BUSINESS PROCESS AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS RE-ENGINEERING: An Analysis in the Sri Lankan Context *

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ABSTRACT

Research and case studies have shown that there are a number of practical issues that need to be satisfied for successful business process re-engineering (BPR) (Weerakkody, Tagg & Bennett 1995, Willcocks 1995, Lombroso & Boyle 1995, Heracleous 1995, and Chodari, Haynes & Ridgway 1995). The success of business process and information systems re-engineering (BP & ISR) would significantly increase if efforts were made to identify factors which may influence the implementation of BP & ISR prior to the actual BPR work.

This report uses a case study approach to analyse the business and IS/IT environment in five Sri Lankan organisations and identify factors which may influence the successful implementation of BP & ISR in Sri Lanka. While some of the factors and issues may be distinctive to the case study organisations, many could apply to most large and medium size organisations in Sri Lanka.

Although each case study organisation was unique and represented a different sector in the Sri Lankan business environment, the day to day work and the IS/IT procedures were very similar in these organisations. The successful implementation of BP & ISR will largely depend on a number of cultural, political, organisational, management, employee, and business and IS/IT factors. Therefore a BP & ISR approach will need to be tailored

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before it is used in the Sri Lankan business environment. The business and IS/IT environment, particularly in the state organisations is relatively backward in comparison to organisations in the UK. The work environment in organisations is functionally oriented and surrounded by functional (departmental) barriers. In the IS/IT field, most organisations use or have access to the latest hardware, but lack proper information systems to support their business requirements due to primarily the lack of expertise in the area of business systems analysis and design.