

Working conditions in Qatar

BESIX Group

[CSR approach within the Group](#)

[CSR report 2010-2011](#)

CSR report 2012-2014 : to be published on BESIX website [homepage](#) end of June 2015

BESIX Group is convinced of the importance of establishing and upholding a non-discriminative working environment.

- In 2009, the creation of [BESIX Foundation](#) was the logical outcome of a sincere sense of responsibility which is not only embedded in the BESIX Group's business, but is also related to the continuous attention to our impact on the human and social environment in all the countries where we operate.
- In 2010, BESIX Group published its first [CSR report](#) summarizing its most relevant CSR 2010-2011 actions. The second edition of our CSR report consequently covers the period from 2012 till 2014. In the following years, we will maintain a 2-year reporting cycle.
- In 2013, a Respect campaign was launched and run in 2014-2015. In this context, BESIX has set up a company-wide network of Confidence Officers, besides the designated under the legal framework of actions against harassment of any sort or form. Each subsidiary within the Group has at least one such Confidence Officer or in-house contact person or ombudsman on board.
- On top, BESIX Group contractually states basic principles about H&S and working conditions with its subcontractors. This is complemented by the Corporate BESIX Group [Code of Conduct](#) and the [Sustainable Procurement Code of Conduct](#).
- In 2013 and 2014, Six Construct was also awarded the [CSR label](#) by the Chamber of Commerce of Dubai for its consistent and significant work in the field of CSR.
- In 2015, we intend to register our candidature for joining the "Ten Principles" [Global Compact](#) initiative of the United Nations. This candidature will be presented simultaneously with the edition of this second CSR Report.

[Six Construct](#)

The Group brings its engineering expertise, via its regional company Six Construct, in the Arabian Gulf since 1965: buildings, maritime works, civil construction for industrial projects, environmental and energy-related industries, sports and leisure complexes, and a huge range of infrastructure projects. It operates in Qatar since 1966 and has key reference [projects](#) in this country.

Six Construct employs more than 3,000 workers and staff in. About 2,100 subcontract workers are active in Qatar on site.

Health and safety

BESIX Group cares deeply about its staff's safety, comfort and well-being, but also that of its subcontractors and the people who are impacted by our daily activities and construction sites. Objectives are guaranteeing an incident-free working environment, preventing any adverse impact on the environment. Through its Respect campaign, BESIX Group also intends to prevent stress and burn-out.

Six Construct is implementing programs setup to match the local context as well as BESIX Group specific programs to ultimately enhance labor's safety awareness. Moreover, HSE incentive schemes based on monthly prizes to workers who have obtained good HSE performances (e.g. zero injuries, etc.) in the project have been developed. All related security equipment are always provided.

Six Construct Qatar records on sites over the last three years with no fatal injuries (including for our subcontractors).

Initiated in 2009, the Safety & Environmental Time Out sessions are a great way to keep all Group staff on track on our common journey towards HSE Excellence: across the world, across all project sites and in every office, BESIX Group employees and workers take a little break together to brainstorm about Health & Safety and Environmental issues on the job. The Safety Time Out 2014 counts nearly 27,000 participants in countries in which the Group is active.

On top, Six Construct is certified as:

- a. ISO 9001 (sets out the requirements of a quality management system);
- b. ISO 14000 (defines terms of fundamental concepts related to environmental management) and;
- c. OHSAS 28000 (international Standard for occupational health and safety management systems).

Conditions of employment

Most of the workers are hired through local agencies in India, Nepal, Philippines, Bangladesh, etc. which expressed terms of contract and employment in their local tongue. These agencies are compelled to sign a [Sustainable Procurement Code of Conduct](#) which details what they can do, or not.

Six Construct staff members (including expats) work fully complied to local law, with adapted working hours in summer time. Workers are paid through a systematic bank process, special bank system allowing the Workers to hold each one a personal Pay Card.

BESIX Foundation created a basic computer course, '[Right2Learn](#)', to allow them to make economies on their telephone calls by using Internet to contact their family. After Dubai and Abu Dhabi, a classroom opened in May 2013 in Qatar.

Six Construct organizes an annual Long Service Award Ceremony in order to thank and promote staff members who have been working for Six Construct for the past 15, 20, 25, 30 and 35 years. Since most of our workers stay for very long periods, they get extra advantages to demonstrate looks for staff members with whom it can build long-term partnership. Six Construct employs now already the second generation of workers (children).

For safe custody and easy handling of administrative / immigration procedures, the company gives the possibility to safely hold on to the worker passport or not. In case company holds documents they are available at first request by the employee

Six Construct is applying the standards either in accordance to the countries labor law or to the requirements of the tenders to ensure that workers and staff are adequately accommodated. Besides, Six Construct, which intends to develop further accommodations, provides transportation buses with AC for its workers, TV and sports room, an open cricket pitch, a mini market and an infirmary first aid facility.

Six Construct contributes significantly to medical expenses of its staff. The company reimburses all valid and justified medical expenses directly to the Workers. It has also put in place an agreement with a private clinic in which the company workers do not have to pay any fees as it is directly billed to Six Construct. Qatar had announced two years ago that it would implement a compulsory medical scheme (similar to what has been done in the UAE). The company will comply with the requirements of this future insurance scheme as soon as it will be implemented.

Freedom of association

The CSR enthusiasm of Six Construct, as a BESIX Group company, highly depends on the impact of its activity, development and growth on such stakeholders and on the society in which it operates. BESIX Group's commitment systematically and significantly strives for higher CSR standards and rules than the ones usually referred to in the country concerned. The Group, through its company Six Construct, stays attentive to the fact that Qatari authorities stress the importance of H&S for all workers.

BESIX and Six Construct are having a dialogue with the International Labor Organization and trade unions organizations, either in Belgium and internationally. The Group always respect law in countries where it operates. Six Construct has also got regular contacts with Belgian and international trade union, and also media about its activity in Qatar.

BESIX and SIX Construct are having a dialogue with the International Labor Organization and trade unions organizations, either in Belgium and internationally. On February 10, 2015 BESIX participated to a meeting called by the Belgian National Contact Point of the OECD at the Federal Public Service Economy.

During the meeting, which was attended by representatives of the Belgian General Federation of Labour (FGTB/ABVV) and the Federation of Entreprises in Belgium, many aspects raised by the report of TUAC (Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD)¹ on working conditions in Qatar were raised and discussed.

A FGTB/ABVV representative indicated during that meeting that he was having no specific complaint to formulate against BESIX and about the company's behaviour in Qatar with its workers (i.e. safety,

¹ The Trade Union Advisory Committee (TUAC) to the OECD is an interface for labor unions with the OECD. It is an international trade union organization which has consultative status with the OECD and its various committees.

payments and living conditions). He considered BESIX-SIX Construct as an exemplary company in the region with regards to respecting ILO ground rules.

In October 2013, an [international delegation](#) of the trade union travelled to the Middle East in order to visit the employee's accommodations. A Six Construct employee accommodation was visited in Qatar by representatives of CSC Building – Industry & Energy, and CSCBIE, these last one being in charge of BESIX. The feedback made clear that BESIX Group, and especially its subsidiary Six Construct, is a company which tends to do well in Qatar. From 2014, local government requests edited new requirements for accommodations. BESIX is more than supportive about this new issue recently published and will put its own accommodations to use.

Since 2013, Six Construct's accommodations in Qatar have been visited 3 times by [Building and Wood Workers International](#), an international trade union. BWI delegates positively assessed our facilities. A follow up meeting held early 2014 in Geneva with ILO confirmed those positive assessments.

The Six Construct village visit was positive overall. Six Construct mentioned that it intends to add an extension and to build a separate dinner areas with Kitchen. The second visit for the stadium project was excellent, they refer to us to be an example on HSE.

Challenges

Since its first CSR Report, BESIX Group really intends to consolidate our achievements and adds the sustainability factor that follows our strong CSR commitment. The Group's CSR challenges are available in our [CSR reports](#).

Contact

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