

# Implementation of Cooperation Agreement

As part of its strategy to gain respect for the rights and improve the conditions of migrant workers in Qatar, the global union federation Building and Wood Workers' International (BWI) signed an agreement with QDVC and VINCI on workers' rights, occupational health and safety and workers' welfare, including both working and living conditions. This is the first agreement that was signed by a global union and a Qatari-based company.

The agreement was signed in November 2017 in Geneva, Switzerland in the presence of ILO Director-Gener-



al Guy Ryder and it was reported in a number of news outlets.

This newsletter briefly outlines some of the elements of the agreement and what has happened to date. It includes, for example, details on training sessions for the 27 elected Workers' Welfare Committee members. These sessions are conducted by BWI with the support and cooperation of the company.

## Ethical Recruitment & Workers' Rights practices in the Supply Chain (chapters 1 and 4)

In the agreement, QDVC commits to ensure its employees are being recruited in a fair and ethical manner. On 27 May 2018, a PPP (Public Private Partnership) was signed between QDVC and the International Labour Organization (ILO) with the support of BWI. QDVC has been selected by the ILO to work on a pilot project that focuses on ethical recruitment among manpower agencies and suppliers, ultimately, resulting in the creation of a recruitment fee-free corridor in the construction sector between sourcing countries and Qatar.

The partnership will help QDVC extend responsible recruitment

& employment practices to its supply chain entities through independent audits, a capacity-building programme and impact assessment research with a view to achieve the objectives set in the first and fourth chapter of the agreement.

Ethical recruitment is complicated because many abuses are difficult to trace. Recruitment takes place in the context of bilateral agreements between governments. Such agreements result



Signatures of the partnership between QDVC and the ILO on fair recruitment in the ILO Office in Doha, 27th May 2018

in differences in wages depending on country of origin. For these and other reasons recruitment has long been a priority issue for BWI and for the Council of Global Unions working group on migration that is chaired by Ambet Yuson. Our cooperation with QDVC will give us additional insight into recruitment issues and opportunities for change.

# Training & Development Programme for the QDVC Workers' Representatives

(chapter 2, 3 and 5)

QDVC, in the agreement, supports an independent and representative workers' welfare committee to discuss a range of topics including employment, working and living conditions, wages, welfare and occupational health and safety.

QDVC organised a large awareness campaign around its Worker's welfare committee and supported the organisation of elections which led close to 3,000 workers (72% of the total labour population at the time of the elections) to freely choose 27 representatives to serve for a term of two years.

BWI and QDVC, in accordance with the agreement, have been working together on a workers' education and capacity-building programme for the representatives.

The programme, the first of its kind in Qatar, is moving forward and is on schedule. This training



**BWI Training Facilitators:** Marco Polo Ferrer and Prince Verma.  
**QDVC Training Coordinator:** Dawood Irfan, QDVC.

aims to build the competencies of the workers' representatives (WRs) to help them represent and effectively solve the complaints of their co-workers. This is a significant beginning in the process of respecting the right of workers to have independent representation.

The program is composed of **4 modules** designed and delivered by BWI to the current workers representatives and their substitutes, with the support and contribution of QDVC. Each module lasts a full day and is conducted during working hours.

Training sessions include "ice breakers", individual and group activity, presentations, role-play and evaluation of the sessions. They have enabled

**Module**



**Workers' Representatives as Leaders**

**Conducted on 07/06/2018**

**Module**



**As Communicators**

**Conducted on 17/07/2018**

**Module**



**As Team Builders**

**Conducted on 19/08/2018**

**Module**



**As Workers' Rights & Welfare Champions**

**Scheduled mid-September 2018**



participants to understand the role of workers' representatives and use concrete tools to achieve their mission: leadership, listening and communication skills, how to run an effective meeting and practical knowledge about workers' rights under the Qatar Labour Law and the company welfare policy.



## BWI/QDVC/VINCI Agreement Reference Group

The three parties, QDVC, VINCI and BWI, held their first reference group meeting, with the participation of QDVC CEO Philippe Tavernier and BWI General Secretary Ambet Yuson along with Sarah Tesei, to agree on the terms of cooperation. They agreed to focus on three initial priorities:

- Ethical recruitment (in cooperation with the ILO);
- Training of Worker representatives (27 members of the Workers' Welfare Committee have already been elected to two-year terms with a workers' participation rate of 72%); and
- Holding the first joint QDVC/BWI inspection visit of company sites before the end of 2018.



**Members of the BWI/QDVC/VINCI Agreement Reference Group are:** Ambet Yuson and Jin Sook Lee (BWI), Sarah Tesei and Henriette McCool (VINCI), Hamad Al-Marri and Hans Mielants (QDVC).