



Our early efforts to proceed with some of the key initiatives identified in our HR strategy have not progressed as quickly as we had planned precisely because of our linkage to Public Service initiatives. For example, the restructuring of the FS Group to incorporate key elements of the Foreign Service Development Program, a version of the Management Trainee Program tailored to departmental requirements, had to be negotiated with PAFSO through the collective bargaining process. After ten months of joint effort, an agreement was finally reached on April 24, 1998. The implementation of the Universal Classification Standard (UCS) has been delayed by at least six months, and we now understand that the new standard may not resolve as many of our systemic problems as we had originally hoped. We discuss the status of the UCS project in section 4.2.3 below.

We will continue to seek the understanding and support of the central agencies for our initiatives and we will continue to support fundamental reform of the Public Service legislative framework.

1.4 WORK PLANNING

Our consultation paper said we would cull all of the promised actions from the draft HR strategy, analyse them and suggest an order of priority for each of them. Last summer, we began to build detailed project plans for each of our major initiatives and to weave them together in a master blueprint for organisational change.

As we drilled down into the HR strategy, identifying and sequencing the critical activities of each promise, we began the evolution of the blueprint. At this level of detail, we could map the interdependencies among our many initiatives and with others being undertaken outside the department. Key features of the detailed project plan are:

- an inclusive design that touches each major community;
- a corporate root for community-specific initiatives wherever appropriate;
- provision for negotiations where required;
- provision for tenders where external resources are required; and
- clear, inspiring interim goals paced to sustain momentum throughout the project span.

While this work needs to be updated and extended, the summer plan helped us to determine which horizontal initiatives are most critical to HR reform and therefore deserve priority attention. These findings are reflected in this new version of the HR strategy.

Within DFAIT we have multiple stream-specific HR cycles, which have never been formally mapped or synchronised for optimal corporate efficiency. We captured the rhythms of these cycles in our work plan so that we could align the implementation of key HR initiatives with them. Consequently, we can now set specific milestones for the