

PM4DEV

**FUNDAMENTALS OF
PROJECT MANAGEMENT
FOR DEVELOPMENT
ORGANIZATIONS**

SECOND EDITION

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PROJECT MANAGEMENT FOR DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS

*A methodology to manage development
projects for international assistance and
humanitarian relief organizations*

PREFACE

More than ever, development organizations need to respond quickly to new challenges imposed by a changing environment with more stakeholders, and constraints are limiting the ability of project managers to reach the objectives of their projects. Depending on the technical competency of project managers to guarantee the project's success is not enough. Today's development projects are more complex and require the application of many skills. Project managers need to coordinate project teams that bring together specialists from different fields; they need to use different approaches to solve complex problems, while at the same time they are being asked to do more with less. Today's development organizations are becoming catalysts of change in the communities they serve; and in order to deliver the projects on time, under budget and to meet the level of quality demanded by donors and beneficiaries, they will need to dramatically change the way in which projects are managed.

The future of many development organizations depends on their ability to employ the potential of modern project management methods to face new challenges, to help reduce risks and increase the chances of success. These organizations need to invest in the education of their project managers, develop basic managerial competencies use new tools and apply the best practices of a project management methodology.

Donors are requiring better controls and better managerial competences in the staff responsible for managing projects, it will not be a surprise that in the near future this competence is not only required but demanded. This book covers the fundamental concepts of project management with a quick overview of the project management cycle and its management processes; with a particular attention to the new role that a project manager needs to play, as well as the skills required to successfully run a project within a challenging environment subject to constraints typical of development projects.

NEW TO THE SECOND EDITION

The second edition of “Fundamentals of Project Management” incorporates a new approach to learn the basic elements of project management. At the end of each chapter we have included a review section including questions designed to go through the chapter’s important lessons (answers can be found at the end of the book). The book also features updated graphs and additional diagrams to help readers illustrate the concepts presented throughout the book.

This book has a companion e/course on CD-ROM that can be purchased from PM4DEVs web site. The course provides a simple way to learn the basic elements of modern project management concepts that were presented in this book. Each module of the course presents the most important ideas and concepts with the aid of charts and graphics. At the end of each module, a short test is available to practice and review the main topics of the book.

People interested in learning and increasing their professional credentials can obtain a certificate in the Fundamentals of Project Management with completion of the ecourse. The certificate requirements are designed to accommodate the highly demanding schedules of development professionals who need to expand or and validate their knowledge.

Visit our web site at <http://www.pm4dev.com/english/elearn.htm> for additional information and instructions on how to obtain a copy of this eCourse.



FUNDAMENTALS OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT FOR DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS

- **CHAPTER 1** INTRODUCTION TO THE MODERN PROJECT MANAGEMENT METHODOLOGIES AND KEY DEFINITIONS.
- **CHAPTER 2** THE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT ENVIRONMENT AND THE VARIOUS CHALLENGES THAT LIMIT PROJECT SUCCESS.
- **CHAPTER 3** THE SIX PROJECT MANAGEMENT PHASES AND THE PROJECT MANAGEMENT CYCLE.
- **CHAPTER 4** THE NINE PROJECT MANAGEMENT PROCESSES THAT FACILITATE THE DELIVERY OF PROJECT BENEFITS.
- **CHAPTER 5** THE SKILLS, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN PROJECT MANAGEMENT.
- **CHAPTER 6** THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES FOR PROJECT MANAGEMENT.

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CHAPTER 1

PROJECT MANAGEMENT FOR DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION TO PROJECT MANAGEMENT

For most development organizations, project management only deals with the implementation of the activities and keeping track of budget expenditures; but little effort is devoted to plan the various management processes that make up a project. Project management is more than just implementing activities, it includes the management of limited resources to ensure that the project meets its objectives within the expected quality, time-frame, and budget; and, at the same time, meet the expectations of its stakeholders.

Additionally, development projects operate in locations surrounded by many challenges from extreme working conditions to volatile environments where human or natural events can put the project at risk of not meeting its goals. Development projects face constant demands to do more with less; at the same time, project managers have to deal with numerous requests from numerous stakeholders in addition of being responsible to deliver outcomes in conditions where security risks are high and goods and services are limited.

This complex project environment needs appropriate project management skills; it requires that projects take into account the input from different stakeholders while balancing the need to manage project budgets, monitor schedules, and evaluate outcomes. In this environment development workers assigned to manage projects are often not sufficiently equipped with the necessary management skills and lack access to the tools and methods that will help them do their job in an efficient and effective manner.

Currently, there is not a widely defined standard for managing development projects; for that reason, each organization or project manager defines their own approach to manage a project. Nonetheless, there is one significant advance in the development sector, and that is the institutionalization of the project's logical framework or log-frame. Yet, having a log-frame does not ensure the success of a project; in fact, many project managers using the log frame, fail to understand the critical managerial components of the project and focus excessively on the technical components while ignoring the processes facilitating the planning and implementation of a project. Management skills are often seen as an unnecessary element, and something that can be achieved just by monitoring the project's budget and schedule; however, the success of development organizations requires that organizations take a new approach to their understanding of management within the context of a development project.

The lack of consistent project management methodology results in the duplication of efforts that affect the bottom line of the organization's development goals by producing outcomes at higher costs and higher risks; which creates an environment of distrust from donors and stakeholders.

Although many development organizations claim to have good principles of project management, only a few can provide evidence that they use formal project management methodologies in a consistent, predictable, and reliable manner. Most organizations run projects relying on the technical skills of their project managers who –not surprisingly- have little or no formal training in management. This problem implies a direct impact to the organization, in such a way that their projects -at best-, are able to accomplish the planned activities, but with an increase in the risks of failing to meet their intended objectives.

In recent years, most development organizations have seen an increase on accountability requirements from international cooperation and donor agencies, leading to a greater focus on effectiveness and efficiency in the way projects are using the resources and delivering benefits. In this rapidly changing environment, with a diverse range of issues and challenges, project management can support the achievement of project and organizational goals and give greater assurance to stakeholders that resources are managed effectively. Many development projects fail to deliver the expected outcomes or fail to produce the desired impact in the communities they serve. The most common for project failures are:

- Objectives not properly defined and agreed due to the rush to obtain funding.
- Beneficiaries are not included in the early decisions of the project.

- Discrepancies in understanding the project's objectives due to the low participation from stakeholders.
- Outcomes and benefits are not properly defined in measurable terms; there is too much emphasis in measuring and tracking activities and tangible outputs than the intangible benefits that come as a result of achieving the project's final goal.
- Insufficient planning and coordination of resources results in plans that do not meet the actual conditions in the field and project staff have limited skills to modify and adapt the plan in time and under budget.
- Poor estimation of duration and cost result in activities that take longer than planned and cost more than what was budgeted.
- Incomplete, unrealistic, and outdated project plans: the team follows blindly the plans that, in many cases, have never been verified or modified to adapt to a changing environment.
- Lack of communication and stakeholder management leads to high expectations about the project, increases distrust, and results in beneficiaries that are disconnected from the project.
- Weak project leadership, vague lines of responsibility and authority producing an uncoordinated team that often duplicates efforts.
- Inadequate definition and acceptance of roles results in project staff that cannot assume their responsibilities and increases the time a project manager needs to work with the team.
- Poor commitment to the project by the team, the organization, and the beneficiaries that result from inadequate leadership skills.
- Weak control processes and feedback mechanisms that do not detect problems early enough.
- Lack of analysis of major risk factors and inadequate risk response strategies results in higher costs to recover from the risk events.
- Lack of good quality controls that impact the ownership of the project by the beneficiaries and other key stakeholders.

All of these causes could be addressed by the application of modern project management tools and techniques. Applying a formalized project management framework, or methodology, to projects can help with clarification and agreement to goals. It helps with the correct identification of the resources needed to ensure accountability for results, performance and foster a focus on the benefits to be achieved.

This book, and the other books in the PM4DEV series aim to provide project managers with a guide to help national and international development organizations, with a meth-

odology to initiate, plan, implement, monitor and close projects in a more consistent, reliable and predictable manner. The effective use of a project management methodology ensures a cost effective use of limited resources such as people and funds. A project management methodology can help development organizations meet their strategic goals by standardizing processes, reducing risks, and avoiding duplication of efforts with the purpose of increasing the impact of their interventions. The proposed premise is that organizations that systematically apply modern project management methodologies can ensure that donor, organizational and beneficiary resources are used in the most efficient and effective manner in a way that will increase the chances of meeting the needs of the beneficiaries.

This book has been written for three main audiences:

- For project managers assigned with the responsibility to manage a project, within a certain time, budget, and scope, the guidance provided in this book should be useful for building the range of skills appropriate for effective project management.
- For Development Organizations, to whom the arguments presented in this book should demonstrate the benefits of a structured methodology in the process of selecting the right projects, in addition to helping them do the projects right.
- For project staff, in charge of implementing the project's plans, as they need clear guidelines to help them do their job in the most efficient manner.

The objectives of this book are:

- To help development organizations understand the need to quickly adapt to new challenges and invest their limited resources in the best way possible in order to achieve recurring successes for which they can use a proven, but flexible, project management methodology.
- To help development organizations understand that in order to implement projects successfully, project management must become part of the organizational culture; because, the effective utilization of the project management methodology depends upon the integration of project management processes into the day-to-day operations in the field.
- To provide a common framework and terminology across development organizations, especially Non Governmental Organizations (NGO's); as it is through a

common methodology, and a common language that project managers in development organizations can increase their knowledge and build their skills.

This book focuses on concepts and practices related to development projects. The ideas and methodologies presented in the course of the following chapters should prove useful to anyone who is engaged in managing projects in the broader development field. The content, ideas and methods presented in the book should help bring sustainable benefits to the communities and beneficiaries who need it the most.

DEFINING A PROJECT

There are many definitions for what constitutes a project, some of these definitions describe the nature of a project and how it differs from other type of work, and the descriptions used to define a project include the following:

- A temporary process, which has a clearly defined start and end time, a set of tasks, and a budget, that is developed to accomplish a well-defined goal or objective.
- A temporary effort of sequential activities designed to accomplish a unique purpose.
- A group of inter-related activities, constrained by time, cost, and scope, designed to deliver a unique purpose.
- A temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product or service.
- An undertaking that encompasses a set of tasks or activities having a definable starting point and well defined objectives.
- A clear set of activities with related inputs and outputs aimed to achieve objectives and goals linked to anticipated (desired) effects and impacts in a target population.

From all these descriptions, one can see that there are some specific attributes that define a project and separate it from most ordinary work:

- A project has a beginning and an end.
- A project has limited resources.
- A project follows a planned, organized method to meet its objectives with specific goals of quality and performance.
- Every project is unique.

- A project has constraints and a unique reason.

For the purpose of this book, we will use the following definition of a project:

A project is a temporary effort made up of a set of related activities undertaken to achieve a unique goal or objective within specified constraints.

Definition of Management

Management is defined as the achievement of -project or organizational- objectives through people and other resources. Management is a process of setting and achieving goals through the execution of the four basic functions of management: planning, organizing, directing, and controlling, by utilizing human, financial, and material resources. Management has also been defined as “the art of getting things done through other people”¹ This definition highlights the fact that managers achieve organizational goals by developing an environment where others can perform the tasks and not themselves.

There are four basic functions in management, often classified as planning, organizing, leading and controlling.

1. Planning involves defining organizational goals and proposing ways to reach them. Managers plan with the objective of achieving a desired future by committing resources and deciding with tasks must be done to reach the intended goals
2. Organizing is the process of creating organizational structures that will enable employees to carry out the manager’s plans. It is about making optimum use of the resources required to enable the successful implementation of plans.
3. Leading involves getting others to perform the tasks by direct influence and by applying communication skills that will build the right atmosphere to help employees do their work.
4. Controlling is the process by which the organization monitors the performance and takes corrective action. Checking progress against plans and make the necessary modifications to keep the plans in track.

¹ J. Stoner, Management, 4th Ed., (Prentice Hall 1989)

DEFINITION OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT

According to “A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge, PMI, Third Edition”², “Project management is the application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to a broad range of activities in order to meet the requirements of a particular project”. In addition to this definition, other leading organizations in project management offer the following definitions:

- The ISO 10006, a standard for quality in project management defines it as: “Unique process consisting of a set of coordinated and controlled activities with start and finish dates, undertaken to achieve an objective conforming to specific requirements, including constraints of time, cost and resources”.
- PRINCE2, the UK standard for project management says: “a temporary organization that is needed to produce a unique and predefined outcome or result at a pre-specified time using predetermined resources”
- IPMA, the International Project Management Association, defines a project as “a time and cost constrained operation to realize a set of defined deliverables up to quality standards and requirements,”³

In other words, Project management is the planning, implementing, and monitoring of project activities to meet project objectives, achieved by effectively controlling and balancing the constraint of scope, schedule, and budget, in producing quality deliverables that meet or exceed the expectations of the project stakeholders.

The temporary nature of projects contrasts with processes, or operations, which are permanent or semi-permanent ongoing functional work to create the same product or service over-and-over again. For the purposes of this book we will use the following definition:

Project management is the process of combining systems, techniques, and knowledge to complete a project within established goals of time, budget, scope and quality.

² www.pmi.org

³ www.ipma.ch

PROJECT MANAGEMENT CONSTRAINTS

Every project has to manage four basic constraints; scope, schedule, budget and quality. The success of a project depends on the skills and knowledge of a project manager to take into consideration these constraints and develop the plans and processes to keep them in balance. It is not enough for a project to meet the budget targets or to show to the donor that all activities have been completed on time. Development projects need to balance all four constraints if they want to realize the full benefits of a project.

Classical project management usually considers three constraints on a project: scope, time and costs (known as the project triangle)⁴, we believe that it is important to place under this category the constraint of quality. For development projects it is not enough to deliver a project according to the scope, on time and under budget; but the project must meet the needs and expectation of the beneficiaries who are the ultimate judges of the project quality.

Project management is the discipline of planning, organizing, and managing resources to deliver all the work required to complete a project within defined scope, time, and cost constraints.

Managing these constraints requires careful analysis and an agreement on the priorities for the organization, the donors and the beneficiaries. Depending on those factors, a project may assign more importance to the budget and quality than to the schedule or scope; these types of decisions, early in the project, have a fundamental impact on all the project plans that will need to be designed to ensure that the project is able to manage the

four constraints. Failure to do that may result in the use of resources in areas that do not contribute to the ultimate success of the project.

The definition of project management implies that projects have specific limits in scope, schedule, budget and quality. Understanding the combination of these elements provides opportunities to make better choices when tradeoffs are needed. The use of a triangle helps understand these relationships, adjusting any one of these sides, the other two are affected. For example, a change in the project plan to shorten the schedule might result in an increase in costs or require a decrease in scope. The diagram below helps visualize the close relationship amongst these four constraints:

⁴ The Project Management Life Cycle, Jason Westland, 2006, Kogan Page Limited

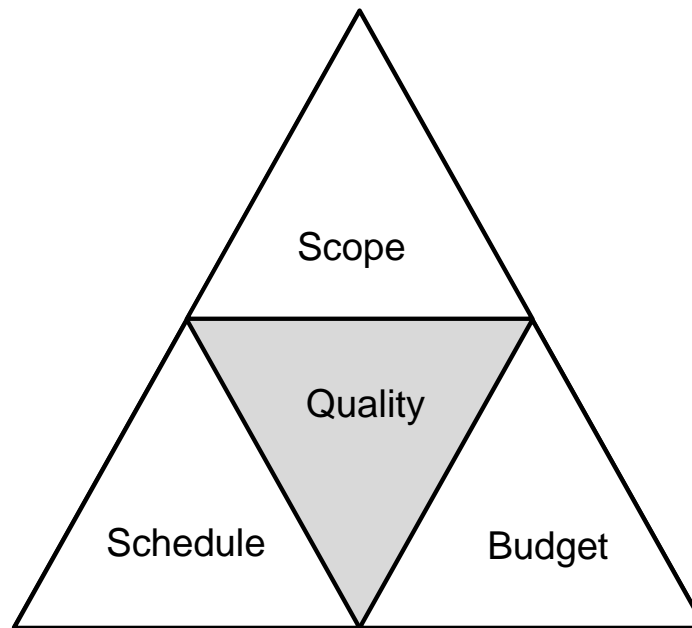


Figure 1. The Four Constraints of Project Management

- **Scope** is what the project is trying to achieve, it entails all the work involved in delivering the project outcomes and the processes used to produce them; it is the reason and the purpose of the project. One of the leading causes for project failures is poor management of the project scope, either because the project manager did not spend enough time defining the work; because, there was no agreement on the scope by stakeholders; or because there was a lack of scope management which leads to incurring into additional work that was not authorized or budgeted, this is known as scope creep. Scope creep, or the uncontrolled changes in a project's scope, is the tendency of a project to include more tasks than originally specified, which often leads to higher project costs than planned and an extension of the initial completion date.
- **Schedule** is defined as the agreed amount of time needed to complete the project. The schedule is often the most frequent project oversight in developing projects which is reflected in missed deadlines, incomplete activities, and late donor reports. Proper control of time requires the careful identification of tasks to be performed, an accurate estimation of their durations, the sequence in which they are going to be done, and how people and resources are allocated. The schedule is an approximation of the duration of all activities in the project and it is not unusual to find that the original estimates were off target once the project makes progress and there is an increased understanding of its environment. The schedule also uses critical information from key project stakeholders

about their availability to participate in the project; for instance, beneficiaries who have limited time to commit to the project due to other priorities. The project team should verify any time constraints or requirements for a specific date or period that comes from beneficiaries or other key stakeholders.

- **Budget** or the costs approved for the project include all the required expenses needed in order to deliver the project within scope and schedule. In development projects managers have to balance between not running out of money and not under spending, because many projects receive funds or grants that have contract clauses with a ‘use it or lose it’ approach to project funds. Poorly executed budget plans can result in a last minute rush to spend the allocated funds. A number of constraints: financial, political, and organizational, may dictate the methods by which resources such as personnel, equipment, services and materials are acquired. The project manager needs to know any existing resource acquisition policies, guidelines, and procedures. Moreover, the preferences from the beneficiaries and/or the donor’s agreement may influence purchasing decisions. Information from similar or past projects can be used to gain a better understanding of budgeting strategies.
- **Quality** is the fourth constraint defined as: delivering the project outcomes according to the stated or implied needs and expectations of the project beneficiaries and the donor agency. Quality is all about achieving stakeholder’s satisfaction. It also means complying with quality standards that are either mandated by the donor, local government (such as laws and regulations), or by professional standards (such as health). Quality is also defined as the “Conformance to requirements or fitness for use”⁵; which means that the product or services must meet the intended objectives of the project and that the beneficiaries can use or benefit from the project deliverables as it was originally intended.

Managing the Project Constraints

Managing these constraints is the main responsibility of the project manager. Each constraint has a specific goal and a project is deemed successful when it achieves all four, failure in any of the four has an impact in the other three. For instance, a delay in a project has an impact on its cost, and an increase in scope has an impact in both time and budget. Managing the four constraints also involves making trade-offs. All projects are

⁵ Joseph M. Duran , Quality Control Handbook (1951)

implemented using estimates to establish the time and cost to deliver specific objectives of certain level of quality; therefore, projects are implemented with many uncertainties and exposed to many risks, which requires revisions to the original plans along with negotiations with the different stakeholders.

Changes in the social and natural environment can delay a project, increase its costs, or reduce its scope forcing the project manager to evaluate alternatives and negotiate with the donors and beneficiaries for modifications. Project management is in essence the art, science and craft required to balance the scope, schedule, budget, and quality constraints of the project. The project triangle illustrates the process of balancing constraints because the three sides of the triangle are connected, and changing one side of a triangle affects at least one other side, and all sides affect the center which is quality.

Here are some examples of balancing the project constraints:

- When the schedule of a project needs to decrease, the project might need to increase the budget because more resources are needed to do the same work in less time. If the budget cannot be increased (the donor doesn't approve the increase), then scope might need to be reduced because the available resources will not be sufficient to do all the planned work in less time.
- When the budget of the project decreases, the schedule might need to be stretched out because budget is not available to pay for the staff as originally planned. If time cannot be increased, the other alternative is to reduce the project scope because fewer staff will not be able to do all of the planned work in the available timeline.
- When the project scope increases, there is a need for more time or more resources (budget) to complete the additional work. When the project adds more work than the originally budgeted it is important that before the new work is started, there is an approval from the donor for additional funds, otherwise the project will end up with a budget shortfall that could have an impact on the expectations of quality from the beneficiaries.

Quality is at the center of the project triangle because it affects every side of the triangle, any changes made to any side of the triangle are likely to affect quality. For example, a need to cut activities to meet the budget might result in a decreased scope, which reduces the opportunities to achieve an acceptable level of quality.

eCourse Fundamentals of Project Management



This eCourse provides a simple way to learn the basic elements of modern project management concepts presented in this book. Each module presents ideas and concepts with the aid of charts and graphics to help increase your understanding. After each module you will have an opportunity to review the main topics with a short quiz. This course has been designed to be taken in no more than 60 minutes. You can take the course and its modules at your own pace, the menu and index can help you move around the course and take each module and each lesson independently.

To help you increase your knowledge, many modules include links to documents that you can open and read at your convenience. These documents are in Adobe PDF format.

This course is divided in 6 easy lessons:

1. The Objectives of the Course
2. Introduction to Project Management
3. The Project Management Cycle
4. The Project Management Processes
5. The Roles and Responsibilities of the Project Manager
6. The Project Management Organization Structure

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PM4DEV - Project Management Series:

Fundamentals of Project Management



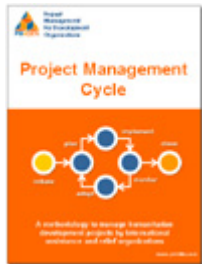
This book is an introduction to the basic ideas and concepts of project management for development organizations starting with an Introduction to the project management cycle and followed by the nine management processes. Readers will develop a basic understanding of how a modern project management methodology can help development organizations deliver projects that produce the most impact. This book includes practical insight on the key skills a project manager must learn to be effective in attaining the project objectives and how organizations can benefit from using modern project management practices and methodologies.

Mastering Project Management



This book presents the nine project management processes. These are designed to help manage the different elements of a project: scope, budget, schedule, quality, team, stakeholder, information, risk and contract management. One of the most critical roles of the project manager is the integration of these processes to ensure that they are all properly coordinated. The reader will learn that the complexity of development projects require a different approach and also new ways of managing limited resources and the increasing demands from all stakeholders.

The Project Management Cycle



This book offers an introduction to the concept of managing a project using a cyclical approach. Project Management for Development Organizations consists of six phases: initiating, planning, implementing, monitoring, adapting and closing. This integrated approach provides a continuous learning process; and keeps the project on track to deliver its outcomes on time, on budget and under the expectations of the donor and project beneficiaries. The reader will learn how understanding the project cycle allows for opportunities to make adjustments and an on-going learning process.

Advanced Project Management



This book focuses on advanced practices and methodologies in project management, from the project maturity model, to project portfolio management. This book will give readers helpful information that can be incorporated in their project management practices. Topics discussed include: project management during emergencies, security management, managing international projects, project management information systems and helpful advice on how to implement a project management methodology in a development organization.

