



PM CONNECT

A quarterly newsletter that brings information on modern project management methods, practices and tools to the international development community

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1. First Conference in Quito Ecuador

PM4DEV held the first of a series of sessions to reach its customers in Latin America with a conference in the city of Quito Ecuador. Paola Diaz-Torrez, Director of Client Relations for PM4DEV facilitated an animated discussion on the challenges facing

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2. Definition of Project Success

Project success has been historically defined as a project that meets its objectives under budget and under schedule. This evaluation criterion has remained as the most common measure in many industries. But for development projects success goes beyond meeting schedule and budget constraints and includes the impact on the beneficiary's benefits, meeting the expectations of stakeholders and supporting the organizations strategy.

But defining these dimensions of success is more difficult and some can only be evaluated years after the project has been completed, and for many organizations these type of evaluations are difficult to do due to lack of funding.

To help organizations make an assessment of success a distinction must be made between project success and project management success. Project

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New eBooks posted on the PM4DEV website:

- **The Project Management Processes.** This eBook presents the project management processes. These are designed to help manage the different elements of a project, different projects may have different needs from each process.
- **Skills for Project management.** This eBook details the key roles and responsibilities that a project manager must have to effectively and efficiently manage a project.
- **Structures for Project Management.** Presents the various structures to organize project management and the advantages and disadvantages of each one.

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success can be measured as a level of effectiveness, were the project deliverables are measured in terms of benefits and stakeholder satisfaction, in other words the extent to which the project ultimate objectives are attained.

Project management success is defined by the level of efficiency the project achieved to reach the project objectives. Efficiency is related to how the project manages its limited resources to meet the goals while building good relationships with internal and external stakeholders.

On the other side there are many ways a project can fail, a project can fail in meeting the budget, schedule and scope goals, but be a success in meeting the development objectives, likewise, a project can meet the budget, schedule and scope goals and fail in meeting the final development objectives.

The worst type of failure when the project fails to meet the budget, schedule and scope goals and the development objectives.

Organizations that are able to constantly meet the criteria of success as a project and as project management are characterized by the use and application of a consistent, repeatable and predictable methodology that supports the planning and implementation of development projects; and make project management a key competency supported by an environment that nurtures learning.

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organizations in the implementation and management of projects.

The American Ecuadorian Chamber of Commerce – AMCHAM - hosted this event. Bernardo Traversari, executive president of the Chamber and Veronica of La Paz, assistant director, offered their welcome words to the participants. Among those who participated were representatives of World Organization Council of Credit Unions, Inter-Cooperation, Alternative Foundation, Christian



Children Fund of Ecuador and other colleagues and consultants of local development organizations.

The event was an excellent opportunity to hear the challenges and problems local organizations face with managing development projects. A consistent theme was the fact that most project managers come from a highly technical background with little or no formal management training and the lack of good training opportunities to build managerial skills in the context of non-government organizations

PM4DEV will continue its activities to build relations in Ecuador with the intention of developing a better understanding of the specific

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3. The Role of a Project Management Methodology

A project management methodology is an organization's method to control and make decisions on project management. A methodology is a collection of best practices, knowledge, processes and internal agreements that become a standardized set of procedures for an organization to manage its projects.

Using project methodologies is a strategy that allows organizations to maximize the project's value to the organization. The methodologies must evolve and be constantly improved to accommodate an organization's changing strategy, focus or direction. There is not one methodology that fits all organizations and all needs, a project management methodologies must be build following the organizations culture, vision, mission, values and with a strong focus on stakeholder benefits.

A methodology is a set of tailored guidelines or principles that can be applied to a specific situation. In a project environment, these guidelines usually include description of processes, procedures, standards, templates, forms, and checklists used over the project life cycle.

Many development organizations today do not use any formalized project methodology. They run their projects as they always have. However, the environment and new demands from donors and beneficiaries is changing rapidly. Organizations are in need for dynamic methodologies and processes, that allows organizations with the ability to change their development strategies to deliver more benefits and create larger impact while keeping accountability for their actions.

4. Project Participation.

Participation in project management is a process that allows sharing some of the control on the project with key stakeholders, especially beneficiaries. By giving beneficiaries the opportunity to participate in the decision making elements of project management helps build a sense of ownership on the outcomes of the project.

Ownership on the project outcomes ensure the participation of stakeholders, when they know their voices, opinions and preferences are heard they know the project is meeting their needs. Participation should not be limited to the baseline interviews and occasional communication meetings but to all the project phases from the design, planning, implementation, monitoring, adaptation and closing/evaluation of the project.

Participation is also a political act in which beneficiaries are empowered to have their voices heard and that simple fact changes the

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**DOING THE RIGHT PROJECTS...
... DOING THE PROJECTS RIGHT**

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....*Project Participation, from page 3*

power relationships between the project and the stakeholders. Participation is also strategic to the needs of the project as it increases the impact of the project and increases its sustainability beyond the end of the project. But participation is not cheap, it costs its share of money and time but the benefits of this investment are recovered by the long term impact.

The principle behind participation is that stakeholders are collaborators in the project, not just simple recipients or contributors, but active partners in the project at every phase of the project. All participation approaches are designed to generate an active participation including making key decisions on the project that have a direct influence on the stakeholders and most important they can even help challenge some of the original assumptions the project had about the stakeholders and that can have a significant input in the project design and strategies.

Project managers must built in participation in the project design, and choose when, what why and who will participate; taking in consideration that asking too much participation can also have a negative effect, after all stakeholders have other priorities and activities that the project is competing with. The project manager must be conscious of the time availability and effort needed from stakeholders.

Project stakeholders vary and their level of participation also varies depending on who they are and what are their stakes in the project, the project should identify all project stakeholders and evaluate the level of participation needed from each, when the participation is needed, and why the [participation will increase the impact of the project. This simple analysis help focus the project resources on the areas that will bring the most benefit.

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needs of the Latin-American development organizations that will help us improve our efforts to customize our services and solutions.

The next event to meet and understand the needs of local organizations will be made in La Paz Bolivia in December 2007. This will be another opportunity to conduct our market research activities to build the right type of services and products that will cater to the special needs of the Latin-American development community.

These activities also set a good foundation for the world-wide launching of PM4DEV's consulting services for Project Management for Development Organizations, to be made in early 2008 in Latin America.

For more information please contact Paola Diaz-Torres, Director of Client Relations at PM4DEV paola.diaz@pm4dev.com

The points of view expressed in this newsletter provide a summary of themes, that in PM4DEV's experience, have proved critical in the successful implementation of project management methodologies. It draws on the expertise of Project management professionals and provides a guide to deliver a methodology that increases the chances of project success. For more information about PM4DEV services, contact our customer relations director:

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