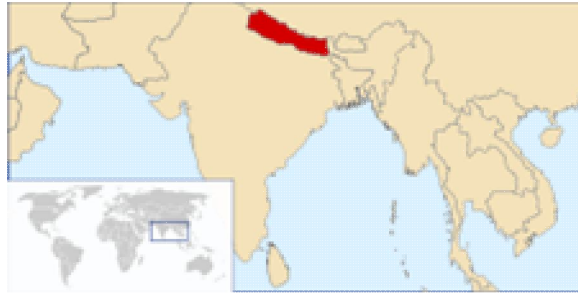


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Project Management Update from Nepal

By Suraj Dahal

*International Correspondent for PMForum & PM World Today
Kathmandu, Nepal*

Value & Results for Nepal from 23rd IPMA World Congress in Helsinki, Finland in June 2009

First, Project Management Association of Nepal (PMAN) is a fairly new establishment that promotes the profession of project management (PM) in Nepal. It was started with the initiative of 7 founding members mostly from social development, IT and financial sectors, in January 2006. Till date it has more than 55 institutional and individual members.

The foremost achievement of the visit was to share the steady growth of the Project Management Association of Nepal (PMAN) to be in a position to meet all the criteria for its membership at International Project Management Association (IPMA). It has submitted its application this month to the IPMA Executive Board to be the next member nation to join IPMA.

That organization already has 45 national member associations mainly from Europe, North and South America and a new notable ones from Asia such as Iran, India and China.

Second, Nepal had the largest number of delegates from any country outside of Europe and the Americas for both the Young Crew Workshop and the IPMA World Congress in Helsinki, which had representation from more than 55 countries.



It was important for us to emphasize that we have a lot to contribute as well as gain from PM associations and professionals in other parts of the world, especially from the ones that already have mature member services, certification programs, and are advancing the body of knowledge. What we bring back to the country is a global perspective on where PM is today and how we can adapt the knowledge and practices to local initiatives.

Third, I was awarded an opportunity, as a speaker, to present our case on our naïve and organic growth and share how the participation at past global events and networking opportunities have contributed to our association's maturity. It was very awe-inspiring to receive kind words of encouragement and assurances from the senior board and executive members to continue further and make a contribution that transcends personal gain and recognition.

Fourth, the delegates, members of our association and young crew, had an excellent opportunity to meet and share various aspects on PM. It was a chance for them to learn. I'm sure most of these contacts made will translate into something meaningful in their own professional engagements.

Fifth, our association had been involved with the international promotion of this World Congress with the Finnish event management company, Momentti Oy, now Forest Agency, since late January. Many of the delegates were corresponded with and invited by the Nepalese team from Kathmandu. It was an excellent occasion for us to be a part of the organizing team and personally meet them at the World

Congress. We cannot thank the Finnish Project Management Association and Forest Agency enough for entrusting us with this sensitive responsibility.

Our involvement did make a dent and the team's presence could be felt even at the registration desk, at the start of the conference. Tom Taylor, the master of ceremony did, on a number of occasions, comment on the shortest registration lines and quickest administration amongst the recent congresses. He also light-heartedly mentioned that there were nine of us here from Nepal and wondered if anybody were left behind back home!



Sixth, though our membership status is being reviewed by the Executive Board and subject to further discussion at the Council of Delegates in Dublin this September, we have now a chance to get a head start with the certification program with the German Association for Project Management (GPM). Discussions were held with Mr. Werner Schmehr, Managing Director of PMZERT for the Basic Certificate in PM which is independent than that of the 4 level certification of IPMA. It is a realistic approach considering the time it will take to have our own competency baselines complied, certification program instituted and assessors developed in place to award IPMA certificates in Nepal. We are targeting to have the Basic Certification launched as early as the end of this year.



Seventh, one of the outcomes was the networking and discussions we have had with young PM professional from Germany, Canada, US, Spain, and others who are developing a concept of Project Managers without Borders. We are also a part of it and one of our next projects for the association would be to provide a platform whereby PM professionals from other parts of the world would contribute to the development of a country like ours.

Eighth, the Young Crew (YC) members of PMAN are going to start their efforts through the support of the YC Management Board. We were welcomed to be involved at the international level at the same time develop our YC program though our full membership at IPMA is yet to be formalized. We agree, it is never too early to have them started.

Ninth, it was an excellent opportunity to have participated and contributed at the Global PM Forum where all the member association representatives were considering how IPMA should move ahead. We discussed on the strategic direction, marketing efforts, and international coordination and cooperation that would best place IPMA as the prominent and global body for PM profession.

Tenth, we received regal reception from our Finnish colleagues of Forest Agency; Mr. Pekka Kayhko, Mr. Kimmo Niskanen, Mr. Jouni Niskanen and the whole team. With their warm hospitality, Finland became a new home away from home. We were very well attended to and at least one of them accompanied us to tours and visits that they had planned for us. They hosted us at their homes and took us fishing and to a summer cottage for barbequed sausage - Finnish style. It was the warmest cultural exposition and most generous offer; one we will never forget!

A personal inspiration for me was my meeting with Dr Louis Klein, Managing Director of Systemic Excellence Group from Germany. I had long been in search of a chance to pursue research that could contribute to the knowledge of PM. I had been in contact with Pr. Christophe N. Bredillet of ESC Lille since 2006 and had endeavored to enroll in the PhD program there on Strategy Program and Project Management but had not quite been able to take the big jump because of the expenses. Dr. Klien, after a brief discussion, has discussed a possibility for him to take me under his wings to conduct a research project on Cross Cultural Complex Projects. I could be a part of it and at the same time continue what I am doing for the association and social development here in Nepal. I don't think anybody could ask for more.

Last but not the least, the 23rd World Congress was truly refreshing with a host of social and networking events. It did justice to the theme: REFRESH. On the whole, they deserve a huge commendation as they were able to garner as much support and have such a diverse program, a true test that they rose to accept and one that was executed with finesse and innovation under a very precarious global financial climate. The best part of it is that, we had an up-close look at it and have yet another perspective on finding a solution amidst uncertainty.



So, with heavy conference bags, full of goodies, we came home with a lot of homework on our minds and loads of optimism that we too can dream of hosting the 29th IPMA World Congress in Kathmandu in 2015. Chinese have a proverb for this: Be careful of what you wish for, it might come true!

Of course, all this was not possible without the generosity and support from a few notable personalities.

My special thanks to Prof. Dr. Nino Grau, Vice President of Standards and YC, IPMA and Pekka Kayhko from Momentti Oy for always finding time and an occasion to introduce me to people who mattered; Mr. Samuli Karjalainen (Forestman) for awarding me an opportunity to present a paper. David Pells, Managing Editor, and Miles Shepherd, International Correspondent of UK of PMFORUM for highlighting our efforts. Jorunn Wolstad of Norwegian Project Management Association for finding me and sharing about their new project in Nepal. Morten Fangel for his kind words of encouragement; Mag. Brigitte Schaden, President of IPMA, for her guidance and words of comfort; Mr Adesh Jain, Vice Chairman of the Council of Delegates, for asking us what help could IPMA or PMA India could extend; Mr Veikko Vällilä, General Secretary of IPMA for all the support; Roberto Mori, Vice President of Membership, IPMA for his guidance; my special friends Aarti Sorensen from GPM and Estuardo Calderon from SE Group for kindly offering to help in everything we do and for introducing me to Dr. Louis Klein; Kimmo Niskanen and Jouni Niskanen for their time for the Nepalese delegates before, during and after the congress days, and Katariina Alava from the Embassy of Finland in Nepal for believing in me that none of the nine delegates from Nepal would stay behind in Finland or elsewhere and would come back home to contribute to the advancement of the PM profession.

I want to pay a special tribute, warmest gratitude and genuine respect to the event management group, the unsung heroes, Momentti Oy (Forest Agency), for turning this fairy tale story into reality. Our next big challenge is down the road, please keep in mind the World Congress in Nepal.

Thank you all very much!

Contributed by
Suraj Dahal, General Secretary,
Project Management Association of Nepal



About the Author:**Suraj Dahal**

*International Correspondent – Nepal
Based in Kathmandu*



Suraj Dahal is a visiting professor of project management at Kathmandu University's School of Management for MBA and affiliated Bachelor's Degree programs in Development Studies and Development Finance. He completed his BSEE degree in electrical engineering in 1997 and MBA degree in 1999 from the University of South Alabama (USA), and is a PhD candidate on project management. Suraj has served in executive positions at prominent non profit organizations in Nepal and has implemented projects with the World Bank, DfID / Enabling State Program, European Commission, Save the Children, and other international organizations. A graduate of the Executive Program for Nonprofit Leaders of the Graduate School of Business at Stanford University (USA), he is also a trainer and consultant for development projects. He is currently Executive Chairman of Kathmandu Academy that offers such qualifications as Cambridge University's International A Level, International Diploma in Project Management and ACCA. Mr. Dahal is an active advocate of the project management profession and is the founding member and General Secretary of the Project Management Association of Nepal. Suraj Dahal can be contacted at suraj@ktm.edu.np.