



# Circular Economy in Construction Sector—a Guideline for Policy Makers from Global Perspective

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## Abstract

Construction and demolition waste (CDW) comprises the major portion of solid waste and it is becoming a global concern due to rapid urbanisation. Construction and demolition waste management (CDWM) and circular economy (CE) are interconnected as both focus on waste prevention and resource conservation. However, without having an efficient CDWM system, CE establishment is not possible. Policies are the leverage for any national or local level action. Although there are policies and regulations on CDW, inadequate enforcement and challenges faced during implementation have made the policies dormant or unsuccessful. Hence, there is a dire need to understand various aspects and challenges involved in CDWM to develop effective policies. This study explains political, market, environmental, economic, social, local, and technical aspects of CDWM and how different regions are striving to implement CE. Best practices, pioneers in CE, major challenges faced during CE establishment, and how policies could be used to overcome the issues are discussed. A continuous improvement framework to establish CE in construction sector and a robust action plan to implement the framework at the regional level have been proposed in this study. This study will guide policy maker to develop policies that are inclusive, flexible, and dynamic to enable gradual circular transition.

**Keywords** Construction and Demolition Waste · CE · Action Plan · Policy · Framework

## Introduction

Rapid urbanisation and economic development have led to rise in resource consumption and waste generation per capita. According to the OECD, 2019, construction sector is one of the largest consumer of natural resources and the largest generator of solid waste [1]. Over ten billion tons of construction and demolition waste (CDW) per year has been produced globally which is 25% of the total waste occupying 35% of landfill [2–4]. Although over 90% of CDW has reuse, recycling potential only 20–30% is recovered [5]. In developing countries, more than 90% of waste is either dumped illegally or burned. Moreover, unauthorised disposal of CDW is creating social, economic, and environmental issues [6,

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7]. Construction and demolition waste management (CDWM) is a complex and challenging task all over the world because of its nature, composition, volume, and complexity [4]. However, few western countries such as Netherlands started embracing circular economy (CE) and achieving more than 90% resource recovery and recycling. It is possible for them with the help combination of policies, suitable technologies, and effective CDWM [8, 9]. CE encourages the opportunity to reduce virgin material consumption and associated environmental impact by encouraging reduce, reuse, and recycling of CDW. Adopting CE harnesses multiple benefits including economic benefits such as GDP growth and social benefits such as job opportunities [5, 10, 11]. Since policies act as a stimulator leveraging CE, it is imperative for the policy makers to have knowledge about entire dynamics of the system [12]. Hence, it is important to understand the market, political, social, environmental, economic, and technical aspects of CDWM. Learnings from best practices who are pioneers in CE, challenges faced by other regions, and how policies could be an effective tool to overcome those challenges are essential to develop successful policies and hence discussed in this study.

Existing research articles on CE are very generic, focusing towards specific region and discussing mostly on the overall importance, barriers, and benefits of achieving it. This study gives a clear guideline for policy makers from the global perspective. It highlights on the various aspects to be considered before framing policies and the importance of policies in achieving CE. This study strives to answer the below questions:

- What are the various aspects to be considered while framing policies for CE in construction sector?
- What are the lessons to be learnt from other regions with respect to CDWM and CE implementation?
- How policy and interventions could be used to overcome the major issues and challenges in CDWM and CE?

Finally, a framework for framing policy and an action plan for effective implementation of policy are recommended.

## Understanding Construction and Demolition Waste

### Definition and Composition of CDW

The European Catalogue of Waste (Directive 75/442/CEE and 94/904/CE) classifies CDW into eight groups as indicated in Fig. 1, where the hazardous wastes are highlighted in red and other wastes are non-hazardous [2, 13]. Composition of CDW varies greatly depending on the location, size, source, and type of the building or structure.

### Linear Economy and Its Consequences

Construction sector consumes about 50% of the total raw material and 36% of energy in European Union [14]. Non-metallic mineral consumption such as sand, gravel, and limestone is expected to double from 79 GT in 2011 to 167 GT in 2060. It comprises about half of the total material consumption around the world [15, 16]. Seventy percent of the building waste is from high-rise construction projects and has high recycling

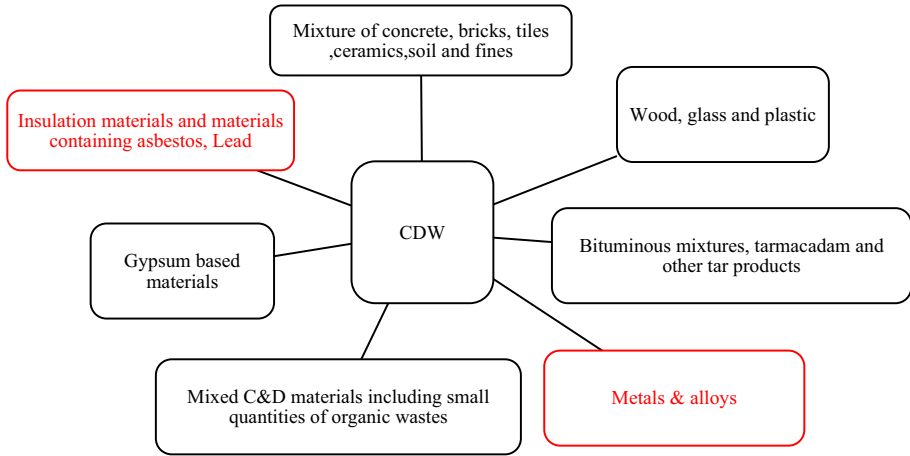


Fig. 1 Types of materials in CDW

potential [17]. Despite having high reuse and recycling potential, vast proportion of CDW is being open dumped or disposed of at landfills especially in developing countries [18–20]. Figure 2 shows the percentage of waste going to landfill among different regions in the world. Landfilling leads to severe wastage of natural resources [16]. Moreover, there is a huge environmental cost associated with landfilling. The impacts can range from contaminated groundwater to greenhouse gas emissions. However, landfilling is still being the most popular method of waste disposal [18, 19, 21]. This clearly shows that construction sector is following linear principles where the resources are majorly ending in landfill.

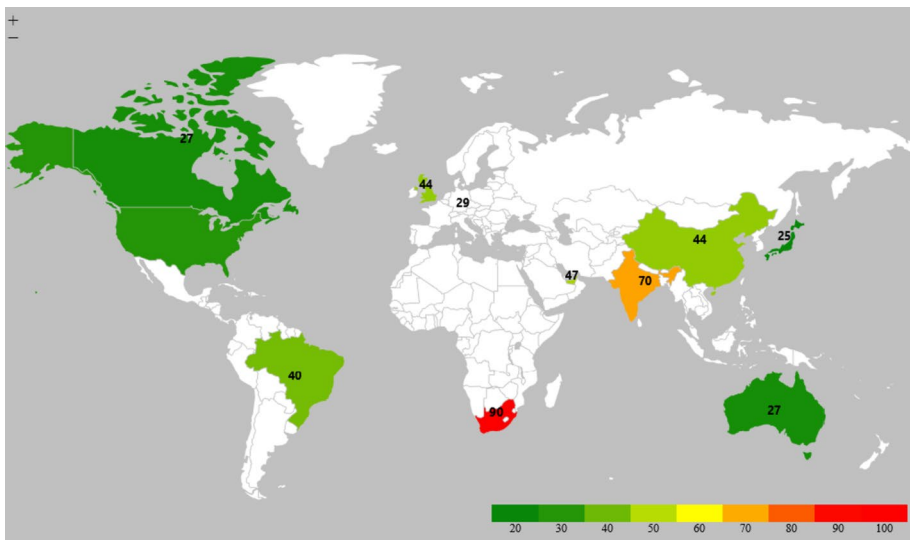


Fig. 2 CDW landfilling percentage

## CDWM and Transition Towards CE

Generally, CDW is managed according to the waste hierarchy starting from prevention to disposal at landfill with prevention being the most desirable. The best way to manage CDW before and after generation is detailed below.

### Prevention

During the design and planning phase of a construction and demolition project, CDW generation shall be prevented by (i) refusing waste generation by considering alternative processes, methods, and materials and (ii) following sustainable design such as designing for deconstruction/dismantling [22–24].

### Reduce

Waste minimisation is most desirable in CDWM [25], which can be achieved by giving more attention during the planning and design stage [26]. Waste reduction shall also be achieved through procurement of sustainable materials, adopting lean construction practices, effective resource management, and onsite CDWM practices. During the use phase, strive to reuse, repair, and refurbish the structure and its components as long as possible to increase the life cycle [21, 27–29].

### Recycle

Recycling and reusing the materials will reduce land use conflicts, carbon footprint, pollution, and energy and water consumption [7, 30, 31]. However, profound knowledge on characteristics of materials and their environmental impacts is required for better handling and to increase the possibilities of recovery and recycling [32–34].

Recycling is proved to have economic and environmental benefits. Hence, after being generated, recycling is the best way to handle CDW. The best way to handle CDW has been proposed in Fig. 3.

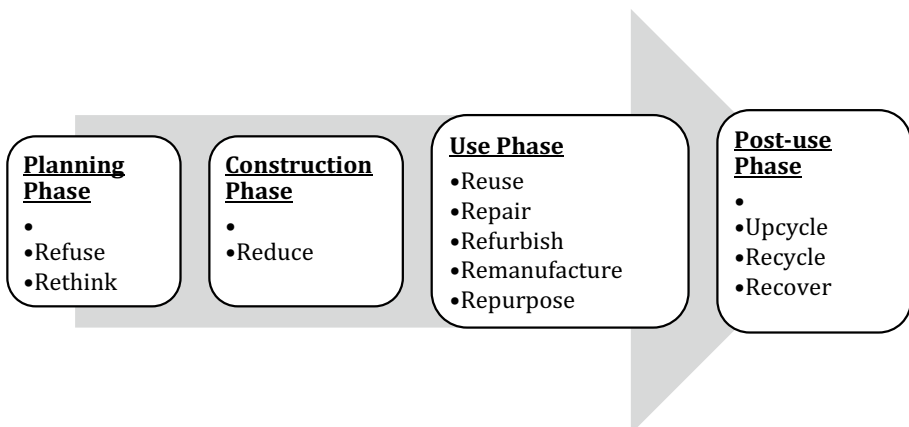


Fig. 3 The best way to handle CDW

Minimising the processing cost and transportation distance to the treatment facility and having CDW preliminary storage site under proximity are essential to control illegal dumping. Developing strategies for local level implementation involving local authorities and organisations improve the effectiveness of CDWM [35].

CE and waste hierarchy pave a new way by rethinking, redesigning, and repurposing building and their elements to reduce the impact throughout the lifecycle. CE prevents resource wastage by closing the loop and encourages transition from take-make-dispose culture [10]. CE thinking has led to the idea of up cycling rather than simple reutilization of materials without considering quality of utilisation [36]. Principles of CE have started influencing national strategic vision. Several CE initiatives have been taken and regulations have been launched around the world [37]. CE policies have been adopted by China at first in 2008, Denmark in 2013, and Colombia in 2014; Netherlands, Korea, and Finland in 2016; and France, Slovenia, and Greece in 2018. However, CE implementation is complex and unsatisfactory in these countries as construction sector is characterised by multiple stakeholder involvement and huge investments with several interconnected attributes [38]. It will not be possible to properly implement CE without the support of smaller-scale organisations, including municipalities and micro and small construction enterprises [35]. System wide transformation from linear to CE will be achievable only with incremental change. Achieving nationwide transformation needs change in fundamental economic activity having CE at the highest level of political decision-making. Setting up a waste management hierarchy and focusing towards prevention would be helpful in initiating the transition [38, 39]. Both CDWM and CE are interconnected where CE is not achievable in construction sector without having a robust CDWM system in place.

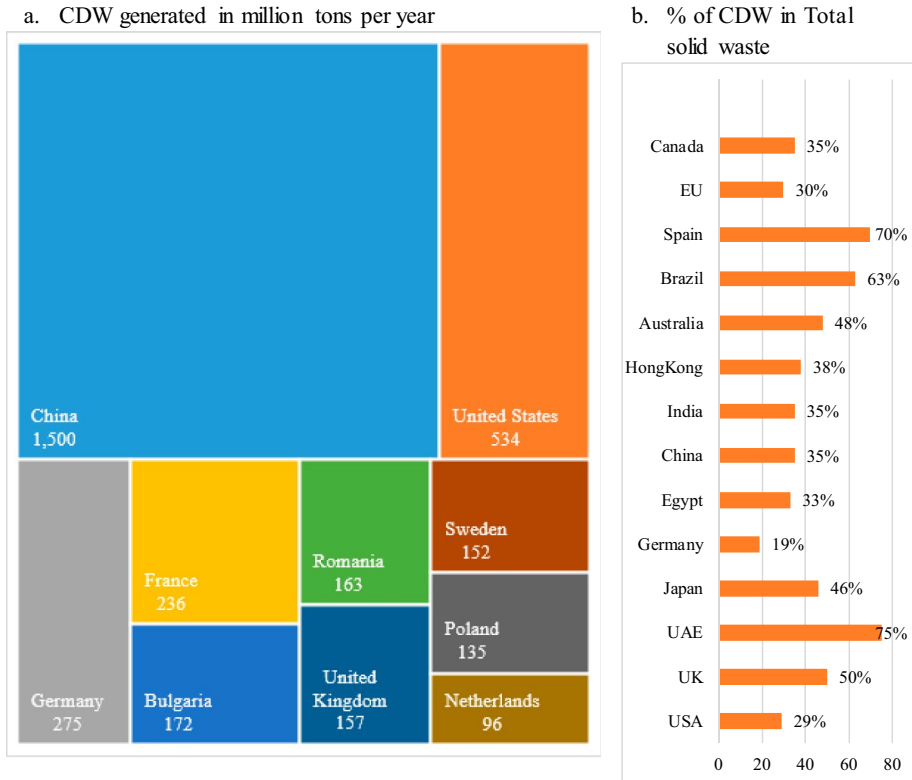
## Aspects of CDWM

In order to frame holistic CE policies for construction sector, it is important to understand the following aspects.

## Magnitude of Waste Generation and Global Market Status

CDW has a global market size of USD 212.8 billion in 2021 and it is expected to reach USD 287.4 billion by the year of 2027. Growth of residential projects is creating a huge drive to the market and emerging economies such as Asia Pacific, Africa, and South America are found to be the major market area. Notably, India is found to be the fastest-growing market for CDW in South East Asia [40].

Figure 4a shows the top ten generators of CDW around the globe in million tons per year. According to the World Bank report, 2.01 billion tons of waste is generated by global cities accounting for 0.74 kg/person/day. It is expected to increase by 70% reaching 3.40 billion tons by 2050. China is the largest generator of CDW while Iceland is the least generator. This assures that the rate of generation varies with the population and economic activities [41]. In case of a natural disaster, the amount of debris generated varies from 5 to 15 times the annual waste generation rates of the community based on the nature, severity, and location of the disaster [42]. Figure 4b shows the proportion of CDW among the total solid waste generated among the world countries.



**Fig. 4** a CDW generated (in million tons) among the top generators. b Proportion of CDW among total solid waste (in %). Major sources: [3, 21, 41]

## Environmental Aspect

To understand the environmental aspect, life cycle assessment (LCA) would be the appropriate tool as it accounts for the entire life cycle of the material and associated environmental impact [43, 44]. Hence, results from few LCA studies have been discussed below to understand the importance of environmental consideration of CDW.

Leachate, emission of  $H_2S$  gas, and heavy metals such as lead in paints, copper, chromium, and arsenic in treated wood create major environmental impacts and need to be considered while handling CDW. This heavy metal leakage could contaminate soil, surface, and groundwater [21, 44]. For instance, difficulty in sorting and lack of demand lead to disposal of drywall in landfill leading to increased hydrogen sulphide ( $H_2S$ ) production under anaerobic conditions [45]. The LCA study performed on residential house revealed that building material manufacturing process has the highest share of environmental impact, and transportation of building materials contributes up to 20% of the impact. Hence, local material sourcing and prefabrication are recommended to reduce impact [46]. A streamlined LCA analysis stresses on waste minimization and indicates that improper disposal methods would lead to negative environmental impact [47]. Prevention could contribute to 60% waste reduction and 62% lesser impact compared to without prevention scenario [43]. Improper disposal of CDW leads to destruction of urban centres by creating a nuisance on

public roads, clogging sewers, and degrading water resources which gets aggravated during economic expansion. Since, transportation is found to create a major impact from the recycling process preference shall be given to on-site recycling wherever feasible. Ninety percent of energy consumption and GHG emission could be prevented by on-site recycling process [48, 49]. It is recommended to limit the transportation distance to 40 km otherwise the benefit of recycling waste would be eliminated by increased carbon emission [50, 51]. Landfilling leads to the highest impact while recycling after selective demolition has the least impact on the environment [30]. From LCA, it is understood that impact reduction is possible through judicious and wise selection of materials and methods. As a whole, prevention is the best way before generation, and recycling is found to be an effective way after generation to reduce carbon emission and other environmental impact.

### Technical Aspects of Management

The unavailability of advanced technology decreases the chances of recovering the materials without getting damaged, and conventional building methods prevent deconstruction of structure [29, 52]. Several studies highlighted that the lack of technology is one of the major barrier in establishing CE in construction sector [5, 53, 54]. Traditional method of CDWM is no longer providing a promising solution in the current scenario where the waste is increasing in quantity and complexity. Hence, there is a dire need for predictive management methods with higher efficiency [55]. Tools and technologies such as Building Information Modelling (BIM), Big Data, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Internet of Things, Radio-Frequency Identification, Block chain, and Simulation & Modelling are very helpful in CDWM and CE transition [56]. Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) are highly useful in CDWM assisting in real-time monitoring, risk management, and decision-making [56, 57].

Although recycling is found to be an effective CDWM approach, transportation and logistics affect the total environmental and economic benefits of recycling. Hence, it is vital to adopt innovative technology to maximise the benefit and minimise the impact of recycling. Then only, stakeholder engagement in recycling could be achieved, resulting in improved recycling and diversion of CDW from landfill [12]. Cost-effective and innovative recycling technologies can increase the quality, reduce the cost, and thereby increase recycled material consumption [56]. Developed economies have the advantage of innovative advanced technologies which helps them to achieve higher CDW recovery with good quality in comparison to developing countries [12].

### Economic Aspect

Since, cost benefit is a primary consideration for any stakeholder to participate in CDWM and commitment towards CE, it is important to consider the economic aspect of CE. Cost involved in government supervision, penalty for illegal dumping, cost associated with removing illegal dump, processing cost of legal dumping, tipping fee, capital cost for treatment facility, and incentive for participation by public and private companies should be considered while working towards CE implementation in construction sector [58, 59]. Economic instruments such as tax, incentives, penalties, and subsidies are identified to be most effective and influencing strategy for CDWM enabling circular transition [60–64]. As availability of virgin material at low cost is a major challenge, taxing the virgin materials enhances the support for secondary materials. From the UK, Denmark, and Sweden, it is

understood that imposing tax on virgin material would directly boost secondary material market [65]. Similarly, landfill change is identified as the most successful strategy to control landfilling [37].

Since waste treatment facility and CDWM infrastructure incur huge capital investment with longer period of return, there is lack of interest from public and private parties. In such scenario, public–private partnership (PPP) is found to be helpful where public and private party have partnership in establishment and running of processing facility. Public sector offers land and private sector would be given responsibility to finance, build, and operate infrastructure projects until the projects are transferred back to the public sector [66, 67]. Transferring the transportation and recycling process of CDWM to a private body helps to remove the entry barrier into recycling business [68].

Long-term operation is difficult for recycling plant without subsidies [69]. In order to increase the subsidy efficiency, government has to adopt general dynamic subsidy mechanism which varies according to the consumer quality perception. If government is willing to pay high subsidies, then it can give subsidies for both production and consumption of recycled materials; if it is not able to subsidies both, then it can prioritise supporting production. This would help to achieve immediate results and stability in market [70]. Although government subsidy is found to increase the profit of recycler, the learning of recycler makes the subsidy more efficient through process optimisation resulting in maximum profit and minimum impact [71]. Already, stationary plants are running successfully in many regions with positive net present value and internal rate of return. Mobile recycling plants shall also be supported by the municipality by providing concrete waste for free and getting the recycled aggregates at discounted price [65]. However, recycling CDW is economically feasible only when the recycled product is better in terms of cost and quality compared to the conventional product [3, 65]. Insisting sustainable procurement strategy, setting clear specification with consistent valuation procedure for secondary materials/products, procurement of secondary materials for public projects, developing a material catalogue, collaborating with manufacturers, and establishing independent audit for secondary materials would help to boost the recycling market [72].

## Social Aspect

Lack of stakeholder engagement, coordination, and commitment is one of the major barrier in CE establishment and stakeholders' behaviour greatly impacts the level of implementation [73–75]. Majority of construction companies are micro and small companies which follow inappropriate waste management practices [76]. Support from construction stakeholders is important to reduce landfilling [77]. Landfill charge and recycling fee are found to impact the contractors' recycling preferences [68]. Stakeholder's perception and willingness to pay [78] should be considered while planning for secondary market establishment [77]. Hence, awareness among the stakeholders especially among the authorities and contractors is essential to achieve effective policy implementation and establish CE. Coordination and collaboration can be achieved through knowledge transfer and networking [79]. Stakeholder's commitment shall be improved by providing incentives for good practices [3], penalising non-compliance, and through strict supervision [80]. For transformation towards CE, both horizontal coordination across government departments and with other stakeholders from goal setting to action and vertical coordination across authority levels are required [81]. Involving stakeholders in policy-making, collaboration among the secondary material producer and consumer, inclusive and participatory planning by including



local waste management practitioners in decision-making, having regular meeting with interested parties and improving the CDWM system based on feedback, and developing an industry-wide agreement on procurement of recycled aggregates and its quality assurance would help to boost secondary materials market and drive CE through stakeholder participation [60, 82].

### Local/Regional Aspect

Since policy enforcement, monitoring, and control lie entirely in the hands of local authority, participation and commitment of local authorities are highly essential [35]. Local authorities are responsible for integrated waste management [83]. Due to lack of awareness, training, adequate supervision, infrastructure, and resources, municipalities are spending additional cost in removing illegal dump [84]. Investment in local municipalities for logistic optimisation, stakeholder engagement, improving secondary material market, and local economy is very important to achieve CE. Consideration should be given on awareness, training, and knowledge sharing to improve onsite and offsite CDWM [76, 85]. Supervising illegal disposal shall be shared with other stakeholders such as NGO and public [58].

### Political Aspect

Although policy is the leverage for CE, policy inadequacy has been reported in Thailand [86], Chile [12], Dutch [56], Kuwait [75], Australia [87], Italy [88, 89], China [90], India [73, 91], Vietnam [67], USA [90], and Portugal [92]. National vision is important to stimulate infrastructure, funding, and legal enforcement where policymakers are the facilitators of CE [93]. The whole value chain must be considered to deal with dynamic complexity and the stakeholders in construction has to realise that adopting CE aid in economic, social, and environmental value addition [21, 94].

Construction Material Recycling Law enacted by Japan in the year 2000, enforced mandatory recycling of iron, wood, concrete, and asphalt. This resulted in a 33% increase in the CDW recycling within the period 1996 to 2008 [95]. Landfill tax in New Zealand, tax for extracting natural aggregates in Europe, and waste disposal charging scheme for construction projects in Hong Kong are few examples indicating the importance of policies in CE transition [96] (Yu et al., 2021). Finland has many good policies and regulations that facilitate its leading role in CE such as ‘Natural Resource Strategy for Finland: using natural resources intelligently’—2009; Resolution on Strategic Programme for the CE, 2021 [81]; and ‘Leading the cycle: Finnish Road Map to a CE’—2016 [38].

It is vital to be cautious, since certain policies such as imposing higher waste disposal fee might worsen illegal dumping as the public tend to bifurcate the fee [97]. Consumption of recycled materials is legalised in many regions such as USA, Italy, Japan, and France [65]. It is also important to consider the cross-regional impact of policies. After China’s National Sword Policy banned the waste import, Australia realises the inadequacy in waste treatment facilities and urgency in need for innovative and advance strategies for CDWM [72]. Hence, a clear and structured policy with long-term credibility is required [88]. Hence, it is understood that policy has a huge impact on local and global CE practices.

Policies should be bi-directional to achieve a CE and the entire system should not be ‘waste centric’ instead it should shift towards ‘designing-out-of-waste’. Through the bi-directional approach, feedback from stakeholders on the ground should be considered at the micro level, evaluation of the supply chain should be made at the meso level to adjust

the regional level policy, and final policy adjustment should be made at the macro or national level. This kind of approach would help in effective and successful policymaking [98]. Diverse policy instruments should be used in synergy, aligned with the dynamics of the secondary materials supply chain [99]. Policies can be categorised into control and command policy and information-based and market-based policy [100]. A combination and wise use of policy instruments are required for successful, socially acceptable, and feasible CE policy [101].

## Learning from Other Countries

Table 1 shows the good practices in CDWM and CE establishment in construction industry among various regions along with suggestions and recommendation to improve.

## Pioneers in CE

Austria and Netherlands which are pioneers in CDWM rely on local waste regulation framework and waste management plan rather than national regulation. Countries having dense infrastructure for CDWM recycling such as the UK and Germany show high recovery rate [107].

Anti-waste Law, 2020, launched in France, aims in system-wide circular transition encouraging business, municipalities, and citizens to adopt circular practices and eliminate waste. The law strives to initiate societal transformation and establishes new measures such as reparability index and ban on destructing unsold goods. This law is a supportive tool for the countries' climate policy and French Climate Plan. It broadly utilises EPR schemes to prevent waste generation. The principle goals of France CE are as follows: (1) stimulating design for CE; (2) preserving value through resource management; (3) making the economics work for CE; (4) investing in innovation, skills, and infrastructure; and (5) collaborating for the system change [114].

Amsterdam Circular Strategy 2020–2025 aims in achieving sustainable cities by reducing raw material consumption. It is working towards the ambition of halving the virgin material consumption by 2030 and becoming fully circular by 2050. It aims in designing climate-adaptive cities using sustainable materials for roads, playgrounds, and bridges. Special attention is intended to be paid in closing the building material loop by including circular criteria in tendering of infrastructural and public projects, encouraging disassembly and segregation of components for higher level application, and stimulating circular renovation of public and private housing.

A global project on circular construction called CIRCuiT (Circular Construction in Regenerative Cities) is funded by the EU Horizon 2020 programme. Project areas include Helsinki region/ Vantaa, Copenhagen, London, and Hamburg. The project is working under three themes to achieve circular construction which are given below:

- a) Extending building lifecycle through repurposing or refurbishment
- b) Development of flexible construction which is versatile and modifiable and allows dismantling
- c) Enabling reuse of building components and recycling of materials after dismantling of buildings [125]

**Table 1** Region-wise analysis of good practices, suggestion, and recommendations for CE

Region	Good practices	Suggestions and recommendations
Africa	Have secondary market for bricks, wood, metal scrap, and plastics [102]	Stringent policies, effective monitoring, strict enforcement, inclusive system, and engagement at the local level are highly required to establish a good CDWM system in Africa [103]
Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 76% of the debris is recycled</li> <li>• Has Landfill charge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technology intervention in waste minimisation and industry-academia collaboration is required [87]</li> <li>• Need for cross-regional waste management mechanisms</li> <li>• Establish a dynamic penalty system according to the landfill and treatment capacity and stakeholder compliance</li> <li>• Collaborative landfill charge prevents illegal dumping and minimize waste generation in cross-region [104]</li> <li>• Raise awareness and fostering networks via different channels, develop sustainable business models, standardise business approach across the supply chain</li> <li>• Establish central marketplace (physical/online)</li> <li>• Advertise secondary market</li> <li>• Tax break/incentive to use recycled materials</li> <li>• Coalition with private companies and research</li> <li>• Supply chain consideration, sustainable procurement, knowledge sharing on best practices [72, 105, 106]</li> </ul>
Austria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rely on local waste management plan</li> <li>• Landfill Ban</li> <li>• Landfill Tax [107]</li> </ul>	Best in CE [8]
Brazil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Well established policy [83]</li> <li>• Mandated use of recycled aggregates in pavements [108]</li> </ul>	Need quality control on recycled materials for large-scale applications [83]

**Table 1** (continued)

Region	Good practices	Suggestions and recommendations
China	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• China follows PPP for recycling and transportation of CDW</li> <li>• Mandated use of recycled aggregates in public and private projects</li> <li>• 20% must be used in government funded project—Shenzhen, Shanghai</li> <li>• Concrete below C25 should consist of 15% recycled aggregates—Suzhou</li> <li>• In Hangzhou, Xi'an, Chengdu, and Zhoukou, recycled building materials are the first consideration in government-funded projects [68]</li> <li>• Regulation permits the use of recycled materials in foundation and subgrade of pavements [108]</li> <li>• Encouraged green building technology adoption and green subsidy policies to encourage sustainable building practice [109]</li> <li>• Actively working on improving the effectiveness of CDW management by using economic instruments such as incentives and subsidies, establishing an integrated network called urbanisation resource environment (URE) system and adopting cleaner production policies [97, 110]</li> </ul> <p>Hongkong—permits the use of recycled materials in foundation and subgrade of pavements [108] Waste landfill charge [111]</p>	<p>Need more investment in CDWM Use subsidy and environmental tax to boost recycling Need to understand the casual relationship between the stakeholders and their influence in CDWM [97] Lack of guidelines on CDW sorting and collection, lack of knowledge and standard for reuse and recycling of CDW, and immature market preventing CE transition. Need to improve the existing CE model through 3R approach [62, 97]</p>

**Table 1** (continued)

Region	Good practices	Suggestions and recommendations
Europe	<p>EU Waste Framework Directive (2008/98/EC), which sets a target for the recycling of non-hazardous CDW at a minimum of 70% of its weight by 2020</p> <p>B2B schemes in Europe are successful such as deposit-refund scheme for construction packaging, drums, etc. [60]</p> <p>Recovery rate of over 90% is recorded in some of the highly developed nations such as Italy, Netherlands, Ireland, and Luxembourg since 2010. Iceland, France, and Sweden also show an excellent recovery rate and it is 100% for Netherlands. At the same time, Montenegro in Europe recorded 0% recovery rate in 2018 [9]</p> <p>Spain</p> <p>Traceability of CDW with local licensing</p> <p>Deposit based on estimated waste from site waste management plan later it gets refunded by submitting waste management certificates [60]</p> <p>Landfill Tax [112]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transform the recovery target from weight-based target into material specific target in order to achieve true circularity</li> <li>• Circular design, digitisation, and material passport improve effectiveness [113]</li> </ul>
Finland	<p>CE has been achieved in Finland through innovations, digital solutions, responsible investors, business, consumers, and smart regulations [81]</p>	Best in CE [8]
France	<p>Extended Producer Responsibility has been launched in 2022</p> <p>Landfill Ban</p> <p>Landfill Tax [112]</p>	Need to achieve societal transformation [114]
Germany	<p>Waste generators are responsible for segregation, recycling, and reuse of CDW [108]</p> <p>Landfill Ban [112]</p>	Need for more facility equally distributed in all regions [8]

**Table 1** (continued)

Region	Good practices	Suggestions and recommendations
Greece	Promoted CE through 3R concept Developed multi-stakeholder partnership in CE implementation Support circular entrepreneurship Having dedicated indicators to monitor CE [38]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop Stakeholder engagement</li> <li>• Support entrepreneurship</li> <li>• Develop dedicated indicators for progress monitoring</li> <li>• Set up separate ministry for overseeing CE implementation and progress [38]</li> </ul>
India	CDWM is heterogeneous among the cities while Delhi is pioneering Established recycling plants are successfully running under PPP [73, 115]	Need for stakeholder engagement Need for stringent policy enforcement [73, 116, 117]
Japan	Mandated recycling of certain demolished materials [108] Landfilling fee, tax breaks, and soft loans for recycling companies; low-interest loan for consuming secondary materials [100]	Good in CE [38]
Korea	Increasing trend in number of recycling plants producing quality aggregates as well as the number of quality certifications [118] South Korea has an innovative Framework Act on Resource Circulation (FARC) (Act No. 14229, May 29, 2016) and several regulatory measures in place Mandated recycling ratio [38]	Although the quality of recycled aggregates is increasing in par with natural aggregate, negative public perception is still impacting the market of secondary products [118]
Netherlands	Landfill Ban Landfill Tax Effective local waste management plan Effective implementation [112] Pioneer in CE Landfill Tax [112]	Best in CE [8, 38]
Portugal		Need for higher-end large-scale CDW processing plant Need focus on reducing transportation and processing of non-treatable materials to increase optimisation and profit [119]

**Table 1** (continued)

Region	Good practices	Suggestions and recommendations
Singapore	<p>Constructed an industrial park for recycling and rented out recycling plants to private enterprises for low rent 99% of CDW is reused and recycled [120]</p> <p>Collection and transportation are managed by private sector</p> <p>Informal sector is authorised and play wider role in recovering valuables [121–123]</p>	<p>Singapore has one of the best and most comprehensive systems for waste management. It is capable of achieving 99% of CDW excluding soil and sludge. The incoming CDW is sorted, valuable materials are recovered, and finally, the remaining content is incinerated in waste-to-energy plants. The National Environment Agency of Singapore (NEA) is maintaining a well-updated website containing a database of the organisations involved in waste management; the online directory contains information about traders, waste collectors, and recycling facilities. It has established a licensing system for waste collectors involved in the collection and handling of CDW [28, 102]</p>
UK	<p>Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) in 2012 aid conserve natural resources and prevent wastage</p> <p>Mandatory onsite waste reduction [108]</p> <p>Standardised systems and single-large market for secondary materials</p> <p>Landfill tax, aggregate levy allowing UK to achieve the highest rate of resource recovery in EU. Fiscal policies and legislation have proved to be the key drivers of waste minimisation in UK construction industry [77]</p>	<p>Lack of government support for market. Government support, public tender including recycled material, training, and qualification of secondary materials is required. Cost reimbursement for purchasing recycled material has positive effective whereas labelling creates negative effect [124]</p>
USA	<p>Rewarding zero CDW emitter, developing techniques such as 'design for deconstruction', placing accountability on individuals such as developers and allocating large fund for collection and management of CDW</p> <p>Has developed CDWM system and levy waste landfill charge [90]</p>	<p>Need to focus on establishing system that focuses on waste prevention and CE and sustainability [90]</p>

A report from Ellen Macarthur Foundation ‘Towards The CE’ sheds light on the transition path from linear to CE. It clearly indicates that CE is the only answer for our present and future resource challenges and has huge economic opportunities. The report indicated that skills in designing and manufacturing of circular products, new business models where products become services, skills in reverse logistics and treatment, and improving intersector and intercycle performance are the building blocks for CE [126].

## Issues in Establishing CE and How Policy-Based Solution Could Overcome the Issue

CDW management system is informal at the local level and the entire system lies in the hands of informal sector in developing countries [18]. There is a huge disparity and inaccuracy in the estimation of amount of CDWs generated [127]. Although the quality of recycled aggregates produced from recycling plant is increasing on par with natural aggregate, negative public perception is still impacting the market of secondary products [102, 118]. There is a lack of database and policy monitoring system which provide reliable and accurate information on material flow and waste generated [128]. Proper database management system on CDW would help in better monitoring, estimation of future rate of generation, and planning of treatment facilities and landfills [28]. Since decision makers are often changing, there is no ambition for long-term CE strategies. Decision on waste and resources management and its strategies are often fragmented among departments and municipalities [59]. Similarly, CE and CDWM involve multiple barriers and challenges. From a thorough literature survey [5, 17, 19, 25, 26, 35, 62, 65, 72, 78, 85, 87, 93, 107, 108, 111, 112, 117, 129–137], the most repeated and highlighted challenges and barriers faced by countries around the world in CDW management and CE establishment has been extracted and summarised in Table 2 along with policy-oriented solution.

## Framework to Achieve CE in CDW Management

Policy process is cyclic and iterative involving five stages such as setting agenda, formulating policy, decision-making, implementing, and evaluating [36]. Initially, a policy guideline has to be set up which acts as a basic policy upon which frameworks, subsequent policies, and regulations for CE shall be built based on feasibility and requirement. One-size-fits-all approach should be avoided and policy should be flexible and established in phases allowing modifications according to feedback from the previous phase [31]. Attention should be given to promotion of policies and information exchange. Identify and structure the data necessary for monitoring CE at macro and microlevel. Include the perspectives from national, regional, and municipality level stakeholders and get feedback on policy from policymakers at each level [31]. Encourage collaboration of academia, policy makers, and other stakeholders to establish a clear structure of CE. Develop clear indicators to monitor and track the progress and performance of CE [89, 138].

Framework to CE in CDWM has been proposed below (Fig. 5) based on the findings made from various aspects. A cyclic process has been proposed since the improvement is iterative and continuous based on feedback and technological advancement.



**Table 2** Issues/challenges and policy-based solution to achieve CE in construction sector

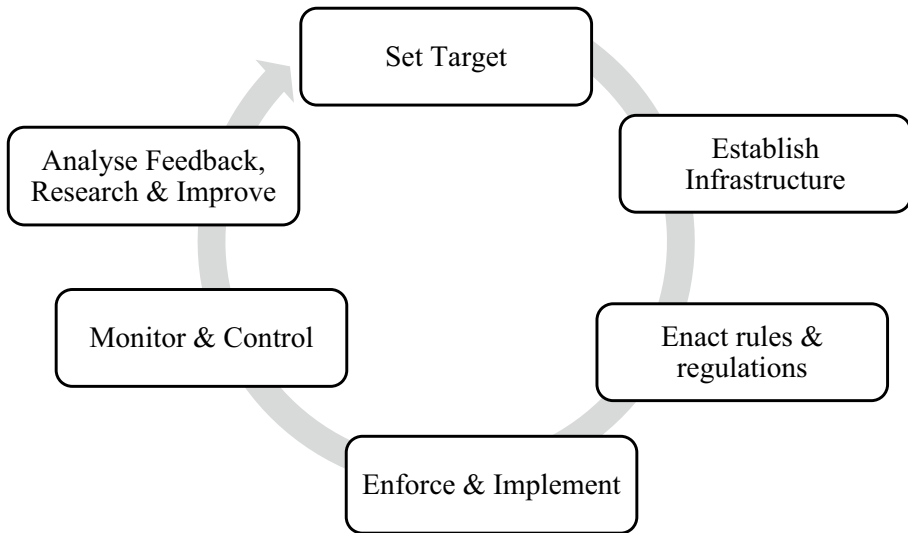
Category	Issues/challenges	Policy-based solution
Policy and intervention	Lack of policy/regulation and unclear responsibilities	Developing holistic policy and continuous improvement based on feedback Policy focused on value creation with long-term vision [138] Making clear roles and responsibilities Setting exclusive ministry for framing CE policies, encourage coordination, and overseeing establishment [38] Regulatory and financial support for industrial transformation [67]
Market	Availability of virgin material at low cost Low-quality recycled materials/products Lack of market for secondary products/materials Lack of standardisation for secondary materials and their applications	Increasing virgin material price Taxing virgin materials [65] Penalty for illegal disposal and Incentives for pricing green materials [83, 108, 108] VAT refund policy [139] Stimulate research on improving quality and identifying advanced technology Market development is urgent need with advertising [85] Establish online/physical market [140] Legalise secondary material consumption [65] Establish material bank [141] Embrace service-oriented business leasing, pay-per-use, buy-back policies [141] Certify of recycled products [142]
Data	Lack of data on CDW generation, characteristics, material flow across the life cycle, cost involved in management, landfill, etc	Develop transparent, safe, and reliable platform for data and information sharing [138]
Infrastructure	Lack of infrastructure Longer transportation distance to treatment facility Lack of Reverse logistics and circular business models	Establish infrastructure with PPP [66] Support entrepreneurs in circular business Partnering with small and medium business for handling parts of CDW process [119] Mandating EPR Setting up infrastructure for reverse logistics [143, 144]

Table 2 (continued)

Category	Issues/challenges	Policy-based solution
Technology	Lack of technology adoption for tracing material flow, data collection, and in the CDWM process	Support and encourage technology adoption through fiscal instruments and appreciating best practices Adopt BIM and material passport [53, 113, 145, 146] It is fundamental to have digital collaboration to encourage new business models and material circularity [141]
Enforcement, monitoring and control	Lack of enforcement and poor implementation Poor supervision and control	Allocate resources and performance evaluation for local authorities to enforce policies implementation Clear definition of roles and responsibilities Conduct premonition audit [147] Initiate changes in design and construction process [141] Interdepartmental coordination among authorities [143] Stakeholders compliance [82, 111] Supervision [148, 149] Fiscal policies for waste minimisation [3]
Stakeholder engagement	Lack of coordination among government departments Lack of commitment from local authority/municipality Lack of stakeholder/contractors' support Lack of communication and collaboration	Allocate resources and performance evaluation for local authorities to enforce policies implementation Clear definition of roles and responsibilities Mandate use of secondary materials/products Government should act as a model in procuring secondary materials for public projects Incentives and subsidies for procuring secondary materials Support business adopting material circularity Encourage collaboration of academia, policy makers, and other stakeholders to establish clear structure of CE indicators [89, 138]. Digital collaboration. [141] Promote economic viability and profit for contractors [58, 84] Local networking opportunity to improve commitment and business [147, 150]

**Table 2** (continued)

Category	Issues/challenges	Policy-based solution
Knowledge	Lack of knowledge on materials, treatment methods, and applications	Establishing dedicated institute or collaborate with academia for developing uniform national guidelines and standards for reuse and recycling materials Create awareness about secondary materials/products among consumers Educate and train waste practitioners [140] Encourage design for circularity [141] Interdisciplinary research [151]



**Fig. 5** Framework to achieve CE in CDW management

### Action Plan to Implement the Framework

An action plan has been proposed to establish a robust waste management system across the state/county considering the state/county in three levels (Table 3). The entire central authority will be at macro level who are capable of creating policies and regulations for the whole region; the lower-level authorities or local bodies would be at micro level who have direct responsibility for implementing the regulations at ground level; and medium-level bodies will be the controlling group of micro level bodies and act as an intermediary between macro and minor level authorities. Medium-level authorities will be involved in the enforcement, facilitating, and monitoring of regulations.

### Conclusion

This study involves analysing various aspects of CDW, challenges involved, and situation of global region with respect to CDWM. Finally, a framework for policy development and action plan for the implementation of CE in construction sector with focus on CDWM are given as a guide to policymakers. By analysing the various aspects and global scenarios, the following conclusion has been made.

- It is observed that based on economic activity, population, and national approach towards material conservation, the amount of CDW generated, recovery rate, recycling rate, and landfilling rate varies.
- Effectiveness of CDWM depends on the local legislation, enforcement, infrastructure availability, and construction and demolition practices.
- CDW has a higher opportunity for the application of the CE principle by promoting the reduction, reuse, and recycling of materials. However, the effectiveness of imple-

**Table 3** Action plan to achieve zero landfill

Level	Action plan
Macro	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Set up an exclusive governing body for CDW with clear roles and responsibilities</li> <li>● Set a 'Net zero' target with a timeline with quantifiable and achievable milestones</li> <li>● Allocate fund and resources</li> <li>● Create infrastructure</li> <li>● Create a transparent platform to gather data, trace material flow, get overall statistics, and decision-making</li> <li>● Create rules and regulations</li> <li>● Make amendments based on feedback from micro and medium level</li> <li>● Continuous monitoring and control</li> <li>● Use a combination of financial tools such as penalties, subsidies, and tax waivers to achieve targets</li> <li>● Establish collaboration with academia to encourage research on technology and materials towards 'Net zero'</li> <li>● Enact regulations to control air pollution from the construction sector</li> <li>● Support and evaluate local authority</li> </ul>
Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Enforce rules and regulation</li> <li>● Establish infrastructure—C&amp;D recycling plant, collection, and transportation facilities</li> <li>● Robust monitoring and control</li> <li>● Harness technology such as GIS, GPS, and RFID</li> <li>● Focus on efficient IEC</li> <li>● Capacity building</li> <li>● Conduct stakeholder meetings with builders, architects, and contractors and educate them through regional technical schools/centres on technologies such as 3D printing and deconstruction and tools such as BIM in order to become 'zero waste' producer</li> <li>● Develop SOP for CDW management</li> <li>● Mandate on-site segregation</li> <li>● Enforce mandatory dust control measures</li> <li>● Acknowledge best practices with rewards and awards</li> </ul>
Micro	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Implement rules and regulations on CDW at local level</li> <li>● Create a warehouse for storing pre-used and unused materials</li> <li>● Setup laboratory to check the quality of materials</li> <li>● Set material-wise targets for proper management of CDW</li> <li>● Encourage entrepreneurs working on whole or a part of CDW management, such as logistics, recycling, and manufacturing secondary products from CDW</li> <li>● Create an online platform for trading surplus, pre-used, and secondary building materials</li> <li>● Strive to achieve behavioural change through continuous enforcement and education</li> <li>● Integrate and acknowledge scrap dealers into the system and design the system in such a way that no material can flow into the illegal market</li> <li>● Create an entry and exit permit system for construction and demolition projects</li> <li>● Deploy technology such as block chain, Internet of Things, and GPS to trace material flow and automate the permit system</li> <li>● Monitor dust control implementation practices</li> </ul>

menting CE models highly relies on national policies but the policymakers shows less engagement in circular economic concepts.

- The policy should have holistic high level vision on waste prevention rather than addressing end of pipeline issue or focusing on single issue such as landfilling.
- Collaboration with academia and supporting research is important to improve quality of secondary material and technology. Industry wide collaboration is required for supporting secondary materials market
- CE and policy enforcement are not possible without local level engagement and action.

- Need for legalisation, standardisation, and acknowledgement of secondary material utilisation and online or physical market to sell.

Policy and interventions are mandatory for driving CE transformation. Fiscal instruments are very effective. Lack of coordination among government departments could be overcome by clearly defining roles and responsibilities with an exclusive ministry for CE at the top. There is a need for transparent, unified database platform for sharing information and decision-making. Illegal dumping is a global issue and recycling market has great opportunity. Integration of informal sector into the waste management system would help in achieving higher recycling and recovery rate with existing infrastructure. By following the proposed action plan at three different levels would help in achieving CE gradually through continuous improvement. Authority at the macro level should understand the dynamics of the medium and micro levels and continuously improve the system according to the feedback and impact. Integrating technology would help in getting real-time data and in effective decision-making. Stakeholder engagement is essential and shall be achieved through networking and combination of policies. As a whole, a flexible iterative policy with local level action would facilitate successful nationwide CE transition.

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**Data Availability** Data will be made available on request to corresponding author.

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**Consent for Publication** Not applicable.

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