



BWI-VINCI-QDVC JOINT AUDIT REPORT

26-27 OCTOBER 2021
DOHA, QATAR



BWI
Building and Wood
Workers' International
www.bwint.org





BWI-QDVC-VINCI
delegation at the
QDVC Head office
26 October 2021

Background

In November 2017, the global union federation Building and Wood Workers' International (BWI) signed an International Framework Agreement (IFA) with QDVC (a Qatari shareholding company with two shareholders: Qatari Diar Real Estate Investment Company and VINCI Construction Grands Projets) and VINCI, a French-based global player in concessions and construction, in Geneva, Switzerland at the ILO headquarters. The IFA can be downloaded at the following link:

https://www.bwint.org/web/content/cms.media/661/datas/Signing_BWI_QDVC_Vinci.pdf

The focus of the agreement is to ensure decent work, health and safety along with good welfare standards for all workers employed by QDVC in Qatar. The agreement was a result of continuous engagement between BWI and VINCI since 2014.

A Reference Group consisting of QDVC management, VINCI management and BWI Representatives is responsible for the implementation of the BWI/QDVC/VINCI agreement. The agreement states that the Reference Group can conduct a "site inspection if they deem doing so is necessary to ensure this agreement is being effectively implemented". In January 2019, the first joint audit was conducted by the Reference Group.

Joint Audit Dates and Program

The Reference Group agreed upon a second joint audit of the QDVC sites and operations in Qatar from 26-27 October 2021, taking into due consideration the COVID-19 regulations and possible restrictions. In addition to the members of the Reference Group, it was agreed by all parties to include representatives of the French trade unions that have a membership at VINCI operations in France (see appendix 1 for the list of participants of the joint audit).

Presentation of QDVC and its projects in Qatar



The program and Terms of Reference of the joint audit were mutually discussed and agreed upon by the members of the Reference Group, prior to the audit.

The program (see appendix 2) consisted of:

- Presentation of VINCI CSR approach and framework agreement with BWI,
- Presentation of QDVC corporate structure and the health and safety, corporate social responsibility, human resources (recruitment, etc.) policies and initiatives,

- Presentation of QDVC Workers' Welfare Committee (WWC) and grievance mechanisms,
- Presentation of DDAB project and a site visit,
- Meeting with the QDVC WWC representatives,
- Visit of STS (QDVC's main manpower provider) labour accommodation and meeting with their WWC representatives (as recommended during the previous audit),
- Presentation of BWI global and Qatar campaign, including trainings of QDVC WWC representatives,
- Discussions with ILO, QDVC and manpower provider STS on the joint pilot project on fair recruitment, evaluation and next steps.

Presentation of
QDVC Health and
Safety Policy in
Qatar



The second joint audit also built upon the observations and recommendations provided during the previous joint audit.

Building upon the recommendations of the previous audit, visits to the labour accommodation and interviews with workers of QDVC's main manpower provider, in addition to workers directly employed by QDVC, was organised.

Terms of Reference of the Joint Audit

In line with the first joint audit, the Reference Group agreed to use the International Framework Agreement (IFA) signed by the three parties as the basis for the Terms of Reference for the joint audit.

Thus, the observations and recommendations, and consequently the report, uses the following outlines of the IFA as reference points. The observations on policies in response to the COVID-19 pandemic cut across the different items.

1. Labour Migration and Recruitment Practices

- Recruitment-agency selection
- Fees and debt control
- Clear and transparent recruitment contracts
- Freedom of movement
- Workers are free to terminate employment

2. Working Conditions

- Occupational Safety and Health
- Employment conditions

3. Living Conditions

- Workers' accommodations
- Health and life insurance
- Social and community life
- Freedom of cultural practices
- Right of privacy and communication with family

4. Subcontractors' practices on workers' rights

5. Co-contractors

6. Grievance Mechanism

Joint Audit Observations and Recommendations

A follow-up table summarizing the findings of the 2019 audit and whether the issues and recommendations identified are closed/ongoing/pending is provided in appendix 3.

1. Labour Migration and Recruitment Practices

At the opening meeting, QDVC and VINCI management gave a series of presentations on its corporate social responsibility approach and the application of the agreement contextualising policies of CSR and HR policy initiatives throughout the layers of subcontracting, including manpower providers. The presentations were complemented by discussions with the ILO and QDVC pilot project on fair recruitment.

Presentation of the QDVC-VINCI CSR Policy



The following observations were made by the delegation:

■ Recruitment of QDVC employees:

- ▶ Since 2015, a reduction of QDVC manpower is recorded due to projects' completion, and it is forecasted to drop down further during 2021/2022. No direct recruitment of workers from abroad has taken place since 2017.
- ▶ At the same time, QDVC has pursued since 2013 a process of :
 - Qatarization with 5.5% of Qatari staff as of September 2021 (recruitment and development of skilled Qataris, including women).
 - Diversity, with 21% of female staff as of September 2021.
 - Internal labour mobility within its projects.

■ Recruitment in the supply chain:

- ▶ Due to the current nature of the projects, majority of the workers on site are employed by subcontractors and manpower providers. Therefore, QDVC is **focusing on policies and measures for fair recruitment in the supply chain**, monitored through **labour rights** audits and tackled through the partnership with the ILO.
- ▶ The **selection of manpower providers and recruitment agencies** who respect the Qatar Labour Law and commit to reach full compliance with the QF and the SC Workers' Welfare Standard is part of the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) due diligence in the subcontracting process initiated in 2015 and reinforced in 2021 with the update of QDVC management policy.
- ▶ QDVC has also started in 2021 to deploy Cumulus, a Forced Labour screening tool developed by Verité to assess risks of forced labour in the supply chain.

BWI and French trade union representatives provide feedback and observations to QDVC-VINCI



The following points were highlighted as positive elements:

■ Recruitment of QDVC workers:

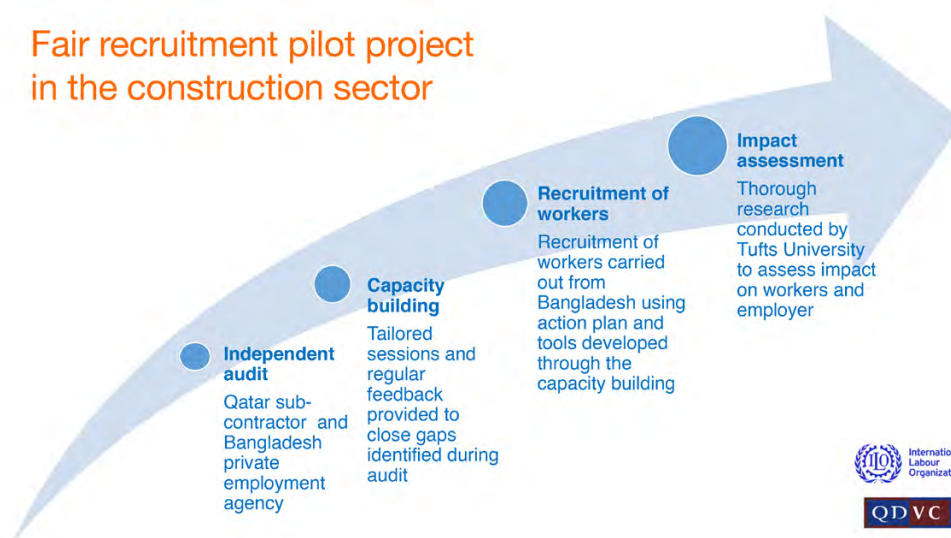
- ▶ **QDVC pays all the costs related to recruitment process** (work visa, flight ticket, health screening, contract processing, residence permit, health card, and bank account), including fair administration fees to the intermediaries to make sure the workers do not pay any fees.
- ▶ Selected workers are provided with the employment contract in the language of origin, pre-departure orientation trainings, and **QDVC Workers' Rights and induction Handbooks** provided in Hindi, English, Bengali and Nepalese.
- ▶ **Internal mobility of workers within QDVC projects** contributes to raise workers' wellbeing to reduce instability and insecurity in workers' work prospects, as well as workers' development, human capital development and matching skills.
- ▶ QDVC informs workers about their labour mobility rights upon recruitment, and it provides the **possibility of changing employers, leaving their job, and returning home at any time**. It has never refused a request to transfer a worker to another company. QDVC has provided 779 NOCs for transfer of employers locally.

■ Recruitment in the supply chain:

- ▶ The majority of workers on the projects are legacy workers (they were already working in Qatar before being mobilized by subcontractors on the project).
- ▶ The due diligence and continuous assessment of manpower providers against the company's CSR standards contributes to raise the overall standards of subcontractors.
- ▶ As an example, STS has been selected as a preferred manpower provider and an umbrella contract is used on DDAB project whereby STS provides manpower to subcontractors on site.
- ▶ The pilot PPP (Public-Private Partnership) between the ILO Project Office in Qatar and QDVC for fair recruitment of workers between Bangladesh and Qatar proved successful for workers recruited fairly, not burdened with debts, and informed before their departure about their working and living conditions.¹
- ▶ The QDVC-ILO pilot project has already left a legacy in terms of recruitment standards. STS, the manpower provider partner to the pilot project, has since recruited more than 1,045 workers following the fair recruitment model and extended the practice to other corridors beyond Bangladesh-Qatar (such as India and Nepal).

Fair recruitment pilot project in the construction sector

Presentation of the fair recruitment pilot project in the construction sector by ILO and QDVC



The following recommendations were made:



RECOMMENDATION #1

The pilot project between the ILO Project Office in Qatar and QDVC has proved successful. However, the situation in the sending country makes it increasingly challenging to assess the systemic risks and loopholes to counter human rights abuses or trafficking practices. Continuous monitoring and enforcement are needed to be sustainable after the pilot phase.

¹ https://www.ilo.org/beirut/projects/qatar-office/WCMS_823470/lang--en/index.htm.

It is noted that targeted awareness raising, and communication campaigns should be carried out in cooperation with national communities in Qatar in cooperation with BWI, who could also strengthen its engagement to provide recommendations and advice on work with the sending countries and QDVC.

Site visit of the STS – QDVC's main manpower provider – labour accommodation



RECOMMENDATION #2

Despite significant improvements and high standards for a transparent fair recruitment process, it is noted that some workers who joined STS, the main manpower provider for QDVC, in the past, or before the fair recruitment system was put in place, paid an intermediary in their country of origin for their recruitment. Cases of paid recruitment fees and reimbursement should be investigated and workers reimbursed or compensated.



QDVC/VINCI RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS #1 AND #2

From 2015, QDVC has reinforced measures in place to eradicate the recruitment commissions and associated costs paid by workers in the countries of origin. QDVC and STS made all possible effort to obtain from the recruitment agencies to reimburse the sums identified.

Since committing to the ILO pilot project in 2018, STS has strictly integrated the fair recruitment model into their operations and implemented an effective reimbursement plan and mechanism for the workers who paid fees to intermediaries in their country of origin.

VINCI plans to develop a toolbox to share with other companies the learnings of the pilot project with the ILO. QDVC/VINCI fully welcomes the need to further cooperate with BWI with national communities in Qatar and the sending countries.



Site visit of the
QDVC DDAB
Project Site

2. Working Conditions

QDVC provided various presentations on issues related to occupational health and safety (OHS) and employment conditions. Presentations were supplemented by a site visit of the DDAB project, a dialogue with the Workers' Welfare Committee (WWC) representatives, and a visit at the accommodation facility of STS (the main manpower provider for QDVC).

A. Occupational Health & Safety



The following observations were made by the delegation:

- Whilst it is acknowledged that construction works involve a high level of health and safety risk, QDVC is engaged to build a culture, where “Making sure everybody goes back home healthy and without injury at the end of the day” is the priority. **Everyone has the right to STOP** in case unsafe situations arise.
- QDVC is widely integrating OHS policies across all company's operations through a **health and safety management system** certified OHSAS 18001 and ILO-OSH 2001 since 2009 and certified ISO 45001 (new international OHS standard) since 2020, the provision and respect of the PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) and collective protection.
- The **OHS management** system is complemented by training programs to build competencies for direct employees, manpower providers and subcontracted workers starting with the induction phase upon arrival, as well as awareness campaigns, such as weekly toolbox talk, monthly forums, and the 'International Safety Day(s)' events.
- QDVC is conducting **deep incident investigation and debriefing** to identify root causes and agree on corrective measures to implement to avoid similar events from happening again along with sharing the lessons learned within the company.

- The company conducts yearly **health check-ups** of all workers and identifies workers at higher potential risks or with chronic diseases to be regularly monitored. Subsequent health check-ups are conducted every 3 or 6 months depending on the pathology.
- Amongst **work-related fatal accidents**, with more than 241,000 people inducted since 2009, 8 persons died on QDVC sites (1 fatality every 40 million manhours). They were all employed by manpower providers and/or subcontractors.
- Amongst **non-work-related death**, with more than 11,000 employees hired directly by QDVC since 2009, 15 employees died from natural causes (8 staff and 7 workers) and 1 worker committed suicide.
- QDVC **safety records** as of October 2021 (overall since 2009) are the following: with over 321 (321,146,908) million manhours worked, the Frequency Rate (FR) is 0.6 and Severity Rate (SR) is 0.010. The safety records as of October 2021 (12-months rolling period) are the following: with approx. 9 (8,981,966) million manhours worked, the Frequency Rate (FR) is 0.2 and Severity Rate (SR) is 0.004.

OVERALL HEALTH & SAFETY DATA SINCE INCEPTION (2009 – 2021 OCT)

BELOW RECORDS INTEGRATE ALL EMPLOYEES ON SITE (QDVC, MANPOWER PROVIDERS AND SUBCONTRACTORS)

Induction	241,000	Safety induction required to enter the site
Manhours	321,146,908	Total hours worked on projects
Work related fatal accidents	8	1 fatality every 40 million manhours No fatality among QDVC employees
Frequency Rate (FR)	0.6	(Total Lost Time Injuries above 1 day * 1 000 000) / Total Hours Worked. 12 months rolling period results: 0.2 (for 8,981,966 working hours)
Gravity Rate (GR)	0.010	(Total days lost from Lost Time Injuries * 1 000) / Total Hours Worked. 12 months rolling period results: 0.004 (for 8,981,966 working hours)

THE BELOW RECORDS INTEGRATE ONLY EMPLOYEES FROM QDVC (STAFF AND WORKERS)

QDVC employees	11 000	Include QDVC staff and workers
Non-work-related death	16	15 from natural causes (8 staff / 7 workers) and 1 committed suicide

The site visit was not considered to be a technical OHS inspection, nor were the delegates qualified health and safety inspectors. Rather, it was intended by both the delegations for the purpose of assessing globally the commitments made under the Framework Agreement.

Site visit of the
QDVC DDAB
Project Site



The following observations could be made related to the site visit:

- Good respect of PPE (Personal Protective Equipment)
- Site traffic management on site was duly signalled
- Storage spaces (open-air) and working activities were adequately separated
- Urinals, toilets and wash basins sampled on site were adequately clean
- The sampled mess hall was proper and clean, with first-aid kits complete and checked regularly, and appropriate ventilation provided to renew the air
- Meals are delivered to workers from outside catering to avoid food poisoning due to heat
- Prayer and ablution place was present on site



The following points were highlighted as positive elements in relation to occupational health and safety at the site visit:

- Compulsory occupational **health assessment and HSE training** for all the workforces.
- **Heat Stress Management:** During the summer period (1 June – 15 September) work is prohibited between 10.00 am and 3.30 pm. The Heat Stress Index is continuously monitored. Water canteens and fruit supplement are provided to the workforce, ice is added to the potable water tanks. Shaded areas are equipped with fans, water igloos and benches are made available to allow regular breaks. The Medical Emergency Drills related with heat stress are regularly performed and Special Heat Stress Awareness Campaigns are regularly performed.

- **COVID-19 measures:** Daily check of body temperature, face masks daily delivered to the workers, and weekly sanitation are provided and carried-out. Additional buses are being provided to limit the occupancy to 50% and new smart phones were provided to the workers to allow them to use the official Qatari contact tracing app, Etheraz.

Site visit of the
QDVC DDAB
Project Site



The following recommendations were made in the area of occupational health and safety:



RECOMMENDATION #3

At the closing session, questions arose regarding QDVC policies and practices to provide psychosocial assistance to workers, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic period, where workers have been far from their families for months and even years. Noting this, BWI and the French trade union delegation recommended to monitor and track psychosocial risks as a main health risk.



QDVC/VINCI RESPONSE #3

At the time of the audit, the delegation was informed that there are several programs in place and more information was provided shortly after.

After the audit, QDVC/VINCI provided additional information:

- Psychosocial assistance is provided by QDVC in partnership with EUTEL-MED as an integral part of the health prevention program, dealing with psychological risks related to international mobility and expatriation. In addition to targeted assistance in the workers' native language, several programs have been put in place, such as:

- the **In-House Counsellors (IHC)**, program for which a team of QDVC staff have been trained to provide Psychological First Aid (PFA) and counselling in the event of traumatic incidents.
- the **Buddy Peer Support (BPS)** consisting of a team of 30 QDVC workers trained to detect and identify any potential psychological disorders among the workers and, to provide support to the workers.
- **Specific training was provided to QDVC doctors** to tackle the COVID-19 crisis **and special workshops in English and Hindi** were organized for workers, management, and staff on how to manage during the COVID-19 crisis.
- QDVC provides **free psychological support and counseling services** through Eutelmed to all QDVC workers. Consultations are available in Hindi, English, Tagalog, Malayalam, Bengali, etc.
- During the pandemic, distressed workers have made use of this facility to help with the frustration of being away from family.

The trade unions delegation exchanges with STS workers during the visit of their accommodation facilities



RECOMMENDATION #4

Questions related to the harmonization and analysis of medical records from accommodation facilities and all work sites were raised noting the importance of having an overall medical record of workers, closer coordination and direct contacts between doctors and medical staff on site and at the accommodation, as well as of training medical staff at accommodation sites on work-related health problems.



QDVC RESPONSE #4

QDVC is working on implementing a software to record employee medical check-up allowing the information to be available (live) to all medical team only (confidential data).



Specific health measures related to COVID-19

QDVC has strictly observed all official recommendations and has implemented additional measures based on VINCI's protocol: a **COVID-19 steering committee** was formed to meet every day and put the adequate measures in place such as:

- Informative posters and videos about awareness and preventive measures in various languages displayed at various locations and screened daily.
- Frequent toolbox talks, awareness forums and information sessions.
- The workers' residence is equipped with 6 quarantine/isolation rooms for workers suspected of COVID-19. Each quarantine/isolation room is for one worker only.

Site visit of the
QDVC DDAB
Project Site



B. Employment conditions



The following observations were made by the delegation:

- Once a year, QDVC organises a staff satisfaction survey. In 2020, staff has indicated that QDVC performance is good/exceptional in 78% of the surveyed topics.
- Workers are satisfied with their overall employment conditions. The delegation notes that some of the youngest workers are however alarmed that the completion of projects will cause job losses or instability.
- Workers are **paid on-time and above the required minimum wage law** introduced in Qatar in 2021. Since they are aware of QDVC's financial situation, however, they accept salary freezes, though they might be compensated with annual performance-based bonuses and promotions.
- WWC elections are organised according to well-defined and effective procedures. **QDVC organized its third cycle of elections in 2021 with 93% participation rate.**

- WWC representatives meet with the QDVC management every two months during working hours. Ahead of the meeting, WWC representatives present the workers concerns/grievances/complaints to the management. They do not have an allotted time and space to speak with the workers but take advantage of other meetings where interpreters are present to collect grievances.



The following positive elements were noted:

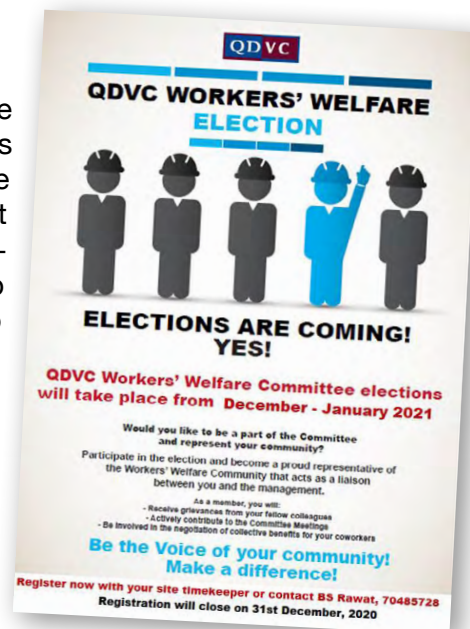
- Workers have been employed by QDVC for a long time (in 2021, **the average seniority was 6,72 years**), indicating their **overall satisfaction in working for the company and felt respected by the management**. None of the workers with whom the delegation interacted was keen to change employer/leave the company in the near and medium future.
- **Workers have developed confidence and trust in the dialogue process and towards the company management**, sustained by a track record of demands taken into consideration and of problems being solved, as well as by transparency in the information provided by the management.



Specific employment measures regarding COVID-19:

- QDVC has put in place measures to minimize hardships resulting from the outbreak of COVID-19. At management level, meetings have been carried out to discuss and communicate QDVC's global policy on employee remuneration and sick leave policy during this period. QDVC has decided that **workers who need to be placed in quarantine in relation with COVID-19 will be paid wages in full without affecting their sick leave or jobs**. Thus,

BWI and French trade union representatives provide feedback and observations to QDVC-VINCI



ensuring employment and wages post quarantine. Employees with chronic disease who were temporarily not allowed on site also had their wages maintained.

- In case of workers unable to travel back to Qatar, they will continue to receive their wages. Furthermore, in case of future travel bans preventing travel out of Qatar, QDVC has decided that **demobilized workers unable to travel will have their demobilizations extended, therefore continuing to receive wages, housing, food, and care until they are able to leave the country**. Following a request from the Workers' Welfare Committee, QDVC agreed to pay for the PCR tests, quarantine costs in addition to the return flight tickets for the workers scheduled to go on annual leave. However, some workers interviewed still prefer to work to support their families in the origin countries, in the given situation.

BWI and French trade union representatives meet with subcontractor Workers' Committee representatives



The following recommendations were made:



RECOMMENDATION #5

Although there seems to be a good and transparent communication from the management to the WWC representatives on the trends of the company, it is noted that more information and transparency is needed on the information regarding promotions and corresponding salary increases.



RECOMMENDATION #6

The Welfare manager in charge of relations with the WWC should not attend all the WWC pre-meetings, to allow workers to discuss freely among themselves, and to build their confidence as a group.



QDVC/VINCI RESPONSE #5-6

The QDVC management agrees that the person might be perceived external to the group of representatives. However, he/she provides support with interpretation that might be otherwise lacking and is involved only for the main WWC meeting (not the one done on the project). Another more neutral interpreter can be identified to facilitate the discussions.



Site visit of the STS – QDVC's main manpower provider – labour accommodation

3. Living Conditions

The delegation visited STS accommodation facility, the main manpower provider for QDVC, where workers working at QDVC sites are housed.

In addition, the delegation had the opportunity to meet with the elected workers' welfare representatives of STS, covering representation both at work and at the accommodation.



The following observations were made by the delegation:

- Good, clean, and well-maintained accommodation facility with no more than 4 residents per room, no bunkbed, toilets, and showers in good conditions in separate rooms, good outdoor and indoor leisure space, in-house canteen and dining hall, free wi-fi connection.
- The laundry for working clothes is done daily, and twice a week for personal clothes.
- Medical clinic adequately equipped, with nurse and doctor available 24h/7days, and emergency vehicles available. Few people visit the clinic daily mostly with musculo-skeletal disorders or small cuts. The clinic has digital records of cases and is therefore able to monitor and follow the patients, including those with chronic diseases.

The workers' representatives at the accommodation facility have the chance to meet and to talk to workers daily. Pictures and roles of the elected representatives are posted in the common areas, so that workers can reach out to them at any time to submit their grievances. Complaints reported refer mainly to the living conditions at the accommodation (food, etc.) rather than to their working life on the sites. Some workers' representatives affirm having paid recruitment fees to expatriate to Qatar long before working for STS and before the labour reforms were adopted.



The following points were highlighted as positive elements:

- **STS implemented Workers' Welfare Committees and improved its practices in the maintenance of the accommodation facility following QDVC recommendations.**
- **The workers' representatives record all the complaints in writing, thus allowing for an analysis and redressal of the cases reported.**

BWI and French trade union representatives meet with Workers' Welfare Committee representatives at the QDVC DDAB site



RECOMMENDATION #7

Expand the scope of issues workers' representatives can deal with, in a collective dimension rather than as individual grievance receivers, starting from the analysis of such grievances to identify whether they are symptomatic of a shared and collective problem. Concomitantly train workers' representatives and build their awareness and confidence towards the managers.



QDVC/VINCI/STS RESPONSE #7

STS representatives have been invited to the BWI training to build capacity of workers' representatives (latest training was delivered in October 2021).

4. Subcontractors' practices on workers' rights

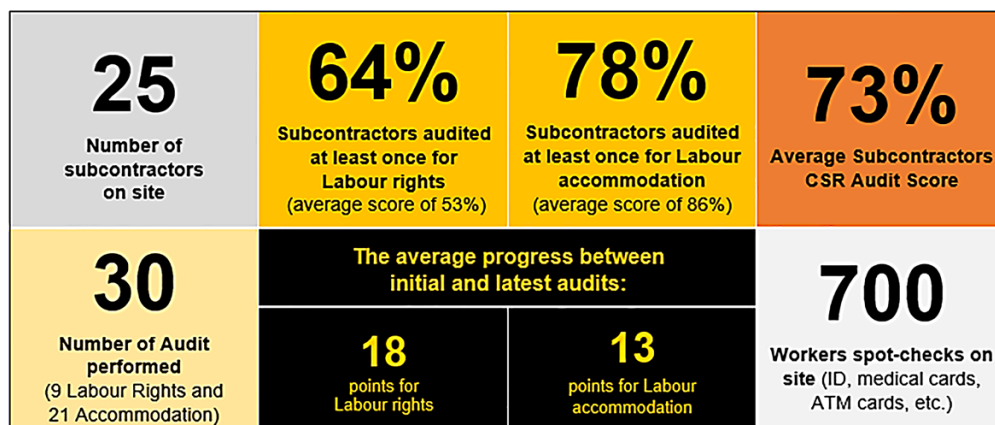
The following observations were based on the presentations of the QDVC QHSE & CSR Director, VINCI Social Responsibility Manager, the DDAB Project Director, and the STS Operation Director.

- **Due diligence procedures and regular audits of subcontractors** put in place to ensure compliance of Qatari labour laws, Qatar Foundation, and Supreme Committee standards, **especially during prequalification stage**, and at follow up audits and spot checks on both labour rights and accommodation that include:

LABOUR RIGHTS AUDITS	ACCOMMODATION AUDITS
Recruitment	Housing and drinking water
Sponsorship and free movement	Bathroom and toilets
Contracts	Sleeping
Wages and Benefits	Kitchen and catering
Working conditions	Transportation
Workers Representation	Medical care
Medical coverage (health insurance)	Building standards and fire safety
Grievance Mechanism	Welfare and leisure facilities

- Between 2018 and 2021, DDAB team has conducted 114 pre-award accommodation audits and 63 post-awards inspections with subcontractors. 12 housing facilities have been rejected after the pre-award inspection.
- At the DDAB project, where 80% of the manpower employed is subcontracted, 92% of employed workers have been covered by labour rights audit.
- There is recorded progress between the initial and subsequent audits of subcontractors. Average compliance rate with QF and QL standards is 90%.
- In addition to the audit system and contractual clauses, other CSR subcontractors' due diligence tools are set such as the **reference list** of subcontractors and manpower providers, and the **CSR database of subcontractors**.

Figure: Records of December 2020



Source: QDVC Annual Report 2020



The following points were highlighted as positive elements:

- The DDAB subcontractor CSR due diligence practice is supported by several departments within the project, mainstreaming due diligence across the functions.
- Positive impact on subcontractors' standards pushes up the overall standards, as subcontractors may independently choose to apply the same standards to other main contractors in the Qatari labour market.

5. Co-contractors

The audit did not cover this area extensively. The delegation was made aware that QDVC CSR & QHSE policy, standards and tools are shared with the clients and the main partners of QDVC.

BWI and French trade union representatives meet with Workers' Welfare Committee representatives at the QDVC DDAB site



6. Grievance Mechanisms

The following observations were made based on the presentations from the QDVC QHSE & CSR director, VINCI Social Responsibility Manager and complemented by the interactions with the Workers Welfare Committee representatives.

QDVC has three internal systems to address grievances of workers directly hired by QDVC as well as workers employed by subcontractors and manpower providers:

- **Line management, Human Resources, HSE & CSR teams,**
- **Grievance officers** for individual cases,
- **Workers Welfare Committees** for collective cases.

Should the person not be satisfied with the internal grievance mechanisms, external grievance mechanisms are foreseen, which are:

- **BWI**
- **Ministry of Labour**
- **ILO Project Office in Qatar**



The following points were highlighted as positive elements:

- Positive impact on subcontractors: during the labour rights audits, **QDVC is requesting all their manpower providers and subcontractors to put in place a grievance mechanism and elected Workers' welfare committee.** Following QDVC recommendations, 10 of the main subcontractors have implemented WWC.
- The **WWC has evolved into a central vehicle to discuss complaints and grievances.** WWC representatives consult with management regularly to solve complaints/grievances reported to them by the workers, both on site and at the accommodation facilities, where they can also refer to the Welfare Manager.
- **WWC representatives are satisfied with the responsiveness of the management** to solve grievances and complaints.



RECOMMENDATION #8

Whilst it is positive that the WWC has become a central vehicle to report grievances to the management, it is now mature enough to evolve from a mechanism to collect and report individual grievances, into a mechanism for organising, representing and channelling workers' voice and promoting their collective interest through dialogue, as stated in the committee purpose. To this end, targeted interventions are needed to increase representatives' protections, and for workers to learn the nature of the task and to acquire new skills to perform it.

The delegation proposes a gradual approach made of:

- ▶ Extension of the scope of the topics and issues discussed by the WWC to include for example salary grids and budget issues.
- ▶ Targeted learning that enables workers to understand the overall system of workplace dialogue. BWI can support this process as part of its WWC training activities.
- ▶ Monitoring of the cases raised to understand whether they are shared enough to be scaled up to a collective dimension.
- ▶ Separate meetings for WWC representatives prior to the official meetings and time-off with workers on the site to consult with workers they may not represent.



QDVC/VINCI RESPONSE #8

WWC representatives were trained by BWI on various topics. The training is done during working hours and typically lasts a full workday. It includes “ice-breakers”, individual and group activity along with role-play and evaluation sessions. The table below provides information on the trainings provided by BWI to QDVC and STS workers.

YEAR	BWI WORKER REPRESENTATIVES TRAINING
2018 & 2019	7 June to 22 September 2018 & 3 October to 28 October 2019 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Module 1: Leadership concepts and values ● Module 2: Effective communication and public speaking ● Module 3: Team building and running effective meetings ● Module 4: Practical knowledge on Qatar labour law/ grievance handling
2021 Session included QDVC & STS representatives	22 September 2021 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Module 1: Bringing roles of workers’ representatives ● Module 2: Mandates of WWR/WWF according to law and employee’s handbook ● Module 3: Workers’ representatives as leaders ● Module 4: Writing skills of workers

Due to the COVID-19 global pandemic, no training was conducted in 2020.

Extra training could be delivered to further enhance the dialogue and negotiation capacity of the Committee representatives.

QDVC/VINCI confirmed that WWC representatives have a room available and can arrange regular meetings with the workers at any time without attendance from management. QDVC agrees to facilitate separate meeting rooms and extra-time allocated during working hours to consult with their co-workers and collectively prepare the meeting with the management. However, it has proven an uneasy task for the WWC representatives, not the least due to different degrees of understanding of the task. BWI is encouraged to take this issue up during the WWC representatives’ trainings.

BWI-QDVC-VINCI
delegation with
subcontractor
Workers' Committee
representative



Conclusion

The delegation members acquired a good general understanding of the current situation of workers conditions at QDVC construction projects in Qatar, despite the tightness of the visit.

Overall, no major issues were identified during the audit, indicating that the company's duty to manage the social impact of its activities is deeply ingrained across the QDVC corporate and projects management. The company has also sought opportunities for improvement in areas identified during the previous joint audit, and in the commitment by QDVC/VINCI management at all levels to ensure CSR compliance and welfare of workers working at its sites and across the layers of subcontracting.

Of particular relevance, it is to be noted QDVC/VINCI commitment to audit and to promote a race-to-the-top of its subcontractors in terms of workers' rights and welfare. By incentivising good practices and providing the toolbox, some subcontractors are now autonomously implementing measures that are above the national minimum required standards. This way, QDVC/VINCI is contributing to the overall improvement of the working and living conditions of construction workers in Qatar beyond those working at its sites. However, challenges remain with small subcontractors.

In this context, whilst QDVC/VINCI has been pioneering in the setup of well-functioning WWC in Qatar and paved the way for an improvement in working conditions, members of the delegation believe that the WWC are now at the stage where they could evolve into fully autonomous workers' organisations, with enhanced roles and responsibilities that include and go beyond the handling of grievances, towards a workplace dialogue in terms of employment and conditions and an increased protection for workers' representatives.

Finally, as the audit was resumed at a time of COVID-19, it is worth mentioning that despite the positive initiatives and policies implemented by QDVC/VINCI to support workers amid the global pandemic, the delegation noted that psychosocial risks associated to periods of isolation or time away from families in countries of origin, are a major concern for the workers.

Appendix 1: List of Participants

BWI DELEGATION

Ambet Yuson, Secretary General

Paola Cammilli, Global Director for Campaigns

Marco Polo Ferrer, Qatar Community Liaison Officer

VINCI TRADE UNION REPRESENTATIVES

Roberto Migliardi, European Works Council Representative

Alexandra Charton, CFDT Representative

Philippe Gaborieau, CGT Representative

Gilles Haenn, CFE-CGC Representative

Noureddine Boudjeniba, FO Representative

VINCI DELEGATION

Sarah Tesei, Social Responsibility Director

Henriette McCool, Social Responsibility Manager

Vincent Maurice, Social Affairs Director

QDVC DELEGATION

Roberto Strigi, CEO

Nicolas Ebel, QHSE and CSR Director

Fatima Al-Siddiqi, Communication Manager & Ethics officer

Fatima Al-Qaoud, HR Director

Zuheb Date, Senior HR Officer

Gaëtan Vigneras, DDAB Project Director

Miguel Rhodes, DDAB HSE Manager

Quentin Gasnière, DDAB Finance & Admin Manager

Abdullah Zainal, DDAB CSR Manager

Parvathy Adiyat, DDAB CSR Officer

Jaleel Hyderali, DDAB CSR Officer

Baghirat Singh Rawat, Worker Community Manager

Appendix 2: Programme

Tuesday 26 Oct.	QDVC's Application of Agreement, Site Visit & Labour Accommodation
8:00 - 8:15 am	Arrival QDVC HO (The Gate Mall Tower 2, Floor 14)
8:15 - 8:30 am	Opening Remarks (<i>A. Yuson, R. Strigi, S. Tesei</i>)
8:30 - 9:00 am	Introductory roundtable of all participants
9:30 - 10:00 am	VINCI CSR Approach & agreement (<i>S. Tesei, H. McCool</i>)
9:30 - 10:00 am	QDVC Presentation (<i>R. Strigi</i>)
10:00 am - 12:00 pm	QDVC H&S-CSR and HR Policy and initiatives presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Human Resources (<i>F. Al-Qaoud</i>) ✓ Corporate Social Responsibility (<i>N. Ebel & H. McCool</i>) ✓ Health & Safety (<i>N. Ebel</i>)
12:00 - 1:30 pm	Lunch (Gate Mall)
1:30 - 2:00 pm	Transport to DDAB work site
2:00 - 2:30 pm	DDAB Project Presentation (<i>G. Vigneras, Q. Gasniere</i>)
2:30 - 3:00 pm	HSE Presentation & Safety Induction (<i>M. Rhodes</i>)
3:00 - 6:00 pm	Site Visit Meeting between BWI & VINCI representatives and QDVC Workers' Welfare Committee Meeting with grievance receiver & buddies on site
6:00 - 6:30 pm	Transport to subcontractor labour accommodation
6:30 - 7:30 pm	Visit of subcontractor labour accommodation
7:30 - 8:30 pm	Meeting between BWI & VINCI and subcontractor Workers' Committee representatives
8:30 pm	Dinner at workers accommodation canteen
9:30 pm	Travel back to hotel
Tuesday 27 Oct.	Workers' Welfare Committee, Fair Recruitment, and Debrief
8:00 - 10:15 am	BWI Presentation: global & Qatar campaign, and training of QDVC WWC reps QDVC presentation of QDVC Workers' Welfare Committee over the years & elections
10:15 - 11:30 am	Presentation of ILO Programme in Qatar (<i>M. Tunon</i>) Presentation of ILO and QDVC pilot-project on fair recruitment (<i>N. Ray, H. McCool</i>)
11:30 - 12:30 pm	Audit closure preparation (auditors only)
12:30 - 1:30 pm	Feedback and observations from BWI representatives, next steps and closing remarks
1:30 - 3:00 pm	Lunch in Gate Mall
<i>Afternoon</i>	<i>Visit of Qatar National Museum & Souq Waqif</i>

Appendix 3: 2019 Audit Findings Table

Framework Agreement	2019 Recommendations	Comments & Status (Pending/Ongoing/Closed)
1. Labour Migration and Recruitment Practices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment-agency selection Fees and debt control Clear and transparent employment contracts Freedom of movement Workers are free to terminate employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If successful, findings from the ILO pilot could be extended throughout the construction sector and other industries in Qatar. BWI recommends increased engagement of BWI to provide inputs, recommendations, and advice to strengthen existing work. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closed: BWI was consulted and provided inputs during the ILO pilot project capacity-building program (February 2019 session).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working Conditions Occupational Health and Safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Question raised regarding the method of pulling long cables for heavy sections posed by delegation. Two years ago, information regarding the number of deaths since the start of the project was not available. Harmonization and analysis of medical records from workers' accommodation and work sites is needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closed: HSE Manager confirmed and provided evidence that proper equipment is used to pull cables safely (certified drum stand and roller). Closed: QDVC has since consolidated information and maintained records of all the deaths regardless of their nature. Deaths occurring outside of the of the worksite have also been recorded. Separate categories for suicide and natural death are now being maintained. Closed: Company doctor consolidates and has access to all medical records. QDVC HSE Manager has access to records and can determine if injuries and health issues are work related.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employment conditions Wages Work hours and rest time Paid holidays, medical and emergency leave Safe return Creation of independent and representative workers' committees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendation to train WWC representatives on occupational health and safety, like IIF Safety Champion. Allow for separate meetings for WWC representatives prior to the main meeting. Time-off for representatives to consult communities and other workers who may not be represented. Provide WWC with more information regarding demobilization and company-related matters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closed: Training was organized jointly with BWI (dates) and all representatives have received H&S training. Ongoing: Additional hour without management presence was granted to WWC representatives from January 2019. Closed: During each meeting, WWC representatives are provided with detailed updates regarding the overview of the company, HR updates and financial situation.

Appendix 3: 2019 Audit Findings Table

Framework Agreement	2019 Recommendations	Comments & Status (Pending/Ongoing/Closed)
2. Living Conditions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workers' accommodations Health and life insurance Social and community life Freedom of cultural practices Right of privacy and communication with family. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the time of the audit, QDVC workers were housed at the Serge Moulene Workers' Community. The accommodation owned and operated by QDVC. High levels of moisture observed in the bathroom and needs to be addressed urgently. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closed: QDVC has taken note of the moisture and confirms that it was part of the maintenance plan; the issue was resolved immediately.
3. Subcontractors' practices on workers' rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observation: Due diligence procedures and auditing of subcontractors put in place to ensure compliance of Qatari labour laws and QF and SC standards. 	N/A
4. Co-contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observation: QDVC/VINCI CSR policy and QDVC/VINCI-VINCI-BWI Agreement shared with Alstom. 	N/A
5. Grievance Mechanism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WWC to remain central tool to address individual grievances raised by workers in addition to collective concerns. Any additional campaign and initiative must be linked to WWC. WWC representatives to be part of the grievance mechanism process. WWC to represent workers during procedures if requested by the worker. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Closed: While WWC remains the central vehicle to address grievances, in some instances it is more efficient and faster for workers to have access to their line manager/supervisor, HSE personnel or CSR/grievance receiver to resolve issues. Ongoing: WWC representatives are part of the grievance procedure and have been included in the flowchart. Closed: QDVC management agrees for WWC representatives to represent workers during procedures in case they request for it.



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