



# Community and post-disaster Program Management Methodology

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## Abstract

The challenge for personnel in disaster situations is that there has been very limited effective Program or Project Management (PPM) methodology, education or training provided to plan and implement Programs of Projects that will deliver sustainable value for stakeholders following a disaster.

Based on extensive program management research and practice, this paper addresses a context driven, flexible but robustly practical approach to Program and Project Management methodology and education. Current Program Management training is a one size fits all approach based on Project practices and methodologies which do not integrate effectively with Project Management or cater for the largely unpredictable or high risk situation, such as a disaster.

This paper reviews

- A practical process for assessing, planning and delivering best value outcomes for Programs and Projects.
- The PSA Project process which can be integrated into any Project methodology through the working Scope within an effective Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) process by engaging key stakeholder values to enable sustainable Program results..

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## 1. Introduction

Projects may be the vehicles for delivering defined value. In traditional project management, governance structures such as Project Boards and Program Offices define the broad scope of the intended project together with the expected benefits for the investment made. However, in a community or post-disaster situation, there is a compression of responsibilities whereby traditional Project Management is combined with Program responsibilities. It is as if the Project Manager has to also assume the role of Program Manager at the same time. This then poses the first challenge to traditional Project Management in community and post-disaster situations can a project manager work effectively as a program manager?

The second challenge is simply addressing the question of whose and what needs are required to be fulfilled. In a

post-disaster context, understanding the ‘messy situation’ with the range of stakeholders, their priorities and delivering value in precisely the way each of these stakeholders expect, presents a substantial challenge. Often the perception and needs of those who fund reconstruction appear to have a greater influence than the pressing needs of those who are ostensibly the beneficiaries of the project. Can the program or project manager have the confidence and interpersonal skills to be able to work collaboratively as well as the empathy to stand in each of the stakeholder’s shoes in order to elicit stakeholder needs and responses?

The third challenge is the Project Management framework or methodology to be used.

Program and Project Management methodologies have developed significantly over the past 45 years and are still developing in theory and practice (praxis). The core of Program

Management is the realisation of Benefits/Return on Investment for the Key Stakeholders, whilst the core of Project Management is the delivery on time, budget, to value and within risk profiles. Programs are typically whole of life cycle ongoing developments whereas projects are unique and have a start and finish.

There are a large array of Project Management publications, qualifications, and differing types of delivery through a range of methodology. Program Management is not as well expanded yet, but is being better researched and developed in its need to bring together benefits not otherwise realisable by individual projects. There is also a significant gap remaining in understanding, knowledge and application in the integration of Program and Project Management to achieve the best value/impact outcomes at the least cost and time and to requirements and especially in high risk environments.

The Project Management Institute (PMI), has leading publications and large followings on both the Project Management Body of Knowledge v5 (PMBOK) (PMI, 2013a) and the Standard for Program Management v3 (SPM) (PMI, 2013b).

There is an interesting gap in the direct working of Program to Project Management within and between these two leading publications.

The PMI also has a Project Management Competency Development Framework (PMI PMCDF) (PMI, 2007b) which is a reputable publication in itself, as are all of the above in themselves, but admits to being yet to publish a relevant Program Management Competency Development Framework.

The competencies for Program Management are quite different in common application and understanding to those for Project Management. This can be seen by the sort of key issues addressed in the PMBOK and the SPM and also more insight given into it in recent papers such as the Ten Core Competencies of Program Managers (Sohmen and D. C. K. D, 2015).

There is not only a marked difference in the application of Program and Project Management between such documents, but, more significantly, there is a real issue in general application in the need to be able to understand and apply Program and Project Management together and have effective working between the two.

Most Projects these days exist within a Program setting and most Programs rely for their outcome through delivery by Project Management. The key benefits realisation criteria need to be translated to a scope/work breakdown structure which can then be delivered and measured through standard project management delivery. Program Management quite often has both tangible and intangible (soft and hard/human and material) target outcomes and these need to be clearly translated into measurable deliverables through Project Management.

There are other world leading publications on Program and Project Management including from the International Project Management Association (IPMA), the Association for Project Management (APM), PRINCE 2 (Project In Controlled Environments), Agile Project Management, the Asia Pacific Federation of Project Management, the Australian Institute of Project Management (AIPM), Accrediting Project Managers

Globally (APMG) and Project Management for Development Organisations (PM4Dev) amongst others. Some of these organisations provide Program to Project Management methodology, but there is presently little agreement between these various groups on the core essentials of such. Two of the latter qualifying organisations provide also Program/Project Management for the International Development Sector (Steinfort and Walker, 2011).

Here exists a significant challenge for the Project Management and Program Management world and, in particular, their various organisations. Will they individually, or together, arrive at some sort of standard practices that can be applied effectively and universally to the very large need for Program to Project Management integration globally in differing sectors and in this case, disaster, resilience and climate change Programs?

The international development sector has traditionally applied Program to Project Management from the outset to the front end. The Logical Framework (Logframe) (USAID (1973) The logical framework: modifications based on experience, Baccarini, 1999; AUSAID, 2005; Speckley, 2004) was first used in 1969 which, coincidentally, is the same year as the PMI was founded. This process was further developed to Program Cycle Management (PCM) (Speckley, 2004) then Results Based Management (RBM) (Comparison of the European Commission's project cycle management) and other iterations of the Logframe/Theory of Change chain of input, output, outcome and impact. Notable organisations such as the United Nations (UN), the World Bank, the European Union (EU), the Asian Development Bank and a whole long list of Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) such as Red Cross, World Vision, Save the Children, International Organisation for Migration and a plethora more work in this frame (Anon, 2004; UNDP (2002) Handbook on Monitoring and Evaluating for Results, Cooke-Davies, 2009; Maylor et al., 2006; Cracknell, 2000).

There has been some serious work done to integrate these two worlds of Program to Project Management (PPM), but there remain significant gaps in the relating and effective working together of these in the main frames outlined above.

Certainly, when it comes to pre- and post-disaster community response, recovery and sustainable redevelopment, this lack of agreement or co-ordination in method, language and due process is the most significant factor in not enabling effective PPM being used globally.

Program Management methodology, education and training should provide personnel with the skills and knowledge to design, plan, implement and deliver Programs of Projects (Belassi and Tukul, 1996; Cicmil et al., 2006; Crawford et al., 2003; Crawford et al., 2006; Crawford and Bryce, 2003).

## 2. Overview — significant gaps in the theory and practice of Program to Project Management

The world's largest project management institute (PMI) notes that "Programs are comprised of various components, the majority of these being the individual Projects within the Program" (PMI, 2013b).

This PMI Standard for Program Management 3rd Edition (PMI SPM) was published in 2013 and improves upon the

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