

Perspectives of Latin American Women in Project Management

Interview with Dr. Angélica Larios¹

Author, Advisor, Volunteer Leader
Alacontec, Mexico City, Mexico



Interviewed by Yasmina Khelifi
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Introduction to the interviewee

Angélica Larios, DSL, MBA, PMP, is co-author, along with [Ipek Sahra Ozguler](#), of a newly published book of interviews with female project managers titled "[Perspectives of Latin American Women in Project Management](#)".

Angélica Larios is a Project Manager with over 20 years of experience implementing software projects related to business intelligence, planning and budgeting, and software application-based financial consolidation solutions to support the business decision process. She owns ALACONTEC, an I.T. consulting firm founded in Latin America. She has held various positions in private and public organizations, such as the Ministry of Health in Mexico as I.T. Director and as Business Manager for several Mexican firms.

She holds a Master's Degree in Business Administration and a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science from the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), in addition to her studies in Project Management and her ® Professional Project Management (PMP) certification, which have helped her consolidate her career and to have a better understanding of what companies and projects need today. She holds a Ph.D. in Strategic Leadership from Regent University, VA, USA; and she has been a

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volunteer since 2007 for the PMI local chapter in Mexico, being Former President, and in various positions within PMI (CMAG, BVAC, EMAG). She is the author of several published articles in project management, pmworldjournal and Grebennikno in Russia. Angélica has been elected as a member of the board of directors (BOD) of the ILA (International Leadership Association) (2021-2024). Angélica also serves as an International Correspondent for the PMWJ in Mexico.

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Interview

Q1. Angélica, thank you for accepting the invitation for this interview with PMWJ. We were expecting the interview to be with both you and Ipek Sahra Ozguler, your co-author, but we understand that Ipek was unavailable. Nevertheless, we were glad to learn that you both together have authored and published an interesting book with interviews. Why to do such a great project?

Angélica Larios (Larios): Thank you Yasmina for this opportunity, as you know Ipek and I are passionate about project management and have dedicated many years to being part of a beautiful profession. Not only as practitioners but also as volunteers, and contributors in different arenas. Ipek published in 2020 a compilation of international women leaders around the world to see the female perspective; I was invited by her to be part of this initiative and loved the idea to replicate the feeling of Latin America women and the profession. The idea of the book was to give voice to many women that are searching for an opportunity to develop themselves in wherever area they want to focus. The idea was to give an overview of the status of project management through the eyes of a variety of women located in Latin America, brand new professionals, seasonal professionals, retired, volunteers, with different backgrounds and experiences but with the love and passion for managing projects.

Ipek, is currently focused on other projects so she was not able to join in the interview, however, I would like to recognize her contribution and the teamwork we did together to achieve this wonderful goal.

Q2: What was the initial vision and goal that prompted writing a journalistic book, “Perspectives of Latin American Women in Project Management”?

Larios: As described above, the idea was to present the perspective of different women in Latin America according to their experience what is the status of project management in a vast region such as Latin America. The journalist style gives us the

opportunity to present in a form of interview what women want to express. As you can see in the pages of the book the ladies possess a different path and evolution in terms of experience in the field and the volunteer development; in the interviews they express themselves openly and deeply according to their points of view.

Q3: How would you describe the book?

Larios: As a motivational one, this book is like a mirror where women interested in developing their abilities in project management can find different paths. As brand-new students, scholars, as seasoned professionals, as retired, as professor, as volunteers in different capacities, women reading this book will find a light of hope where project management can be used in every imaginable project and where women can find a piece of inspiration to develop their careers.

The book is not limited for women only; the idea is that whoever reads the book can help women specifically to find a place for professional development and career path either or both in the professional or volunteer capacities.

Q3: How did you choose the women you interviewed?

Larios: Our focus was on women in the project management profession based or located in Latin America. The selected interviewed women were based on their experience, professional development, volunteer path and searching for a variety of level of expertise. We wanted to have a variety of women that represent a spectrum of ladies that have studied, practiced, lived, promoted, volunteered the benefits of project management firsthand and that could give an image of what is the perception of the status of project management and women in Latin America.

Q4: Who is the core target audience for the book?

Larios: Professional women in Latin America or related to Latin America for business that are interested in developing project management capacities and are searching for examples, for contacts, for ideas on how other women have developed their careers, what they do each day, how they have overcome difficulties and what is the expectation they have for the profession in the future. Women can find in these pages a variety of examples to be inspired by their counterparts in different countries and find a way to see their own path. It is important to highlight that the book is being published in Spanish and English in an effort to be more global and open enough for readers and anyone interested to have the option to read the book in either or both languages.

Q5: What do you hope readers take away from this book?

Larios: As I explained my aspiration is that women around the world can see in this book a source of inspiration, a way to value the project management as a profession, as complementary to their educational or professional paths and an alternate way of developing skills through volunteer paths in their local communities. Instead of being a book of concepts or best practices, it is a book of life examples of other women located in Argentina, Peru, Colombia, Mexico or Brazil, giving examples of using project management in different contexts to cross frontiers, live in other countries, develop other abilities and find ways to succeed.

Q6: What is the key contribution of female project managers to the chapter, practice and dissemination in Latin America?

Larios: Women have been crucial for the development of the PM profession in Latin America. As you can see in their testimonies, most of them heard for the first time about project management in another country or forum and they have persisted enough to bring the practice to their location. Women are big promoters for this practice because they see firsthand the value of project management even in their daily lives. In each role, women have been able to see a way to develop their careers and their availabilities from the volunteer side up to the professional side. Currently there is an initiative of women communities in several chapters in Latin America where women promote and help other women to be part of their professional development.

Q7: Please explain the status of Project Management in Latin American region based on the interviews.

Larios: In their words, project management has seen a burst in the region in the last decade; more opportunities are open for female project managers to develop their careers throughout the entire region. However, women see a tremendous opportunity for growing in the following years to incorporate more women in the field and establish equal conditions for them.

Q8: Are there some particularities for women in project management in Latin America in comparison with other regions in the world?

Larios: This is a great question and difficult to say. First, this is not a formal and rigorous research to have fundamentals to speak of the status on PM around the world. However, under the perspective of the female interviewed in Latin America, there is a boom in the use of these methodologies and ways of doing business with a practical approach of other aspects in life. In Latin America can be perceived a great enthusiasm to adopt and grow the use of project management principles. I would say that project management is well-accepted worldwide, and more and more commonly used and known; however, I can see there are more mature markets such as USA and probably Europe while in Latin America it is a growing and long path to go.

Q9: We are also curious to know how you managed this project across the miles: as Angélica you live in Mexico and Ipek in Istanbul. Could you share how you organized?

Larios: Fortunately for us, the pandemic opened many ways of collaboration and long distance work. Not only are we far away but also the women participating in this project are located in different countries. Basically, email and a couple of meetings, WhatsApp was a common way to communicate and make decisions. We had a tremendous welcome among the interviewees and answers came along using email. Pretty much as we all work nowadays, I guess!

Q10: Could each of you share a key takeaway or a A-HA moment?

Larios: Well, an editorial project is quite different from the one we are more familiar with in project management. We had ups and downs as usual and sometimes of hesitation and doubt; however, once the book saw light and I was able to spread the news, the A-ha moment has come (at least to me) on the importance and relevance to have the opportunity to spread the news and have testimonials that we can read on how project management can change lives. Reading the lines of the book and seeing the happiness of these ladies, despite of their struggles, made me feel proud and that we did something really valuable.

Thank you so much for this opportunity, on behalf of Ipek, I want to thank David, Yasmina and the PM World Journal readers for this opportunity to be heard and to share what is happening on this side of the world. I hope we can contribute to the development and growth of PM in the different regions.

Book information

The book is available in Spanish and English in the same edition to have broader readers across the globe. The book is in different locations as ebook mainly but can also be ordered in a print fashion. The main outlet is on amazon; I am sharing the link here

[Perspectivas de mujeres en la dirección de proyectos \(medinalibergroup.com\)](https://medinalibergroup.com/)
[Perspectivas de Mujeres en Dirección de proyectos en Latinoamérica eBook : Ipek S. Ozguler, Angélica M. Larios: Amazon.com.mx: Tienda Kindle](#)

Thank you for allowing me to share my experience as a PM.

About the Interviewer



Yasmina Khelifi

Paris, France



Yasmina Khelifi, PMP, PMI- ACP, PMI-PBA is an experienced project manager in the telecom industry. Along with her 20-year career at [Orange S.A.](#) (the large French multinational telecommunications corporation), she sharpened her global leadership skills, delivering projects with major manufacturers and SIM makers. Yasmina strives for building collaborative bridges between people to make international projects successful. She relies on three pillars: project management skills, the languages she speaks, and a passion for sharing knowledge.

She is a PMP certification holder since 2013, a PMI- ACP and PMI-PBA certification holder since 2020. She is an active volunteer member at PMI France and PMI UAE, and a member of PMI Germany Chapter. French-native, she can speak German, English, Spanish, Italian, Japanese and she is learning Arabic. Yasmina loves sharing her knowledge and experiences at work, in her volunteers' activities at PMI, and in [projectmanagement.com](#) as a regular blogger. She is also the host and co-founder of the podcast [Global Leaders Talk with Yasmina Khelifi](#) to help people in becoming better international leaders.

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