

## **Farms, Food and Project Management, the Trend that Isn't and Welcome to the January 2017 PMWJ**

*David Pells, Managing Editor*

Welcome to the January 2017 edition of the **PM World Journal** (PMWJ). This 54<sup>th</sup> edition continues to reflect the international nature of this publication; **28** original articles, papers and other works by **35** different authors in **15** different countries are included this month. 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.

Since August I have been using this opportunity to mention new trends or important issues that I see as journal editor. This month I want to discuss the lack of a trend, what I see as a major shortfall in the project management professional world – the lack of attention to projects and project management in basic industries. Where are the case studies, models and bodies of knowledge for project management in agriculture, food production, housing, healthcare, education, security, transportation and other such industries? Many will argue that projects in those industries are covered by the general and generic project management models and standards produced by AIPM, APM, IPMA, PMI and other leading international bodies. In my opinion, that's not good enough. And there's another problem...

### **Farms, Food and Project Management and the Trend that Isn't**

My grandfather was a dairy farmer, working hundreds of acres, herds of cattle, multiple barns, farm equipment, seasonal changes and many projects. As a child, I visited his farm many times. I loved it! We also lived in a small town in the northwestern United States, actually just outside of town where we had some land, gardens, cows, chickens, horses, barns and work to do. We too had many projects, although I don't ever remember them being called projects. It was just work to do. I left home for university at 18 and never returned to living in my home town. But I've never forgotten my background or my grandfather's farm. In recent years, I've thought a lot about the types of projects that farmers have, especially in developing countries where agriculture is so important (and where international development banks continue to invest millions in agricultural improvements).

My father was a school teacher, teaching elementary school for 30+ years. As a child, I also spent many hours with him at the school, both during and in between school hours. Over the years, I became familiar with class types and sizes, curricula, facilities maintenance, school buses (he also drove a bus – it was a small town), teacher salaries and benefits (or lack thereof), administrative issues, sports and extracurricular activities, homework, grading and many other school-related issues. Here again, as I got older and learned about project management, I often

thought about education-related projects. Since education is a common topic in all towns and cities, especially now in the United States where public education is in generally poor condition, I've often wondered how project management could contribute more.

One uncle worked my grandfather's farm, then worked for a local refinery. One uncle was a horse rancher, another was a logger, another joined the Air Force and became an expert computer-based missile systems mechanic. I'm one of the few in the family to go to college, to graduate with multiple degrees. Most members of my immediate and extended family have lived all their lives in small towns. Now it has occurred to me that little of what I've learned about project management is very useful to those family members and others with similar occupations or working in industries and enterprises based in rural areas. There's probably not a single member of my family who knows what project management is, what a PMP certification means, what a PMO is, what the difference between a project and program is, or anything else that we spend all of our time in the PM profession talking about. And they don't care!

During 2016, we saw a very tumultuous presidential campaign and election in the United States during which a majority of the population living in small towns, rural America, voted for a candidate who disparaged traditional government institutions and leaders as "elites", trashed the media and more educated (and knowledgeable) leaders, and promised solutions for the people "left behind" by the global economy and the information age. Now it has occurred to me that we in the project management profession have also left those stakeholders behind. What do we do, say, publish or teach that benefits those living in small towns, on farms, in rural communities where big corporations don't hire programmers, engineers and project managers? Where work and projects are in fields, barns, garages, schools, clinics and small businesses!

Sure, many of the projects are small, even micro-projects in many cases. But let's back up a little; let's consider projects or programs involving multiple farms, multiple schools, multiple hospitals, multiple roads and shops, multiple small businesses. What about programs or projects to help entire communities change, create jobs, improve lives? What about projects to transform entire industries? In America or in Europe, maybe not so common; in many African and Asian countries, these are the programs and projects that really matter.

This brings me to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). We have a great paper in the journal this month by five authors from Brazil entitled "How to Effectively Change the World"; it's about development projects and how project management can contribute to global efforts to achieving the MDGs. Of the 17 MDGs, seven deal with basic human survival and better living standards: reducing hunger, good health, quality education, clean water and sanitation, affordable energy, improved infrastructure, more security and strong institutions. The other ten deal with such topics as reducing poverty, gender equality, decent work, reduced inequalities, sustainable cities, responsible consumption, justice and the quality of life. All of these goals are aimed at improving the lives of billions of people worldwide, including many living in rural communities.

So why isn't there an AIPM or APM SIG or an IPMA or PMI global interest group related to the MDGs? Why isn't there a project management body of knowledge related to each of these goals, or for every basic industry including agriculture, education, health care, security and many others? This is the missing trend, in my opinion. So we have great standards, certifications, educational programs and bodies of knowledge, but who are they for? It seems that those things have all been created for us, not for the hundreds of millions of people who need projects and change. Advanced degrees and project management certifications are great, but 50% of the world's population doesn't care. They need better food, better housing, better education, better healthcare, better lives. They don't need a PMP certification or a PMO.

Finally, many readers will assume that I am just talking about development in other parts of the world. But I believe all of the issues discussed above apply just as directly to many communities in the United States. We have severe problems related to poverty, homelessness, nutrition, healthcare, education, crime, aging infrastructure, energy, even clean water in some places now. Projects and project management are needed to help improve lives, not just to develop new software to compete in the global marketplace, sell things on the internet or raise a corporation's stock price.

### **This month in the Journal**

Now for this month's journal which again contains some interesting and outstanding works. Six featured papers are included this month. Alan Stretton has contributed another good paper, raising questions about the "program" designation. The aforementioned paper by Luiz Rocha and his co-authors in Brazil about the MDGs is eye opening. A paper about project management and entrepreneurship by Dr. Uzoma Amaeshi in Nigeria should be useful to readers everywhere, while the paper by Dr. Chima Okereke on the causes of project failures in Africa describes some very widespread truths. Dr. Paul Giammalvo has contributed another excellent research paper on PM-related job categories. And a first paper by Dr. Bill Brantley and Dr. Mary Ashlock on project communication is a welcome addition. These are all excellent contributions to the P/PM literature.

Four series articles are included this month, including a first article in a new series on *Managing and Working in Project Society* by members of the Swedish Project Academy. The series is based on the book with the same title that won PMI's 2016 book of the year award. Dr. Darren Dalcher has facilitated another 'Advances in Project Management' series article by Routledge author Sankaran Ramani, also providing an interesting introductory article himself on "living in the inherent paradox of change." Finally, we featured a risk doctor briefing article by Rose-Hélène Humeau in France, a very interesting and useful contribution.

The advisory article by Paul Pelletier in Canada is again on the topic of "diversity intelligence" and the commentary article by Roberto Mori in Italy is on the topic of "resilience". These two subjects are 'hot topics' in the PM world. I am also happy to

publish an interesting Student Paper by Charlotte Wallis in UK, based on her research for a course through the PR Academy in Kent.

Four papers are republished in our Second Editions category this month, including another older paper by Russ Archibald, this one about the history of project management as of about 2009. Larry Suda's 2016 PMI congress paper is on NASA's PM leadership Lab; Martin Sedlmayer's paper on "10 key arguments why PM continues to grow" was originally published last year in Germany; Kik Piney's paper on "A New View of the Precedence Diagramming Model" was originally published in *PM World Today* in early 2012. We hope you agree that these were worth republishing.

Interesting regional reports are also included from Jouko Vaskimo in Helsinki and Cecilia Boggi in Buenos Aires. Cecilia's is particularly interesting as she discusses award winning wines and wineries in Argentina and the importance of projects and project management in the wine growing region around Mendoza. Seven good book reviews are also included. All of the articles, papers, reports and reviews this month contribute to the global project management body of 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. But please read again if you don't mind, as 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@peworldjournal.net](mailto:editor@peworldjournal.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 may also be read and referenced by students and researchers around the world long into the future.

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soon introduce a Research Scholar opportunity. For information about these programs, please contact [info@pmworldlibrary.net](mailto:info@pmworldlibrary.net).

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### **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 January and good luck with your projects!

## About the Author



### **David L. Pells**

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**David L. Pells** is Managing Editor of the ***PM World Journal*** ([www.pmworldjournal.net](http://www.pmworldjournal.net)) and Managing Director of the PM World Library ([www.pmworldlibrary.net](http://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. Since 2010 he is an honorary member of the Project Management Association of Nepal. From June 2006 until March 2012, he was the managing editor of *PM World Today*. 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, spoken at conferences and events worldwide, and can be contacted at [editor@pmworldjournal.net](mailto:editor@pmworldjournal.net).