

Editorial

Seven articles are included in this issue. Once again they come from different parts of the globe but with the unifying focus on construction in developing countries.

Based on a questionnaire survey, the first paper by Choudhry et al. lists the causes of discrepancies between design and construction in Pakistan. These causes can be attributed to various parties: client, designer, approving authority, and contractor. Incomplete data provided to the designer is the highest ranked cause. The authors came up with a few recommendations for improving the situation.

The second paper, also from Pakistan, produced by Arshad et al. quantified construction material wastage for different types of building projects, and identified the factors and causes of wastage from the contractors' perspective. Bricks, tiles, and mortar are the top three most wasteful material. Management, material handling, and operation were the top three causes of waste. They also found that material type and their percentage wastage and causes vary with types of building projects. They recommend, among others, a full-time waste manager/supervisor for large projects to reduce wastage.

The third paper written by Williamson et al. came up with an innovative method of constructing biogas dome using pneumatic formwork in Nepal. The traditional method uses heaped soil as temporary formwork for unreinforced concrete dome. A prototype dome that was constructed using simple hand tools demonstrates the feasibility of this technology.

Mejía and Franco-Duran propose municipal planning offices use evidence-based approach to assist in the policy decision-making process. A city in Colombia was used as a case study. Fifty-five public investment projects executed during 2008–2013 were analysed. One of their recommendations is that 15 days be set as the expected duration for the registration and approval processes of all public projects throughout Colombia.

Many developing countries are moving towards modern construction technologies. But the standard form of contracts may not be in keeping with this development. Fateh and Mohammad compared provisions in the standard forms of construction contracts used in Malaysia with that of selected advanced countries in the context of industrialised building system (IBS). They recommend that a few clauses be inserted in the former to help accelerate IBS adoption.

Muñoz Cru et al. make the case that bioclimatic conditions are a forgotten factor in dwellings in Colombia. As a result, current conditions are detrimental to hydro-thermic comfort. They recommend the adoption of the *habitat* perspective, which allows for comprehensive planning, taking into account environmental, economic, social, architectonic, and cultural components, and allowing a comprehensive understanding of the city and the diverse roles of its inhabitants.

Even though Columbia has come up with its own occupational health and safety management system for the construction industry, Suárez Sánchez et al. found that lack of commitment and a lack of knowledge about safety as the main weaknesses. They support the call for growth of occupational safety culture and deployment of various options to improve work safety.

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