

Global Citizens, Project Earth Revisited (again), Solving Global Problems and... Welcome to the January edition of the PM World Journal

David Pells, Managing Editor

Welcome to the January 2018 edition of the **PM World Journal** (PMWJ), the 66th uninterrupted monthly edition. This issue contains **34** original articles, papers and other works by **39** different authors in **14** different countries. News articles about projects and project management around the world are also included. Since the primary mission of this journal is to support the global sharing of knowledge, please share this month's edition with others in your network, wherever in the world they may be.

For the past year I have used this space to discuss important trends or issues that I see as journal editor. Last month, we launched the first Editor's Choice Awards for outstanding articles and papers published in the PMWJ in 2017. This month I go even bigger picture, solving global problems. What are we as project management professionals, either individually or as professional organizations, doing to help address pressing global problems? Sometimes I think that is asking too much; how can we make a difference when the issues and problems seem so great? Now as I approach the end of my career, I am asking myself why I did not try to do more.

Recent Context

In September, in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey which devastated the Texas coast, I led an initiative in partnership with the Dallas and Fort Worth Texas PMI chapters to help PMI members affected by that category 4 storm. Because PMI and its various chapters in the USA are not registered as charities, we were restricted from raising money or providing financial assistance to individuals. I explored options for creating a new charity for helping those in the PM field recover from natural disasters, but the legal and bureaucratic barriers were significant. Instead, over three months collected just over \$2,000 worth of gift cards to grocery stores, restaurants and hardware stores, donated by PMI members in the Dallas and Ft. Worth chapters and shipped to PMI chapter leaders in the Houston areas for distribution to PMI members whose homes were damaged by the hurricane. Needless to say, those who received the gift cards, as small as they were, were extremely grateful. At least we did something! [1]

In November, APM published a remarkable report authored by Prof Peter Morris, one of the world's most respected experts on modern project management. The report was titled "Climate Change and What the Project Management Profession Should be Doing about It: A UK Perspective." As stated in the report's introduction: 'Research on climate change has so far been led predominantly by physical scientists, but addressing how to mitigate and adapt to it will also require management and social science skills. Those expert in the world of projects and their management should have a significant role in this. This essay by Professor Peter Morris provides an initial scoping of where and how project management as a profession might address the implications and consequences of climate change.' Peter ends the report in section 8.4, "So what should project management be doing?", with suggestions for actions at the individual, enterprise, international and professional levels. [2]

Over the years, I have been involved with many discussions and a few initiatives to address some global problems; I've written some papers. I decided to do something more this month. But first, a little more context!

Global Citizens

Over the last few months, I have noticed television ads on CNN, NBC and a few other media channels in the United States by an organization called "Global Citizen". Founded in 2008 by three bright guys in New York who decided to try to make a difference, Global Citizen is now a major social action platform for those who want to help solve the world's biggest challenges. Global Citizen is headquartered in New York, with offices in Canada, Australia and the UK. On their platform you can learn about issues, take action on what matters most and join a community committed to social change. Through their mix of content and events, grassroots organizing and extensive reach through digital channels, Global Citizen is building the world's largest movement for social action. They organize massive global campaigns to amplify the actions of Global Citizens from around the world. With millions of members and the support of many high-profile celebrities, they have organized concerts and events in New York's Central Park and other places worldwide in recent years. [3]

Global Citizen is not the only group or global initiative underway, launched by concerned and motivated individuals worldwide. While politicians have argued, made global agreements, established goals, and committed support and money, it often seems like they have done little to actually solve the problems. It seems that individuals and online communities are now doing more and having a greater impact. The message to me was "just do something".

Project Earth Revisited (Again)

Believe it or not, "Project Earth" was the name of an initiative within the project management professional world launched in 1990 in Calgary, Canada following a keynote speech by Dr. Frank King, former chair of the 1988 Calgary Winter Olympic Games, at the PMI'90 Global Congress (The event was called Seminars/Symposium at that time). In his dramatic presentation, Dr. King painted a dire picture of the damage being done to the planet by humans in recent years. While global warming and climate change were not yet so front-and-center, significant environmental problems were well publicized and visible worldwide. Dr. King challenged us as individuals and as a profession to do something about it.

A group of PMI members met after Dr. King's presentation to discuss Dr. King's message. We took up the challenge and created a "Project Earth" initiative, resulting in presentations, workshops and meetings at the next five PMI conferences and at the 1994 IPMA (aka INTERNET) World Congress in Oslo, Norway. The initiative gathered steam, resulting in the chartering of PMI's first official significant interest group (SIG) in October 1994. Interest and membership was international. Project Earth had structure, leadership, plans, goals and even industry support. It lasted a few more years, morphed into PMI's EnviroSIG, then died in about 2002. I described the Project Earth history in an editorial in 2008. [4]

Maybe Project Earth was ahead of its time. I've written on related topics many times over the intervening years. But maybe we've now come full circle these 25 years later.

Solving Global Problems

So now I want to announce a move to raise the visibility of global problems, challenges that must most likely be solved via programs and projects. We have created a new section in the PM World Library called simply "[Solving Global Problems](#)". As stated on the webpage,

“Project managers and those in the programme and project management field are uniquely positioned to help solve major global problems, ranging from disaster response to reducing poverty and lack of healthcare. We know how to plan, implement, manage and complete projects of all kinds, from simple to complex. We create solutions, manage change, lead teams, create new value every day; why not contribute that knowledge and expertise to solving global problems? This section of the PM World Library is intended to provide information about and opportunities to participate in solutions. It's January 2018 and we're just getting started. But check out what we've added so far, then check back to learn more or get involved, either personally or through your organization.”

There is not much there yet, but the following framework (with subcategories):

- Global Initiatives (Global Citizen, Millennium Development Goals, much more)
- Disaster Response and Recovery (earthquakes, fires, floods, storms, etc.)
- Solving Global Human and Social Problems (basic education, health, hunger, more)
- Solving Global Environmental Problems (climate change; air, land, water pollution)
- Animal Rights and Protections (domestic and wild animals, endangered species)

Access to two major resources have already been added, Global Citizen and Peter Morris' Climate Change report. In future weeks and months we will add many more resources in the major subcategories within each of these main topics, so please visit the site (access is free). I think it is our destiny as professionals and as a profession to help create a better future for life on this planet. Maybe this small effort will help. [5]

Now - This month in the Journal

This is another full edition of the PMWJ with interesting original works from authors around the world. We begin with 11 featured papers. Tororiro Chaza has contributed a paper that promotes project management as a critical competency for infrastructure projects in Zimbabwe, a country where recent political changes might mean more investment in infrastructure this year. A timely paper! Alan Stretton in Australia is back with another ground-breaking paper, this one directly linking project failures to weak organizational strategic planning. Massimo Pirozzi in Rome has authored another major paper on the relationship of project success with stakeholder management, another timely topic. Lev Virine, Michael Trumper and Eugenia Virine in Canada are back with another paper related to both project successes and failures – Heuristics and Biases in Project Management.

Kik Piney in France has provided a very significant new paper, one that apparently took several years to emerge, that takes on the overall structure of PMI's PMBOK Guide. His paper titled “PMI's Models of Project Management: Life Cycles, Process Groups and Knowledge Areas” is one everyone should read. Dr. Pavel Barseghyan in Texas has authored Part II of “Elements of Mathematical Theory of Human Systems”. Part I was published last month in this journal. This is a serious paper full of equations, so some may struggle with the analysis.

Two papers are included this month by academic researchers at Nnamdi Azikiwe University in Nigeria. The first by Dr. Felix Ikekpeazu discusses “Mortgage Financing for Housing Delivery in Nigeria”. “Appraising the Present State and Challenges of Construction Site Communications in Nigeria”, is by Nathan Agu, Stanley Ugochukwu, Fidelis Ezeokoli and Uchenna Ajatar. The papers we receive from Nigeria tend to address local industry issues from useful and practical perspectives; these papers are no exception.

Two papers compare technical analysis methodologies. Stephen Paterson, Scottish expat living in Thailand, has authored “A Comparison between 8 Common Cost Forecasting Methods.” “Comparison of Construction Delay Analysis Methods” is by Abid Tabassum, Umair Abid and Ardalan Honarmand in Ontario, Canada. The final paper is by the UK’s Mark Reeson titled “How the SMART Sustainability Model is Transforming Business.” Featured papers are serious works that contribute to the global PM body of knowledge, so please give them a look and a possible reading.

Two series articles are included this month. Prof Darren Dalcher in UK has facilitated another interesting ‘*Advances in Project Management*’ article, this month by Routledge author Gabrielle O’Donovan. Read Darren’s interesting introductory article titled “*Why culture really matters: The hidden perils of acculturation.*” Then read Ms. O’Donovan’s article titled “*Developing a Culture of Partnership between Project Management and Change Management.*” This is another highly useful and important article from Darren’s growing team of Routledge authors.

One advisory article and two commentaries are included this month. Prof Clifford Gray in Oregon has finally returned to the PMWJ with a highly relevant advisory titled “Revisit of Reference Class Forecasting (RCF): Estimating Costs of Infrastructure Projects.” If you have an interest in mega-projects, you will know that RCF may be the most reliable way to estimate costs on these huge projects. Dr. Gray highlights some benefits. Anil Seth in India has contributed a Commentary article based on his experience “handling a team,” complete with a useful checklist. We also include a quite interesting set of trend predictions for 2018 by various international project management leaders, provided by Spring from PMR magazine in China. The statements are pretty interesting, for instance how many mention agile.

This month, we continue the program in support of graduate students attending SKEMA Business School in France, at their Lille and Paris campuses. Ten student papers are again included this month, on a wide range of topics but most with a contract management perspective. It’s interesting to see what these students chose to research for their graduate PM course. Please read these papers, for most of them their first published works. The papers are generally very well written.

Informative reports are again included this month from Jouko Vaskimo in Finland, Cecilia Boggi in Argentina and Miles Shepherd in UK. Four book reviews are also included this month, and one Second Edition, a 2008 paper by myself on water projects. All of the articles, papers, reports and reviews included in the PMWJ represent significant work by the authors, and some contain significant new knowledge. Please read those of interest to you, then share them with others. Sharing knowledge multiplies the impact of good ideas, and some ideas (like projects) can change the world.

The rest of this article is our monthly boilerplate. Please read if this is your first time with the PMWJ or read again if you are a regular; it’s important for sustaining this publication.

Share Your Experience, Research and Knowledge

We invite you to share your own experience, knowledge or research results related to program and project management. A wide variety of original works are included in the PMWJ each month. Share knowledge and gain visibility for yourself and your organization; publish a paper or article in the PMWJ. See our [Calls for Papers](#) and review the [Author Guidelines](#) for the journal. Then just email your original work to editor@pmworldjournal.net. The PMWJ is not a refereed journal; however we can publish your work quickly (for sharing

with thousands of readers around the world and for immediate reference). The PMWJ is also indexed by EBSCO, which means that your work can also be read and referenced by students and researchers around the world long into the future.

Opportunities to get involved

If you are interested in becoming a regular contributor, consider becoming an **International Correspondent**. Correspondents receive visibility in the PMWJ, introductions to others, many opportunities to author works for the journal and free membership in the PM World Library. For more, visit <http://pmworldjournal.net/team/international-correspondents/>.

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If you are a student of project management at an accredited university, consider our virtual project **research internship** program. [Learn about our interns here](#). See opportunities for students at <http://pmworldlibrary.net/students/>. The PMWL supports continuous learning in the field of program and project management but is proving especially useful for students. Help us create a global resource; visit www.pmworldlibrary.net and become a member.

Thanks to Authors and Sponsors

I want to thank the authors who contributed to this edition of the PMWJ. Most have included an email address at the end of her or his author profile. If you find an article or paper useful or interesting, let the author know. Better yet, ask questions, start a discussion, share information and knowledge. We also want to thank our advisors, correspondents and contributing editors around the world. These teams include leaders from academic and professional organizations in around 50 countries.

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Share it forward

If you found something interesting in the PMWJ this month, please **SHARE IT FORWARD** - send the link to colleagues, co-workers or friends. If you have knowledge or a story to share, submit an article or paper for publication. We are especially interested in those that contribute to solving global problems. Thank you for reading this month’s edition of the PMWJ, have a great month and...

Good luck with your projects!

References

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About the Author



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David L. Pells is Managing Editor of the ***PM World Journal*** (www.pmworldjournal.net) and Managing Director of the PM World Library (www.pmworldlibrary.net). David is an internationally recognized leader in the field of professional project management with more than 35 years of experience on a variety of programs and projects, including engineering, construction, energy, defense, transit, technology and nuclear security, and project sizes ranging from thousands to billions of dollars. He has been an active professional leader in the United States since the 1980s, serving on the board of directors of the Project Management Institute (PMI®) twice. He was founder and chair of the Global Project Management Forum (1995-2000), an annual meeting of leaders of PM associations from around the world.

David was awarded PMI's Person of the Year award in 1998 and Fellow Award, PMI's highest honor, in 1999. He is also an Honorary Fellow of the Association for Project Management (APM) in the UK; Project Management Associates (PMA - India); and Russian Project Management Association. He was made an honorary member of the Project Management Association of Nepal in 2010. From June 2006 until March 2012, he was the managing editor of the *PM World Today* eJournal. He occasionally provides high level advisory services for major programs, global organizations and the U.S. federal government. David has a BA in Business Administration from the University of Washington and a Master's degree in business from Idaho State University in the USA. He has published widely and spoken at conferences and events worldwide.

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