

VINCI's agreement with global union BWI to improve safety & labour rights in Qatar

An innovative approach to improve workers' rights in a challenging context

22 October 2019
IPLOCA HSE & CSR Workshop
Geneva

Main principles of the agreement with BWI and QDVC

November 2017

Resulting from discussions that began in December 2014, the global union federation Building and Wood Workers' International (BWI) signed an agreement with QDVC and VINCI on workers' rights.

It applies to all workers employed by QDVC in Qatar and includes due diligence with sub-contractors.

QDVC : a Qatari company owned by Qatari Diar Real Estate Investments Company and VINCI Construction Grands Projets.

Main principles of the BWI Agreement

Labour Migration & Recruitment practices

Working Conditions

Living Conditions

Subcontractors practices on workers' rights

Grievance Mechanism



January 2019: 1st audit of QDVC/VINCI workers' conditions in Qatar by the global union federation BWI

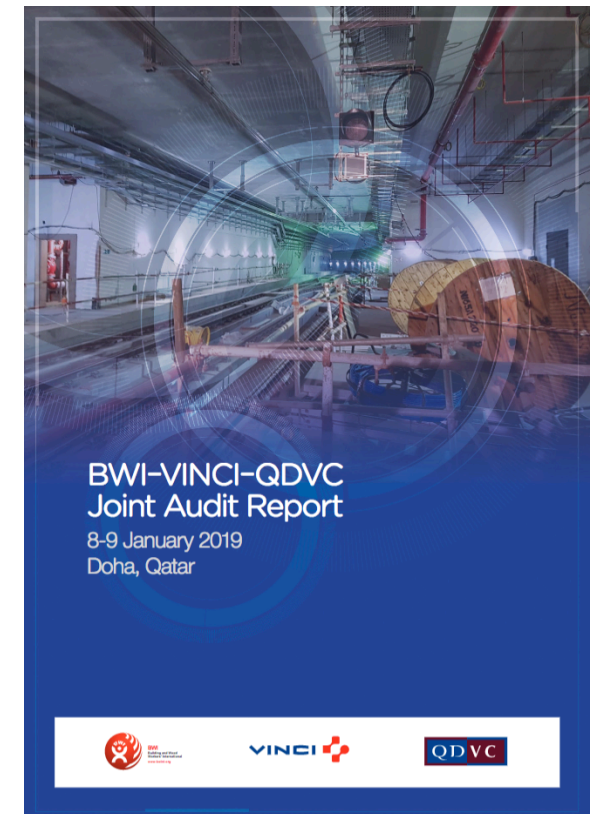
- ❖ **BWI conducted the first on-site audit of the operations of QDVC** in Qatar on 8 and 9 January 2019, accompanied by French trade union representatives (CGT, CFDT and CFE/CGC) from VINCI. The audit included:
 - A site visit of QDVC's main project, the Light Railway Transit System (LRT) of Doha;
 - An inspection of the workers' accommodation, built and operated by the company;
 - The observation of the elections and counting of votes of the QDVC's Workers' Welfare Committee (WWC), the first workers' committee elected in Qatar;
 - Interviews with workers on site, workers' representatives and safety champions without management supervision;

- ❖ **Publication of the audit report (full transparency with external stakeholders):** <https://www.vinci.com/publi/vinci/2019-01-BWI-QDVC-VINCI-Joint-Audit-Report-En.pdf>



Why was the audit innovative?

- ❖ This audit and collaboration are interesting and innovative in many aspects:
- ❖ With BWI, VINCI has set up an **independent and effective grievance mechanism in a country where the freedom of association and collective bargaining is not accessible for migrant workers**. The system allows all QDVC employees, including temporary workers and sub-contractors, to refer any complaint or unresolved problem to BWI.
- ❖ While audits often focus on health & safety at work, the agreement and scope of the audit was **not limited to health & safety**: it encompassed **all the key elements of what constitutes the full journey of a migrant worker in the Middle East and the human rights risks associated**:
 - recruitment and employment practices,
 - health and safety at work and at the accommodation,
 - working conditions,
 - living conditions,
 - grievance mechanisms, including elected workers' committees,
 - CSR due diligence of subcontractors and manpower providers.



FILM ON AUDIT & ELECTIONS OF WORKERS' WELFARE COMMITTEE

<https://youtu.be/qP4tdpPm8W4>

BWI training and development program of WWC representatives

In 2018, QDVC and BWI conducted a training program for the workers welfare committee representatives.

This training aims to build the competencies of workers' representatives (WRs) in the Workers' Welfare Committee (WWC) such that they are able to represent the QDVC workers more effectively.

This training was first of its kind in Qatar for workers representatives.

In 2019 October, QDVC has extended its training program to the workers' representatives of subcontractors/Manpower.

The program is composed of 4 modules corresponding to the main roles that WRs are accountable on as follows:



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
and company



BUILDING
RESPONSIBLY

Who We Are

A group of leading engineering and construction companies working together to raise the bar in promoting the rights and welfare of workers across the industry.



FLUOR

JACOBS

MCDERMOTT

MULTIPLEX
Built to outperform.

SBI
OFFSHORE

TechnipFMC

VINCI

wood.

Our Partners



BSR



HUMANITY
UNITED

Vision and Mission

Collaborating to promote the rights and welfare of workers in the engineering and construction industry and **establish common baseline for treatment of workers in global E&C industry.**

We advance our programs by:



Adopting common principles and practices



Engaging workers, clients, governments, civil society, and international organizations

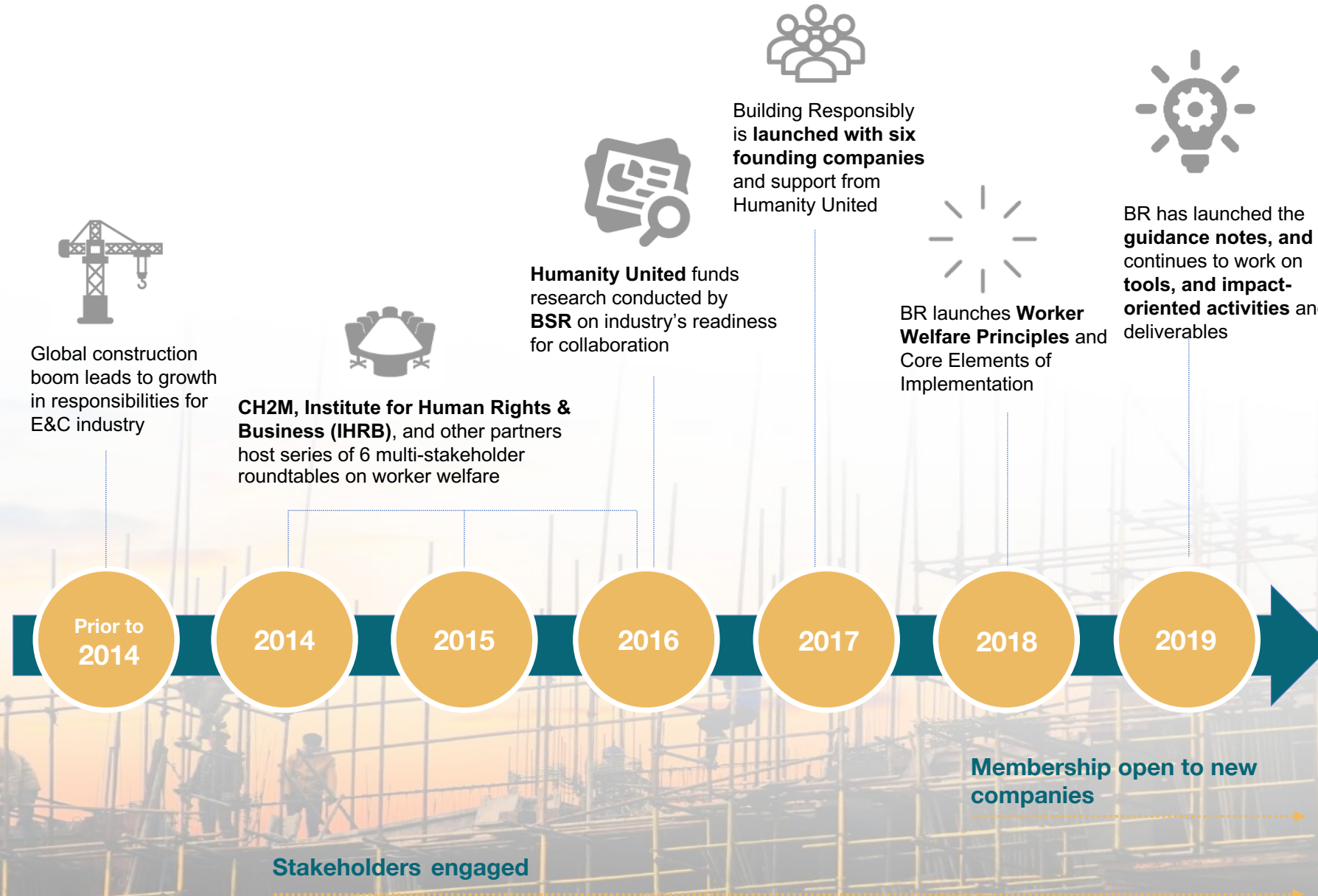


Developing tools



Driving innovation and continuous improvement

Timeline



Building Responsibly Principles

1 Workers Are Treated with Dignity, Respect, and Fairness

2 Workers Are Free from Forced, Trafficked, and Child Labor

3 Recruitment Practices Are Ethical, Legal, Voluntary, and Free from Discrimination

4 Freedom to Change Employment Is Respected

5 Working Conditions Are Safe and Healthy

6 Living Conditions Are Safe, Clean, and Habitable

7 Access to Documentation and Mobility Is Unrestricted

8 Wage and Benefit Agreements Are Respected

9 Worker Representation Is Respected

10 Grievance Mechanisms and Access to Remedy Are Readily Available

Core Elements of Implementation: Commitment, Oversight, Training, Reporting, Engagement

Building Responsibly Guidance Notes: published in open resource on October 10th 2019

The purpose of the Guidance Notes is to:



BUILDING RESPONSIBLY

Worker Welfare Principles

Building Responsibly developed these Principles to serve as the global standard on worker welfare for the engineering and construction industry. They address key areas of worker vulnerability to raise standards and level the playing field so that competitiveness is not at the expense of the worker. Given differing local and national requirements and external guidelines, these Principles establish a common, global baseline for the treatment of workers in the engineering and construction industry. By collectively committing to and promoting these Principles, we can foster a business environment that advances the safety, security, and welfare of all people—especially those working in the construction sector.

Building Responsibly members are committed to acting ethically and with integrity in all their business dealings with respect to worker welfare by supporting and adopting the following Principles:

- Workers Are Treated with Dignity, Respect, and Fairness**
Workers, irrespective of their nationality, gender, ethnicity, social and legal status, race, religion, or other protected status, are treated with dignity, respect, and fairness, and are not subject to harassment, discrimination, abuse, or inhuman or degrading treatment.
- Workers Are Free from Forced, Trafficked, and Child Labor**
Workers are not subject to forced, coerced, trafficked, bonded, child, or involuntary labor of any form.
- Recruitment Practices Are Ethical, Legal, Voluntary, and Free from Discrimination**
Workers shall be recruited through ethical and legal means whereby all recruitment shall be free from discrimination and all forms of involuntary labor, slavery, and trafficking. Companies should commit to responsible recruitment in their operations and prohibit the payment of fees by the worker. Conditions of employment shall be transparent and agreed upon in writing prior to commencing work in a language that is understood by the worker.
- Freedom to Change Employment Is Respected**
Workers are free to refuse their contract; cancel and change their employment; and, where appropriate, return home travel at the end of their employment contract should be provided.
- Working Conditions Are Safe and Healthy**
Workers have a safe and healthy work environment, subject to a robust health and safety management system that is compliant with all governing health and safety laws and regulations and is aligned with applicable international standards and industry best practice. This includes access to safe and clean transportation and welfare amenities on project sites; and the promotion of transparent and external reporting regarding health and safety incidents.
- Living Conditions Are Safe, Clean, and Habitable**
Workers, when provided with accommodation, have living conditions that are safe, clean, hygienic, and habitable, where consideration is given to their physical and mental health and well-being.
- Access to Documentation and Mobility Is Unrestricted**
Workers have access to passports and personal documentation at all times. Workers shall have freedom of movement outside normal working hours, unless there are legitimate safety or security issues that might threaten the health, safety, or well-being of the worker.
- Wage and Benefit Agreements Are Respected**
Workers are paid their agreed wages regularly and on time. Workers will receive all benefits to which they are entitled in accordance with contractual arrangements.
- Worker Representation Is Respected**
Workers have the right to freedom of association. In countries where the right to freedom of association is restricted under law, companies should recognize the right of workers to develop alternative means for independent and free association and to communicate and promote their rights and welfare.
- Grievance Mechanisms and Access to Remedy Are Readily Available**
Workers have, and are aware of, the means to report grievances or any activity that is inconsistent with these Principles without fear of retaliation, retribution, or dismissal, and to have them addressed in a prompt, fair, and consistent manner.



BUILDING RESPONSIBLY

Principle 1: Workers Are Treated with Dignity, Respect, and Fairness

Workers, irrespective of their nationality, gender, ethnicity, social and legal status, race, religion, or other protected status, are treated with dignity, respect, and fairness and are not subject to harassment, discrimination, abuse, or inhuman or degrading treatment.

Introduction
Applying the Building Responsibly principles in practice will be unique in every instance. This guidance note offers discussion around the potential issues and challenges faced and offers suggested good practice options for the implementation of each principle in the Key Components for Consideration section.

All workers, wherever they are employed, must be treated with dignity, respect, and fairness. There is a heightened risk of abuse where companies rely on migrant workers, low-skilled workers, and/or workers with low level of literacy. In these instances, companies must pay particular attention to their projects and operations to ensure all workers are treated with dignity, respect, and fairness.

Key Terms and Definitions

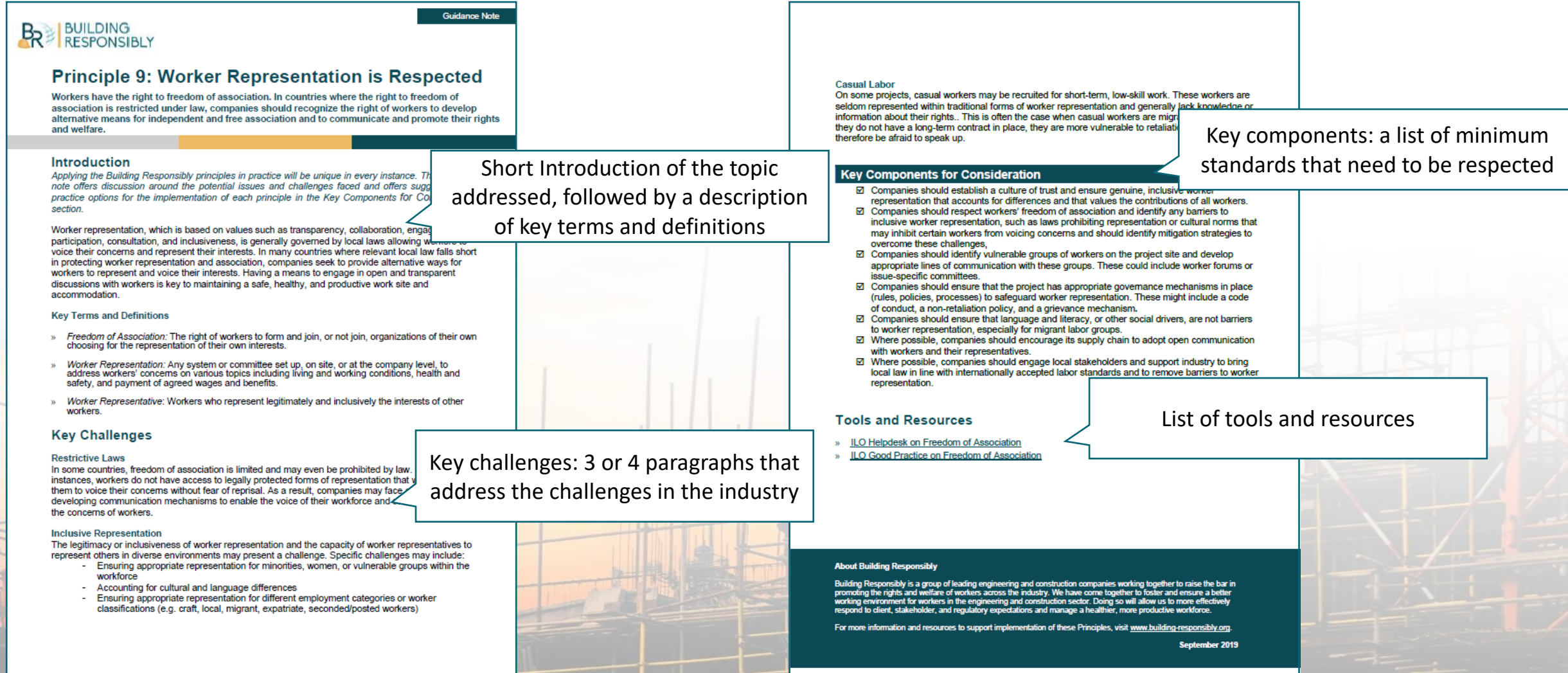
- Dignity:** The right of workers to be valued and treated in an ethical manner; to be protected from bullying, harassment, or any forms of disciplinary action that could be deemed overly harsh or degrading, and to have their right to privacy respected.
- Fairness:** The promotion of equality in workplace policies, processes, and forums to ensure fairness in employment and provide opportunities in a non-discriminatory manner.
- Inhuman or Degrading Treatment:** Treating workers as less than human and thereby causing physical or mental suffering or feelings of fear and humiliation.
- Harassment:** Harassment can occur in the workplace, accommodation, or transportation. It involves a range of unacceptable behaviors and practices, or threats thereof, whether a single occurrence or repeated, that aim at, result in, or are likely to result in physical, psychological, sexual or economic harm and includes gender-based violence and harassment.
- Discrimination:** Employees are treated with respect and fairness and, regardless of their location, are free from all forms of discrimination, including discrimination based on nationality, gender, ethnicity, social and legal status, race, religion, or any other protected status.

Key Challenges

Unskilled and Low-skilled Work
Unskilled or low-skilled work can be a major component of construction projects in certain sectors and geographies. In some developing countries and in countries with labor shortages, many construction workers may come from impoverished communities, with limited access to education and professional training and low awareness of their rights. As a result, they often work in low-paid or temporary jobs, making them more vulnerable to exploitation by unscrupulous recruiters and employers, and are more at risk of being caught in forced or bonded labor.

- Provide an overview of potential issues and challenges relevant for each principle
- Offer suggestions for implementation
- Include a list of relevant tools and resources

Guidance Notes Structure



Why join Building Responsibly?

1

Align more effectively with regulations and clients' requirements

2

Share with peers effective ways to help promote the rights and welfare of workers in the industry

3

Increase productivity by improving workplace management practices

4

Learn from and engage civil society stakeholders

Thank You

Building Responsibly

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