

# Leading the charge in workers' welfare best practice

HBK Contracting was the first contractor to be appointed by the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy (SC) for FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™ projects. The company embraced the Workers' Welfare Standards, paving the way for others to follow.

HBK Contracting was commissioned to work on Al Janoub Stadium in May 2014. Within months, the company showed strong commitment to the SC's Standards, making significant strides in ensuring workers' well-being.

The company's strong compliance with the Standards resulted in its appointment as the main contractor for two more FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™ stadiums: Lusail and Ras Abu Aboud in 2016 and 2018 respectively.

Ramzi Dahdah, Chief Operating Officer at HBK Contracting, said: "A happy and content workforce is a productive workforce. We recognise their hard work and acknowledge their contributions in bringing our projects to life. It is our primary responsibility to ensure our workers are taken care of at all times."

HBK Contracting was the first main contractor to agree to the SC's recruitment fees reimbursement scheme and has returned approximately QAR 5.4 million per year to over 3,000 workers. This example has since been followed by over 190 contractors and other contracting parties (OCPs) across SC projects.

HBK has reimbursed all their workers, even those who joined the company before the Standards came into effect, in an effort to treat all their workers equally, and ensure every worker benefits.

"Charging workers recruitment fees is an unethical practice, prohibited by the Standards and Qatari law," said Dahdah. "Working alongside the SC has bolstered our efforts to abolish this practice, ensuring workers are free of recruitment-related debts and able to send more money back home to their families."



"The strict implementation of the Workers' Welfare Standards will help Qatar reach new heights in workers' well-being, and the onus is on contractors to look after their workers. The Standards have become a benchmark and are ingrained in our company's values and ethics. There's no turning back, we need to work harder and raise the bar even higher."

**Ramzi Dahdah**  
Chief Operating Officer, HBK Contracting

HBK Contracting now only works with recruitment agencies approved by the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour & Social Affairs. The company also sends its own human resources team to conduct interviews with candidates in their home countries to make sure workers are not impacted by illegal and unethical recruitment practices.

HBK was also among the first contractors to establish catering services at each of its workers' accommodation sites. This gives workers the opportunity to enjoy the flavours of a home-cooked meal.

"Our workers come from countries where food is truly celebrated. Food brings people together and this camaraderie is what we aim to achieve every day on and off site. Our staff work hard. It is our responsibility to provide them with the right nutrition when they get back from work," said Dahdah.

Throughout its journey with the SC, HBK Contracting has taken the lead in implementing the Standards across all aspects of workers' wellbeing – a commitment that goes beyond 2022.