

Introduction

In December 2010, Qatar won the rights to host the 2022 FIFA World Cup games. The announcement came with increasing pressure from international human rights organizations, media and other groups for Qatar to reform its labor laws, which governs the lives and working conditions of foreign workers in the country. Although Qatar continues to develop and implement major reforms to its labor laws, until now there was no one unique tool based on survey data to evaluate the impact of the government's policies on guest workers.

The objective of this paper is to present the Qatar Guest Workers' Welfare Index (GWWI), a multi-dimensional comprehensive tool based on survey data of migrant workers developed by the Social and Economic Survey Research Institute (SESRI). In addition to assessing and tracking the welfare of this population, the objective of the index is to identify areas of improvement to guide policy formulation.

Methodology

The development of SESRI Welfare Index started with the 2016 Guest Worker Welfare Workshop, which marks the beginning of the Index. At this workshop, SESRI developed the core framework for the index of migrant workers' welfare, based on individual-level survey data that SESRI can use to track changes in welfare over time.

Data collection:

- May 2018
- Mode: Computer Assisted Personal Interview (CAPI)- 30 minute to 1 hour in-person survey

Sample design:

- Stratified cluster sampling
- Number of completed interviews: 1,028 blue-collar workers residing in labor camps

Response rate:

- 231 labor camps, of which 200 agreed to participate in the survey, yielding an overall response rate of 87%



Main Findings

THE MIGRANT WELFARE INDEX

Overall, on a scale from 0 to 100, where 0 indicates the lowest welfare and 100 indicates the maximum welfare for migrant workers:



THE 2018 GWWI SCORE IS 81

This is an improvement from the score of 75 reported in 2017 (SESRI, 2017; SESRI, 2018). The index score is the average score of the composite scores created for each of the six sub-indices based on the mean of the items that had their primary loadings on each factor.

The sub-indices consist of the following factors:

- Mental Health
- Physical Health
- Working Conditions
- Living Conditions
- Satisfaction
- Contracts

While the sub-indices of greatest improvement in 2018 are Contracts, Working Conditions, and Satisfaction, they remain the indicators with overall lowest ratings, hence requiring particular attention and further investigation.

Between the two waves (2017 and 2018), Contracts as a factor registered an impressive jump, from 61 to 71 on the same scale from zero to 100.

- Could be due to the implementation of Law No. (13) of 2017, which amended Qatari Labor Law, in terms of both the establishment of committees for the settlement of labor disputes and providing a mechanism for settlement of disputes between the workers and employers

However, Contracts received the comparatively lowest rating among the factors of the Index. The 2018 data shows that 70% of blue-collar workers reported that they fully understood the information in their contracts, and 80% reported that employers had fully honored their contracts.

- This indicates that employers need to improve understanding and convey information about migrant workers' contracts, as well as to honor contracts in order to raise the general welfare of the migrant workers in Qatar



Conclusion and Recommendations

The GWWI is based on a pioneering approach to sampling and surveying blue-collar workers developed by SESRI.

While the GWWI tracks the welfare of blue-collar workers, this tracking is done via the use of cross-sectional data. In order to improve this tracking, SESRI plans to retain a proportion of the sample (10%) starting with the next waves of the GWWI surveys. This will allow the generation and development of longitudinal data for a better analysis of changes over time.

