

Concessions & Assets

BESIX contributes to new state-of-the-art school campuses as part of Abu Dhabi's PPP programme

In May 2022, the Abu Dhabi Investment Office (ADIO), in collaboration with the Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK), has awarded the contract for the Zayed City Schools public-private partnership (PPP) project to a consortium led by BESIX and Plenary Group, and subsequently achieved the commercial close. In July, the parties together with the lending banks reached the financial close. This project is the UAE's first public-private partnership in the field of school infrastructure, a pioneering project confirming BESIX's trusted status as industrial equity provider in the Middle East.

The Zayed City Schools PPP project covers the design, procurement, construction, financing, commissioning and 20-year operations, and maintenance of three new school campuses with an aggregate capacity of 5,360 students in Abu Dhabi's Zayed City. As a pathfinder project developed from origination to award under Abu Dhabi's new PPP regulatory framework, it will pave the way for increased private sector participation in delivering public infrastructure.

Best of both worlds

This unique, integrated PPP solution will be the first-of-its-kind vertically integrated PPP education solution for the MENA region and will maximise operational efficiencies by bringing together high-calibre education and building service providers under a single PPP project framework.

Mohamed Al Dhaheri, Acting Executive Director Business Enterprise, ADIO, said: "ADIO is proud to have delivered this procurement on time which has taken 17 months from the commencement of the business case to the commercial close. This is a record for the MENA region and, together with the quality of the tender documentation, has been considered a standout success. We want to be considered the gold-standard and to offer a PPP programme that local and international investors can participate in, safe in the knowledge that we will offer a high-quality and efficient procurement process that is central to Abu Dhabi's long-term vision for the future."

The campuses, catering to students from kindergarten to grade 12, will provide students access to high-quality learning environments and modern facilities, enhancing the attractiveness of Zayed City and Abu Dhabi. "We focus our efforts on enhancing education sector infrastructure to cater for students and parents throughout Abu Dhabi regions", said Dr Tareq Al Ameri, Executive Director Licensing Sector at ADEK. "With its world-class standards, the three new schools will empower more students to access quality education opportunities, to learn and thrive in a healthy and safe environment."

The education service at each campus will be provided separately by a Chartered School Operator.

Strong partners

For this project, BESIX in the Middle East has partnered with Australian Plenary Group, one of the world's leading investors, developers and asset managers of public-private partnership infrastructure projects, who has a solid track record of delivering projects across the world. Peter Lembrechts, General Manager, BESIX Middle East: "We are extremely proud to partner with the Abu Dhabi Government to develop and implement this pathfinder PPP project, providing our expertise in terms of financing, engineering, construction, and long-term maintenance. In Plenary Group we have found a world-class partner to develop and deliver this project. In this project, BESIX demonstrates how technical and operational know-how can be combined with specific development skills. As industrial equity provider, BESIX is ready to contribute to the delivery of an impressive programme of infrastructure development for social and economic growth in the GCC."

World-class school campuses

The campus buildings have a dual priority of academic excellence and high environmental performance and will feature state-of-the-art facilities and equipment, allowing for world-class, high-end education. The buildings have been designed and will be built with high sustainability objectives, complying with the Estidama Pearl 2. As low-energy buildings, they will focus on usage and consumptions efficiency. The partners will give priority to the use of locally produced building materials.

Construction on site has started during the third quarter of 2022 and will be completed in August 2024, with schools opening in September 2024.



Project details

Zayed City Schools

Location

Zayed City, Abu Dhabi (UAE)

Client

Abu Dhabi Investment Office (ADIO), in collaboration with the Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK)

Contract type

DBFMO

Total project value (funding needs)

670 million Emirati dirhams (approx. 165 million euros)

Equity percentage

20 %

Construction period

2022 - 2024

Operations & Maintenance period

20 years



The buildings will be low-energy buildings with a focus on usage and consumptions efficiency and the partners will give priority to the use of locally produced building materials.