases in the United States looked into the recruitment process of trafficked victims. Labor traffickers said that migrant laborers were simpler to manipulate and control and that they made more money in the labor trafficking industry by performing hard labor for longer hours than American citizens (Bracy, 2019, 37). During the recruitment process, recruiters and traffickers preyed on the victims' vulnerabilities, and they frequently employed a combination of false promises and high-pressure coercive tactics (Bracy, 2019, 37). A study by Zhang, Spiller, and Qin found that 55% of undocumented workers entering the United States

experience some form of labor abuse, with 30% experiencing labor trafficking (Bracy, 2019, 37-38). Undocumented and minority status elevated the likelihood of trafficking among migrant workers, with construction and janitorial services having the most reported trafficking crimes and labor abuses (Bracy, 2019, 38).

Geography of a Region

Geography is an underdeveloped dimension of human trafficking studies. Geography covers a wide range of themes linked to human trafficking. Social structure, social relationships, demographics, and environmental geography are among the subjects covered. The nature of trafficking is influenced by geography. Factors such as culture, economic functions, social structure, and political structure influence the nature of trafficking. In other words, geography affects the nature of trafficking depending on the place the phenomenon occurs.

The concept of human trafficking is not universal and is heavily influenced by regional legal, social, and cultural forces and conditions. Every country with a functioning legal system defines and addresses human trafficking in its way. In other words, depending on where an occurrence occurs, it could be regarded as human trafficking or another type of labor violation. Society also has an impact on this. The legal system is founded on social norms and ideas centered on labor, social structure, and culture (Chan, 2022, 400). Chan investigates Chile's current cultural evaluation of trafficking finding. There is a considerable Spanish influence in the judiciary and statutory laws, as well as French and European influences in codification, and rigorous adherence to and interpretation of laws in Chile (Chan, 2022, 401). The adoption and modifications of colonial power's judicial and cultural stature are often the case for former colonies. The difficulties in combating trafficking can be found in Chile's legal culture. According to Chan, we can comprehend how social influences shape the actions of and within

judicial systems, such as attitudes about "ideal victims" and the rewards and costs of prosecuting (Chan, 2022, 401). The Chilean definition of labor trafficking differs from that of the United States, resulting in significant differences in how traffickers are prosecuted, classified, and reported. All occurrences of labor trafficking in Chile must be considered forced labor. Furthermore, Chile has a legal system that has accepted labor exploitation, making convicting cases of labor trafficking difficult (Chan, 2022, 409). For example, in 2020, a Chilean judge ruled that two potential labor trafficking cases were absolved. In the sentencing, the judges stated that "due to not knowing the Spanish language, lacking (family and social contacts), being subject to her employers' authority, both in the workplace and in her place of residence, which she shared with the accused, which allowed them to exercise greater control over her person... which led to physical abuse on one occasion, and the excessive workload to which she could be exposed, and non-payment of her salaries and social security contributions... (These) are all elements that, even assuming that they were (corroborated), are still insufficient to meet the requirements of (the crime of human trafficking), since none of them deviates too much from the vulnerable situation of many migrants" (Chan, 2022, 410). The opinions of the judges suggest a normalization of migrant labor exploitation that would prevent them from adequately identifying situations of labor trafficking (Chan, 2022, 411). Chan's case study of Chile reveals that trafficking takes diverse forms in different places. Trafficking varies depending on a country's labor laws, culture, and meaning. The 2020 Chilean case covers a different geographical component of human trafficking: cultural persecution. Cultural oppression is a broad phrase that refers to any form of societal marginalization of a group of people; it encompasses but is not limited to, racism, sexism, classism, and heterosexism (Chin, 2004, 153).

Thus far, our discussion has focused on the internal conditions of a geographic location in terms of influencing a region's approach to human trafficking. However, no space is immune to external pressures. In the case of geography, an area or state is influenced by its neighbors and broader geopolitics. The terminology push and pull factors are appropriate here. Poverty, political instability, and conflict are seen to be the key supply or push causes for people trafficking. Pull factors generate demand for victims, particularly in affluent places with more opportunities for traffickers and frequent destinations for migrants. DiReinzo (2017) examines the limits or lack thereof on international movements of people and their relationship to trafficking in the Schengen region of Western Europe, a region with open borders and frequent migration of people.

Stricter borders make it tougher for traffickers, but they do not put an end to the crime (DiReinzo, 2017, 281). Secure borders increase the expenses and obstacles for traffickers by increasing the cost of bribe payments, getting legal or illegal travel paperwork, and increasing the likelihood of being captured (DiReinzo, 2017, 280). These borders may reduce trafficking to some level, but they also breed traffickers who become regional specialists, learning about a country's checkpoints, topography, and demand. The authors state, "If there is a relatively free flow of persons across country borders, this allows traffickers to obtain this knowledge through firsthand observation and experience. In short, if the practice of human trafficking exists in one country and it is relatively easy to cross into bordering countries, this should enable the movement or expansion of the crime, all else equal" (DiReinzo, 2017, 280). In the Schengen area, the lack of borders facilitates the entrance of trafficking through simpler laws and lower transit costs. Through the push factors of their home regions and the pull aspects of the West, the poorer regions of Eastern Europe generate a supply of victims (DiReinzo, 2017, 281).

Outside of economic gain, perhaps the most important component in human trafficking is a society's culture of marginalization and discrimination toward "other" populations. Human trafficking necessitates the dehumanization and devaluation of a person, and there are long-standing and widespread misconceptions about members of racially and ethnically underprivileged groups (Bryant-Davis, 2017, 153). Human trafficking thrives on a culture of marginalization, racism, misogyny, and stereotyping. Racially and ethnically underprivileged people are more vulnerable to human trafficking, in part because they lack legal protection, face stigma, and are more likely to fall into poverty (Bryant-Davis, 2017, 156). Cultural oppression enhances the risk of human trafficking by denying access to resources, in addition to dehumanizing individuals through the promotion of stereotypes and victim-blaming. Groups in any given social circle can be denied equal rights under the law, education, secure housing, or any other privileges that empowered groups have (Bryant-Davis, 2017, 157). Individuals reared in groups that experience various challenges are more vulnerable to trafficking. Abuse is one of these obstacles, as is living in areas prone to disaster, poverty, injustice, and violence (Bryant-Davis, 2017, 157). Intersectionality refers to the factors of gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and other characteristics that contribute to the vulnerability of human trafficking. Intersectionality refers to how social difference categories like race, gender, and class interact with structural conditions to shape life opportunities and experiences. This is one of the lenses through which relational analyses of human trafficking provide light on the role of societal inequalities (Cockbain, 2022, 64).

Social groupings' susceptibility in a geographical perspective can be seen all over the world. No nation or social group has not been a victim nor have they not victimized another group. This is most usually accomplished by abusing social groups based on religious beliefs,

racial hierarchy, or patriarchy. For example, Brazil defines who is and who isn't a "person," leading to a contested space in terms of human rights (Talbot, 2017, 78). Brazilian federal law has a history of exploiting citizens. Differentiated Citizenship is an example, defined as a system where rights are applied differently to different sectors of Brazilian society. Those who live in Favelas are not given the status of "citizens," and under Brazilian law, are illegally there. This has led to state-sanctioned violence against the poor, including federal removals, mass police shootings, and further human rights violations (Talbot, 2017, 82-83). It should also be noted that Brazil, although pledging itself as a "racial democracy," still is socially influenced by "whitening" racial status (Winant, 1999, 98). This means that ethnic groups of African or Indigenous descent are more vulnerable to these human rights violations.

Finally, the type of human trafficking we witness is determined by the physical location of an area of interest via landscape and environmental elements. Tsunamis, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and drought can have a severe influence on a region, bringing instability, poverty, criminality, economic distress, and other elements that contribute to trafficking susceptibility (Tomkins, 2018, 507). Hammock (2017) discusses three theories that link environmental degradation to human trafficking. The first is the hypothesis of social disorganization, which states "that the breakdown in community resources or functions, community relationships, or the overall closeness of the community affects the willingness of those within to stop or report criminal activity within the neighborhood" (Hammock, 2017, 4). According to the social disorganization theory, crime clusters in the most destitute places. In terms of environmental challenges, communities that are significantly influenced by environmental stressors are more prone to disintegration. This results in social collapse and impoverishment, which increases crime. Hurricane Matthew, for example, wreaked havoc on the Caribbean. Following that, there

was an upsurge in trafficking reports and worries about Caribbean minorities in major Florida cities (Tomkins, 2018, 509). The routine activities theory is Romaine's second theory. She says that this idea holds that if the opportunity to commit a crime presents itself, the crime will be committed. This includes having a suitable victim, not having a guardian, being profitable, and being motivated (Hammock, 2017, 4-5). The crime pattern hypothesis, which asserts that "geographical factors of environments that constitute individuals' living, working, or recreational spaces contribute to and allow for criminal activity" (Hammock, 2017, 5), is the third theory. Criminal activity will increase in areas that lack social functions and community involvement. All these theories can be used to show how environmental factors influence human trafficking. Physical geography influences trafficking by affecting populations that are vulnerable to environmental hazards and by disrupting trafficking travel. Furthermore, traffickers are drawn to affected areas, making affected communities more vulnerable (Tomkins, 2018, 516).

Chapter 1 Conclusion

The concept of human trafficking has only been around for a century, and is becoming increasingly more focused on in academia and the western media. Although the term is just another way of defining slavery, it is a hard subject to tackle. The nature of human trafficking is fluid, making statistics and finding difficult to come by. Furthermore, trafficking is respondent to the geography it takes place in. In other words, definitions, prominence, and other factors of trafficking are reliant on a region's cultural, social, political, and economic makeup.

Although labor trafficking is far more prevalent across the globe as opposed to sex trafficking, labor violations receive less international attention. Migrant workers and local populations under unequal social status are far more vulnerable to the threat of labor trafficking. Furthermore, the introduction of mega-sporting events amplifies the existing social inequalities

of a region. Rather than bringing social justice and economic benefits to the citizens of a country, mega-sporting events have a track record of increasing human rights violations already present in a region.

In chapter 2, I will look into the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar and the events that unfolded in the country in regards to labor trafficking. Although the 2022 FIFA World Cup brought the international spotlight on labor trafficking on a large scale, the event represents mega-sporting events in the worst light: as a position to worsen human rights violations and as fuel for the existing divergences in a region.

Chapter 2

Qatar and the 2022 FIFA World Cup

Introduction

The sports world was stunned in 2010 when FIFA granted the bid for the 2022 FIFA World Cup to Qatar. Former FIFA president Sepp Blatter stated that giving a World Cup to a Middle Eastern nation was an attempt to bridge the gap between the West and Arab states (Independent Digital News, 2011). Concerns regarding a huge athletic event in Qatar were immediately addressed in Western media on the theme of human rights. Qatar is categorized as a "Tier 2 Watch List" country in the 2010 U.S. Department of State's Trafficking in Persons Report, the second lowest rating a country may receive (Trafficking in Persons Report 2010, 275). Unlike the International Olympic Committee, FIFA does not oblige host countries to secure human rights protection (Human Rights Watch: FIFA Misleading the World, 2022). When combined with Qatar's widespread maltreatment of migrant labor, FIFA's failure to safeguard human rights resulted in international condemnation of the Cup. Qatar's labor force was 90% made up of migrants in 2010. This figure soared to 95% on the eve of the World Cup in 2022 (Human Rights Watch: Reporter's Guide, 2022, 2), with workers from Eastern Africa, South Asia, and other Middle Eastern countries included. The Kafala sponsorship scheme in Qatar is a human rights problem.

The Kafala is a migrant worker sponsorship scheme that began in the British Colonial periods and was adopted by the Gulf States following independence (Human Rights Watch: Reporter's Guide, 2022, 4). The Kafala system connects migrant permits to employers, providing the employer with complete accountability and control over the worker. This empowers the employer to sponsor the migrant's entry into the country, get residency and work permits,

permission to quit or change jobs, and make workers illegal and deport them (Robinson, 2022). Workers must also have an exit permit to depart the country under the Kafala system. The nature of this system assures that the employer has complete control over the foreign worker's life. If the worker complains or opposes, they face deportation, wage withholding, and threats to their family. Wage theft is another concern in Qatar, and it is linked to the country's labor trafficking problem. In Qatar, construction businesses can delay earnings for up to five months, and workers must pay their employers first to get cash for visas, travel, shelter, and food (Robinson, 2022). High recruitment costs combined with high-interest rate loans resulted in debt bondage, leaving the worker trapped with their employer indefinitely with no way out. Qatar passed legislation in 2017 in response to international pressure that theoretically permits workers to change employers and employment and leave the country at whim (Human Rights Watch, 2018). However, this is rarely, if ever, implemented due to lack of enforcement from the Qatari government. Qatar also passed the Universal Recruitment Scheme, which requires employers to demonstrate that their employees did not pay an initial recruitment fee (Human Rights: Significant Labor and Kafala Reforms, 2020). This law is also lightly implemented, with only 50,000 workers affected since 2017.

The case of Qatar exemplifies the worst-case scenario of human trafficking in mega-sporting events when it is authorized and not properly handled by a committee. Despite Qatar's poor human rights record and persistent maltreatment of migrant workers, FIFA openly chose the country to host the World Cup. FIFA and the rest of the globe did little to help Qatar prepare, other than pressure the Qatari government to make minor improvements such as increase employee salary and limit working hours in the summer. Because FIFA was unaware of its significance as a regulating body, there was little inquiry and few prevention strategies for

worker exploitation. Between 2016 and 2019, 15,000 migrant laborers perished on World Cup building sites (Human Rights Watch, 2022, 11). The majority of these deaths occurred as a result of heat and extended working hours up to 16 a day, with causes including cardiac arrest, heart attack, respiratory failure, and illness.

FIFA's unwillingness to address the issue adequately, as well as its willingness to award Qatar the World Cup bid despite its well-known labor issues, exemplifies the sharp edge of the double-edged sword of huge sporting events. On the one side, the international emphasis on Qatar resulted in more media coverage, recognition, and revisions to the country's migrant worker system. On the other hand, the 2022 FIFA World Cup, exacerbated existing structural inequities by growing its migrant labor population, cooperating badly with human rights groups, and refusing to make fundamental changes to the Kafala System.

In this chapter, I will explore the prevalence of labor trafficking in the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar. The country's social, political, and economic makeup is constructed around a labor regime that is designed to expose migrant workers to trafficking. Nonetheless, FIFA awarded Qatar with the hosting rights for the World Cup and did little to stand against Qatar's human rights abuses. Qatar exemplifies the "grizzled underbelly" of mega-sporting events (Boycoff, 2019, 6). Hopes and expectations of human rights reforms were trampled under the Cup's amplification of migrant worker abuses under the Kafala System. In this chapter, I will present the history of slavery in Qatar and its similarities to Qatar's migration patterns today. Then I will present the origins of the Kafala System, its role in abusing migrant laborers in the World Cup, and the lasting effects of the mega-event on Qatar in the aftermath.

Slavery and Migration in Qatar

Slavery and human trafficking are not new concepts in Qatar or the Arab world. Qatar, located in the Arabian Gulf, has long benefited from the Arab slave trade, a system that controlled the Middle East, Northern and Eastern Africa, and South Asia from the eighth century until the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Al-Mullah, 2017, 88). This slave trade, like the transatlantic slave trade dominated by Western nations, was based on racial hierarchy. The construction of "blackness" and "whiteness" survived in medieval Islamic culture's hierarchy. Slave trade victims included Indians, East Africans (Zanj), Ethiopians (Habash), and Southern Africans (San) (Brown, 2019, 68). Slavery was still practiced in the Arabian Gulf region in the early nineteenth century and into the early twentieth century. Around the turn of the century, Great Britain became active in Qatar and the Gulf Region. The prevalence of slavery in Qatar was utilized by Great Britain to meddle with Qatar's foreign and internal affairs (89). To achieve economic, political, and international authority in the region, Britain utilized its power to ban the Arab slave trade in Qatar. Treaties signed in 1868, 1916, and 1935 were used to eliminate the slave trade and strengthen the Empire's grip over the region. However, Britain did this to secure trade routes to India and to gain control of the slave and armament trades. These treaties did not formally abolish slavery in Qatar, and the official practice did not end until Sheikh Ali bin Abdullah announced the termination of the slave trade in Qatar in 1952 (Al Mullah, 2017, 89).

The history of slavery in Qatar is significant for understanding the country's current socioeconomic structure and economic system. It's also important to understand the modern migrant labor abuse and human trafficking. Qatar had a population of 2,421,055 people in 2015, with just 346,211, or 14.3%, of them being citizens. The remaining 2,074,844 people, or 85.7% of the total, are migrants (Ganji, 2016, 225). It is difficult to determine migrant populations in Qatar due to their quantity, as well as the Qatari government's lack of involvement in the

migration process and failure to keep complete data on their migrant populations. According to most assessments, the migrant population accounts for between 77% and 90% of Qatar's overall population. Human Rights Watch believes that 95% of Qatar's labor force is made up of migrant workers (Human Rights Watch, 2019, World Report 2020). These migrant workers are particularly prone to labor trafficking and other forms of exploitation. The present migrant worker migration in Qatar closely resembles the structure of the arab slave trade. According to a 2013 UN report, the top five nations are India (576,776), Bangladesh (220,403), Pakistan (192,860), Egypt (143,960), and the Philippines (96,487). Similarly, the top five countries in a 2014 report by Jure Snog were India, Nepal, the Philippines, Bangladesh, and Egypt (Ganji, 2016, 223). Similarly to the Arab Slave Trade, the present migrant influx of workers to Qatar originates in South Asia and Africa. Following the oil boom of the 1970s, these nations became over-represented in Qatar's economy. During this time, Gulf states began to focus their short-term recruiting on labor migrants from Asian countries to exploit oil (Ganji, 2016, 224-225). Despite the abolition of slavery in Qatar, the same communities that the country preyed on for generations remain the major labor. This is owing, in part, to Qatar's and the rest of the Gulf States' emerging economy, stable governments, development, and labor shortages. While these aspects are true, the major participant in this is the Kafala System, which supports human trafficking and migratory workers.

The Kafala System

The Kafala System is a migrant worker sponsorship program designed to regulate both employers and migrant workers. The practice arose after the abolition of slavery in Western Asia in the 1950s. In the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the Kafala System is still in use.

Kafala is also located in the Arab countries of Jordan and Lebanon. The economic goal of the sponsorship system was to offer temporary, rotating labor that could be quickly recruited into the country during times of economic boom and evicted during times of economic downturn (Migrant Forum, 2012, 1). The Kafala System is a legalized bondage system that deprives employees of all rights while giving employers unlimited control over the lives of those for whom they are responsible. In other terms, the Kafala is a system that supports and benefits from human trafficking.

The Kafala system, implemented in the GCC and other Arabic countries in the 1950s, connects migrant workers and their visas to their employers. This arrangement puts migrant workers in a precarious position, reliant on their employers for legal status, housing, labor, payment, and transportation. The system also offers employers unlimited and unregulated power over their employees, allowing them to be held accountable for violations (Human Rights Watch, 2022, 4). Temporary labor programs exist across the world, including in Western countries like Canada and the United States. All of these are exploitative on some level, binding low-wage, low-skilled, and vulnerable migrants to a single employer and one sector of employment. However, the Kafala System is an extreme version of sponsorship, with the employer wielding significant influence over the worker's visa, lodging, work, salary, and immigration status (Cholewinski, 2023). This sponsorship system makes migrant workers extremely vulnerable to human rights violations, especially trafficking. Human Rights Watch identified five ways in which the Kafala system contributes to human trafficking.

1. Employer sponsorship is required for migrant workers to enter the country.
2. Employers have the authority to renew or terminate a worker's employment and residency at any time.
3. Employees must obtain their employer's consent to change occupations.
4. Employers might report employees as "missing," which can result in deportation and unlawful status.

5. Workers must have their employer's permission to leave the nation at any time. (Human Rights Watch, 2022, 5).

Furthermore, Ganji suggests that there are four stages to the migratory process in Qatar.

The recruitment, deployment, employment, and return are the four phases to the Kafala System. Human rights violations can occur at any of these stages, and the migration process mirrors the lifecycle of human trafficking. Understanding these phases and the subsequent abuses against migrants illustrate the Kafala system's link to human trafficking and suggestive of the social inequality that the World Cup exacerbated.

The recruitment process takes place outside of Qatar, in the migrants' home country. During this process, labor brokers working for Qatari corporations travel to the nation of origin and auction off workers looking for jobs in another country. Workers can pay these labor brokers to obtain a work visa. This permits labor brokers and Qatari corporations to earn even before the migrant has completed any work. Furthermore, this places the migrant in debt, which they must return to Qatar. (Ganji, 2016, 233). This debt is frequently compounded in the later stages of the migratory worker cycle, resulting in a debt bondage in which the worker is trapped in a loop of earning money to repay their loan but not enough to keep for themselves.

Labor brokers frequently demand recruitment fees that far exceed the legal restrictions imposed by labor organizations in the countries of origin. A 2013 research project in Nepal found that 1,000 agencies in Kathmandu employed between 25,000 and 30,000 labor brokers across the country. However, Nepal's regulatory agency, the Department of Foreign Employment, registered only 500 labor brokers (Kern, 2015, 160). This enabled the remaining 24,500 to 29,500 laborers to be recruited illegally and charged exorbitant recruiting fees. These unlawful brokers target vulnerable populations, lie about their legal registration, and then exploit desperate people looking for jobs.

Labor brokers also help with the deployment phase, which is the migrant worker's journey from the country of origin to the country of destination. Before traveling, the employee signs a demand letter, which acts as an employment contract. Again, the migrant must typically pay a fee before receiving the demand letter. This is illegal in Qatar and most South Asian countries. These laws, however, are not strictly enforced. According to a 2011 report conducted by Amnesty International and the Qatar National Human Rights Committee, 53% of all construction workers in Qatar were forced to pay labor brokers and recruitment companies to show them demand letters (Amnesty International, 2013, 34). Migrants must also pay for their travel expenses. This is where most of their debt comes from. The agreement of a worker to migrate to another country for work implies that these individuals must pay for their travel. As a result, labor brokers and employers will pay for the migrant's travel expenses. However, the individual is required to repay these fees eventually, keeping them in financial bondage while working in Qatar. There is typically a hefty interest rate levied on these travel expenses, some as high as 36% according to Amnesty International (Amnesty International, 2013, 136). These fees and interest rates make it difficult, if not impossible, for the employee to escape and repay. According to a National Planning Commission analysis, migrant laborers from Nepal paid an average of USD 1,200 for travel to Qatar (Agunias, 2012, 3). In these cases, migrants are imprisoned and compelled to work.

While in Qatar, migrant workers are frequently paid far less than their original agreement, which is insufficient to pay off their debts (Ganji, 2016, 234-235). As a result, the worker is locked in Qatar, with no possibility of repaying their obligations, getting out of their contract, or leaving. Ganji explains, "As such, that migrants are being transported overseas based on deceptive or fraudulent claims — and subsequently being exploited for their labor once in

Qatar — indicates the presence of human trafficking" (Ganji, 2016, 235). Migrants traveling to Qatar typically have little knowledge of their rights or the country's lack thereof. Furthermore, individuals are frequently misinformed about the resources available to seek help. In Nepal, 57 companies are responsible for informing migrants about their rights and resources. However, polls of returning migrants to Nepal revealed that the vast majority of workers were not properly educated by Qatar's government authorities about its inadequate resources (Amnesty International, 2013, 101).

Most of the media and academic publications on human trafficking and human rights violations in the run-up to the FIFA 2022 World Cup have focused on the employment stage of the migrant worker cycle (Human Rights Watch, 2022, and Amnesty International, 2013). This is especially true in the construction business. Migrant laborers, who are bound to their employers under the Kafala system, frequently have their passports confiscated upon arrival. This is used as leverage against the worker and is indicative of labor trafficking. Passport confiscation, while unlawful, is a regular feature of migrant life in Qatar (Amnesty International, 2013, 37). In a survey of 1,189 migrant workers in Qatar, 90% reported that their employer was in possession of their passport (Garrett, 2020, 203). Workers are completely controlled by their employers after their passports are taken and they are owed a large sum. The employer is also responsible for their workers' food and housing, which they might charge to the migrant worker. Sponsors frequently install construction workers in labor camps on the outskirts of their job sites and Qatari cities. These accommodations often accommodate 10 to 15 workers in a single room with bunk beds and stone floors, resulting in tight circumstances and limited privacy (Ganji, 2016, 235). Workers are sometimes confined in camps and unable to leave without a residency visa, which employers rarely provide (Amnesty International, 2013, 62).

Migrant laborers in Qatar frequently experience 60-hour work weeks, well exceeding the terms of their contracts, with no overtime pay (Amnesty International, 2013, 44). Researchers studied two workers' timesheets before the 2012 World Cup building. The first individual, when working for ITC, revealed that he had worked 273 hours of overtime in twelve weeks without receiving any further compensation. According to Qatar's 2004 labor code, the maximum amount of overtime allowed is 12 hours per week (Amnesty International, 2013, 44). This individual worked an average of 22.75 hours of unpaid overtime per week in July, August, and September when temperatures in Qatar averaged more than 100 degrees Fahrenheit. The second person, employed by Bestway Qatar, worked 231 hours of overtime during thirteen weeks in August, September, and October. This amounts to an average of 17.75 hours of unpaid overtime each week (Amnesty International, 2013, 59-60).

Wage abuse is another reality for foreign workers in Qatar. Workers face restricted payment or no payment at all, in addition to being in debt bondage from their travel and signing expenses. In a 2020 investigation, Human Rights Watch interviewed 93 migrant workers employed by 60 different companies. All 93 of these employees reported some form of wage abuse. These included underpaid overtime, unjustified deductions, delayed and withheld wages, incorrect wages, and unpaid wages (Human Rights Watch, 2020). Human Rights Watch stated that migrant laborers employed by Bin Omran Trading and Contracting had not been paid in five months (Human Rights Watch, 2022b). Bin Omran Trading and Contracting was involved in various projects related to the 2022 FIFA World Cup. Unpaid salaries bind workers in debt and under the power of their employer. This also results in starved workers and, in extreme cases, death for those who are severely abused.

When workers sign a contract, they agree to labor for a specific amount of time. Along with changes in employment, decreased compensation, and other false promises outlined in the contract, the agreed-upon length of employment is also often misrepresented and a source of abuse. On the one hand, migratory workers may have shorter employment periods than predicted. The Kafala system is meant to bring in a large number of people when they are needed and to expel them when they are not. Workers who are sent home early do not receive any compensation, leaving them with debts from the recruitment and deployment phase while unemployed. The most typical method of contract time is exploited by keeping migrant workers longer than necessary. Because employers control every element of the worker's life while in Qatar, they also have the authority to keep the person in Qatar for longer than the contract allows. Amnesty International spoke with numerous workers who had gone home after spending time in Qatar. Manoj, who worked on construction at Khalifa Stadium, requested an exit permit from his manager to return to India after his two-year contract expired. Manoj explains, "At first he did not respond, but I repeated myself... [and] eventually he said, 'do three or six more months, there is still work to be done.' Manoj begged his management to let him go, emphasizing that his contract had expired. 'His expression changed', Manoj recalls, 'and he said sternly, 'I'll tell you when you can leave. Get back to work, don't make this request of me again' (Amnesty International, 2016, 29).

According to Qatari law, migrant workers must receive annual leave every year. However, it is also abused. A Nepalese man wished to return home to check on his family following a series of natural disasters. However, his bosses refused to let him leave. The individual, who called Tiray to conceal his identity, said,

"The company won't let me go home. They have said nothing, they just ignore my requests" (Amnesty International, 2016, 28).

These are just two examples of the awful reality of the migrant worker in the Kafala system. When a worker's contract expires, their sponsorship ends as well. However, workers are

at the mercy of their sponsors to either extend their contract or terminate it. This is another example of trafficking due to the employer's power to decide when a worker leaves, no matter what the conditions of their contract states.

Despite these severe and cruel working conditions, migrant workers frequently remain in their current positions for fear of deportation, loss of sponsorship, unlawful status, and financial loss. A migrant worker can request a transfer to another company; however, this request is frequently declined by their employer. If a worker leaves their employment without the employer's permission, they are immediately considered illegal (Human Rights Watch, 2022, 5). Ganji explains, "Under the Sponsorship Law, sponsors are required to report such events — referred to as "absconding" — to the Ministry of Interior. Absconding can result in migrants being fined, deported, or even prosecuted on criminal charges" (Ganji, 2016, 236). Migrants are more exposed to trafficking and other human rights violations while they are illegally present. Without the meager protections provided by Qatari Law and the 2004 Labor Law, individuals may be forced to work again, this time without any protection or salary due to their illegal status (Ganji, 2016, 232).

The return phase is the final stage of the migration cycle. Although not part of the Kafala system, this phase offers obstacles for migrants returning to their home country. The International Labour Office (ILO) identifies hurdles to economic and social reintegration. In a 2013 study, the ILO examined the hurdles to reintegration for migrants returning to Sri Lanka. Between 2006 and 2011, around 11% of Sri Lanka's migrant workers worked in Qatar. Socially, neighbors frequently pushed returning migrants out of their former homes, particularly women. This is due to isolation from the community, and family, and being driven out (ILO, 2013, 13). Ganji explains, "Socially, returning migrants reported certain challenges when reintegrating with

their families and communities, including a decline in the family's economic situation as well as a tendency not to form partnerships with or participate in community organizations" (Gangi, 2016, 236). Economically, returning migrants may struggle to find work in their home country, and if they do, most report that it is significantly below their skill level (ILO, 2013, 14). The majority of the 70% who found work within the first six months of coming home reported earning so little that they were termed unemployed (ILO, 2013, 16).

The Kafala System is designed to expose migrant workers to a system where they are powerless. With all the control in the employer's hand, migrant workers are exposed to numerous human rights abuses, especially labor trafficking. Regardless of Qatar's human rights record and their use of the Kafala System, FIFA still awarded them the hosting rights for the 2022 World Cup. Amongst hopes of a positive legacy, there was immediately speculation that the mega-event would fuel the existing labor regime. In the next section, the events that took place around the World Cup will be traversed in the lens of human rights.

The 2022 FIFA World Cup

There are both positive and negative implications to winning the bid for the World Cup or Olympics. The international spotlight on a host nation or city can enhance its global stature, promote national culture and heritage, and stimulate regional economies. For years, the responsibility of hosting a large sporting event has been regarded as a luxury due to the hopes that the host nation will reap some rewards, such as international recognition and status. However, in the twenty-first century, the recognition of hosting big events as a double-edged sword has never been more widespread. More and more countries are less willing to take on the environmental, economic, and political concerns associated with hosting mega-sporting events.

This is due to heightened awareness of "the grizzled underbelly" of the Olympics and World Cup (Boykoff, 2019, 6).

While hosting a mega-event might lead to positive changes in a country's social, economic, or political structure, the competition for hosting can also exacerbate existing societal inequities rather than bringing transformative changes. When Qatar won the bid to host the 2022 FIFA World Cup, there was widespread belief that the tournament would bring beneficial reforms to the country's labor extortion problem (Ganji, 2016, 237). Hassan al-Thawadi, Qatar's World Cup chief, stated, "The World Cup is a catalyst. It (labor) will be addressed. We're making that commitment" (Gibson, 2012). He later mentions that the bid will be a "catalyst to accelerate positive initiatives already being undertaken by Qatar, which will leave a legacy of enhanced, sustainable, and meaningful progress regarding worker welfare across the country" (Gibson, 2014). However, Qatari officials were more concerned with the benefits of the World Cup for their infrastructure and financial sector than with altering their labor laws. FIFA announced in 2014 that it would not strip Qatar of the 2022 World Cup due to multiple claims of trafficking and abuse of the millions of migrant laborers working on World Cup venues, despite the country's failure to modify its labor regulations before the event (Stavis, 2014). After learning of migrant labor abuses such as wage theft, harsh working hours, trafficking, and death on construction sites, the European Parliament ruled that FIFA should withdraw the proposal from Qatar. However, Theo Zwanziger, member of the FIFA executive committee, stated that pulling the World Cup away from Qatar would be "counterproductive" because infractions will occur nonetheless, this time without the attention of Qatar (Stavis, 2014).

The 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar represents the pinnacle of the "grizzled underbelly" of huge athletic-based place prevention and development. Mega-sport events have the power to

reshape communities. When international pressure was applied to Qatar, some labor reforms were implemented; however, they were inadequately enforced. Furthermore, the international pressure, building deadlines, financial pressure, and national prestige elevated Qatar's reliance on the Kafala System. The migrant labor system was expanded and exploited to meet construction deadlines, resulting in a rise in human rights crimes, particularly labor trafficking. Qatar's refusal to dismantle the Kafala System, combined with FIFA's failure to hold Qatar to fundamental human rights norms, resulted in an upsurge in trafficking related to the World Cup. The World Cup did not reform but rather fueled Qatar's labor regime.

Before the games, Qatar had a substantial migrant worker population. In 2010, Qatar witnessed a construction boom, which resulted in many migrant workers moving to the country. In 2015, 1.7 million migrant workers made up 90% of Qatar's workforce (Amnesty International, 2016, 13). By 2020, the number of migrant workers is expected to reach 2 million. These figures are significantly larger than Qatar's migrant labor population before the World Cup. In 2005, Qatar's migrant population was 646,000. This increased by 125.44% to 1.45 million when development began in 2010, and to 1.7 million during the peak of construction in 2015 (Macrotrend, 2024). With the number of migrant workers increasing and few reforms to the Kafala System taking place, the World Cup directly contributed to a rise in labor violations and migrant worker trafficking.

Construction for the World Cup includes more than just stadiums for the games. To meet the requirements for hosting the games, new highways, hotels, tourist attractions, public transportation, athlete villages, and other infrastructure were built (Garrett, 2020, 202). Furthermore, Qatar has twelve venues equipped for the games, complete with air conditioning, greenery, and expansion. The initial proposal was for twelve stadiums to be used for the events.

Following budgetary difficulties, this number was reduced to eight, with seven of them being entirely new and built for the World Cup (Amnesty International, 2016,14). Overall, Qatar spent at least \$200 billion on real estate and development projects, hiring up to 1.5 million migrant workers for the World Cup alone (Gangi, 2016, 221).

In 2015, Amnesty International interviewed 136 migrant laborers who were working on the new Khalifa International Stadium for the 2022 FIFA World Cup. These individuals were assigned to work on the stadium and surrounding green spaces in the Aspire Zone (Amnesty International, 2016, 4). The stadium is located outside of Qatar's capital, Doha, and is operated by several foreign and government entities. During Amnesty International's interviews, migrant laborers disclosed various hardships and cases of trafficking occurring in preparation for the World Cup. According to the accounts of these workers, Qatar did not alter its migrant worker program in preparation for the games, despite initial claims. Furthermore, FIFA had failed to sufficiently protect the basic human rights of migrants working on World Cup construction, while promising the EU and Human Rights organizations that the World Cup would be a catalyst for reform (The Guardian, 2012). As a commercial organization, FIFA should adhere to the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (Amnesty International, 2016, 61).

Testimonies from workers in Qatar during World Cup preparations offer an insider's perspective on the state of the Kafala System in relationship to a mega-sporting event. Laslett (1999) argues that personal narratives can “address several key theoretical debates, macro and micro linkages, structure, agency, and their intersection. They can provide access to both the individual and the social and make it possible to see the connections between them” (Laslett, 1999, 392). Dutta (2016) agrees, stating that the testimonies of workers help researchers

understand how laborers shape their work geographies, see themselves in a wider social structure, and display how they value themselves as individuals (Dutta, 2016, 3).

Workers' testimonies at the Khalifa Stadium and Greenways disclose a significant quantity of evidence of labor trafficking, including wage theft, excessive working hours, tight living circumstances, passport seizure, and other infractions. Those interviewed discussed contract violations such as agreed-upon salary, agreed-upon term of labor, extended working hours, and the type of job to be performed. A Nepalese man, nicknamed Ubaraj for safety, told Amnesty International that he had been misled about his wage and the type of job he would be undertaking in Qatar. He explains:

"I am an electrician by trade and I agreed to electrician work but when I came to Qatar [in October 2014] the company gave me electrician work for only the first two months. After that, they said I had to do iron fitting work and I've been doing that ever since...I have been doing iron fitting work on Khalifa Stadium since March [2015 to May 2015]."
- Ubaraj (Amnesty International, 2016, 21)

Ubaraj says he has not been paid as agreed. He claims that he signed a contract in Nepal to come to Qatar and work for 1100 riyals (\$300) plus 200 riyals (\$50) for meals each month. However, he is paid 700 riyals (\$190) plus 200 riyals (\$50) for meals (Amnesty International, 2016, 20). When Ubaraj complained to his management, he was threatened with passport confiscation and nonpayment. He explains,

"The manager said 'Work for another 1-3 months and accept whatever you get. If you don't work you won't get paid and you won't get your passport back'. After that I just kept quiet, I had no choice"
- Ubaraj (Amnesty International, 2016, 21).

Tek Thapa, another Nepalese worker, had a similar story to Ubaraj. Tek stated that he signed a contract for scaffolding work at a monthly pay of 1,400 riyals (US\$380) and a meal allowance of 300 riyals (US\$80). However, the labor broker in Nepal compelled Tek to sign a blank sheet of paper as his contract.

"A man from my employer met me at the airport, he took me with others through immigration and then we were driven by bus to our camp in Al Wakrah. Once we arrived at camp the boss there told me I would be doing steel work, not scaffolding work, and my pay would be 1100 riyal (\$300) plus 200 riyal (\$50) for meals per month. I was in shock but did not know what to do. The other men in the camp with me told me to keep quiet and stay calm. At least I would make some money and after two years I could leave."

- Tek Thapa (Amnesty International, 2016, 21-22)

Tek questioned his management why he was being paid less, and his manager replied

"This is what we've always paid (Amnesty International, 2016, 20).

Other workers discussed the pressure of borrowing. Shauqut, a gardener from Bangladesh, said that he owes his recruiter 150,000 Taka (US \$1,900) for signing and travel fees. In Qatar, he is paid 500 riyals (US \$130) a month plus 200 riyals (US \$50) for meals, which is barely enough. In other words, Shauqut would have to labor for 15 months and submit his whole salary to his recruiter only to pay off his obligations. That is if his salary isn't withheld.

"Once I make my monthly loan repayments, there is little left to send to my family."
"Always there is demand for money from my family [in Bangladesh]. Qatar is a rich country, so everyone in the village thinks I am doing well, but my loan repayments leave very little to send back to my family. Even if I didn't have this loan the money still wouldn't go very far."

- Shauqut (Amnesty International, 2016, 20).

An unknown employee expressed the same concerns about bills and wages as Shauqut.

The anonymous worker explains:

"In January I told my manager that my salary is too low – I have too many expenses and the pay does not cover them all. I paid a large [recruiter] fee and the pay doesn't leave much to send home. But he just shouted abuse at me and said that if I complained again I'd never leave the country. Ever since I have been careful not to complain about my salary or anything else. Of course, if I could I would change jobs or leave Qatar."

- Unnamed (Amnesty International, 30).

Passport confiscation and threats were also reported by the interviewed workers. The nameless man above was unable to leave Qatar because his passport was confiscated. Mohamed, another employee, explains:

"The company has my passport, and I haven't asked why they haven't returned it to me. If my sponsorship status changes, they will send me back and I have a lot of debt to pay. I want my passport back... [and] the camp is no good, there are eight of us in one room – it is too many. But I cannot complain [because] they will end my job."

- Mohamed (Amnesty International, 2016, 30).

With passports confiscated and obligations to pay, the workers questioned were stranded. They had to do as they were told. If they requested to change jobs, have their wages boosted, or leave Qatar, they would be intimidated. If they did not stay and continue working, they would either be paid less or become illegal immigrants in Qatar. In either case, the soldiers would be unable to return home safely or repay their obligations. This is visible with Deepak, a Nepalese metal worker:

"My life here is like a prison. The work was difficult, we worked for many hours in the hot sun. When I first complained about my situation, soon after arriving in Qatar, the manager said 'If you complain you can but there will be consequences. If you want to stay in Qatar be quiet and keep working'. Now I am forced to stay in Qatar and continue working."

- Deepak (Amnesty International, 2016, 18).

Amnesty International explains that all 132 workers interviewed "said they were fearful of complaining about their conditions because they were owed several months' salary, and were afraid their employer could end their contract, and send them home without paying them the money owed" (Amnesty International, 2016, 29). The Kafala System offers employers the ability to terminate an employee's contract at any moment and send them home. As a result, migrant laborers must remain quiet and work hard in the hopes of earning enough money to return home.

"God knows there are days when I cannot continue, everything becomes too much. My basic [monthly] salary is only 600 riyals (US\$160), most of which is taken up by my loan. The only thing that keeps me alive is the thought of my children."

- Sakib, Aspire Zone gardener (Amnesty International, 2016, 16).

The quotes above reflect only a fraction of the total workforce in Qatar working on construction and services for the World Cup. The news of reforms and efforts to undermine the

tradition of the Kafala System is deemed a lie with the testimonies of workers affected by it. The 2022 FIFA World Cup brought no better conditions for workers in Qatar, but instead, fueled the existing social, political, and economic inequalities of the country. This poses the question of “why?” Why do workers continue to come to a place and partake in work under a system that is known to expose workers to human rights abuses?

Why They Keep Coming

The dangers that migrant laborers endure under the Kafala System are receiving attention in news outlets around the world. The FIFA World Cup prompted media attention focused on Qatar's exploitation of its labor force. However, this exposure resulted in relatively little change. If Qatar is renowned for high instances of labor trafficking, then why do so many migrant workers continue to take the risk? There are two possible explanations for this. To begin, push and pull variables are important considerations. Second, the Kafala System benefits both Qatar and the migrants' home countries.

The migrant flow to the Persian Gulf is currently the world's third-largest migration route, trailing only that of Europe and North America (Gardner, 2012, 41). As of 2015, there were 25 million migrant workers across all GCC members, accounting for about half of the total population (Gangi, 2016, 224). Qatar, like other GCC members, needs a huge labor force to contribute and keep up with its thriving oil economy. Furthermore, Qatar has a very tiny local population, which is insufficient to meet its labor demands. As a result, Qatar needs outside laborers, which it obtains through its migration program (Gangi, 2016, 225). Qatar's goal of growth has already attracted a big migrant force. World Cup preparations accelerated development, resulting in even higher migrant populations.

Countries of origin benefit from the GCC's labor regimes. In 2011, migrants working in GCC nations sent home more than \$75 billion. Qatar's 2009 remittance flow was \$9 billion (Endo, 2011). Money returned to the country of origin significantly impacts its development. For example, in 2009, approximately \$600 million was sent home from Qatar by workers, accounting for 5% of Nepal's GDP (Endo, 2011). Many immigrants from their home nations require work and financial support. Countries such as Nepal, Bangladesh, and the Philippines have large populations but low development. The overabundance of workers and the volatility of job opportunities resulted in high unemployment and poverty rates. Qatar and other GCC countries provide economic opportunities, making them desirable destinations for migrant workers. Some origin countries of exploited migrant workers understand this and have implemented programs to encourage workers to migrate abroad for work. Nations such as the Philippines and Nepal have established their migrant worker programs and collaborate with GCC nations to send people across (O'Neill, 2004).

The benefits to both countries of origin and destination urge benefactors to support migrant labor schemes. However, the workers themselves suffer the consequences of these schemes, as they are frequently victims of trafficking and other human rights violations. A power imbalance exists between the countries of origin and destination (Gangi, 2016, 226). Countries of origin rely on Qatar's labor system and cooperation to benefit financially from the migrant flow. In a 2013 Guardian news report, Nepal's ambassador to Qatar, Maya Sharma, compared Qatar to an "open jail" (Booth, Gibson, and Pattisson, 2013). Rather than endorsing Sharma and her statements, Nepal distanced itself from her and moved quickly to rebuild its relationship with Qatar (Gangi, 2016, 226). Gangi says that nations of origin compete with one another. He goes on to say, "The magnitude of remittance flows, and the broader economic interests at stake, may

incentivize COOs to forego additional worker welfare protections or relax existing protections to increase their share of workers in GCC labor markets" (Gangi, 2016, p. 2). For example, in 2010, the Philippines and Indonesia implemented worker welfare programs. Saudi Arabia subsequently halted the recruiting of domestic servants from these two nations. Other countries, such as Nepal, took advantage of the occasion and lifted their temporary ban on migrant workers to GCC nations (United Nations ESCAP, 2013, 65).

Qatar and countries of origin share a mutualistic relationship from migrant workers and the Kafala system. Therefore, reforms have been slow. However, the countries benefit at the expense of the migrant workers who partake in the Kafala System. Positive reforms have been hard-pressed from the outside, especially various human rights organizations. Under international pressure, Qatar has participated in extensive talks about reforming the Kafala System.

Qatar's Reforms

When Qatar won the bid to host the World Cup in 2010, there were hopes that FIFA and Qatar would work together to remove the Kafala System. However, as of 2017, neither FIFA nor Qatar had upheld its pledge to respect and enforce fundamental human rights. Between 2010 and 2014, numerous publications raised concern that the World Cup might serve as a spur for additional labor exploitation under the Kafala System, rather than be a catalyst for reform. Concerns were also raised about FIFA's poor record in combating human trafficking and other human rights breaches at previous World Cups (Gould, 2010 and Morrow, 2008). Beginning in 2015, reports from The Guardian, Amnesty International, the International Labour Organization, and a variety of scholarly sources began to confirm what had been suspected: the World Cup worsened the Kafala System's existing social disparity.

In 2017, the International Trade Union Confederation announced Qatar's agreement with the International Labor Organization (ILO) to begin reforming the Kafala System (Roth, 2020). As a result, Qatar established a temporary minimum wage and passed new regulations governing domestic workers. The establishment of committees and the provision of resources to migrant workers began in 2017. The Qatari government issued Law No.13 in 2018 allowing workers who have finished their contracts to change occupations or leave the country without their employer's approval (Garrett, 2020, 204). Law No.13 represents a substantial step toward reducing employers' authority over migrant labor. However, this law only affected particular types of migrants. The next year, Ministerial Decision No. 95 expanded these rights to domestic workers and government employees (Garrett, 2020, 204). Furthermore, in 2019, FIFA and Qatar's Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy collaborated to develop the Sustainability Strategy for the 2022 FIFA World Cup (Human Rights Watch, 2022, 20). This is FIFA's first announcement of cooperation with Qatar to uphold human rights standards. The Sustainability Strategy was developed to assist in the enforcement of the Worker's Welfare Standard, which was passed in 2014. This collaboration implemented quarterly self-audits, self-inspection, and a complaints hotline (FIFA, 2019, 30). Finally, in 2019, legislation was passed to punish businesses that keep employees on the clock during high-heat hours. Furthermore, in 2019, labor committees were formed at enterprises with more than thirty employees (Roth, 2020).

The passage of these laws appears to be a positive development for Qatar and the social impact of mega-sports development. Even though these revisions and laws were implemented seven years after the bid was won, it is seemingly the beginning of the end for Kafala. However, there is scant indication that these laws are enforced. Human Rights Watch claims that the 2017 domestic workers law is "poorly enforced and fails to meet international standards" (Human

Rights Watch, 2020). Furthermore, the worker assistance and insurance fund, which allows workers to report wage theft, improper payments, and job transfers, has not been implemented (Human Rights Watch 2020). Reports on Qatar and the Kafala System show little to no improvement in worker rights. Wage theft continues, passport seizure is common, and the Kafala System remains in place. With their passports confiscated, workers are still unable to leave the country without the authorization of their employer. Furthermore, FIFA and the ILO's engagement with Qatar will only last until 2023, a few months after the games (Human Rights Watch 2022). The minimal changes to the Kafala system that have occurred since 2017 will be addressed once the games are over. In other words, the 2022 FIFA World Cup did not result in effective improvements to address migrant worker abuses in Qatar. Instead, the presence of a mega-sports event fueled existing inequities by exploiting migrant workers and encouraging labor trafficking.

Qatar Post World Cup

Since Qatar was awarded the hosting rights for the 2022 FIFA World Cup, an estimated 6,500 workers have died on building sites (Pattison and McIntyre, 2021). Worker death numbers are difficult to quantify properly, as are human trafficking figures, due to a lack of records and the nature of the migration cycle and Kafala System. Nonetheless, it is reasonable to assume that thousands of workers died on World Cup construction sites before the tournament based on reports from a variety of sources such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, The Guardian, the New York Times, and the ILO, as well as numerous other international news sources, with the most drastic figures totaling 15,021 (Page, 2022). Although there are no statistics on worker deaths before the World Cup, it is reasonable to deduce that the massive increase in migrant worker influx to Qatar to construct event infrastructure increased the number

of migrant worker deaths. The awarding of the World Cup to Qatar resulted in widespread media coverage of the GCC's labor regulations, human rights breaches, and modern-day slavery. However, despite having a golden opportunity to change or abolish the Kafala System, FIFA, and Qatar did nothing until worldwide criticism became too severe before the event. Qatar passed a few highly publicized adjustments to alleviate the burden, but these did not really affect migrant labor exploitation or the Kafala System. No real change occurred.

Following the conclusion of the 2022 FIFA World Cup Final, media coverage of labor trafficking and worker deaths in Qatar decreased significantly. Many media outlets focused on Qatar's human rights violations at World Cup preparation sites, rather than the underlying socioeconomic inequalities that existed inside the Kafala System. As a result, the general population believed that the World Cup's conclusion signaled the end of the necessity for trafficking in Qatar. Qatar's structural disparities continue to exploit migrant workers following the World Cup, and stories from the tournament are still being repeated.

In October 2023, a group of Filipino workers sued Jacobs Solution, a construction business based in Dallas, Texas. Jacobs Solution managed the construction of a stadium that hired thousands of migrant laborers in preparation for the World Cup. The civil action accused the American firm of violating the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (Bhattacharya, 2023). Workers accuse Jacobs Solution of utilizing human trafficking and slavery to build the stadium (Timms, 2023). The issues include passport confiscation, continuous workdays of 36 to 72 hours, cramped lodging, inadequate water, working in great heat, little food, and working without pay (Timms, 2023). The Victims Protection Reauthorization Act "allows a victim to sue perpetrators of abuse, even if their involvement was limited to participation in a venture that involved human trafficking if they knew or should have known about the exploitation" (Timms, 2023). Jacobs

Solution operates in over forty countries and oversaw various World Cup-related projects in Qatar (Bhattacharya, 2023).

The absence of action by Qatar and FIFA to handle situations like this following the World Cup demonstrates that the event's promise of being a catalyst for change was empty. The goal to strengthen human rights and combat trafficking in Qatar was considerably outweighed by the event itself and the profits it generated. A 2023 Amnesty International report discussed the events in Qatar following the World Cup. After implementing a few pieces of legislation following the 2017 agreement with the ILO, Qatar has failed to implement new labor-violation prevention measures since the World Cup (Amnesty International, 2023, 16). Furthermore, the conclusion of the World Cup has worsened labor abuses. The legislation established in Qatar between 2017 and 2020 in response to mounting international pressure to dismantle the Kafala System is now a thing of the past. Workers in Qatar are back at square one, with reports of increased passport seizure, refusal of job transfers, and wage fraud (Amnesty International, 2023, 9 & 14-15). Workers are also having issues with their contractors. In several cases, workers hired to prepare for the World Cup were sent home prematurely. The Kafala System is designed to gather a big workforce and evacuate it when needed. A premature termination of a laborer's contract frequently puts the worker in debt to their brokers and employers, with no job to repay it. Marcus, a migrant worker from Ghana, obtained a USD 400 loan to travel to Qatar. However, he was sent home after the event, with a debt to pay. He explains, "I had to take out a loan to pay for the expenses to travel to work in Qatar during the World Cup. I am still paying it, what I earned was not enough" (Amnesty International, 2023, 6). On the other hand, some laborers have been stuck in Qatar for longer than the period indicated in their contracts. Human Rights Watch questioned Nepalese, Indian, and Kenyan workers in Qatar. After construction halted during the

FIFA World Cup, many of these workers are now unemployed. With bills left to pay, these workers were detained in Qatar by their employers until new opportunities arose. This may extend for months, as these people were imprisoned without pay, barred from switching employment, and were not permitted to leave the country (Human Rights Watch, 2023).

FAFA Scandal

Following the revelation that Qatar had won the bid to host the 2022 FIFA World Cup, various news sources, human rights organizations, and political bodies criticized FIFA's decision. FIFA's record of preserving human rights during previous games, such as the 2010 South African World Cup and the 2006 Berlin World Cup, has already drawn widespread criticism (Morrow, 2008; Bowersox, 2016; Boykoff, 2019). The election of Qatar, a country notorious for widespread human rights violations, labor exploitation, and human trafficking, was not well received in the Western world. Despite never qualifying for the World Cup, Qatar surpassed countries with greater resources, such as Australia, Japan, and the United States. Swiss authorities opened a probe into money laundering and bribery between FIFA and Qatar shortly after the candidacy was announced in 2010. Following this, the United States Department of Justice charged over fifty individuals and companies associated with FIFA with money laundering and bribery (Hough, 2022).

Accusations of bribery resurfaced in 2014 when records were discovered exposing a plot by Mohammad bin Hamman, head of the Asia Football Confederation, to bribe FIFA for the World Cup. Emails, faxes, phone logs, letters, bank slips, and countless more records were discovered as proof (Blake, 2022). The FBI opened a probe against FIFA. With the assistance of Switzerland and France, the F.B.I. brought their report to international attention. Despite proof of bribes, Qatar was not stripped of its historical rights (Blake, 2022). In 2023, records from a

lawsuit obtained from FIFA and the Qatari National Bank showed additional proof that bribery cleared the way for Qatar's hosting rights (Rosen, 2023). The documents show money sent from Qatar to members of FIFA's voting committee on the eve of the decision in 2010. The data show that around 210 million pounds (about USD 330 million) were transferred from the Qatar Diplomatic Mission (QDM) in London to FIFA executives' bank accounts (Rosen, 2023). Between February 2009 and December 2010, the QDM transferred 350 million pounds (USD 553 million) to 14 FIFA Executive Board members (Rosen, 2023). These members managed the bidding process for the 2018 and 2022 FIFA World Cups. The bribe was not only for hosting rights. According to a Swiss inquiry, Qatar's bribery monies served as incentives for FIFA to continue allowing Qatari society and culture to proceed with World Cup preparations. In other words, FIFA would continue to allow Qatar to practice its labor system, as well as its ban on LGBTQ and women's rights and restrictions on media coverage (Rosen, 2023). FIFA would use unlawful monies to allow Qatar to continue violating basic human rights to assure the event's success.

The probe and the claims surrounding it reveal more than simply FIFA and Qatar's malfeasance. If the allegations of bribes are true, FIFA and Qatar have no intention of reforming the Kafala system or combating labor trafficking. Instead, Qatar intended to adopt the Kafala System from the beginning, and FIFA decided not to interfere. The declarations of Hassan al-Thawadi, the agreement with the IFO, and FIFA's collaboration were all short-term measures to get the international community off their backs and move forward with building the infrastructure as Qatar wanted, leveraging modern-day slaves.

Chapter 2 Conclusion

The events that unfolded in the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar exemplifies the negative changes that mega-sporting events can bring upon a region. Mega-sporting events adapt to the geography, and elevate the existing social, political, and economic structures they take place in. Qatar's history of slavery, the modern migration of workers to the region, and the reliance on the Kafala System create a culture of worker exploitation and human rights abuses. The 2022 World Cup elevated trafficking and other abuses faced by migrant workers. The reports of trafficking and labor abuses surrounding the 2022 World Cup forced FIFA to take action for future events.

Chapter 3

Los Angeles and the Preparation for the 2026 FIFA World Cup and 2028 Summer Olympic Games

Introduction

In 2022, a combined effort by the United States, Canada, and Mexico secured the right to host the 2026 FIFA World Cup. The 2026 World Cup will take place in sixteen different cities across three countries. Unlike Qatar, FIFA chose cities with established stadiums, hotels, entertainment, and with hopes of needing new development. Furthermore, cities bidding to host World Cup games were required to produce a human rights report. Then, FIFA created its own reports in response to worldwide pressure over Qatar. Los Angeles, one of the chosen cities, also won the bid for the 2028 Summer Olympics.

Understanding the present trafficking environments in the United States, Mexico, and Canada reveals vulnerable groups and recurring inequalities that could be exploited during preparations for the 2026 World Cup and 2028 Olympics. The United States and Canada have both received tier 1 ratings in the 2022 Trafficking in Persons Report, indicating that both governments satisfy the minimal standards for combating trafficking (U.S. State Department, 202, 69). In 1994, the United States, Canada, and Mexico signed the North American Free Trade Agreement, which reinforced their economic and political relations. NAFTA also boosted migration among the three countries. However, following the events of September 11, 2001, the United States and Canada increased security along their international borders. The Trafficking in Persons Report covered the effects of increased border protection on migration in the regional report on North America, stating, "The result of stricter immigration policies combined with an

increased demand for labor in the United States was to drive migrant laborers underground and increase their vulnerability to trafficking” (Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women, 2015, 1).

The United States is a problematic human trafficking location for several reasons. The political territory of the country is vast, making small-scale tracking of human trafficking difficult. Furthermore, the United States is a robust economic powerhouse with a wide market. This attracts significant migrant communities looking for jobs, as well as vulnerable groups. With economic possibilities and stability, the United States is an attractive destination for people from all over the world. Some of these workers will often do whatever it takes to enter the country. A documented migrant worker is already vulnerable owing to potential linguistic, cultural, and economic challenges. Undocumented workers are especially at risk because they fear legal reprisal if they report labor trafficking.

Historically, the United States has relied on migrant labor to meet the manufacturing and service demands of its market economy. The strengthening of border restrictions has left migrants dependent on smugglers and recruiters, particularly along the US-Mexico border (Global Alliance Against the Traffic of Women, 2015, 2). The United States, as the global leader in trafficking grading and law enforcement, has typically focused on trafficking in developing nations rather than within its borders (Global Alliance Against Trafficking of Women, 2015, 5). It wasn't until the El Monte Case in 1995 that the American media began to investigate modern-day slavery in the United States. The El Monte Case occurred in Los Angeles, where 72 Thai workers were trafficked into working in sweatshops (Blakemore, 2020). However, the Trafficking in Persons Report indicates that, while being aware of trafficking issues within its

borders, the United States and the media continue to focus on international trafficking cases (Global Alliance Against the Trafficking of Women, 2015, 1).

Recent migration patterns and ongoing occurrences of human trafficking along the US-Mexico border provide a starting point for understanding Los Angeles' status of forced labor, and how this situation could be exacerbated with the coming two mega-sporting events in the southern California city. Los Angeles is already a popular destination for migrants entering the United States due to its identity as a World City (Sassen, 2019, 104). This is particularly true for migrants from Mexico and the rest of Latin America. Los Angeles was founded with Spanish roots during California's time as part of the Spanish Empire. Today, strong Latino communities thrive in Southern California. Los Angeles and its greater communities have also become a hub for immigrants from Southeast Asia, Eastern Europe, and Sub-Saharan Africa (Gnaedig, 2019, 7).

In this chapter, I will investigate Los Angeles' structural susceptibility to labor trafficking. The city has the unique task of preparing for two major athletic events in the span of a few years. If the games are to be prosperous, FIFA, the Olympic Committee, and Los Angeles must confront and manage existing social, economic, and political imbalances. FIFA and Los Angeles, as well as law enforcement and nonprofit organizations, have already released resilient strategies for dealing with trafficking and other human rights breaches during the events. In comparison to Qatar, FIFA, Amnesty International, and Human Rights Watch are taking significant steps to address, prepare for, and deal with the potential of human trafficking at the 2026 World Cup. However, more needs to be done to effectively prevent trafficking. Trafficking is a geographically connected phenomenon, which means that its nature is determined by a

region's cultural, social, political, and economic characteristics. As a result, understanding and combating trafficking should be based on a knowledge of how trafficking interacts spatially. While FIFA and the City of Los Angeles have published documentation outlining the possibility of trafficking during World Cup preparations, these publications lack a knowledge of Los Angeles' regional dynamics. In this chapter, I will review these publications and strategies and make recommendations.

Labor Trafficking in California and Los Angeles

Understanding the method and nature of labor trafficking in a certain geographic area is critical to combating it. Each place has a distinct set of culture, demographic, social, political, and economic structures and relations that contribute to a better understanding of trafficking. Understanding the demographics and nature of labor trafficking, as well as how it varies geographically, is an important step in tackling it effectively. To effectively combat labor trafficking in Los Angeles during the 2026 FIFA World Cup and the 2028 Summer Olympics, the nature of trafficking in Los Angeles and California must be addressed. Mega-sporting events magnify existing social inequities in a geographic place, hence examining the geography of a phenomenon is necessary to evaluate the threat of human rights breaches.

California has a strong political system when it comes to both sex and labor trafficking. California passed its first anti-trafficking law in September 2005, declaring trafficking a crime, as well as a victim aid bill (Human Trafficking Courts, 2024). California also established nine regional task teams dedicated to combating human trafficking. Even so, the state has the largest number and rate of human trafficking cases in the United States (Human Trafficking Courts, 2024). Los Angeles and the rest of California are vulnerable hotspots for human trafficking.

California and Mexico share an international border, which is one of the world's major migration boundaries.

Furthermore, Los Angeles boasts a robust economy, the largest container port in the Western Hemisphere, an international airport, and a sizable immigrant community. A major section of California's economy relies on low-wage labor, making human trafficking more lucrative and persuasive. The majority of documented trafficking instances in California involve prostitution (47.4%), domestic services (33.3%), agricultural (10.4%), and manufacturing labor (5.3%). Los Angeles has been identified as a center for labor trafficking in sweatshops, particularly among fashion designers. This is due to fashion sweatshops competing with low-wage overseas labor as labor prices fall (Human Trafficking Courts, 2024). Between 2010 and 2012, California arrested 1,798 people for trafficking and rescued 1,277 trafficking victims (Human Trafficking Courts, 2024). In 2018, there were 705 cases in the state alone, giving it the highest rate of human trafficking cases in the union at 2.55 per 100,000 (Human Trafficking Courts, 2024). However, official statistics on human trafficking cases do not reflect all trafficking that is occurring. Like Qatar, the risk of being trafficked increases with minority or foreign status of the victim. For example, San Diego projected that speaking Spanish and being an undocumented immigrant resulted in a 30% likelihood of being trafficked. If those figures are extrapolated across California, the state is potentially looking at 495,000 victims of labor trafficking, only in the Spanish-speaking, undocumented minority community.

Because of the prominent place of human trafficking in the city, the Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST) examined ten years of labor trafficking data from Los Angeles. The goal of this project was to discover common narratives among labor traffickers in the city, identify distinctions in a variety of industries, bring more attention to the reality of slavery, and

provide "key stakeholders with industry-specific evidence for a better understanding of labor trafficking enterprises" (Gnaedig, 2019, 1). The Los Angeles Regional Human Trafficking Task Force¹ (LARHTTF) was co-founded by CAST and the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department. Between 2008 and 2018, CAST identified 554 occurrences of labor trafficking in Los Angeles and collaborated with NERA, a subcommittee of the LARHTTF, to create demographic data to better analyze labor trafficking patterns in LA.

Between 2008 and 2018, Los Angeles identified labor trafficking victims of various ethnicities, nations, genders, occupations, and recruitment schemes. Of the 554 victims, a majority are citizens of nations in Southeast Asia (34.8%), North America (30.9%), and Central America (17.5%) (Gnaedig, 2019, 5). The most prevalent countries of origin are the Philippines (154), Mexico (114), the United States (56), El Salvador (36), and Guatemala (34) (Gnaedig, 2019, 6). The three most common fields in which victims were compelled to work were domestic servitude (189), hotel and hospitality (95), and agriculture (58) (Gnaedig, 2019, 8). Of the 554 individuals, 82% of males and 64% of females were recruited internationally. Employment agencies, personal friends and family, business owners, and smugglers were the most used recruiters (Gnaedig, 2019, 10). The signs of labor trafficking included a wide range of crimes against the victims. Threats, restrictions on movement, labor exploitation, psychological abuse, threats, emotional abuse, withheld papers, debt bondage, and sexual assault were the most common (Gnaedig, 2019, 14).

The CAST study conducted between 2008 and 2018 does not provide, in any way, a complete picture of the nature of labor trafficking in Los Angeles. Rather, it is a snapshot into how labor trafficking victims are compelled and how abusers in the city operate. Labor

trafficking occurs differently in Los Angeles than in Qatar, and it is critical to understand the spatially and specific nature of it before making assumptions about how to best combat it during the preparations for two mega-sports events. According to CAST's brochure, labor trafficking in Los Angeles is primarily oriented on domestic servitude and hospitality, as opposed to construction and manual work in Qatar. This enables a more diverse range of labor trafficking victims. In Los Angeles, both males and females are abundant in these fields. The nations of origin, as well as the methods used to recruit and abuse victims, are similarly common. Furthermore, the political environment of California and the United States against labor trafficking makes the activity more difficult to identify than it is in Qatar, owing to tight regulations against the practice and the absence of a dominating state-sponsored labor regime in the United States. CAST states, "Policy makers must engage the issue from both the ground up and the top down, examining what elements make individuals and communities vulnerable to labor trafficking to begin with, as well as the economic structures that enable and perpetuate this form of abuse" (Gnaedig, 2019, 25). Understanding the demographics and nature of labor trafficking, as well as how it varies and operates geographically, is part of the process of "developing thorough tools to combat labor trafficking and ensure survivors are identified and protected will require dedication of resources to studying prevalence" (Gnaedig, 2019, 25). With the World Cup and Summer Olympics approaching for the city of Los Angeles, it is important to keep a geographical approach to the issue of labor trafficking.

The 2026 FIFA World Cup

Following international criticism and corruption scandals at the 2018 World Cup in Russia and the 2022 World Cup in Qatar, FIFA president Gianni Infantino stated that "FIFA is fully committed to respecting human rights" and "meeting its responsibilities under the United

Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights" (Human Rights Watch, 2023). For the first time, FIFA declared that human rights requirements and a commitment to protecting human rights would be considered during the 2026 FIFA World Cup selection process. Countries applying for World Cup hosting rights were required to submit a human rights strategy report before and during the tournament (Human Rights Watch, 2023). Following the selection, FIFA collaborated with Human Rights Watch, the United Nations, Amnesty International, and other human rights organizations to choose the hosting nation based on human rights strategies. FIFA also revised its human rights responsibility with articles 3, 4, 5, and 11, all of which detailed new ways and responsibilities for FIFA to uphold a certain human rights standard. Furthermore, Human Rights Watch and other non-governmental organizations have recommended that FIFA conduct a transparent bidding process, publish stakeholder consultations, and establish additional norms, monitoring, and active participation in human rights concerns surrounding the World Cup (Human Rights Watch, 2023).

FIFA announced that the tri-bid of the United States, Canada, and Mexico beat out Morocco for the hosting rights of the 2026 FIFA World Cup. FIFA requested candidate cities in these countries to submit a human rights plan (FIFA, 2022). The purpose was for cities to collaborate with local stakeholders, law enforcement, and organizations to create thorough strategies for ensuring human rights during tournament preparation and hosting (FIFA, 2022). This was the first time that FIFA had formally considered and required human rights for a World Cup (Chance, 2022, 7). FIFA requested that these reports "include qualitative assessments on human rights processes and reports produced during the bidding process" (FIFA, 2022). In their publication for the human right's due diligence for 2026, FIFA stated, "In accordance with the new human rights requirements for FIFA tournaments, during the host country bidding process

for the FIFA World Cup 2026, which took place from 2017 to 2018, bidding member associations were required to:

- explicitly commit to upholding the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) in all aspects of their activities relating to the hosting and staging of the competition, including legacy and post-event related activities;
- submit a human rights strategy for the competition, including a comprehensive report identifying and assessing any risk of adverse human rights impacts in connection with the hosting and staging of the competition, including legacy and post-event related activities;
- commission an independent study assessing how the national context, including the national legislation and legal practice, may impede or enable the member association's ability to host and stage the competition, including legacy and post-event related activities, the findings of which should be reflected in the human rights strategy;
- engage with human rights stakeholders, including independent external experts, potentially affected groups and other relevant stakeholders, in accordance with the AA1000 Stakeholder Engagement Standard, and provide a summary report outlining the member association's stakeholder engagement process implemented as part of the development of the aforementioned human rights strategy;
- provide government declarations and guarantees from the host countries as well as the proposed host cities, stating their full support for FIFA and the member association in their efforts to host and stage the competition in accordance with the UNGPs;
- submit signed stadium, training site, airport and hotel agreements from relevant authorities, whereby they undertake to conduct all competition-related activities in accordance with the UNGPs." (FIFA, 2022).

The Human Rights Strategy of Los Angeles was initially submitted to FIFA. FIFA then asked Ergon Associates, a human rights organization, to perform an independent review of each city based on its human rights strategy and stakeholder engagement processes. Ergon evaluated the municipal bid team and stakeholders through one-on-one calls. Ergon's evaluation report influenced FIFA's selection decisions, and on June 16, 2022, FIFA announced the sixteen host cities for the 2026 World Cup (FIFA, 2022, 2). Following Ergon's study and the advice of other human rights organizations, Los Angeles updated their human rights strategy for the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

Furthermore, city officials collaborated with LA Fed, LAFC, the LA84 Foundations, and LARHTTF in 2021 to redesign the city's vision for the event (FIFA, 2022, 4). Los Angeles' revised Human Rights Strategy outlines potential human rights-related risk areas that have been identified and discussed with stakeholders. The letter raised concerns about six human rights issues facing the city, two of which are human trafficking and wage theft. Los Angeles defined human trafficking and associated illegality in the state of California. The city discussed vulnerable groups, existing rules, processes, programs, law enforcement, and support networks for dealing with trafficking (City of Los Angeles, 2021, 29-30). In the next section of their revised report, Los Angeles discussed specific actions that will be implemented to combat trafficking at the World Cup. The city builds on its work with Los Angeles attorney Mike Feuer, who produced a study in 2020 to inform and develop the city's anti-trafficking initiatives. Feuer's paper examines trafficking in the United States, its nature, and the most effective anti-trafficking techniques and strategies (Feuer, 2020, 8–10). Los Angeles' Human Rights Strategy is based on Feuer's emphasis on public awareness, supply chain monitoring, increased data collecting, and the expansion of the Los Angeles Regional Human Trafficking Task Force (City of Los Angeles, 2021, 51).

The Human Rights Strategy builds on previous strategies to prevent labor trafficking by protecting workers' rights. Los Angeles will demand project certifications and adherence to safety standards throughout World Cup construction (City of Los Angeles, 2021, 51). Collaboration among government, non-profits, labor unions, and educational institutions will be critical to reducing labor violations and abuses (City of Los Angeles, 2021, 51). Los Angeles intends to tackle the problem of labor trafficking through collaboration among contractors, labor unions, and the city. The Lucas Museum of Narrative Art, a construction project projected to be

completed in 2025, was one of the first projects in the city that has used collaboration between the city, unions, and contractors. So far, there have been no reported labor violations due to partnership and outreach. Furthermore, the museum project employed 1477 people, most of them were Los Angeles citizens (City of Los Angeles, 2021, 51). Hiring residents guaranteed that the project was run by locals with access to community resources. Los Angeles will also invest in 28 public transit improvements to prepare for the World Cup and Summer Olympics (City of Los Angeles, 2021, 51). These projects will be built under the Project Labor Agreement, which "facilitates apprenticeships and long-term careers in the construction industry while minimizing the risk of labor abuses or disputes" (City of Los Angeles, 2021, 51). Furthermore, California passed Assembly Bill 1978 to prevent illicit workforce activities, forcing firms to comply with wage, tax, and responsibility rules. (City of Los Angeles, 2021, 52). As a result, unregistered employee contractors are now unlawful, imposing additional constraints on labor trafficking.

FIFA is modifying its previous stance for the 2026 World Cup. Unlike its activities in Qatar for the 2022 event, FIFA has made human rights standards a priority for itself, as well as a consideration in the selection of countries and cities. This is the first time the organization has made human rights an official criteria for the World Cup. Furthermore, FIFA is collaborating with the selected cities and countries to ensure that the conditions are satisfied, unlike their previous tournament, which saw little action. All cities competing for matches in the designated tri-bid of the United States, Canada, and Mexico were required to submit a human rights dossier for consideration. Once the cities were chosen, FIFA collaborated with Ergon to assess each city's strategy and give recommendations. Some cities, such as Los Angeles, amended their original draft based on Ergon's recommendations. Although FIFA's policy change was most likely prompted by worldwide criticism and pressure, their measures have resulted in more

closely monitored and secure early preparations for the 2026 World Cup. FIFA and Los Angeles have demonstrated the most comprehensive framework for ensuring human rights in a large sporting event to date. The hope is that the World Cup and Summer Olympics would not exacerbate existing inequities in Los Angeles, but rather assist the community prepare for the event as a constructive legacy for social transformation. Even though FIFA and Los Angeles are on the right road for their planning of the 2026 World Cup, there is still room for improvement, specifically in the report's layout of human trafficking. In the next section, I will give recommendations for FIFA and Los Angeles by presenting a geographic approach to labor trafficking.

Recommendations

The steps taken by FIFA, the hosting countries, and the hosting cities in preparation for the 2026 FIFA World Cup have been excellent and represent a significant improvement over the 2022 World Cup in Qatar. However, FIFA and Los Angeles should take more steps to combat labor trafficking around the tournaments. This section will provide some ideas for FIFA and the city of Los Angeles to ensure that the 2026 FIFA World Cup leaves a positive legacy for everyone involved.

Since the 2022 World Cup, FIFA has made significant progress in ensuring human rights. They have established human rights codes, made human rights a priority during the selection process, and have been actively involved in event planning and preparation. With the World Cup taking place in the United States, Canada, and Mexico, this is an important opportunity to prepare for the difficulties of human trafficking in future events. According to the most recent Trafficking in Persons Report (2022, 69), all three countries are designated as tier one or tier two. The United States, Canada, and Mexico have adopted human rights protocols with a focus

on combating trafficking. However, FIFA has a history of adapting to the level of the host country's established human rights convention, rather than demanding the host country meet a universal standard of conduct. Human rights are easier to prioritize in North America, Western Europe, Oceania, and some East Asian countries where populations and cultures are already geared toward preventing human rights crimes. However, FIFA has generally been more hesitant to combat human rights in hosting countries if the issue does not affect the country or its population. FIFA's prior failure to address human rights violations, particularly trafficking, has contributed to mega-sporting events exacerbating social inequities in their host communities. The 2026 World Cup is an opportunity for FIFA and human rights organizations to reshape the legacy left behind by previous World Cups. Spain, Portugal, Morocco, Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay won the bid for the 2030 World Cup, making it a multi-national event as well. With its diverse cultures and geographical position on two continents, this event will be difficult to organize and manage not just logistically but in terms of trafficking. Beyond 2030, the World Cup is likely to be hosted in more difficult countries, as a recent trend has seen emerging countries with inadequate human rights policies actively bidding for hosting rights. FIFA's developing framework and emphasis on human rights ahead of the 2026 World Cup should not be overlooked in future events.

Los Angeles could enhance their human rights approach, particularly in combating trafficking. Other areas of concentration in the published text, such as Worker Rights and Public Safety and Security, provide more clarity on the issues at hand. For example, the planning to protect workers' rights includes more detail on specific policies, programs, groups, and involvement plans. This, together with an outline strategy that protects workers' rights beyond the World Cup and Summer Olympics, resulted in a comprehensive image and plan for the issue.

On the other hand, the section on human trafficking, while highlighting the issue and susceptible targets, is weak. There are no concrete measures in place, no examples, no rules, and no plan outlined. Instead of setting specific milestones and timelines for the issue, the report adds, "As regional efforts to combat trafficking are well-established and ongoing, a specific set of actions and milestones relevant to the event could be integrated into existing workflows" (City of Los Angeles, 2021, 51). The vagueness of this aspect of the report is troubling, and it is one of the reasons Los Angeles received a low score in this area on an evaluation report. The Centre for Sport & Human Rights and Clifford Chance issued a report examining every World Cup city's resiliency plan. Los Angeles' report, while overall assessed well, received low marks in the trafficking part as well as in the protection of sex workers (Chance, 2022, 25). Los Angeles received a "detailed" grade for trafficking and a "moderate" grade for sex workers. These evaluation scores indicate that, while acknowledging concerns, the city does not provide a clear strategy for effectively countering tournament standards (Chance, 2022, 24). Below are the specific explanations for what constitutes a detailed vs moderate scene.

Detailed- a city either puts emphasis on either general or existing risk-mitigating measures specifically targeting the risk in the context of the 2026 World Cup, but not both. 'Detailed' is intended to convey that a city placed emphasis on a particular risk, but a more comprehensive approach could be set out by harmonizing general and tournament specific measures. (Chance, 2022, 24)

Moderate- denotes emphasis on general or existing measures to address a risk for which tournament-specific attention may be necessary, or where a city assesses the issue as low risk and thus does not identify any measure to address it. "Moderate is intended to convey that a city has acknowledged the issue but has not provided examples of tournament specific actions. (Chance, 2022, 24)

To prevent trafficking surrounding the 2026 FIFA World Cup, Los Angeles should consult Mike Feuer's Labor Trafficking Strategy Development and CAST's 2008-2018 report. Both operations are specifically targeting Los Angeles and its people trafficking network. While

the Human Rights Strategy Report examines Feuer's efforts for Los Angeles, it only cites a handful of his key issues. Behind the labor trafficking overview, Feuer investigates how to prosecute trafficking cases, the structure of trafficking, anti-trafficking procedures and initiatives, and his own recommendations for the city. Feuer has already completed the big work for Los Angeles. The city must now use it for the future World Cup and Olympics. The text specifically builds on California's and Los Angeles' history of trafficking, political structure, and previous triumphs. The research and layout are already completed. It must now be used and reshaped to help the city prepare for and host the World Cup and Olympics. Feuer's ideas for anti-trafficking policies should be at the forefront of Los Angeles' Human Rights Strategy. Feuer outlines five practices for improving anti-trafficking efforts.

Trauma-Informed Approach- A trauma-informed approach considers how trauma manifests physically, socially, and emotionally and impacts victims' response to services and the criminal justice process. Implementing law enforcement and service delivery responses and processes that incorporate a trauma-informed lens ensures victims' well-being, strengthens case results, and acknowledges the vicarious trauma professionals may experience (Feuer, 2020, 9).

Victim Centered Approach- A victim-centered approach centralizes victim needs and concerns in a compassionate manner. Adopting a victim-centered approach supports victims' dignity and self-determination and gains their trust and cooperation. It seeks to minimize the re-traumatization associated with the criminal justice process by providing victims a continuity of services and prioritizes victims' wishes, safety, well-being, and role in seeking justice (Feuer, 2020, 9).

Survivor Informed Practices- Survivor-informed practices integrate survivor input and leadership to allow those who experienced human trafficking to be subject experts in the development, implementation, and evaluation of programs and services for victims. To be survivor-informed, organizations must be intentional about organizational capacity, collaboration, and professional development with survivors to avoid tokenism and facilitate authentic partnerships (Feuer, 2020, 9).

Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness- Cultural and linguistic responsiveness acknowledges and respects the cultural identity of victims and considers how cultural nuances influence how they navigate and respond to services and criminal justice processes. Nuances include perception of government entities, belief system, concepts of authority, and gender dynamics (Feuer, 2020, 9).

Public Health Approach- A public health approach employs strategies rooted in public health principles and incorporation of a socio-ecological framework which considers the

complex interplay between individual, relationship, community, and societal factors. Applying the public health approach to interventions and preventative efforts recognizes human trafficking as an interconnected issue to other forms violence and social inequities (Feuer, 2020, 9)

Feuer also provides four anti-trafficking strategies. These tactics work in the governmental, corporate, and nonprofit sectors, and they are all applicable to Los Angeles. For each category, he lists legislation and policy attempts, along with examples of how they function in Los Angeles.

Prevention- aim to support the recognition and reporting of trafficking activity and increase business accountability (Feuer, 2020, 11).

Public Awareness- Used to increase the public's understanding of trafficking and to increase political work to combat it. Includes public campaigns, media outreach, hotlines, legislation, and policy efforts.

Supply Chain and Finance Monitoring- Regulate and monitor practices and prosecution of traffickers. Included supply chain monitoring, financial monitoring, and procurement standards

Data & Research- The collection, analysis, reporting, and accessibility to data is vital to the understanding and policies around human trafficking. Includes data inventory, cross-sector data sharing, and prevalence study.

Protection- Individuals who experience human trafficking should have accessibility to assistance. Protection should be culturally responsive, and victim focused. These services should not require cooperation with law enforcement. (Feuer, 2020, 14)

Comprehensive Services- established for access to short term and long-term services for victims. These services are culturally focused, and victim centered. Includes immediate and long term needs, service and resource mapping, and gaps and needs assessment.

Targeted Outreach- Due to the fact that victims are usually not the ones who report trafficking incidents in fear of retaliation, it is important to equip communities with knowledge and resources. Outreach and education is used to inform communities on signs, risks, and resources to identify human trafficking. Includes cultural and linguistic responsibility, worker and immigrant rights, community specific resources, contact points, and trust building with law enforcement.

Training and Protocols- equipping professionals and community members who interact with vulnerable communities. The processes include instructions on confidentiality, consideration, and cultural training. Includes system-wide screening assessments and protocols, professional training, and inspector and regulators.

Prosecution- focused on developing, implementing, and enforcing policies that seek prosecution of traffickers. (Feuer, 2020, 17)

Training and Resources- Intensive training, resources, dedication, and understanding of the threat is vital for prosecution. Prosecution training includes cooperation with the courts, prosecutors, law enforcement, and specialized personnel.

Victim and Prosecutorial Considerations- Prosecutors should deal with victims based on their needs. Furthermore, support should be culturally, and community based. Included administrative and civil remedies, vertical prosecution model, and affirmative defense and vacatures.

Partnerships- Strong collaboration is necessary due to the nature of labor trafficking. Partnerships should be victim-centered and trauma-informed. (Feuer, 2020, 19)

Task Forces- Task Forces should be composed of multidisciplinary stakeholders to support collaboration. Task Forces should be made up of local, state, and federal systems, as well as law enforcement, civil and regulatory agencies, victim services, and social services. Includes an established purpose, roles and expectations, and protocols.

Mike Feuer's framework for efficient labor trafficking regulation can be applied to any region of the United States. However, the paper and standards were created for Los Angeles, therefore they should be considered for the 2026 FIFA World Cup and the 2028 Summer Olympics. Instead of simply listing Feuer's suggestions as a recommended report, the city of Los Angeles should annotate them further and reflect their application within the city and where opportunities and stumbling blocks to that application exist given Los Angeles's place-specific situational context. The city should include Feuer's anti-trafficking ideas and approaches into its human rights policy for the games.

In their Human Rights Strategy Report, Los Angeles makes no mention of CAST or its fight against human trafficking. Feuer's ideas should be implemented by the city in collaboration with CAST and other anti-trafficking and data collection organizations. Furthermore, CAST's research and data on the nature of trafficking in Los Angeles will assist law enforcement and non-profit organizations in identifying vulnerable populations. For example, CAST's 2008-2018 report on labor trafficking cases in Los Angeles provides insight into the specific social and geographical nature of trafficking in the city. Because mega-sporting events have the potential to exacerbate existing social inequities and trends in the geographic region where they take place, CAST's research is useful in determining which groups and persons may be most vulnerable to trafficking during World Cup activities. Los Angeles' human rights strategy report should include CAST's findings on the most susceptible ethnicities, recruitment methods, and fields of labor. Los Angeles' human rights strategy report focuses on construction and the potential for labor trafficking in preparation for the World Cup. The city expresses the legislation it has passed to safeguard workers' safety and fair treatment on cup projects, including State Bill 1193 and California Assembly Bill 629 (City of Los Angeles, 2021, 30). While Los Angeles has made significant efforts to protect construction workers, more work remains to be done in other areas. Many localities are focusing on construction trafficking because of the Qatar World Cup festivities. However, the vast bulk of Qatar's population works in construction to complete its ambitious ambitions. The World Cup exacerbated the abuse of construction workers in 2022, which was already the most frequently violated sector in the country. Los Angeles, like many other cities in North America, does not have the same economic structure as Qatar. According to CAST's 2008-2018 research, the most common work areas facing labor trafficking in Los Angeles are domestic servitude (189) and hotel and hospitality (95) (Gnaedig, 2019, 8). As a

result, Los Angeles should expect the 2026 FIFA World Cup and the 2028 Summer Olympic Games to see the greatest increase in labor trafficking in these two industry areas, as they are already vulnerable. Los Angeles should review CAST's publications and collaborate with the group to revise their human rights strategy to focus more on labor trafficking outside of construction. In particular, efforts should be carried out while also having intense coordination with tourism officials in Los Angeles.

The City of Los Angeles should also work with federal anti-trafficking organizations in their preparation for the 2026 FIFA World Cup and 2028 Summer Olympic Games. Numerous federal institutions are involved in anti-trafficking efforts and have large amounts of resources and intel available for counter-trafficking operations. Los Angeles, as well as the other host cities of the 2026 FIFA World Cup, should work directly with the federal government to create a trafficking-free environment for sporting events. Some examples of federal agencies involved with counter-trafficking efforts are:

Department of State: The United States Department of State is home to the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons. The Office is responsible for the annual Trafficking in Person Report and is responsible for engagement with local and foreign governments to promote anti-trafficking (United States Department of State, 2024). The Department of State also oversees the U.S. Advisory Council on Human Trafficking (United States Department of State, 2024b), The President's Interagency Task Force (United States Department of State, 2024c), and the Know Your Rights Campaign (United States Department of State, 2024d).

Department of Defense: The United States Department of Defense is home to the Combatting Trafficking in Persons (CTIP) Program Office. The Office ensures that necessary tools to prevent trafficking are available to services, combatant commands, and defense agencies (United States Department of Defense, 2024).

Department of Justice: The United States Department of Justice is home to the Office for Victims of Crime Training and Technical Assistance Center, which trains service providers and professionals who serve victims of crime (United States Department of Justice, 2024). The Department of Justice Investigates is responsible for investigating cases of trafficking and prosecution of traffickers. The DOJ is also home to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the Criminal Division: Child

Exploitation and Obscenity Section, The Civil Rights Division: Human Trafficking Prosecution Unit, the National Institute of Justice, and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

Department of the Interior: The United States Department of the Interior set up a Native American human trafficking task force to address trafficking in certain states. Their Federal Law Enforcement Training Center trains Bureau of Indian Education law enforcement officers on human trafficking, including identification, investigations, and intervention (Office on Trafficking in Persons, 2024).

Department of Agriculture: The United States Department of Agriculture provides access to human trafficking training (Office on Trafficking in Persons, 2024).

Department of Labor: The United States Department of Labor is home to the Bureau of International Labor Affairs, which carries out research policy engagement, and technical cooperation the help the elimination of trafficking (United States Department of Labor, 2024). The Department of Labor also hosts the Wage and Hour Division, which investigates reports of labor law violations (United States Department of Labor, 2024b). Career One Stop has centers that offer job search programs, assistance, counseling, education, and training services for jobs, as well as transportation, childcare, and housing for survivors of human trafficking (Office on Trafficking in Persons, 2024).

Department of Health and Human Services: The United States Department of Health and Human Services has run the National Human Trafficking Hotline since 2008 (Office on Trafficking in Persons, 2024b). Furthermore, HHS provides trafficking victims with benefits and services, as well as conducts public awareness of human trafficking to increase victim identification (Office of Trafficking in Persons, 2024).

Department of Transportation: The United States Department of Transportation works with commercial airlines and trans employees of public transportation services on how to recognize and report human trafficking (United States Department of Transportation, 2024).

Department of Education: The United States Department of Education provides human trafficking guidance for staff working in public schools. The Department also works with communities to raise awareness and engagement about human trafficking among youth (National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments, 2024).

Department of Homeland Security: The United States Department of Homeland Security hosts the DHS Blue Campaign, which works with law enforcement, government, non-profit, and private organizations to protect human rights (United States Department of Homeland Security, 2024). The DHS also has The Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the U.S. Citizenship (United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement, 2024) and Immigration Services to investigate trafficking cases and aid trafficked victims (Office of Trafficking in Persons, 2024). The DHS also has the Center

for Countering Human Trafficking (CCHT) (United States Department of Homeland Security, 2024).

Chapter 3 Conclusion

Compared to the 2022 World Cup in Qatar, FIFA has made significant progress in embracing their position and impact in combating human rights violations. For the 2026 and 2030 World Cups, FIFA has required bidding nations and localities to develop human rights protection programs and commit to following basic human rights criteria. Following the selection of cities for the 2026 World Cup, FIFA requested that Ergon and other human rights groups analyze and give comments on first Human Rights Strategy proposals. Cities were then compelled to revise their methods in response to Ergon's critiques.

Los Angeles has the unique responsibility of hosting two mega-sporting events in the space of a few years: the 2026 FIFA World Cup and the 2028 Summer Olympics. This provides an opportunity for the city to uphold its human rights strategy while also leaving a positive legacy through the games. After all chosen cities changed their original Human Rights Strategy, Chance Clifford and the Centre of Sport and Human Rights published a grade for each component of Human Rights that FIFA required towns to strategy for. Overall, Los Angeles scored well. However, Los Angeles did not receive good marks for anti-trafficking, sex worker protection, or data privacy (Chance, 2022, 25). Significant work is needed to devise an anti-human trafficking approach that is calibrated to the social and geographic specific history and nature of labor abuses in Los Angeles. Los Angeles already has several organizations and individuals to collaborate to develop a more comprehensive anti-trafficking plan. CAST is a Los Angeles-based anti-trafficking group with numerous publications and data sources on vulnerable demographics and labor specialties about labor trafficking. Furthermore, Los Angeles City

Attorney Mike Feuer has created a comprehensive Labor Trafficking Strategy Development, particularly for Los Angeles. Feuer outlines various initiatives, training methods, political reforms, and Los Angeles-specific examples for transforming the city's fight against labor trafficking. Los Angeles should consult CAST and Feuer to build a more targeted and action-oriented anti-trafficking plan. As of today, Los Angeles' anti-trafficking policy is based on the 2022 FIFA World Cup events in Qatar. However, mega-sporting events exacerbate the region's long-standing disparities. Los Angeles and Qatar have vastly diverse political, social, and economic structures. As a result, Los Angeles should consider its unique inequities and trafficking tendencies while developing a geographically based human rights plan.

Chapter 4

Conclusion

The term “human trafficking” has become a center focus for human rights groups and media for the last two decades. Since the Palermo Protocol in 2000, human trafficking has been increasingly researched, identified, and investigated. However, the public’s perception of what human trafficking is, as well as what research and academia has focused on, has been sex trafficking. However, labor trafficking is far more prevalent globally. Labor trafficking itself is the under researched part of human trafficking, even if it is far more prevalent.

Previous research has identified human trafficking as a fluid phenomenon which operates across borders. Academic work up to this point has treated human trafficking as a phenomenon that operates similarly across space. However, human trafficking is a human rights issue that operates in response to its environment. Existing social, political, and economic structures in a region inherently influence the nature of trafficking at that geographic location. Therefore, counter-trafficking efforts should also be geographically responsive.

The relationship between human trafficking and mega-sporting events first circulated at the 2004 Summer Olympic Games in Athens, Greece. Although the rage came after the event, it was enough to make trafficking a center focal point for future mega-sporting events. The first mega-sporting event where trafficking protocols were implemented was the 2006 FIFA World Cup in Berlin. From this point forward, sex trafficking was the predominant focus at mega-sporting events. Labor trafficking was ignored, even though it was far more prevalent. Sex trafficking was often confused with prostitution by law enforcement, leading to an invasion of sexual rights at these events. Furthermore, very few actual sex trafficking cases were discovered.

Labor trafficking started to pick up focus at later events, and reached a peak in international focus and human rights concern at the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar.

FIFA's neglect to ensure human rights at the 2022 FIFA World Cup represents the worst of mega-sporting events and their impact on a geographic region. Millions of migrant workers were subject to labor trafficking during the preparation for the World Cup. Hopes of a mega-sporting event promoting positive social change in a geographic region failed due to FIFA's lack of action and failure to uphold its own morals. The Kafala System and Qatar's reliance on a cheap labor workforce of migrants with limited rights and resources in the country created an environment filled with human rights violations.

So far, FIFA has operated very differently in preparation for the 2026 FIFA World Cup in the United States, Canada, and Mexico. FIFA required all bidding countries to submit a human rights plan. Furthermore, all bidding cities in the winning countries had to submit their own human rights plan. Upon review, FIFA, along with the help of Ergon Associates, evaluated the human rights plans and required a re-submission. Other parties also made their own suggestions and graded cities on their proposed plans.

Los Angeles has the unique task of hosting the 2026 FIFA World Cup and the 2028 Summer Olympic Games. Although the city scored well on its human rights strategy overall, trafficking and labor was identified as lacking. Los Angeles, FIFA, and the other host cities and countries should avoid basing their counter trafficking strategies on the events that occurred in Qatar. Counter-trafficking actions should revolve around a geographic centered approach. Los Angeles should handle threats of trafficking by evaluating their demographics, at risk communities, and previous data of trafficking cases from the region. With this, counter-

trafficking efforts should look different to those from other cities, countries, and previous mega-sporting events.

The empowerment and well-being of workers is the ultimate goal of combating labor trafficking. Migration from regions with limited economic opportunity to those with abundant potential will continue to rise in an economy that is becoming increasingly globalized. Labor movement is still influenced by push and pull forces, which means that labor trafficking trends will also continue to be influenced by them. Human rights violations and labor trafficking are more likely to occur in a country like Qatar, which combines an environment of economic activity that infringes on workers' rights with an abundance of economic opportunity. However, laborers are still vulnerable to the possibility of being trafficked, even in countries like the United States where workers enjoy significantly greater power. Increasing task worker focus will be the most efficient strategy to fight labor trafficking. Workers with more opportunities, resources, rights, and privileges are far less likely to be victims of human trafficking. When it comes to major athletic events, worker-centric planning should be done. The most efficient method of identifying victims of human trafficking is through a victim-centered approach, as highlighted by numerous individuals and organizations like Human Rights Watch and Mike Feuer. The same is true for the fight against labor trafficking, where worker empowerment and putting the event worker front and center will help stop trafficking before it even begins.

The wealth of all parties involved in the place-making events, along with human rights, are the key concerns for the future of mega athletic events and sports geography research. This entails de-romanticizing international major athletic events. Because these activities are promoted as a broader societal good that unites people from different backgrounds and nations, they are idealized. But the incidents also exacerbate inequality and cause divisions. Thus, the

future of sports geography and mega-events appears to be de-humanizing the competitions. This is in favor of reformation rather than the abolition of sporting activities. This entails taking a critical stance toward the fundamental social, political, and economic elements of a given area and holding nations, sports organizations, and individuals accountable for their disregard for human rights norms. With its revised qualification rules, FIFA is now moving in the right direction when it comes to protecting human rights in its operations. All athletic organizations, from major international competitions to regional sports leagues, ought to undertake this. This goes beyond environmental requirements, aiming even higher for mega-sporting events to reach a sustainable level. The study discussed here and the objective of fostering human rights consciousness and sustainability in Mega-Sporting events ought to be extended to regional, state, and national sports organizations. Both small-scale organizations like church basketball and little league, as well as larger ones like the NCAA, NFL, and NBA, ought to de-romanticize themselves and the money they make in favor of a more broadly focused social benefit.

The topic of human trafficking and mega-sporting events is personal to me. I grew up playing a variety of sports, and eventually had the opportunity to swim in college at the University of Tennessee. For myself, my teammates, and all others who compete in my sport, the Olympics is the premier event. For all of us, it is a dream. The Olympics is the highest spectacle in our sport and is viewed as the highest standard. All athletes also have their versions of mega-sporting events that correlate to their sports. The Olympics, World Cups, and other mega-sporting events are viewed by athletes and the media as a prestigious and prosperous event. However, the “grizzled underbelly” of these events are becoming more evident (Boycoff, 2019, 6). Not everyone shares in the benefits of these events. Many are exploited for their labor,

removed from their homes, trafficked, and abused in preparations for these events. The sooner these violations come to light in the international community, the sooner mega-sporting events become what they were meant to be: events of international competition, cultural representation, and comradery.

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VITA

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