

MANAGE South Asia

JULY 2023



**Conference
Special:
#PMRC23**

**Building
Resilience
in Project
Management:
Navigating the
Unknown**

IN THIS ISSUE



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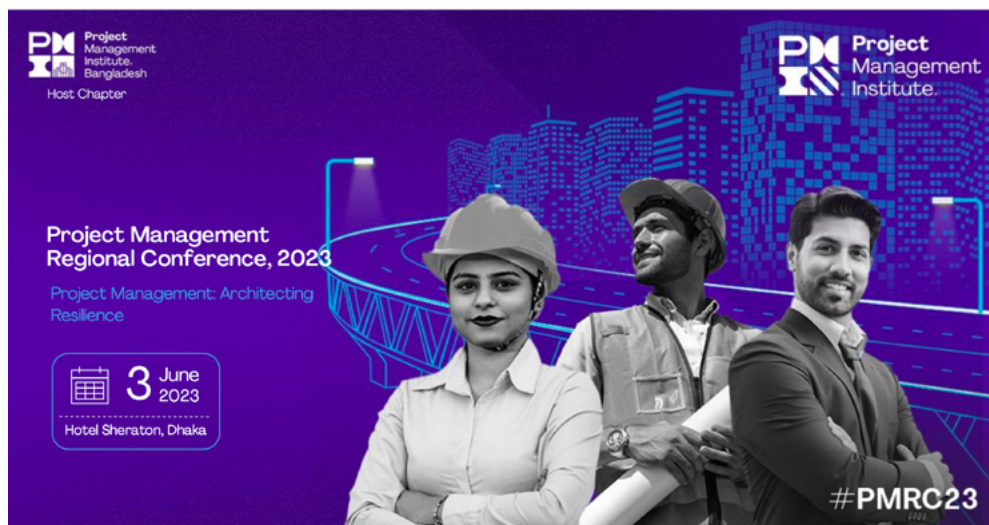
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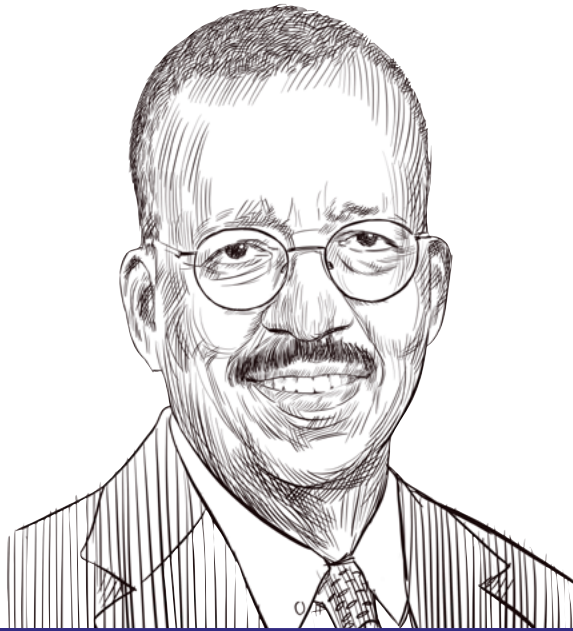
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LETTER FROM MANAGING DIRECTOR, PMI SOUTH ASIA

Dear Practitioner,

It never ceases to amaze me the kind of magic that can be created when a group of volunteers get together. The PMI Bangladesh Chapter truly shines in terms of community engagement. The first-ever Project Management Regional Conference (PMRC) on 3 June in Dhaka, Bangladesh, serves as a testament to the hard work and commitment of these volunteers.

The ninth edition of PMRC, based on the theme, “Project Management: Architecting Resilience,” holds great relevance in today’s evolving landscape of project management. As uncertainty remains the only certainty, professionals need to aggressively build resilience to navigate challenges. With a focus on innovation and agility, resilience can be attained through proper planning and discipline.

I want to extend my gratitude to the industry leaders and project practitioners who shared their insights with our delegates. I am sure their wealth of knowledge enriched the learning opportunities of the audience and helped them gain new perspectives.

More power to our chapter leaders and

practitioners for their unwavering support, passion and resilient spirit. Their collective efforts led to the success of the conference.

Special thanks to our sponsors for their generosity and support to make a difference in the project management community. We look forward to continued collaboration with you in the future.

I am thrilled to announce that the preparations for the eagerly awaited “Project Management South Asia Conference 2023” are well underway. Under the theme “Innovation in Action: Connecting Humans & Technology,” it will take place in Chennai on 2-3 September. Don’t miss out on the early bird discount — [register](#) now!

Kind regards,

Dr. Srinivasa Srinivasan
Managing Director, PMI South Asia



LETTER FROM CONFERENCE CHAIR

Dear Project Management Enthusiasts,

It was an incredible experience for the PMI Bangladesh Chapter to host the ninth edition, and first-ever, Project Management Regional Conference in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Based on the theme, “Project Management: Architecting Resilience,” the conference encapsulated the crucial role of project management in building the resilience necessary for project success. It emphasized the need for project managers to act as architects, construct frameworks that withstand unexpected disruptions and propel projects toward triumph.

Throughout the conference, the audience had the privilege of hearing from esteemed speakers on how resilience can be integrated into project management methodologies, tools and practices. The excitement reached a new height as Nigar Sultana Joty (captain) and Marufa Akter (fast bowler) from the Bangladesh Women’s Cricket Team shared their remarkable journey in the 22 yards.

This conference was a remarkable experience for over 500+ delegates, allowing them to network with peers, exchange ideas and forge meaningful connections beyond the confines of

the conference venue. The knowledge shared and relationships built empowered each one of us to enhance our project management capabilities and foster resilience within our organizations.

On behalf of the organizing committee, I would like to take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the speakers, sponsors, volunteers, PMI R11 chapter leaders, PMI officials, attendees and our board of directors. They generously extended their support, expertise and time to ensure the resounding success of this event. Their presence and contributions were invaluable to the success of this event.

Finally, let us remember that resilience is not merely a concept but a mindset that enables us to adapt, overcome and emerge stronger from adversity.

Warm Regards,

Annesha Ahmed
Conference Chair and President,
PMI Bangladesh Chapter

Building Resilience in Project Management: Navigating the Unknown

Project managers must go beyond process efficiency and optimization to excel in building resilience in a fast-changing project environment.

■ POTSHANGBAM JULY

To effectively tackle unforeseen challenges, project managers must take proactive steps and cultivate a culture of resilience. It will not only help them navigate uncertainty but also enable them to swiftly rebound from setbacks. By prioritizing resilience, project leaders can foster collaboration, innovation and agility and ensure sustainability in the face of constant change.

These were some key thoughts that emerged from leaders at the ninth edition of the Project Management Regional Conference (PMRC) on 3 June in Dhaka, Bangladesh. It was the first-ever PMRC organized by the PMI Bangladesh Chapter, which delved into the theme “Project Management: Architecting Resilience.”

The conference provided a platform for project leaders and practitioners from various industries to come

together, share insights on building resilience in project management and make meaningful contributions to the community. The event was attended by more than 500 delegates from South Asia.

The conference commenced with a welcome note by Annesha Ahmed, president of the PMI Bangladesh Chapter. Ahmed then conducted an insightful fireside chat with Srinivasan, regional managing director of PMI South Asia. Dr. Srinivasan said, “Many of the newer certifications share a common thread, which is agility. PMI has been focused on not only the fundamentals of projects but also on innovation and agility.”

As the chief guest of the conference, K. M. Abdus Salam, senior secretary of Bangladesh Parliament Secretariat, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, gave the inaugural address.

M. A. N. Siddique, managing director of Dhaka Mass Transit Company Ltd., spoke about the Dhaka Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) project, a major





infrastructure project that is expected to significantly impact Dhaka's economy and society.

Lee Lambert, founder of the PMP® certification, shared his personal journey in project management and the growth of the Project Management Professional (PMP)® certification, which now boasts 1.5 million certified project management professionals.

Ben Breen, global director of construction and vice president of PMI Asia Pacific, highlighted how project outcomes can be enhanced in the built environment with the PMI Construction Professional program.

Geetha Gopal, chief operating officer of Verdana, explained the challenges and opportunities of using artificial intelligence (AI) tools in project management.

Russell T. Ahmed, founder and CEO of Team Creative and CLASSTUNE and president of Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services

(BASIS), emphasized that collaboration between academia, government and industry is essential for inclusive growth in Bangladesh.

The second half of the conference started with a fun-filled energizer session with quizzes to engage the audience and maintain energy.

Retired Major General Abu Sayeed Md. Masud highlighted how leadership, technical project management and strategic business management are all essential for project success.

This was followed by an insightful panel discussion moderated by Md. Abdullah Al Mamoon, deputy managing director and COO of United Commercial Bank PLC. The panelists delved into diverse project management challenges in an emerging economy like Bangladesh and suggested measures to address them. They emphasized that project managers must adopt a flexible approach to deal with uncertainty and

create an immune system for project success.

Other notable speakers at the event included Farah Kabir, country director of ActionAid Bangladesh and Md. Ziaul Haque Bhuiyan, chief of staff of ShopUp and national president of JCI Bangladesh.

Quazi Sabir, founder of Khelbei Bangladesh, moderated a motivational session titled "Leadership in 22 Yards." During the session, Nigar Sultana Joty and Marufa Akter from the Bangladesh Women's Cricket Team shared their perspectives on various facets of leadership and essential skills needed for positive results.

Each year, PMRC returns stronger and more impactful, empowering project managers with new trends and insights. The conference provides opportunities for networking, establishing connections and fostering a sense of belonging within the project management community.

Resilience: Embedded in Project Management's Architecture and Vocabulary



SRINI SRINIVASAN

Regional
managing
director, PMI
South Asia

Dr. Srinivasan is a senior leader in the non-profit sector. He has over 33 years of experience as a global management consultant, CEO and entrepreneur in professional services, technology and leadership development.

“We have it in us to be innovative. We have it in us to be creative. We have it in us to find solutions even in situations where solutions have not been readily available. And I firmly believe that is the beauty of project management,” said Dr. Srinivasan, underlining the significance of innovation in project management for achieving better outcomes.

Shedding light on the topic at a fireside chat with Annesha Ahmed, president of the PMI Bangladesh Chapter, he said that while it has become fashionable

to discuss innovation in project management, project managers have, in fact, consistently demonstrated innovation. They have found creative solutions to solve issues which might not have otherwise been readily available within an organization.

“The challenging times, like the COVID-19 pandemic, have brought out the creativity and innovation in project managers in ways that we had not seen before. I think challenging times are often the mother of invention,” he added.

Resilience is ingrained in the architecture and vocabulary of project management. However, COVID-19 brought a heightened sense of urgency to cultivate resilience and find ways to stay on one's feet and overcome setbacks.

In project management, three important aspects of resilience have often been ignored. The first is innovation, which calls for project managers to think outside the box and develop novel solutions and help organizations navigate in new ways. The second is cross-functionality, where organizations struggle to accomplish tasks beyond their own departments or functions. The third aspect is change management, which requires project managers to effectively handle day-to-day changes and introduce new ideas and solutions to address the challenges that arise during the change process.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Project managers must introduce novel ideas to fight change resistance.
- Foster the innovative streak in project managers.
- Agility building is a common thread across all PMI certifications.
- Emphasize the importance of innovation and agility in project management.
- Project managers must reimagine solutions in order to do tasks differently.

Dhaka Metro Rail Network 2030 and its Impact

Over nearly four decades in civil services, M.A.N Siddique has worked both in the field and in the secretariat. Siddique has pioneered several key initiatives in education, farming and the overall development of the communities he has served.

One of the biggest banes to accelerated urbanization is the heavy load on the infrastructure not designed to cater to the surge in population. Dhaka is no exception. To solve the problem of traffic congestion, the government needed an answer that was effective as well as sustainable.

The Dhaka Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) project was thus given the green light, the first phase of which was inaugurated in December 2022, with a total of six MRT rail lines to be opened soon.

In his keynote address, Siddique delved into the potential impact of such a massive undertaking and some of the challenges the organization had to overcome. The most significant impact would be easing traffic congestion. Since the trains and the stations will be powered by electricity, it will also reduce the use of fossil fuels and give Dhaka a greener alternative.

Moreover, a greater number of people will be able to commute to work faster, thus improving their productivity. Siddique said, "The entire project has also opened up employment opportunities, with an estimated 12,000 jobs for graduate engineers in the pipeline, as the project rolls forward."

DMTCL intends to open four station plazas for each MRT line, opening up new business opportunities for residents. In addition, the project has also ensured that people with special mobility needs will have easy access to the MRT.

With an anticipated daily saving of BDT 83.8 million in travel costs and BDT 1.8 million in vehicle operating costs, this project is a beacon of hope for the entire city of Dhaka.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Understand the far-reaching impact of your project.
- Think of creative ways to solve problems; there is always a way.
- Ascertain the sustainability score of your project.
- Consider innovative ways to generate additional revenue.
- Ensure that the needs of all stakeholders are met.
- Enlist project managers to help in the timely delivery of justice.

M. A. N. SIDDIQUE

Managing director, Dhaka Mass Transit Company Ltd. (DMTCL)



Architecting Resilience Through 'PMI-CP' to Improve Project Outcomes in the Built Environment



BEN BREEN

Global director of Construction and vice president (Asia Pacific), Project Management Institute

Ben Breen has played a pivotal role in transforming the project landscape in the Asia Pacific region. He has worked on numerous high-profile projects, including iconic developments like Marina Bay Sands in Singapore. Breen has founded and led project management and design companies and helped them grow and develop into best-in-class providers.

Is construction project management prepared to meet the rising demand and execute projects of the highest quality? Ben Breen shared his experiences and challenges he faced while delivering prominent projects like the Marina Bay Sands (MBS) hotel, casino and premium shopping destination in Singapore. He provided examples of how integrating the PMI Construction Professional program concepts can improve project delivery.

He pointed out several pain points that hampered the progress of the MBS project. Communication emerged as the primary issue involving numerous stakeholders with multiple changes from different parties. Some other key

challenges included poor scope and change order management, interface management, risk management, verbal change orders and multiple stakeholders with differing opinions. He said, "Every single project will inevitably face some sort of change. It is the degree of managing that change that becomes crucial. It is important to learn how to say 'No.'"

Breen explained how the Construction Professional in Built Environment Projects (PMI-CP)[™] certification, a new offering by PMI, guides project managers in adopting the best available methodologies and practices to improve project outcomes in construction projects. For example, the certification will enable project managers to better understand how scope change impacts a project or how to design a blueprint for a project's scope and governance process. He stressed that the cutting-edge course content, developed by industry experts, benefits organizations in terms of efficiency gains, profitability and sustainability of their projects.

When it comes to implementing and utilizing technology, the construction industry lags far behind other industries. "Data is at the center of all emerging technologies. The next big thing is unleashing the power of data and harnessing it for the advantages of future projects," he added.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Develop a communication strategy and enhance stakeholder management.
- Build a cohesive team environment for seamless integration of work.
- Leverage new and emerging technologies to unlock insights from data.
- This certification empowers project managers to make a tangible difference in the world.
- Prioritize interface management for improved stakeholder communication, relationships and deliverables.

The Future of Project Management – Through the Eyes of the Past: Evolution or Revolution?



LEE R. LAMBERT

founder of the PMP® certification and project management thought leader

Lee R. Lambert has over 50 years of project management experience and is a PMI Fellow. Lambert is a past president of PMI's Central Ohio chapter and was one of the founders of the Project Management Institute's Project Management Professional (PMP)® credential.

"Everything is a project and, thus, everyone is a project manager," said Lee Lambert during his 30-minute presentation that was replete with insights and stories from his journey of over 50 years. During his keynote address, Lambert spoke about the immense potential of project management as a profession and shared an anecdote about his unsuccessful stint in engineering at the start of his career and his subsequent foray into project management. It not only opened new doors but also helped him discover his goal in life.

Lambert recalled how the Project Management Professional (PMP)® certification program started way back in 1981 with an initial working group of five members. However, circumstances took a turn when four members passed away. He was the last man standing with the responsibility to make decisions on his own.

Talking about the growth of PMP®, he said that there

are now 1.5 million certified project management professionals. This achievement has also generated substantial funds that have supported PMI's progress and operations. Thus, PMI can initiate various projects and enact change efficiently. PMI, along with the PMP®, has gained significant prominence in the field.

Having observed the project management industry up close, he emphasized that project management offers numerous options, and none of them are hard or challenging. It doesn't require the complexity of brain surgery. Instead, one should approach it with a simple mindset and the determination to do the right thing. Once you have a firm understanding of the fundamentals of project management, you can apply them to any situation.

Lambert urged the project managers to remain relevant and updated and constantly upgrade their skill set, commonly known as 'upskilling.' It is crucial to keep abreast of ever-changing technology. As they progress in this dynamic process, project managers need to understand the systems they work with and the methodologies they employ. They must pay close attention to industry updates and developments and be adaptable to technological advancements.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The concept of project management can extend to all aspects of life.
- Passing the PMP® exam does not guarantee a project manager's effectiveness.
- Every project management job posting prioritizes PMP® certification.
- Project managers must empower others to achieve the project's objectives.
- Multiple certifications do not ensure expertise if they fail to add value to the organization.

Navigating Uncertainty: The Synergy of Resilient Leadership and AI in Project Management

Geetha Gopal, a PMI Future 50 awardee, leads operations, projects, sales, IT, partnerships and customer relations. Based in Singapore, she has experience in several fields including AI, IT infrastructure and digital transformation. Gopal credits her PMP® certification for much of her confidence and success.

We are witnessing unprecedented advancements in technology, which have completely transformed the way businesses operate. Artificial intelligence (AI) has taken over the imagination of professionals and has become a topic of speculation across organizations the world over. Today, there are plenty of AI tools available that can be easily integrated into existing systems to enhance outcomes. Project managers need to understand the challenges and opportunities of using AI tools in project management.

AI can be integrated into project management in many ways, including predictive analytics, task automation, resource optimization, collaborative communication and risk management. However, project managers must also be aware that an over-dependence on AI will lead to concerns over security and ethics. Gopal also stressed the need for national governments to install

different practices and policies to protect the interests of their citizens.

Delving into the need for the human touch, Gopal said, “The human element is crucial when it comes to expertise, judgment, decision-making, creativity, empathy, ethics and values, communication and negotiation and making a personal connection.” These factors are invaluable when it comes to the success of a project and cannot be over-emphasized.

The bottom line is that AI will not replace project managers in totality. But the best way forward is to embrace AI and integrate it to create intelligent and informed decisions for greater efficiency and productivity in project management.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Take your PMI certifications seriously.
- Use existing data and free software and tools to drive digital transformation.
- Embrace AI to suit the needs of your project and organization.
- Be cognizant of the limitations of AI.
- Always do the “right thing” for successful project management.

GEETHA GOPAL

Chief operating officer,
Verdana



Resilience for Inclusive Growth: Vision for Smart Bangladesh



RUSSELL T. AHMED

Founder and CEO, Team Creative and CLASSTUNE | president, Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services (BASIS)

Russell T. Ahmed is the founder and CEO of CLASSTUNE, the leading EdTech company in Bangladesh. He is also the CEO of Team Creative, a system integration company engaged in various eGovernance and other projects. Ahmed is currently the president of the Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services (BASIS), the Apex ICT Trade Association in Bangladesh.

“Your hunger for growth determines how big you are or you become,” said Russell T. Ahmed, as a parting comment to the audience. His talk was a powerful mix of insights from a deeply inspiring personal journey, an understanding of the Bangladesh talent pool and opportunities across the globe. He has a vision for a country that is not afraid of ‘brain drain,’ but is more focused on nurturing those who remain in the country, which number 170,000,000.

He said organizational growth is, to a large extent, a product of research and analysis of the domestic talent

pool against the shifting dynamics of the global offshoring industry. His insights were a testament to the global need for project managers. Replete with anecdotes, his talk provided an up-close look at the country’s transition from Digital to Smart Bangladesh. The insights came from his experience of helming IT and IT enabled service (ITES) companies, and involvement in policy advocacy and policy-making. Beside heading BASIS, an apex trade body for the software and IT-enabled service industry, he has been a panelist on the Prime Minister’s vision of a Digital Bangladesh.

Ahmed opined Bangladesh has what it takes to compete with fast-growing ITES hubs such as the Philippines, Vietnam, Estonia and Turkey. In the era of cost optimization, he believes Bangladesh must focus on “under committing and over delivering,” rather than focusing on cost arbitrage alone. He also shared his “3X3 formula for inclusive growth.” The first column is about taking action, collaboratively, between governments, industry and academia; and the second column is about research and development, industry promotion and HR development. He believes Bangladesh can foster a billion-dollar industry using the resources it already has, without getting into advanced technologies such as robotics and artificial intelligence.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Bangladesh needs 100,000 project managers to address the demands of growing IT and ITES industries.
- Academia, government and industry players must work together to achieve inclusive growth.
- An insider’s view of the journey from Digital Bangladesh to Smart Bangladesh.
- Bangladesh has the ability to attract 5% of the global talent pool.

Project Management for Mega Infrastructure Projects Led by the Bangladesh Army

Abu Sayeed Md. Masud is a visionary engineer who has accomplished many nationally recognized projects in Bangladesh during his service such as the Padma Multipurpose Bridge Project and the Padma Bridge Rail Link Project. He was also responsible for leading the execution of the Hatirjheel project. As a civil engineer in the Bangladesh Army, he led the first-ever multi loop overpass construction in Bangladesh.

**Retired
MAJOR
GENERAL
ABU
SAYEED MD.
MASUD**

Incorporating artificial intelligence or project management tools does not guarantee desired outcomes. Abu Sayeed Md. Masud spoke about the limitations that come with relying solely on technical solutions and dwelled on the significance of approaching every project with genuine passion and enthusiasm. For project managers to achieve

remarkable outcomes, it is crucial for them to invest their heart and soul into the project.

A project manager must possess the intelligence and ability to handle responsibilities effectively. Masud highlighted three key aspects related to PMI principles of project management, such as leadership, technical project management and strategic business management, which are essential for project success.

Speaking about the progress made by the Bangladesh Army, he highlighted how they began with smaller initiatives and gradually took on significant national projects, showcasing their potential for achieving remarkable results. He emphasized the sincere efforts and dedication of the army in overseeing these projects, which contributed to their success.

He also acknowledged that they faced numerous challenges, which hindered the projects' progress. However, the implementation of army procedures and the involvement of senior leadership helped overcome these obstacles.

Masud also said it is important for project managers to focus on the environmental aspect of their projects. He spoke about implementing social mitigation measures while effectively addressing the legal issues in his projects. On legal challenges, he said it is important to engage with stakeholders at all times.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Projects must follow procedures that align with PMI standards.
- Dedication, honesty and knowledge drive project success.
- Follow decision-making procedures that adhere to PMI guidelines.
- Extensive experience and core business expertise are valuable in project management.
- Innovation and insight are essential for project managers to overcome challenges.



Toward a Resilient and Cost-Effective Solution: An ActionAid Bangladesh Shelter Story



FARAH KABIR
country director,
ActionAid
Bangladesh

Farah Kabir is a renowned human rights activist and author, who is passionate about helping underserved communities. She was the chair of the global board of the Global Network of Disaster Risk Reduction, a board member of Climate Action Network South Asia and a member of the advisory committee of Bangladesh's NDA to the Green Climate Fund.

ActionAid Bangladesh runs several projects serving underprivileged communities in Bangladesh. Each of these projects has its own challenges. They need creativity and innovation to find solutions and deliver desired outcomes.

The inception of one such project started when Cyclone

Sidr hit the coastal areas of Bangladesh in 2007, leaving many homes destroyed. The area is no stranger to such destructive weather events and the fishing communities were again left without homes and basic amenities. Shelters had been rebuilt in the past as well, but they were not designed to withstand the next onslaught of stormy weather.

ActionAid volunteers, led by Kabir, realized that this was a project that had to be tackled differently. They went to the root of the problem and understood what was required was a resilient shelter design. The obstacles were many, from convincing the local communities to tackling bureaucratic red tape, generating the required funds and much more.

However, the project finally reached fruition and the local community received resilient shelters, located away from the embankment. This project has now become the benchmark for many such initiatives creating shelters by the government. Kabir hopes that, in the future, there will be more creativity, innovation, technology and networking for such projects because it changes the lives of the communities.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Conceptualize the final vision and desired results.
- Go to the root of the problem.
- Collaborate with all stakeholders.
- Think out of the box to find novel solutions.
- Keep resilience and sustainability at the core of the project.

Leadership in 22 Yards

A conversation with Nigar Sultana Joty and Marufa Akter, members of the Bangladesh Women's Cricket Team, and moderated by Quazi Sabir, founder of Khelbei Bangladesh.

NIGAR SULTANA JOTY

is the captain of the Bangladesh Women's Cricket Team. She is a wicketkeeper and right-hand batter who bats in the middle order.

MARUFA AKTER

is a bowler on the team. She is a right-arm, medium-fast bowler.

"It is not the usual rags to riches story, but a journey from plowing the paddy fields in Bangladesh to claiming important wickets on South African soil. This is the most extraordinary rise of Marufa Akter," said Quazi Sabir in his introduction of the bowler.

What followed was an electrifying conversation around leadership, on and off the field, coupled with insights into a variety of skills that are needed to turn the results in one's favor. Sabir used the opportunity to draw a parallel between leadership under pressure and project management. Reflecting on her time on the field, Joty spoke about the need to develop a sense of calm, logical reasoning and trust in order to succeed under pressure. She believes that trust is an important building block for leadership. "It all begins with how much trust you can put in your players and the amount of trust they, in turn, invest in you," she said.

Joty compared a cricket match with a project, saying preparations begin with a plan. As the captain, it fell

upon her to not only chalk action plans for each player but also communicate them as effectively as possible to the team. When asked whether she made instant decisions with her heart or head, she said it would always be the head. Elaborating on it, she said logical thinking is always more rewarding than emotional decisions.

When asked about her idol, Akter spoke of Indian cricketer, Hardik Pandya. She aspires to play Indian Premier League for cricket someday and hopes to meet him. Both speakers agreed that great leaders are key to a successful team.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Communicate your plans and expectations clearly to the team.
- Be calm and logical to overcome challenges.
- Lead by inculcating trust and, in turn, trust the team.
- Keep a backup plan ready to tackle adversities.
- Strong leadership is crucial for the success of any project.



Resilience in a Fast-Paced Organization: The ShopUp Story

Md. Ziaul Haque Bhuiyan is the chief of staff of the largest startup in Bangladesh. He holds the 2023 National President position of JCI, Bangladesh. He has been a member of JCI since 2013.

ShopUp, a full-stack, business-to-business commerce platform, has so far raised US\$ 200 million in equity and secured US\$ 30 million in debt financing, thus becoming one of the largest startups in Bangladesh. Md. Ziaul Haque Bhuiyan often fields questions from entrepreneurs and others in the startup world on how ShopUp evolved and remained resilient even in unprecedented times. During his talk, he listed funding sources and methods that aid in fundraising.

Shedding light on an incubation program, he said the program grooms and trains entrepreneurs and helps connect them with potential ecosystem partners and investors. It facilitates the process of developing a new business. He also touched upon funding through venture capitalists that usually sponsor companies that have reached a certain level of scale. Incubation programs are a great way for startup founders to connect with funding and business leads to help them access capital and grow the business.

He outlined factors that lead to startups failing to meet funding criteria. One important factor is they do not prioritize project management approaches and streamline processes. He said, "Building a startup does not mean following no

rules and regulations, and doing whatever I want. When you are operating on a small scale, you may be able to do that. But, when scalability becomes necessary, one needs to adopt project management principles. Otherwise, it will lead to failure."

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The incubation program helps access more capital and grow a business.
- Eliminate middlemen in the supply chain to control inflation.
- Companies fail when they prioritize profitability over meeting customers' needs.
- Adopt a systemic approach to address problems and challenges.
- Lack of project management, rather than funding, often contributes to a startup's failure.

MD. ZIAUL HAQUE BHUIYAN

chief of Staff,
ShopUp;
national
president,
Junior
Chamber
International
(JCI),
Bangladesh



Project Management Challenges in an Emerging Economy – A Bangladesh Perspective

Every project has its own set of unique challenges. Overcoming these effectively is a critical facet of project management. With unprecedented disruptions around the world, these challenges take on a different dimension.

MODERATOR

MD. ABDULLAH AL MAMOON

deputy managing director and COO, United Commercial Bank PLC

According to Ifaz, the three main challenges in any project are knowing which fires to fight, putting the right team together and understanding the situation to find the right solution. “Even if you are a great project manager, if you don’t have the right team, it becomes a huge challenge,” he said.

Rahman gave the audience a financial perspective, adding, “There are a lot of risks when it comes to project financing.” Projects get approved but can deviate from the plan in terms of timelines and budgets or they can even be affected by natural disasters. Each project must be carefully researched and assessed by experts in that particular industry.

“Everything you do in life is project management,” said Rashid, giving several examples from his own career. There are stakeholders to be managed, budgets to think of and challenges to deal with. Some projects have too long payback periods and low internal rates of

PANELISTS

SYED MAHBUBUR RAHMAN

Managing director and CEO of Mutual Trust Bank Limited and winner of the Asian Banker Leadership Achievement Award, Bangladesh

MAMUN RASHID

Country clients and markets lead, PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) Bangladesh Pvt. Ltd., academician and author of 12 books on contemporary business and economic issues

FAHAD IFAZ

Co-founder and CEO, iFarmer, which aims to provide end-to-end solutions for farmers and agri-Ministry of Micro, Small, and Middle Enterprises (MSMEs)



return to be viable, while others have become successful despite many believing otherwise.

Mamoon asked the panelists to elaborate on how the changing macro environment is affecting project management and what their suggestions are to mitigate these effects.

Focusing on the startup sector, Ifaz said that for these companies the most significant challenge was fundraising. His advice to project managers and entrepreneurs: “Be adaptive and write your own playbook. The rules are different in Bangladesh and we need to have a different model to run our projects.”

The marketplace today is an unpredictable one and projects must be carefully assessed. Syed said, “Being close to the customer and monitoring the disbursement of funds is critical.”

Technology and globalization are here to stay and we need to adapt these to our planning for successful project implementation. Elaborating on this, Rashid said, “Times are changing fast. It’s not just about technology but also about how fast we can respond to new developments such as deregulation.”

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Be flexible to be able to deal with uncertainty.
- Create an immune system for your project.
- Delegate and empower teams to be adaptive.



Our Heartfelt Gratitude to our Conference Volunteers and Sponsors

We acknowledge the selfless dedication, hard work and commitment of our volunteers. They spent countless hours planning and executing the conference to provide a great experience to our delegates.

CONFERENCE CHAIR

Annesha Ahmed

CONFERENCE CO-CHAIR

Iqbal Chowdhury

VOLUNTEERS

Ahmed Zafor Sadeq Bhuiyan

Sk. Naureen Laila

K. M. Refaul Ehsan

Farhana Islam

Sazzad Ar. Rahman

A. B. M. Taj-Ul Islam

Mahmood Taseen Chowdhury

Mohammad Shahadat Kabir

Aharap Shahriar Anik

Mahmood Reaz

Abu Mohammed Farhan

Md. Mashiur Rahman

Md. Faizul Alam

Abu Nayem Mohammad Ali Khan

Mostaque Ahmed

Tanveer Mohammad Noman

Depesh Banik

Partho Prothim Dey

Arif Ashraf Image

Md. Imrul Hasan

Javed Niaj Mohsin

Md. Raisul Islam

Mohammad Zakir Hossain

Rashed Baree

Apurba Abrar

Arif Ahemd Khan

Hosne Ara

A. M. Al-Amin

Prasenjit Chowdhury

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South Asia Chapter Presidents' Meet

Each year, the South Asia Chapter Presidents' Meet brings together the chapter leaders from across the region for discussions on the strategic direction the region will take that year. This year, the meeting was merged with the Project Management Regional Conference held on 4 June in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

The one-day meeting saw a packed agenda with a range of topics. Dr. Srinivasan, managing director of PMI South Asia, spoke about the importance of chapter collaboration and regional opportunities.

The chapter presidents provided





updates on core services and new services being offered to members. They also highlighted the key challenges that chapters were facing.

The leaders reviewed the progress being made in the chapter collaboration program, which was launched in 2022. The program comprised two key tracks monitored by two chapter presidents. The regional growth track is led by Annesha Ahmed, president of the PMI Bangladesh Chapter; and the track on chapter value proposition is led by Parvez Alam, president of the PMI Chennai Chapter.

PMI South Asia staff also took part in the discussions, providing key business updates and highlighting emerging opportunities, such as the potential collaboration with the Government of India's Management and Entrepreneurship & Professional Skills Council (MEPSC) initiative. This collaboration aims to serve underprivileged youth in the country by providing essential training on project management.

Overall, it was a productive meeting with a host of new insights being shared and plans discussed to foster collaborative growth in the region.

Abhishek Sharma
Manager, Chapter Engagement,
PMI South Asia



PMI WEST BENGAL CHAPTER

Fostering Sustainable Project Management

The PMI West Bengal chapter (PMIWBC) organized the first-ever students' conference on "Sustainable Projects Amidst Artificial Intelligence (AI)" at the University of Engineering and Management, Kolkata on 28 April.

The conference brought together distinguished experts from different industries to discuss the importance of sustainable practices in project management and how AI can be leveraged to achieve green goals.

The welcome address was delivered by Saon Sen Nandi, president of PMIWBC.



Priyanka Sarkar Deb, head of learning and development of Ericsson Cloud Services, was the keynote speaker. A debate competition was also organized for the students. Ayan Pal, senior

consultant of IBM and a distinguished toastmaster, served as the judge and moderator of the debate.

The chapter and the University of Engineering and Management, Kolkata collaborated with the non-governmental organization, Oxygenerators, to raise environmental awareness among students during the conference.

At the end of the conference, the chapter distributed food to needy children. These initiatives align well with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal 2 (Zero Hunger), Goal 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) and Goal 13 (Climate Action).

Augmenting Project Management Capabilities

The West Bengal chapter launched a pilot program on Agile for corporate houses and professionals with up to five years of experience in software development. The courseware specially designed for these segments focuses on utilizing agile principles in product development.

Recently, the chapter completed a project management training program for Simpssoft Solutions, a startup located in Kolkata. The final session was conducted face-to-face at the Simpssoft office premises. Chapter volunteers organized a postcard-making game that helped participants enhance their understanding of agile methodologies and the importance of waste reduction through lean principles.



The program started on 11 February, with six virtual sessions held so far. These sessions delved into various topics, including the basics of project management, risk management and the traditional ways of managing projects.

Empowering Youth



The West Bengal chapter, in collaboration with the Bangladesh Chapter, organized 'Bandhan' on 7 May. Under this program, the chapters exchange and donate books to rural libraries in their respective regions. Tied by a shared mother tongue, Bengali, the chapters have a united mission of conducting learning and reading sessions for youth.

During the first event, Shyamashee Haldar, lead events volunteer of PMIWBC, handed over the first set of books for the donation drive to Annesha Ahmed, president of the PMI Bangladesh Chapter.

PMI SRI LANKA CHAPTER

Collaborative Efforts to Promote Project Management Knowledge

The PMI Sri Lanka Chapter (PMICSL), along with PMI colleagues from the US, held a discussion with the Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission (TVEC), which operates under the Ministry of Education of Sri Lanka. The main goal was to promote project management knowledge and skills in

educational institutions in Sri Lanka.

The event was chaired by K. A. Lithadheera, director general and CEO of TVEC. President Saman Kandanearachchi, executive vice president Dhammike Mendis and former president Aruna Kooragamage represented the chapter.

Book Donation Drive for Quality Education

The Sri Lanka chapter organized a book donation and motivation program on 24 March. Through this initiative, it aimed to support quality education, one of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

As a part of the program, over 150 students received educational kits. PMICSL also conducted a motivational session for the students, led by Shiwanthika De Costa, assistant vice president of events for the chapter.



Insights on Change Management



PMICSL conducted a virtual member forum on "Change Management" on 27 March. Jitin Chugh, an expert in technical project management and agile coach, discussed the significance of Peter Senge's "Systems Thinking Model." Chugh said change is difficult for the

human brain and cited examples to illustrate it. He also explained the importance of negotiation skills for project managers.

About 38 participants from various countries participated in the session.

Acknowledging Achievements

The PMI board members and PMICSL leaders held a meeting with Harshi Herath, the first Program Management Professional (PgMP)[®] certification holder in Sri Lanka. She currently acts as regional project management office (PMO) operational lead and senior project manager in her organization.

During the meeting, Herath shared her journey in the PMO and expressed her interest in volunteering with PMICSL. The board congratulated her on her achievement and extended an invitation to conduct a member forum, where she can share her professional experiences as a program management professional.

PMI MUMBAI CHAPTER

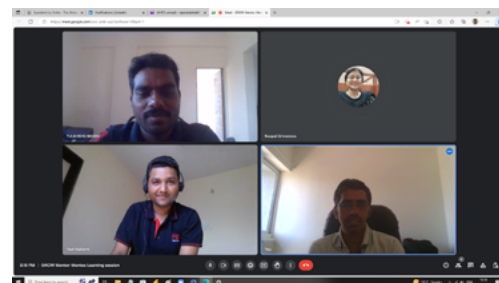
Nurturing the Education of Underprivileged Children

On World Book Day, the Mumbai chapter, in collaboration with its partner, Seva Sahayog Foundation, visited the Sanmitra Book Bank and donated over 300 books. The primary objective of the facility is to provide books to underprivileged children across Mumbai and enrich their knowledge. This initiative is part of the chapter's outreach program, Dnyansarita.



Shaping Professional Goals

The Mumbai chapter mentored a second cohort of students this year from the Defence Institute of Advanced Technology from Pune. This cohort comprised four students who showed interest in operations and supply chain management. Roopali Srivastava, professor, project management advisor and trainer, was the mentor.



After an ice-breaking session, the students shared their self-assessed Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis. The process enabled them to identify areas for improvement based on their weaknesses, as well as focus on enhancing their strengths.

After completing the program, the students now have an opportunity to present a case study at the PMI Mumbai chapter's Project Management Forum, a regular feature in the chapter's activities calendar.

Coastal Cleanup Drive

The Mumbai chapter, in collaboration with Project Mumbai, is working toward the “Clean Coasts Campaign” to save life underwater. Under the chapter’s outreach initiative, volunteers participate in beach cleanup in and around Mumbai. The largest beach cleanup was on 22 April at Dadar Beach in Mumbai. This initiative supports the United Nations’ 17 Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal 13 (Climate Action), Goal 14 (Life Below Water) and Goal 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).



Creating Equal Opportunities

The Seva Sahayog Foundation, in collaboration with the Mumbai chapter’s outreach program, Saksham Samart, is encouraging quality education with a unique initiative, the School Kit Project. Underprivileged students receive essential items needed at the start of a new academic year, such as school stationery and writing equipment.

The Seva Sahayog team has a goal to distribute 103,317 school kits this year. The chapter’s volunteers will actively participate in the initiative by assembling and distributing school kits in schools in remote areas.

PMI TRIVANDRUM, KERALA CHAPTER

New Board Members



Board of Directors FY 2023 - 2024



The Trivandrum, Kerala chapter completed the board election process by the end of February. All of the candidates who filled the open positions were elected unopposed. The newly elected leaders officially assumed their roles at an annual general meeting held in a hybrid format on April 2.

The new board of directors for fiscal year 2023-24 are:

Harikuttan K. – President

Akhila Gowri Shankar – Vice President, Operations

Hariprasad P. S. – Vice President, Finance

Sindhya Sudheendran – Vice President, Education

Sreejesh Varier – Vice President, Professional Development

Anna Jones Koshy – Vice President, Membership

Prageeth Prasannakumar – Vice President, Volunteers

Priyesh Gopalakrishnan – Vice President, Branches

Joji John – Vice President, Marketing

Rasmi V. Nair – Vice President, Governance

Sai Bhadra – Director Events

Jayakishore S. R. – Past President

Establishing a Meaningful Students’ Connection

The Trivandrum, Kerala chapter launched an Academic Forum with students from the School of Management Studies (SMS) at Cochin University of Science and Technology (CUSAT) on 5 April. Inaugurated on the 20th anniversary of the chapter’s formation, it is a significant achievement. SMS also enrolled the first cohort of 75 students as PMI student members, in addition to participating in the PMI Kerala Chapter’s Academic Forum.

Harikuttan K., president of the PMI Trivandrum, Kerala chapter, gave a welcome speech and Jagathy Raj V. P., director of SMS-CUSAT, delivered the presidential address. K. N. Madhusoodanan, vice chancellor of CUSAT, inaugurated the event and presented the PMI membership certificates to the students of the CUSAT Academic Forum.

Sam Thomas, dean of Social Sciences at CUSAT, and Prasanna Sampathkumar, region mentor of PMI South Asia, saluted the students. In a special address, Abhishek Sharma, chapter partner of PMI South Asia, lauded the chapter for having achieved the largest number of PMI student memberships in South Asia. Jayakishore S. R., past president of the PMI Trivandrum, Kerala chapter, highlighted activities planned for the CUSAT Academic Forum members, including personal mentoring sessions, webinars, workshops and seminars. Members of the university’s

teaching faculty also attended the event.

The newly inducted members of SMS-CUSAT attended the first annual management fest, Talentime 38, from 2-4 May. Themed “Ad Infinitum,” the event also attracted students from other universities. A number of competitions were organized for the students.

Creating Networking Opportunities

The Trivandrum, Kerala chapter launched a new initiative called “Smartference,” an in-person event, where members can meet, learn from and network with fellow chapter members. The initiative aims to provide chapter members with networking opportunities with industry professionals to open the



door to new opportunities, partnerships and resources.

The first two sessions were

held on 13 May in Kochi and 20 May in Trivandrum. Over 30 members attended each event.

Nurturing Leadership Skills in Children

The Trivandrum, Kerala chapter’s Toastmasters Club launched the Kids’ Gavel Club on 23 April. The club is designed exclusively for the children of the chapter’s Toastmasters Club members. Membership to the children’s club is free and open to those aged 8 to 18. So far, 12 children have registered as club members.

The Kids’ Gavel Club will provide children with a platform to practice and develop their public



speaking abilities, conquer stage fright and sharpen their communication skills. Such skills will help them become confident leaders in the future.

Initiative for Collaboration

The Toastmasters Clubs of Trivandrum, Kerala chapter and the West Bengal chapter conducted their first joint meeting on 29 April. It marked the first collaboration between the two clubs. The theme of the meeting was “The Magic of Believing in Yourself.” It was attended by members from both chapters, as well as guests.

On 29 April, Division G of Toastmasters District 121 held the division-level annual conference, “TriloGy 2023,” in Trivandrum. The PMI Trivandrum, Kerala chapter’s Toastmasters Club participated in the Banner March and was honored with the “Membership Bonanza Award” for adding three new, reinstated or dual members between February and March.

Recognizing Valuable Contributions

Akhila Gowri Shankar, president of Toastmasters Club of the Trivandrum, Kerala chapter, along with executive committee members Reshma Prakash, Sai Bhadra and Jayakishore S.R., participated in the “Crescendo 2023” Toastmasters District 121 annual conference

held in Kochi on 20-21 May. The chapter’s Toastmasters Club received two awards: the Spirit of 121 Award for achieving distinguished club status in District 121 and the Renewal Rockstar Award for renewing the membership of 21 members by the end of March.



Spreading Knowledge of Project Management

Following a request from the Digital University of Kerala, the Trivandrum, Kerala chapter conducted an introductory session on project management for their management students. Past president Jayakishore S.R. gave an overview of project management to the students.

Enhancing Skills of Visually Impaired Teachers

In collaboration with the Kerala Federation of the Blind, the Trivandrum, Kerala chapter conducted a workshop on motivation and skill development for visually impaired teachers. Jayakishore S.R., past president of the Trivandrum, Kerala chapter, presided over the event and reaffirmed the chapter's commitment to contribute through PMIK Audible, an initiative to provide audiobooks to the visually impaired.

An engaging session was conducted to mark this occasion by Rajit Karunakaran Nair, a strategist, management consultant, design thinker and corporate trainer.

Knowledge-Sharing Session

Priyesh Gopalakrishnan, the Trivandrum, Kerala chapter's vice president of branches, conducted a session on agile project management for the Academic Forum members of Christ Engineering College, Irinjalakuda. He discussed the 'whys' and 'hows' of agile project management and Lean, as well as the basics of Scrum and Kanban. The session helped students understand the latest industry trends and the need for organizations to adopt lean and agile concepts.



PMI CHENNAI CHAPTER

Honoring Women's Contributions

The Chennai chapter celebrated International Women's Day 2023 with the theme, "Embrace Equity," on 11 March. Aparna Grandhi, lead of the Women Engagement Committee (WEC), commenced the event with a welcome note. She highlighted how working in gender-balanced groups leads to higher job satisfaction, productivity and lower turnover compared to an unbalanced environment. Grandhi also provided an overview of WEC's activities over the past year and notes from the in-person WEC events held in Chennai and Coimbatore, where more than 70 women took part in one-on-one conversations with experts.



Vijay Narayanan, secretary of the PMI Chennai chapter, congratulated the women members for their contributions to the chapter and invited them to participate more in

chapter activities. Prasiddhi Singh, founder of the Prasiddhi Forest Foundation, was a guest speaker at the event, who shared her vision for a green planet.

Knowledge-Sharing Sessions

The Chennai chapter conducted a knowledge-sharing session on "Let's Unlock the Power of Intelligent Process Automation" at the Anna Centenary Library Hall in Chennai. Dhana Mani, PMP®, discussed the nuances of automation, including customer expectations and value-driven and scalable solutions. She also talked about end-to-end automation methodologies and shared success stories of automation projects.

The chapter organized a session

on "Physiotherapy for Healthy Living" on 22 April. G. Yuvarani, associate professor at the Dr. MGR Educational and Research Institute, was the speaker. She talked about the importance of health, wellness and fitness to improve the overall quality of life. She also shared insights into senior citizen wellness and the role of the physiotherapist in global health.

The chapter conducted in-person training, "Introduction to Disciplined Agile®," on 4 March. The speaker, S. Chandramouli, PhD, PMI-ACP®, PfMP®, spoke about the basics of Agile and Disciplined Agile (DA)®. He highlighted

several techniques such as how to build and support a DA® team, and choose a tailored Way of Working (WoW) for specific projects or organizational requirements.

As a part of the academia and youth and social impact initiatives, the chapter conducted an insightful session at the Pollachi Institute of Engineering and Technology, Coimbatore, on 24 March. G. Ragothama, associate vice president of branches of the chapter, spoke on "Project Management Fundamentals for Academia." The session drew about 100 attendees, including students and teachers.

PMI BANGLADESH CHAPTER

Building a Stronger Project Management Community

On 13 May and 18 May, the Bangladesh chapter conducted its third and fourth Focus Group Discussion sessions with

professionals from various industries. The chapter's senior members shared their suggestions on how to make the chapter more active and

vibrant. The chapter emphasized the need for the board and its members to work together to strengthen the project management community.

Forging Alliance

The Bangladesh chapter inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with IT solution provider Link3 Technologies Limited on 15 March. Sheikh Raihan Ahmed, managing director and CEO of Link3 Technologies Limited, and Annesha Ahmed, president of the PMI Bangladesh chapter, signed the MoU on behalf of their respective organizations. Both organizations expressed their commitment to enhancing project management practices in Bangladesh.



Donation Initiative

On International Women's Day, the Bangladesh chapter donated five sewing machines to Mastool Foundation, a social development organization, as a part of its social impact initiatives. It supports Goal 8 of the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (Decent Work and Economic Growth).



Insights on Project Management



The "Information Technology and Management (ITM) Summit 2023" was held on March 4 by the Information Technology and Management department at Daffodil International University.

The Bangladesh chapter was invited to participate in a panel discussion with prominent industrialists. The chapter leaders delivered valuable insights into project management skills, certifications and career prospects. The objective of the discussion was to enlighten students and faculty members of the university. More than 300 students attended the event.

PMI PEARL CITY, HYDERABAD CHAPTER

Making a Meaningful Impact

As a part of the Youth and Social Impact program of PMI Pearl City, Hyderabad chapter, a team led by Naga Saujanya, G. Rajeshwari and Vijay Vemana visited a slum in Hyderabad on 28 May. The purpose of the visit was to assess the work of

the social sector organization Akshay Vidya Foundation, understand its delivery model and work together for the chapter's Helping Hand initiative. During a 3-hour walkabout, the team explored the living conditions of local children, gathered insights from the

experiences of students and parents, and examined teaching models and materials.

The chapter aims to launch a pilot program starting with a cluster of six centers. The primary goal of this initiative is to observe and analyze ground-level challenges and identify areas of potential impact on the lives of underprivileged children.

Chapter news contributors: Saman Kandanearachchi, PMP®; Priya Patra, PMP®; Anita Kanojia, PMP®; Prajakta Limaye, PMP®; Rajendra Bhatt, PMP®; Joji John, PMP®; Akhila Gowri Shankar, PMP®; Sai Bhadra, PMP®; Sazzad Ar. Rahman, PMP®; Tamal Banerjee, PMP®, DASSM®; Supratim Sen, PMP®; Sumit Bhowmick, PMI-ACP®, PMP®; Abir Biswas, PMP®; Naga Saujanya, DASSM®, PMP®; G. Rajeshwari, DASSM®, PMP®; Vijay Vemana, DASSM®, PMP®, PgMP®



Star Volunteers

Volunteers are the lifeblood of PMI. They champion project management in their organizations and beyond, drive the programs and activities of PMI chapters, and share their knowledge with the community. In each edition of Manage South Asia, we recognize volunteers from PMI South Asia chapters who have made rich contributions.

Archana Zitshi, PMP®

Former Program Manager, TVS Credit Services Volunteer, Women's League, PMI Pune-Deccan India Chapter

- **Been a PMI member since:** October 2021
- **The biggest hurdles I face as a project manager:** Effective communication across various levels of the organization for project success.
- **The top skills I have learned through PMI:** I learned teamwork and organized planning, where people work and collaborate in a selfless manner.
- **My new success mantra as a project manager:** Being a team player and fostering effective stakeholder collaboration.
- **The big takeaway for me from volunteering:** The chance to make a difference in others' lives, network with like-minded people and enhance my public speaking skills.
- **The future is...** Artificial intelligence, automation and agile ways of working.



Abir Biswas, PMP®

General Manager, Ericsson Global Services, India
Associate Director Outreach, PMI West Bengal Chapter

- **Been a PMI member since:** 2007
- **The biggest hurdles I face as a project manager:** Aligning stakeholders, so all are on the same page.
- **The top skills I have learned through PMI:** Collaboration, public speaking, and event hosting.
- **My new success mantra as a project manager:** Lead without ego.
- **The big takeaway for me from volunteering:** Networking opportunities, professional development and a boost in self-confidence.
- **The future is...** Unknown, and hence exciting and worth anticipating.



Naushad Rajani, PMP®

Senior Manager- Information Risk Manager, ANB Consulting
Vice President Finance, PMI Mumbai Chapter

- **Been a PMI member since:** May 2004
- **The biggest hurdles I face as a project manager:** People's resistance to change.
- **The top skills I have learned through PMI:** Servant leadership, empathy and people management.
- **My new success mantra as a project manager:** Communicate, collaborate and co-operate.
- **The big takeaway for me from volunteering:** It is a journey of mental and emotional fulfillment.
- **The future is...** To be embraced, rather than waiting for it.

Archana Govind

Lead Program Management Office (PMO), Nissan Digital India
Assistant Vice President Social Outreach, PMI Trivandrum, Kerala Chapter

- **Been a PMI member since:** 2019
- **The biggest hurdles I face as a project manager:** Time management.
- **The top skills I have learned through PMI:** Communication, collaboration and networking.
- **My new success mantra as a project manager:** Adapting to new methodologies and tailoring them as required for the tasks.
- **The big takeaway for me from volunteering:** Gaining knowledge about social responsibilities, meeting new and like-minded people and contributing to social causes. These experiences have shaped my personal and professional outlook.
- **The future is...** Ruled by the power of dreams. Master artificial intelligence, acquire power skills and build a sustainable environment.

Madhurambika Hariharan, PMP®

Assistant Vice President, Citi Corp Services Pvt. Ltd.
Volunteer, PMI Chennai Chapter

- **Been a PMI member since:** 2018
- **The biggest hurdles I faced as a project manager:** Resistance to change.
- **The top skills I have learned through PMI:** Taking initiatives and networking.
- **My new success mantra as a project manager:** Change.
- **The big takeaway for me from volunteering:** Gaining new perspectives and different approaches.



Latha Vishwanath, PMP®

Senior Manager, Corporate Quality, Datamatics Global Services Ltd.
Volunteer, PMI Chennai Chapter

- **Been a PMI member since:** April 2018
- **The biggest hurdles I face as a project manager:** Helping people realize the benefits of following a process.
- **The top skills I have learned through PMI:** Leadership and stakeholder management.
- **My new success mantra as a project manager:** Adapting to industry changes.
- **The big takeaway for me from volunteering:** Working together leads to team success.
- **The future is...** Challenging and one that is going to be filled with software apps and devices.

Apurba Abrar, PMP®

Deputy Director and Deputy Project Manager, Investment Promotion and Financing Facility II Project, Bangladesh Bank,
Volunteer, PMI Bangladesh Chapter

- **Been a PMI member since:** 2021
- **The biggest hurdles I face as a project manager:** Vendor management.
- **The top skills I have learned through PMI:** People management.
- **My new success mantra as a project manager:** Manage people and project success will follow.
- **The big takeaway for me from volunteering:** Networking and learning new skills.
- **The future is...** Governed by sustainable project management.



Hosne Ara, PMP®

Product Manager, Conveyance App, Monico Technologies Ltd.
Volunteer, PMI Bangladesh Chapter

- **Been a PMI member since:** September 2020
- **The biggest hurdles I face as a project manager:** Dealing with continuous change during project execution.
- **The top skills I have learned through PMI:** Time and people management.
- **My new success mantra as a project manager:** Embrace a proactive approach to deal with project challenges.
- **The big takeaway for me from volunteering:** Connecting with the project management community has changed my perspectives.
- **The future is...** About the application of artificial intelligence in projects.



Bhaskar Rao Thalatam, PMP®

Vice President Product Engineering, Jnet Technologies Pvt. Ltd.
Volunteer, PMI Pearl City, Hyderabad Chapter

- **Been a PMI member since:** March 2017
- **The biggest hurdles I face as a project manager:** Effectively managing customer escalations while minimizing the impact on team performance and project profitability.
- **The top skills I have learned through PMI:** Collaboration, risk management and time management.
- **My new success mantra as a project manager:** Embrace challenges, empower the team and deliver excellence.
- **The big takeaway for me from volunteering:** The true reward lies in the impact we create, the lives we touch and the growth we experience.



Inviting article submissions



Calling all PMI/ chapter members and credential holders to submit their original writings on the topic of project management. Earn PDUs for your published article!

Submission deadline for the next issue : 15 August 2023

Email your article along with your recent photograph to editor.manageindia@pmi-india.org

Project Management Skills: Not Optional Anymore

What are the top project management skills required to meet the needs and expectations of today's market?

To thrive in today's business environment, project managers must learn and master the following skills:

Thinking like a CEO: In the 21st century, project managers are expected to think and deliver like a successful startup CEO.

Project leadership: Project managers are business leaders and participate in discussions with customers and other stakeholders to define business value. They understand business requirements and contribute to enterprise architecture designs and direct solution architectures. They communicate and sign off on the final solution and the cost case with customers. They continue to lead high-level design, support how the solution is being built and deliver it with the help of multiple people and organizations.

Ability to look for business value: Thanks to cloud automation technologies, the world has shrunk in terms of time, distance and skills. The role of project managers has shifted to being an orchestrator of success within the shortest time possible, a minimum budget and a fixed number of team members. Project managers are today expected to leverage automation tools to reduce cost and deliver quality outcomes with minimum resources.

Embracing automation: Reusable software codes and applications are simplifying software applications and systems. Using products and services related to digital transformation of governments and industries is helping

bridge gaps in manual, unorganized and unstructured information systems.

Being innovative: The enablement of transparency and real-time dashboards is helping project managers deliver faster, foster better decision-making and ensure high-quality products and services.

In what ways do certifications differentiate project managers?

Certifications enable skill development that is aligned with PMI's Talent Triangle®. Exam content outline (ECO) describes domains, tasks and activities in a structured way. The sixth and seventh editions of the *PMBOK®* Guide comprise a collection of best practices. These standards describe the interacting and overlapping domains in a simplified way for non-practitioners and practitioners alike.

The certification journey for project managers starts with the Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM)®. Over the years, practitioners may move to the advisory level and consider the Project Management Professional (PMP)®, PMI Agile Certified Practitioner (PMI-ACP)® or Disciplined Agile® (DA™) certification. Finally, when they reach the level of an expert or thought leader, the ideal certifications to pursue are Program Management Professional (PgMP)® and Portfolio Management Professional (PfMP)®. Fortunately, there are formal education and training programs available to help project managers navigate their journey. Mentorship is also provided by PMI volunteers to aspiring project managers. Certifications at various levels help not only develop good project managers but shape



Kapil Gupta, PMI-ACP®, PMP®, PfMP®

Enterprise Cloud Architect,
Kyndryl India Pvt. Ltd.
PMI South Asia Champion

great project managers. These certifications validate the skills earned and empower project managers to contribute and build great businesses.

Industry-recognized certifications help organize the profession and skills earned through various badges to set expectations and deliver as per the standards defined. This improves the success rate of projects and the overall outcomes.

What would be your advice to someone who is considering a certification but does not know how to go about it?

Project management skills are no longer optional but are now considered mandatory for successful projects. My advice to new project managers would be to actively participate in project management community forums, online and in person. PMI chapters are present in major cities around the region, providing networking opportunities with other project managers. It is important to identify a mentor who can guide you through the certification journey. Become a PMI

member and leverage the standards and practice books for self-study. Besides, attending training sessions from Authorised Training Partners will help you expedite your learning journey.

You should also apply your acquired skills to your current projects to help validate your knowledge. To take a step further, observe how experienced project managers apply and deliver projects. Additionally, project managers must focus on developing

the emotional quotient and leadership skills to effectively manage their teams. Participating and volunteering in PMI chapter activities will contribute to the growth of the chapter as well as your own personal growth. The next step is to become a PMI Champion and represent the industry, at the country level, to demonstrate your project management abilities and skills and show your commitment to the growth of the project management community.

Certified Project Managers Elevate Project Quality

What are the top project management skills to meet the needs and expectations of today's market?

Negotiation, problem-solving, alignment and re-alignment techniques, leadership and managing the political landscape are the top skills required for project managers today. These skills ensure project success of scope, time and cost. The ability and agility to deliver intended benefits, strategic business results and desired project outcomes are the other significant success factors in today's extremely complex project deliveries. Experience in modern and legacy technologies and industries is also useful for project managers today. Every experience is an endorsement of the practical applications of project management techniques and methods to deliver fruitful project outcomes. It is important to document lessons learned, which will provide inputs and insights for future projects.

In what ways do certifications differentiate project managers?

Project management certifications

validate the skills, experience and knowledge of an experienced project who may have worked on various projects across industries. Certified project managers are considered experts in delivering projects with better quality. They follow guidelines and draw from their experiences in similar projects to deliver better outcomes based on standardized project management frameworks and documented best practices.

What would be your advice to someone who is considering a certification but does not know how to go about it?

The first step is to get involved with a PMI chapter in your city and network with professionals from various industries. Participate in discussions at your local chapter. Find a study group and a mentor or guide who can help you navigate the certification landscape. Always stay updated by following the latest Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (*PMBOK® Guide*) published by PMI. Lastly, celebrate your success once you have earned the certification.



Debangshu Ghose,
PMP®

Head of Project Services,
Tieto India Pvt. Ltd.

PMI South Asia Champion



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