

Construction Health and Safety in Developing Countries

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Disclaimer

The authors have sought to report things 'as they are', rather than how they would like them to be, so that project management teams can be realistic about the necessary preparation for work in such countries. Words and images used should not be taken as tacit approval of practices or behaviour observed or reported. It is essential that the industry does not trivialise global construction issues, but takes them seriously in order to drive the change that is needed.

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Foreword

Developing countries accept the presence of foreign companies carrying out work within their borders for a number of reasons:

- as an inevitable consequence of globalisation, as the host country seeks to improve its socio-economic standing
- because their own companies do not have the resources to carry out the work
- to achieve technology transfer from the foreign companies to their own
- or they may be there as a condition of accepting aid money from an industrialised country

Whatever the drivers, the result is that many large projects are carried out in developing countries by companies from industrialised nations.

Some outstanding feats of engineering have been accomplished under these circumstances and are even more commendable considering the major physical and cultural environmental challenges that would have been present.

A number of issues emerge when encountering these challenges, which can lead to a lack of resources being available (eg. equipment to carry out the work, skilled workers and adequate road network for delivery of materials and workers to the site). It is inevitable that any work carried out that is under-resourced will put pressure on the effective management of health and safety.

This manual has been developed to assist those responsible for the management of health and safety. It is not the intention to explain what is different between countries that are industrially developed and those that are developing because this has been thoroughly researched elsewhere. The manual explains those physical characteristics of developing countries (infrastructure, security, politics and weather) along with the human elements (language, literacy, skills and local practices) that impact upon the construction process and the management of health and safety. The manual should also be of use to project management teams working in developed countries, but employing labour from other countries.

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