

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Being the country's pioneering telecommunication service provider, Sri Lanka Telecom PLC has built a strong brand name in consumers' minds. High rise building fiber solution projects is an emerging business in the industry which needs to be captured by the company to maintain its competitive edge against the competitors. Since providing fiber solutions is a core competence of Sri Lanka Telecom PLC, the successful completion of high rise building solutions is of utmost importance. However, in the recent past it was observed that a substantial number of projects have failed to be delivered on time. This situation has unfavorably affected to the company in terms of financial and non-financial losses. In addition, the customer dissatisfaction has caused cancellation of contracts and loss of future contracts.

The main reasons for delays in high rise building solution delivery were categorized in terms of project planning, execution and skills of project team members and supporting staff. When it comes to project planning, absence of a structured planning mechanism using standard project management tools and absence of automated tools were identified as key causes affecting delays. In terms of project execution, delays were occurred due to ineffective monitoring in place currently. There was no project charter defining project scope, objectives and responsibilities, thus the monitoring was not being carried out properly. In addition, many delays occurred due to lack of soft skills in project team members where negotiations, conflict management, teamwork and decision making were not done efficiently. Hence insufficient training provided with respect to required project management soft skills was identified as another root cause.

Literature pertaining to above study areas revealed that project delays are common in long term and complex projects but the consequences are high. Many scholars have emphasized that delays of project delivery lead to customer dissatisfaction and disputes, hence project success is not achieved if time targets were compromised. Project planning is considered as a key aspect in literature and absence of planning is termed to be a main reason for project delays. The importance of monitoring in project execution has been given in literature with proposed frameworks for effective monitoring. In addition, the significance of project charter and documentation in managing projects proactively, in enhancing visibility of project scope and objectives too has been highlighted in researches. Apart from that theoretical studies have proven that soft skills play an important role in project execution and many projects do not reach success due to absence

of required soft skills in team members. It has been illustrated in literature that soft skill training has a positive impact on exhibiting required skill portfolio in project management and the scholars have detailed out the systematic methodology for conducting an effective training program.

The solutions proposed in the report included developing a project management software, designing a project charter for each building solution and conducting a soft skill enhancing training program. The project management software can help to establish a structured planning process with minimal manual intervention, thus the project planning delays are reduced while supporting in project monitoring. A range of project management techniques including work breakdown structure, Gantt chart and critical path method has been incorporated to the software. The proposed solution of designing a project charter can help in reducing project delays caused by unclear time targets, responsibilities and scope of work. Setting clear boundaries on those aspects allow monitoring the progress of the high rise building projects proactively. The third project component was focused on enhancing soft skills of the project team members via training which helps in reducing the delays occurred due to staggered negotiations, conflicts, low teamwork and ineffective decision making.

Finally the report discussed how the literature and solution development are linked to each other. In addition, the medium term and long term recommendations were given together with key considerations in implementing the solutions and the expected time frame for implementation. Therefore through application of proposed solutions, Sri Lanka Telecom can reduce the delays in high rise building solution provision.