

GLOBALIZATION SINCE CHICAGO
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Before entering in the description of what has been done in terms of globalization in the area of project management, let us define what can be understood under this word. As David Curling rightly says in his paper "Globalization of the project management profession", there are two parts to the issue of global project management:

- globalization of the profession
- management of global projects

Both parts are on the program of this Global Project Management Forum N°7. As president of IPMA, the International Project Management Association, I would like to say just a few words on management of global projects, before concentrating on globalization of the profession. In fact, as professional organizations, our job is to concentrate on issues of the profession (developing common rules and understandings, providing networking opportunities, promoting training efforts, developing research, etc.) leaving to the individual members the task of actually managing the global projects.

The management of global projects is certainly the major issue, directly linked to the centers of interest of many people in the project management community. The associations dedicated to project management have been active all over the world in that field. Amongst significant events, one can mention:

- PMI has introduced a specific stream in its annual symposium "Global Project Management"
- IPMA has continued to handle global project management issues in its 14th World Congress on Project Management held in Ljubljana (Slovenia) last June, with some 400 attendees coming from 36 countries
- The European Chapters of PMI met in München (Germany) last June
- Meetings involving international attendance on a regional level have been organized by AIPMA in Australia in November, PMISA in Johannesburg (South Africa) in November, PMA in New Delhi in December, Nordnet (scandinavian countries) in Oslo (Norway) in September
- The organization of the first international French-speaking PM congress in Paris (France) in November 1998

This list, which is obviously incomplete, shows how active are the associations in that area.

Let us now concentrate on the globalization of the profession.

CERTIFICATION ISSUES

On the IPMA side, a lot of work has been done between the National Associations forming IPMA. In 1997/98, it has really been focused on certification issues. The 27 National Associations members of IPMA have formally agreed in various steps, culminating at the Council of Delegates meetings in February and June 1998 in Slovenia, to the IPMA Certification Validation program. It is based on the following concepts:

- a common 4-level structure for the certification programs run by the National Association, allowing mutual recognition
- a common competency baseline with a taxonomy (ICB : IPMA Competency Baseline) describing the knowledge and experience areas of the project management personnel, to be complemented in its own language by each National Association by its own National Competency Baseline (NCB)
- a common set of rules for the certification process
- an international Certification Validation Management Board to coordinate the National Certification programs, foster the development of certification in other countries and maintain the coherence of the global system

Some ten National certification programs are operating to day (although, the majority has not yet the full 4-level structure) and nearly 1,300 certificates have been delivered (of which 1,000 are at the C-level, considered to be equivalent to the PMP).

The next step is to come to agreements with other certification programs, such the PMI or the AIPM programs, to establish the appropriate links. The work has already started between AIPM and IPMA.

On the PMI side, the PMP program continues to receive excellent response from the market, with over 6,000 certificates delivered all over the world. The program is now being refurbished to serve better the needs of the market.

It is now clear that countries wanting to establish their own certification programs can do so in line with the existing structure.

GLOBAL FORUMS

Since Chicago in 1997, Global Project Management Forum N°6 has been held in Ljubljana (Slovenia) last June, in conjunction with the IPMA 14th World Congress on Project Management. Some 40 participants attended it from all over the world. The discussion covered:

- the certification issue, and more specially the possibility to establish links between the existing programs (the 4-level IPMA system run by National Associations, the 1-level PMI system, and the multi-level AIPM system)
- the need for a more visible cooperation structure of a virtual nature (no need for extra bureaucracy) to serve as a means to improve the communication between PM associations and to ensure that common projects are properly led to completion

REGIONAL FORUMS

On November 8, 1997, AIPM organized in Gold Coast (Australia) a PM Forum attended by project managers and representatives of project management associations active in the Asia-Pacific region. One of the main topics was certification and conditions for reciprocity between the various existing programs. These were found to include:

- an agreed tiered structure
- an agreed reference
- a valid and unbiased assessment through a quality and consistent system
- ethical and conduct standards
- a common understanding of concepts and language

- a well-maintained and continually improving system

On November 18, 1997, PMISA organized in Midrand (South Africa) an African Project Management Forum, with attendees representing PM profession in several African countries and the major PM Associations active in the sector. The main discussions were again on certification and on the means to develop PM awareness and usage in the African countries, drawing profit from the strong PM base in South Africa.

On December 14, 1997, PMA organized an Asia-Pacific Regional Project Management Forum where the major topics for discussion were:

- mission and vision of Asia-Pacific Regional PM Forum
- trends in international PM standards and certification
- new frontiers in PM
- PM maturity model
- Regional cooperation strategies in strengthening PM in Asia-Pacific region

COMMUNICATIONS

A very useful tool has been put into place and is operating since over a year: the <http://www.pmforum.org> Website, maintained by David Curling, where one can find all available information on global project management and links with the main websites dedicated to project management. I encourage you to have a look at it; you will not lose your time.

CONCLUSION

I personally feel that progress has been made in the common understanding of the issues. However, there is still the need for a more formal cooperation structure between independent PM National Associations. I sincerely hope that the leaders of the main PM associations will be able to establish such permanent links for the profession development.