

Journal of African Business

Call for Papers

Special Issue: Why do Projects Fail in Africa?

Guest Editors

Drs. Lavagnon Ika & Jan Saint-Macary
Université du Québec en Outaouais, Canada

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Many business leaders and experts—at least in the West—consider project management the wave of the future and the profession of the 21st century. Project management has been heralded as the very essence of management training, operational excellence, and value added to management (Peters, 2004). But how has this success played out in the rest of the world? Twenty five years ago, Stuckenbruck & Zomorrodian proclaimed that the “potential of the project management approach is so promising that, even though it must be drastically modified or tailored to adapt to local cultures, it can be extremely important to the future of developing countries” (p. 174).

During the same period, Africa relied increasingly on project management to achieve its development goals. Yet, many observers point out that abandoned, failed, or poorly executed projects are the norm in Africa and that their use has even thwarted its development (e.g., Eneh, 2009). Thus, although we have witnessed a boom in project management for decades in many parts of the world, its theory and practice remain virtually unknown or at least unproven in Africa.

It is time for a reality check. We need to ascertain what is really taking place. Thus, this special issue is not about the potential contribution of project management to Africa, or what good project management, project planning, or control practices should be in that continent. Instead, it is about what project management *is* in Africa and about what does work or fails in that context (e.g., Muriithi & Crawford, 2003).

In this special issue, we will examine the stakes and challenges of project management in Africa by focusing on how it is practiced in that particular context. We hope to raise and address these specific questions:

- 1) What is the nature of projects and programs in Africa?
- 2) What is project management, and what do project managers do, in Africa?
- 3) What tools, techniques, and approaches are used in the African context, and which ones work and why?

From a methodological perspective, we welcome empirically grounded and descriptive papers that reflect the practice of project management in Africa. Hence, we seek submissions that use research methods such as observations or interviews or that are based on surveys of project

management tools and techniques that project practitioners actually use in their everyday work (e.g., Ika, Diallo, & Thuillier, 2010).

Guidelines for paper submission

For author guidelines, please visit the website of the *Journal of African Business* at:

<http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/journal.asp?issn=1522-8916&linktype=44>

Papers for this Special Issue should be submitted to: lavagnon.ika@uqo.ca and to jan.saint-macary@uqo.ca

All enquiries regarding the special issue should be sent to: Dr. Lavagnon A. Ika, Associate Professor, Université du Québec en Outaouais; Phone: (819) 595–3900 ext. 1938; Email: lavagnon.ika@uqo.ca.

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