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Introduction

This paper outlines a strategic framework for guiding the work of the Executive Director’s office of the Africa Group I Constituency in the World Bank. It is a revision of the first paper that was published in September 2003, which came against the background of a broad consensus within the constituency that the complex challenges of development facing Africa necessitates the strengthening of the region’s engagement with the Bretton Woods Institutions. This consensus has been the driving force in defining the vision and priorities of our work since November 2002, as well as guiding the organizational structure that has been put in place. In the circumstances, the framework is a contribution toward reorienting the mission of the office to being more proactive in assessing the resources of the World Bank Group to more effectively help Africa to move steadily in the direction of sustainable growth and poverty reduction under the umbrella of the Millennium Declaration.

The paper embraces the new ethic of cooperation that is emerging between developing countries and their partners in development: the broad realization that the process of development and the fight against poverty must be driven by the developing countries themselves to ensure ownership and a strong political commitment to a credible and feasible economic agenda. Against this background, the donor community and the multilateral development institutions not only need to scale up the amount of aid but also work with recipient countries to ensure better results. Accordingly, the strategy will align the work of the office with this evolving results-oriented culture, putting the constituency visibly in the mainstream of the growing pressure on the Bank to improve its performance.

The Bank has several policy frameworks and instruments for providing assistance to developing countries including the process of preparing Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers and the Country Assistance Strategy(s). However, recent reviews by the Bank, notably, the Review of Development Effectiveness and the Portfolio Performance review, show that with the present pace of progress Africa is unlikely to achieve even a modicum of the Millennium Development Goals. This suggests that, the Country Assistance Strategy framework, the basic “business plan” for Bank intervention in our countries, needs to be strengthened to more adequately address country-specific conditions, with African countries in the driver’s seat on establishing priorities and setting policies. It is this mindset that underpins the proactive stance that the office is cultivating in dealing with the World Bank Executive Board and management on the way forward for Africa, including the Bank’s involvement in conflict and post-conflict countries. A strong commitment to the Initiative on Low Income Countries under Stress (LICUS) should be a strategic part of the Bank’s assistance strategy for Africa, considering the spillover effects of conflicts on many countries in the region.

Our efforts are not geared simply to getting the Bank to do more of the same things; rather, the constituency must work in concert to encourage the Bank to “think outside the box” by examining the potentials for new methodologies and instruments that might be more suitable to the African development experience. Private sector
development and the need to enhance the role of the IFC is one of the key areas that require innovative thinking. We have emphasized quite clearly to the senior management of IFC that its present model for assisting Africa is not adequate, a point that is supported by the low level of IFC’s activities in Africa.

It is important to recognize the fact that a large and diversified institution like the Bank, serving a broad heterogeneous clientele, would face a challenge in getting a clear perspective on what is required to achieve the Millennium Development Goals in different regions of the world. As such, the poorer countries whose voices might get lost in the maze of bureaucratic procedures—the ones that are considered not to have systemic influence on the global economic and financial system—have a special responsibility to be more aggressive in keeping their particular interests on the front burner of the Bank’s agenda. In this vein, the office is paying increased attention to developing constructive relationships across the various leadership structures of the Bank, including other Executive Directors, representing both developed and developing nations.

Our strategy is action oriented; however, it also stresses selectivity to effectively leverage the limited human and financial resources of the office. Meanwhile, steps are being taken to redress the resource deficiency in the office by securing budgetary resources for increased staffing and reinforcing the skill mix within the staff to effectively respond to the work program.

Periodic adjustments will be made to the work program of the office, with guidance from constituency countries to ensure ownership in the setting of priorities. This means that steps must be taken to enhance communication between the office and constituency countries, a responsibility that requires concerted effort from both sides than has hitherto been the case.

In sum, this paper is an attempt to provide a perspective for improving the service delivery of the office of Executive Director for Africa Group I Constituency in the World Bank. It is the beginning of a process that could mature over the medium term, with support from the capitals of constituency countries. It emphasizes a proactive role for the office, while calling on constituency countries to take their share of responsibility for improved effectiveness. Essentially, the task for the office is three-fold: first, to add value to the policy debates and general direction of the Bank from an African perspective; second, to help make the Bank’s engagement in Africa more results oriented in the context of the Millennium Development Goals; and third, to leverage the representational role of the office by working with other Executive Directors, especially those from the donor community, and Bank management to steer the Bank more in the direction of programs and infrastructure projects that would promote regional development, a crucial endeavor given the small size of the economies of constituency countries.
Context for Change

Poverty reduction has long been the focus of the Bank. However, the Millennium Declaration has created a new context for addressing the issue of poverty. The Declaration shows an obvious disquiet about what has been achieved thus far, while committing the international community to act with a renewed sense of urgency to achieve specific measurable benchmarks within a given time span. This has led to the MDGs which should be achieved by 2015. The debate has shifted from just the mere scaling up of aid to the more complex issue of its quality and impact. The limited capacity of many developing countries to take advantage of globalization to be able to benefit from trade and direct foreign investment is also a topical issue.

For SSA, The Millennium Declaration is both a challenge and a new window of opportunity. The region faces the greatest challenge for meeting the MDGs. Poverty remains pervasive, growth remains below the threshold of 7% p.a. required for the MDGs, the private sector is weak, external debt remains unsustainable in almost all countries, and social indicators generally point to low levels of human development. Regional conflicts have inflicted grave consequences on the populations of a number of SSA countries, in addition to casting political uncertainty over the region, driving away foreign investment. However, there are some middle income countries within SSA which could be a magnet for growth and development in Africa, but which also face a different seat of problems, including heavy debt burdens, HIV/AIDS, and pockets of high levels of poverty. These countries need recognition particularly in accessing concessional resources in order to unleash their growth potential.

There is a broad recognition that frameworks and instruments for development assistance on the part of both the World Bank and bilateral agencies are in need of refinements to become more effective and results-oriented especially in SSA where the scourge of poverty is greatest. Perhaps a more important development is the new consensus among development partners that has led to an environment in which developing countries are being encouraged to take a greater leadership role of their development agenda. Against this background, SSA, in particular, must seize the opportunity to inject its views at the earliest stage of the refinement process.

From the perspective of the office of the Executive Director, we have to also become more effective agents of change by taking advantage of the call of the international community for increased influence of developing countries in the decision-making process of the Bretton Woods Institutions. The challenge for the office is to become a facilitator and proactive advocate, with adequate support from the constituency countries, to make the Bank more responsive to the needs of SSA. This is the underlying theme of the work culture that is being cultivated in the office. Essentially, our strategic view is to find ways of improving service delivery to the constituency in the context of the new reality, one that emphasizes ownership and responsibility on the part of developing countries while challenging the Bank—the premier development institution—to be more results-oriented. There will be an ongoing assessment of our
work program so as to be able to respond to changing circumstances and to remain relevant to the needs of constituency members, individually and collectively.

### Our Vision, Mission and Goals

The **Vision** of the Executive Director’s office is to become more effective and proactive in representing the interests of the constituency in the Bank and in bringing the African perspective to the policy direction of the institution in order to achieve development and significant poverty reduction in the region.

The **Mission** of our Africa Group I Constituency office is to increase the influence of the constituency in shaping policies, strategies and instruments of the World Bank with a view to increasing assistance and development effectiveness for attainment of the MDGs.

The interlocking **goals** for this strategic framework are to:

- strengthen partnerships between our constituency and the World Bank Group;
- ensure the scaling-up of financial and technical support to our member countries;
- Increasing the participation of African enterprises in the business opportunities of the World Bank.
- increase the “effective voice” and participation of African countries in the Bretton Woods Institutions through a configuration of existing opportunities;

### Strategic Objectives

Recent reviews of Bank assistance suggest that addressing Africa’s development challenges will require more and focused attention in terms of increased resources, improved effectiveness, and development of methodologies and approaches that take into account country-specific conditions. It is further acknowledged that significant poverty reduction in Africa, and attaining the MDGs, will require higher growth and which is sustained for a long time. In addressing the current challenges facing the region, the Executive Director’s office at the World Bank will focus on a few high impact strategic objectives in its operational work in the short to medium term.

Given the broad spectrum of issues and topics that are debated at the World Bank in the context of its operations, prioritization of the strategic objectives in this Strategic Framework Paper will reflect the current issues and their potential impact on the policy
and strategic direction of the bank in the immediate future. Thus, the prioritization does not necessarily reflect the relative importance of a particular issue or topic to development or to the Constituency, but rather the time-sensitivity and calendar of the debates.

**Strategic Objectives include:**

- Making Africa a top priority in World Bank Group’s operations, given the relatively higher challenges of growth and attaining the MDGs;

- Increasing resource flows to our constituency (and to Africa in general), and ensuring that resources are timely and predictable;

- Ensuring increased resources for country programs, and within countries to create the fiscal space for productive investments by advocating for the effective use of resources in the Bank;

- Increasing resource allocation to key social and productive sectors, particularly infrastructure necessary for strengthening the foundations for growth;

- Increasing attention to agriculture and rural development;

- Ensuring issues of trade and regional integration receive increased Bank support through financial commitments, technical assistance and advocacy.

- The G-8 Debt Cancellation Proposal is implemented in a manner consistent with its original intention, and Debt Relief is extended to non-HIPCs.

- Increasing effectiveness of resources to Africa through commitments on harmonization, alignment and predictability;

- Scaling up IFC and MIGA activities in Africa to facilitate private sector development by increasing IFC equity investments, and improving the investment climate;

- To bring forth the voice issue to the center stage for discussion and consideration; (i) administrative issues (short term); and (ii) structural issues (long term);

- Ensuring that capacity building resources are effective, result in durable capacity, and contributes to productivity enhancement.

- Building consensus on Bank support for a macro-economic policy framework that enhances pro-poor growth; and financial sector development.

- Broadening consensus on the outstanding issues in the financing and delivery of social services, with particular focus on education; HIV/AIDS, Malaria and TB; Water and Sanitation;
• Influencing Bank policy direction and activities before Board meetings by increasing our participation in the thematic groups discussions.

Realization of the above objectives will require a tripartite arrangement between constituency member countries, the Executive Director’s office and Bank management based on the following principles:

• Seeking enhanced “voice” of constituency member countries by forging common positions, helped by increased cooperation between the office and constituency members.

• Building coalitions with development partners, the private sector and civil society organizations to step up resource flows to SSA, keep the spotlight on the MDGs and ensure the development of the private sector.

• Strengthening partnerships and governance principles that guarantee mutual accountability in donor assistance and effective utilization of resources, and ensuring that each category of stakeholders—donors, the Bank and recipient countries—implement their part of the bargain.

• Improving the effectiveness of official development assistance through harmonization of policies among donors, the streamlining of conditionality and the establishment of improved monitoring and evaluation procedures.

• Building capacity in constituency member countries to enable them articulate their priorities, develop programs and implement them much faster than has previously been the case.

• Development of an effective communication infrastructure, considering that the timely flow of information is central to increasing the participation of the constituency in policy formulation within the World Bank Group.

• Commitment to a competent and professional team in the Executive Director’s office that would effectively represent the views of the constituency in the Executive Board and to management and staff of the Bank.

The above strategic objectives are elaborated in more details in the next section below.
Detailed Strategic Objectives and Focus of Office Resources in the Short to Medium Term.

I. Making Africa a top priority in World Bank Group’s operations, given the relatively higher challenges of growth and attaining the MDGs;

In February 2004, the Executive Board held a colloquium that focused on Africa’s development challenges and priorities. At the end of the colloquium, it was concluded that the “business as usual” approach of the Bank would not deliver the desired growth and poverty reduction in Africa that is consistent with meeting the MDGs. It was then agreed that a pragmatic and innovative approach must be adopted in the Bank’s assistance to the region.

Consequently, the Board and the Development Committee decided that the Africa Region of the Bank must come up with a specific action plan for Africa which would be tailored to the conditions in Africa. Following this decision, the office focused on ensuring that Bank management comes up with an action plan that reflected a departure from the usual approaches in Africa. An Africa action plan called “Meeting the Development Challenges of Africa: A World Bank Group Action Plan” is now in place, and the focus has now shifted to implementation. In the short term, the thrust will be on formulation of implementation modalities that will lead to the desired outcomes. This could include providing information on how best the Plan would be carried forward at country level. In the medium-term, efforts will be devoted to advocacy for adequate financing of the plan and to ensuring its smooth implementation. It is our view that the Plan will not make a difference if significantly higher resources, beyond what is provided under the IDA performance-based criteria, are not committed to it by donors. Thus the office will relentlessly push for a significant resource allocation to the plan over and above what IDA 14 provides, by advocating for alternative financing mechanisms wherever feasible.

II. Increasing resource flows to our constituency (and to Africa in general), and ensuring that resources are timely and predictable.

   (a) Improving Bank support frameworks and reforming lending instruments.

   Africa faces the greatest challenges for meeting the MDGs, requiring not just economic reform but also increased resource flows to the region. The existing frameworks and instruments, such as the Comprehensive Development Framework, the Country Assistance Strategy (CAS), PRSPs, and HIPC, if refined to take into account the diverse, complex and heterogeneous needs of the region, could provide the needed financing mechanisms for enhanced growth and poverty reduction. While the primary responsibility for implementing growth-enhancing and poverty reducing policies lies with our constituency member governments, the Bank’s vast experience in providing assistance to diverse developing countries places the institution in a unique position to help the region confront its development challenges.
The immediate challenge is to ensure that there is a significant increase in resources to Africa, consonant with the needs of the region. Moreover, assistance needs to be timely in order to have high impact, and predictable to ensure smooth implementation of programs/projects. The existing frameworks remain inadequate and some are so complex to be able to deliver timely assistance. A large number of Bank instruments, therefore, require significant reforms and restructuring to make them more relevant to countries and more responsive to changing circumstances.

(b) Debt Relief and the MDGs.

The extension of the sunset clause to December 2006 under the HIPC Initiative provides an important opportunity for eligible countries that are not yet in the framework to get in and benefit from debt relief it provides before its remaining short span expires. The biggest constraint, however, is that the HIPC Trust Fund remains heavily under-funded, in addition to questions being raised about its robustness in resolving the debt problem. Last year, the Bank proposed a new debt sustainability framework to guide borrowing decisions of low-income countries, with the intent of preventing countries from becoming debt distressed once they have reached sustainable levels. The framework presents both policy and operational challenges which would need to be resolved for it to be useful to our countries, including meeting the MDGs. In any event, it will be important to bring outright and irrevocable debt cancellation to its conclusion for the HIPC countries, and to find immediately a mechanism of dealing with the debt problem of middle income countries majority of which have similar characteristics to the HIPCs. Debt sustainability issues should not constrain resources for financing growth, there should be increased resources for the MDGs and financing frameworks should ensure resources predictability.

The office will continue providing timely information to constituency countries on the developments in this area, including implications of the extension of the sunset close and the need to speed up actions necessary for them to start benefiting from HIPC resources. This will also include encouraging countries in the interim period to maintain good track record so that they can reach completion point sooner rather than later. The quest for adequate funding of the HIPC Trust Fund will continue to be a priority in the office’s work plan. In the Constituency Governors’ discussions of the debt issues, they expressed a strong view that debt sustainability should be dealt with in the context of the long term issues of economic growth and poverty reduction instead of fragmenting the issues. In this regard, the office will strengthen its dialogue with the other Executive Directors and management in advocating for the need to mobilize resources in the context of the MDGs, and the need to tackle issues of growth, poverty reduction and debt as a package and in a holistic manner.

(c) Support to LICUS and Post Conflict countries.

The LICUS framework, designed to guide Bank lending to countries with weak policies and institutions, and therefore lacking the capacity to effectively utilize aid, is faced with problems that have limited its usefulness. These include: lack of effectiveness partly arising from inadequate results monitoring and evaluation framework; the very
small size of the resource envelope—estimated at US$ 25 million; the lack of resource additionality; and lack of country ownership and mutual accountability. Moreover the limited Trust Fund resources are being used by Bank country offices to fund analytical work which in principle should be funded from the administrative budget. For the LICUS Initiative to be useful, it needs to be adequately funded. Experience in the implementation of the LUCUS Initiative has shown that country specific LICUS trust funds, including in our Constituency, have been more successful and adequately funded than the “basket” one. In this regard, the office will encourage, in addition to liaising with other Executive Directors in advocating for increased funding of both the country-specific and basket-type trust funds. To improve governance of basket-type trust funds, the office will seek eligibility criteria that apply uniformly to all countries to address issues of subjectivity in their utilization. Also, issues of accountability, ownership and results evaluation will be taken up in the office’s work plan. This will involve, inter-alia, sensitizing constituency countries on the use of LICUS Trust Funds.

(d) Improving IDA resource allocation mechanism to reflect country needs and to ensure objectivity.

The primary tool used in the allocation of Bank resources to IDA countries is the IDA Resource Allocation Index (IRAI)—previously known as the Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (CPIA). Over the past two years, the methodology that underpins this resource allocation instrument has been a source of intense debate both within the Bank and in our countries. While some improvements have been made on some aspects of the methodology, and agreement has been reached on disclosure, a lot remains to be done. In particular, the methodology remains subjective and fails to capture current country performances, a practice that does not create incentives for turnaround countries to even tackle even more difficult reforms. In the short term, the office will continue to advocate for transparency and mutual accountability in the use of the methodology to make it a fair instrument in allocating resources, and help in restraining its use outside the scope of intended purposes. In this regard, the office will continue to push for the public disclosure of the methodology, in parallel with the disclosure of country specific ratings. In the medium term, efforts will be devoted to advocating for further improvement of the methodology, and in particular push for variables for the CPIA or resource allocation to be based on country conditions. This will have two advantages: first, will ensure that different groups of countries, such as good performers, post conflict, turnarounds, etc are not assessed on the same yardstick in the context of resource allocation; second, it would guarantee equitable allocation of resources and would provide incentives for countries to improve even further. This will entail finding strategies on how to engage countries on the methodology and getting feedback.

III. Ensuring increased resources for country programs, and within countries to create the fiscal space for productive investments by advocating for the effective use of resources in the Bank

The effective and efficient utilization of resources is as important as the amount of aid itself. A number of internal reviews of Bank assistance reveal that despite huge funding of programs in Africa, in some areas, it has not been effective. A classic example
is in the area of capacity building. Therefore, there is need to critically look at the budget allocation mechanisms within the institution and what components of country programs are actually being funded. Similarly, at country level, expenditures have simply increased the debt burden of countries without creating internal capacity to generate savings. The office will therefore advocate for the Bank to undertake analytical work in these areas, with a view to creating fiscal space to countries to invest in productive investments.

IV. Increasing resource allocation to key social and productive sectors, particularly infrastructure necessary for strengthening the foundations for growth;

There is an urgent need to substantially increase Bank lending to infrastructure in order to increase economic growth rates in Africa by improving productivity. In addition to enhancing competitiveness, sound infrastructure reduces the cost of doing business and facilitates intra-regional trade and regional integration. The Bank’s budget allocation to infrastructure development has started to address the long period of systematic decline in Bank assistance for this sector. However, in order to have a real and faster transfer of resources to finance infrastructure projects, a number of policy and operational issues will have to be addressed.

In the short term, the office will continue to put up a strong case for increased Bank lending for infrastructure and ensuring that the internal budget allocation mechanisms give priority to infrastructure; seek to create greater understanding, by working with our authorities and through dialogue, on the importance of focusing their PRSPs on the critical needs of the region placing emphasis on infrastructure, given that Bank’s operations are guided by CASs; strengthen consultation and networking to resolve quickly issues of risks and staff incentives that currently are constraining increasing infrastructure lending in the Bank, and financing large infrastructure projects, including advocating for an appropriate staff incentive and career development structure to compensate staff working on complex and or difficult projects. Given the small size of our economies, some infrastructure projects would need to be implemented at a regional level. In this regard, the office will also give priority to the need for the Bank to develop appropriate instruments to facilitate lending at regional level.

In the medium to long term, attention will be paid to increasing the fiscal space in macroeconomic programs to allow increased inflow of external resources. In particular, in addition to the office’s continued advocacy in the Bank, attempts will be made to encourage our Constituency countries to take up this issue in their bilateral consultations with the IMF. The office will encourage constituency Governors to take up the complex issue of fiscal space more vigorously and to raise it at appropriate political fora. Other priorities to be pursued in the medium term include continuing to work with Bank Management in reviewing internal safeguard policies with a view to making them supportive of infrastructure lending, and to continue emphasizing the development mandate of the institution.
V. Ensuring issues of trade and regional integration receive increased Bank support through financial commitments, technical assistance and advocacy.

The Bank’s advocacy role has helped to the profile of Africa's trade issues on the world stage, and, a separate department within the Bank to deal with trade matters to facilitate the integration of trade-related analytical work into country operations has been established. However, major challenges remain, some of which, such as subsidies, go beyond the institutional mandate of the Bank and need to be handled at the highest political level. Issues of standards, trade capacity, export diversification, remain a major impediment to our countries’ integration into the global trading system. The experience of AGOA, where countries in SSA focused their attention on its extension and overlooked the impact of the expiration of the US Multi-fiber Agreement, underscores the need to intensify policy debate on strategic issues with our countries. Also, the tension between regional economic arrangements, and bilateral versus multilateralism in trading arrangements need to be carefully assessed.

In view of the strategic importance of these issues, the office will adopt a two-pronged strategy. First, the office, together with our sister office in the IMF, will continue to seek increasing the effectiveness of our Constituency meetings where policy-makers could focus more on strategic issues. Second, the office will explore using the recently established Analytical Trust Fund to re-assess regional economic and trading arrangements with a view to building consensus on a clear strategy to promote regional arrangements that benefit our countries and facilitate our countries’ access to WTO. Progress in this regard will also have implications for the use of regional organizations and institutions in implementing regional infrastructure programs/projects. The office will also continue to encourage Bank management to help our countries to develop standards and institutional capacity for trade facilitation and trade negotiations. In this regard, the office will closely monitor the implementation of the “Aid for Trade” initiative of the Bank to ensure that adequate resources are provided to countries to deal with trade liberalization issues and addressing supply capacity constraints. Also, the office will explore the possibility for the Bank to provide technical assistance and advisory services on streamlining regional economic structures.

VI. The G-8 Debt Cancellation Proposal is implemented in a manner consistent with its original intended outcomes and non-HIPC’s considered for Debt Relief.

The G-8 proposal to cancel immediately and irrevocably external debt for HIPC countries that have reached completion point provide an opportunity to redirect debt service resources to poverty reducing programs. It will also remove the debt overhang resulting in improvement in country creditworthiness for increased private investment. While a political decision was made to cancel debt, the task of working out the modalities for implementation was left to the Boards of the World Bank, IMF and AfDB. Given this scenario, the immediate task of the office is to ensure that the decision of the G-8 is carried through, to cancel debt irrevocably and without additional conditionality beyond that imposed in the context of the HIPC framework. An important concern that needs to be flagged relentlessly is the additionality of resources to ensure increased net positive resource flows to Africa to finance growth, and this will depend on how the whole initiative will be financed. Another critical aspect will be to ensure that the financial
integrity of IDA is preserved for its sustainability, given that it’s the only most predictable source of development financing for poor countries.

At our office’s operational level, this will require strong interventions in the Board, and strengthening partnership particularly with the G-8 countries. Keeping our constituency countries engaged on this issue will be critical as details on implementation are worked out, in light of the fact that key elements critical for implementation will still be decided at political level, through the Development Committee and or Deputies. In this regard, the office will require some strategic thinking on how this will be accomplished. Beyond the G-8 proposal, the office will scale up advocacy in the Board, and in its consultations with management on debt relief for middle income countries in our Constituency because the majority of them have characteristics that are similar to HIPC.

**VII. Increasing effectiveness of resources to Africa through commitments on harmonization, alignment and predictability;**

Although the situation has improved greatly over the past decade, multiple conditionalities and lack of donor coordination continue to place unsustainable pressure on the limited capacities of African countries, the pace of program implementation, and undermine aid effectiveness. Of particular concern is the cross-conditionality between the Bank and the Fund, which often leads to holding up of funding for development projects and programs because countries have difficulty satisfying certain macroeconomic targets in Fund-supported programs. The effect has been seen in critical areas such as health and education, seriously undermining aid effectiveness. There is some progress on the harmonization of donor conditionality within the institution and with other Multilateral Development Institutions (MDBs), although real implementation is yet to take place in many areas. The Bank’s harmonization and simplification work which entails, among others, the use of country systems provides an opportunity to both our countries and the Bank to have flexibility that could enable tailoring assistance to Africa’s local and diverse conditions.

A tool that has proved to be useful in assessing the effectiveness of Bank assistance to individual countries, and which brings out important lessons for improvement, is the Country Assistance Evaluation (CAE) by the Operations Evaluation Department (OED). This tool has been instrumental in building consensus among the Executive Board members, management and sometimes client counties on re-orienting the Country Assistance Strategies (CAS) to country conditions, policies and priorities. Similarly, OED has carried out evaluation of the PRSPs and made recommendations on how to improve this instrument.

In the short term, the office will continue to advocate for the implementation of donors’ commitment to harmonization, alignment, and commitment of resources in a medium term framework to ensure resource predictability for increased effectiveness. In addition, the office will work with staff to influence the implementation of harmonization agenda No. 2. This will entail finding mechanisms through which the office will regularly be informed about the meetings. In the next two years, the office will pilot selective upstream engagement with Constituency countries on major programs, operations,
initiatives and donors conferences, such as the CGs, Annual Country Portfolio Performance Reviews, etc, to facilitate information flow and knowledge diffusion between the countries and its clients, in the context of strengthening ownership and sharing cross country/regions’ best practices and experiences. Furthermore, the office will continue to be proactive in advocating for the incorporation of the good lessons into Bank supported country operations.

In the medium term, the Executive Director’s office will work to gain support for a further rationalization of the application of conditionality to ensure that it encourages adjustment and reform without stifling the longer-term goals of development. Other activities will include encouraging the use of country experiences in designing financing frameworks and instruments as well as in addressing bottlenecks in existing ones such as PRSPs, the HIPC Initiative, CAS, etc. The office will work with OED and management to further improve this instrument, and to sensitize our countries about the need to align CASs with PRSP priorities. Because Economic Sector Work (ESW) has been a useful tool for identifying country challenges and priorities, efforts will be made to ensure that Bank’s diagnostic work translates into or becomes an integral component of Bank supported operations. This will be important in improving the relevance and timeliness of the Bank’s analytical work which could improve further the quality of country dialogue and increase aid effectiveness. Through consultations with other Executive Directors, the office will work to ensure that conditions attached to Bank assistance are reduced, focusing on critical conditions for growth and poverty reduction, and shifting emphasis from policies and processes to results and outcomes.

VIII. Scaling up IFC and MIGA activities in Africa to facilitate private sector development by increasing IFC equity investments, and improving the investment climate.

Private sector led growth in SSA needs to be harnessed by further improving the investment climate to reduce the cost of doing business and through foreign direct investment. At the moment, the weak private sector in Africa, coupled with the perceived high risk limits the contribution of the sector to economic growth and poverty reduction. Unfortunately, because of these factors, IFC involvement in Africa was kept to very low levels. However, IFC is currently implementing a new strategy for Africa, with a view to increasing its portfolio in the region.

In the short term, the office will give priority to: advocating for scaling up IFC resources to Africa to support private sector development through direct investments and by improving the investment climate; following closely the implementation of the new IFC strategy for Africa, and dealing with emerging issues on a timely basis; ensuring that the reward system of IFC encourages working in difficult areas and recognizes the long term developmental impact of the operations; continuing to emphasize that IFC needs to focus more on the development side of its operations in accordance with the development mandate of the WBG; and making sure that IFC continues its focus on African countries so that they can benefit from the catalytic and demonstration effects.

In the medium term, efforts will be focused on strengthening the collaboration and partnership between IFC and IDA, and in particular to deal with the tensions created due
to the differences in the operational policies of these individual entities. Other activities will include advocating for increased collaboration between the IFC, IDA and MIGA in order to reduce transaction costs; working with MIGA management to harness the role of MIGA, including contributing to the preparation of agency’s strategy for Africa. In addition, the office will continue working with IFC on diversification of instruments and making them relevant to Africa.

The office will also proactively engage Bank Management and IFC to develop a range of instruments to support regional infrastructure projects, including the possibility of developing IFC-government partnerships, where the private sector is either not ready to take on the challenge or simply not interested. The office will also support Bank efforts to establish the necessary regulatory frameworks for private sector participation through up-scaling the Bank's analytical work and capacity building in individual countries. The office will seize the opportunity of piloting the use of environmental and social safeguards policies in Bank operations to provide our countries information and social safeguard requirements in project implementation, and the good practice lessons from the pilot programs and projects.

IX. To bring forth the voice issue to the center stage for discussion and consideration

Since the Monterrey consensus up to 2004, voice was a topical issue for discussion within the BWIs and Development Committee. Since then, however, there has been less interest in the subject. There are two aspects to the voice issue: the short term administrative/management aspects that would not require amendment of the Articles of Agreement; and the medium to long term structural dimensions which are more complex, would be effected through an amendment of the articles, and because of their complexity would required broad consensus at political level.

The immediate priority of the office will be to find a way of bringing back this debate at the center of the discussions in the Board and in the development committee. Given that Africa is unlikely to benefit from a performance-based allocation of voting strength, the office will focus, in the short term, on the administrative aspects of voice which can be implemented by the Board and management and which do not require amending the articles of agreement. These include, continuing to put up a strong case for at least one additional chair in the Executive Board, advocating for appointment of Africans at senior management level, creation of a second deputy managing director position in the IMF to be filled by an African, ensuring that African staff in the two institutions are accorded the same opportunity for career advancement as their counterparts from other regions, and strengthening further the African Executive Directors offices.

In the medium term, priority will be given to strengthen coordination within the constituency through better organization and having consensus on common positions. Given that African countries are the largest beneficiaries of bank assistance in terms of number of countries, better organization at constituency level will help bring about effective voice. This will entail finding pragmatic ways of strengthening the policy and or strategic content of discussions during constituency Governors’ meetings; and the office
to improve outreach to constituency countries by adopting a business-like approach to our service delivery. Put it more simply, the office needs to identify itself much more with our countries by participating in major discussions between the Bank and our constituency countries. This will have a number of advantages including, educating our countries on the role of ED offices and how they can take advantage of them. Most importantly, this could help build trust which would facilitate greater level of information sharing. In addition, the office would be able to get accurate and timely information which would further enhance greater level of the effectiveness of its interventions in the Board. This will entail working with constituency countries to provide input into major initiatives in the region.

The office will encourage Governors to take up issues of a structural nature at the appropriate political fora for Africa to be given special consideration in the restoration of its voting strength.

**X. Ensuring capacity building resources, result in durable capacity, and contributes to productivity enhancement.**

The Bank undertook a review of capacity building activities in Africa in 2005. The findings suggest that despite the significant resources spent on capacity building through ODA, the impact on country capacities has been less than expected. Technical assistance has not led to durable capacities, suggesting the need to adopt a different approach to capacity building in the region. The report which contains a series of recommendations was published recently. The task ahead of us is how to implement those recommendations.

The office worked with the rest of the review team to ensure than the report and the recommendations took full account of the circumstances in Africa, and communicated the recommendations to governors. Going forward, the office will ensure that Governors are sensitized on the key issues, for their consideration in future Bank supported country programs. In the medium term, focus will be shifted to ensuring that the country CASs and Bank operations reflect the recommendations of the report particularly resource allocation to important programs and projects. The guiding principle to capacity building would be increasing productivity in our countries for enhanced economic growth.

**XI. Building Consensus on Bank Support for a Macro-economic Policy Framework that Enhances Growth; and Financial Sector Development.**

There is an established relationship between macro-economic stability, economic growth and poverty reduction. The thrust of key Bank supported reforms in the 1990s was restoration and maintenance of macro-economic stability. For the past two decades, both the IMF and World Bank insisted on strict macro-economic targets, focusing on the short term demand management needs. Not enough attention was given to balancing the supply side in order to address constraints to growth. The outcome of this phenomenon is that while countries have complied with the strict macroeconomic targets and hence maintained stability, their growth potential has been severely limited by lack of meaningful investments in sectors that would increase productivity and reduce the cost of doing business. Even where resources could be available, the tightness of the macro-
economic frameworks has not allowed external resources to flow to where they are needed. This also helps to explain why the initial high economic growth rates of countries that carried out reforms have not been sustained. Hence, there is a need to re-evaluate and rethink this approach if the necessary resources for growth and for the MDGs are to flow to countries that badly need them. Governors have called for fiscal space in their macro-economic frameworks so as to address their infrastructure needs.

In this regard, the office will continuously attempt to build consensus within the institution for the need to balance the short term macro-economic needs with the long term supply issues of growth. This could entail a study that would identify the trade offs. The outcome objective should be growth, and macro-economic stability should not be an end in itself. Also, providing country experiences to our Governors could help them avoid the mistakes of earlier reform processes while taking advantage of the good aspects thereof.

Emphasis will also be given to financial sector restructuring to promote the development of appropriate financial products and services, as well as capacity building for prudent macro-economic management. Ongoing discussions with IFC will continue aimed at getting the IFC to develop appropriate instruments to support the development of micro-finance institutions, including capacity building and equity investments. Other areas of focus will be to work with Bank management on supporting country-driven financial sector assessments and capital markets development, including support to regional initiatives.

XII. Increasing Attention to Agriculture and Rural Development

Addressing rural development challenges requires a holistic approach that entails investment in social sectors, infrastructure, and agricultural productivity to ensure food security and improvements in household incomes. However, because poverty is pervasive in rural areas, a large proportion of rural dwellers cannot afford some basic services at market prices. Under the circumstances, it is important that ways be found to subsidize such services which are vital public goods.

In the short to medium term, the office will continue to impress upon Bank management the urgency of developing appropriate instruments and to encourage IFC’s involvement in rural development by supporting capacity building in rural communities. The office will also support and work with IFC to gain support for initiative-wide funding, and the replication in a number of countries the Rural Private Sector Enterprise Initiative, which is being piloted in Kenya and Mozambique with the possibility of expanding to Eastern and Southern Africa, targeting jobs creation in poor families.

XIII. Broadening consensus on the outstanding issues in the financing and delivery of social services.

In the area of social services, the Executive Director’s office will focus on three areas in the short to medium term: (i) Education for All (EFA), (ii) HIV/AIDS, Malaria and TB, and (iii) Water and Sanitation. Both the education and health sectors demand long term mobilization of resources and efforts, the fulfillment of which requires that a
number of existing initiatives such as EFA First Track Initiative and HIPC be fully funded.

(i) **Education for All (EFA)**

Education is a major factor in enhancing productivity and improving the welfare of the general population. The Bank has been at the forefront of promoting and supporting education programs/projects. Although there has been significant improvement in the sector in SSA, challenges remain which need urgent attention. For example, the EFA program is not adequately funded, and there are internal institutional constraints within the Bank that have not allowed the available committed funds to be quickly disbursed.

The immediate intervention by the office is to press upon management to speed up disbursement of commitments already made. This will entail working with staff to understand the internal factors behind slow disbursement. A study was commissioned by the office under the Analytical Trust Fund for a deeper investigation of the issues that impinge on the speed of disbursements of funds already committed. The study is currently underway and the office will review the recommendations for necessary action. Other short term priorities will include advocating for: increased resources for the education sector, including secondary and tertiary levels; and scaling up of analytical work to track education expenditure outcomes.

Medium term activities for the office will include: identifying issues for Governors to be able to engage IDA Deputies on resource mobilization and accountability; Advocating for measures to improve aid effectiveness in the sector, and issues of the macro-economic impact of global programs and the need for fiscal space.

(ii) **HIV/AIDS, Malaria and TB**

The spread of HIV/AIDS in Africa and its consequences on human and institutional capacity has a potential adverse impact on economic growth and sustainable development in the region. The World Bank has been at the forefront in supporting the fight against HIV/AIDS, particularly in those countries where political leadership and commitment have been strong. Faster implementation of HIV/AIDS programs has been hampered by policy as well as implementation challenges. In particular, funds that have been committed by the Bank are disbursing very slowly, if at all. Malaria and TB also remain major constraints in advancing human development and have impacted on labor productivity. On Malaria, the Bank is re-strategizing to be more effective, and is spearheading the development of a common approach to effectively utilize donor resources. Under the Malaria Booster Program, the Africa region of the bank is preparing a result-oriented program that envisages greater coordination of the various components in Bank supported programs, to maximize effective use of resources. The new approach seeks to emphasize a regional dimension in the effort, and is earmarking US$ 500 million over a three-year period, of which US$ 160 million is earmarked to regional programs. The scope of the program will be ten years. At the moment, the program faces the following challenges. First, because its part of the performance-based allocation
mechanism, making malaria a priority in the country CASs is becoming a challenge. Second, the internal budget allocation challenge for administration. The office will work with the Africa region in the development of this program.

The Bank’s policy framework that limits access to concessional funding by IBRD countries poses serious challenges for the fight against HIV/AIDS. Some IBRD countries are required to borrow at non-concessional terms to fund their HIV/AIDS programs but are unwilling to do so due to other pressing priorities, while others cannot simply afford it. And yet HIV/AIDS prevalence rates in some of those countries have reached alarming proportions. At the same time, some countries are in non-accrual status with the BWIs which means they cannot access any form of funding from the Bank. Given cross-border mobility, this seriously undermines both country-specific as well as regional HIV/AIDS programs. Global programs could provide a short term relief but the tight macro-economic frameworks of individual countries are severely constraining their use.

The office will help in disseminating information to our Constituency countries to encourage sharing best practices and regional experiences on approaches to fight the spread of the disease. Issues of capacity building in the delivery of HIV/AIDs services and absorptive capacity will require urgent attention. The issue of slow disbursement of funds not only for HIV/AIDS, but also for other programs in the region will be investigated through a planned study to be funded under the Analytical Trust Fund. In the meantime, the office will seek remedial actions within the Bank and inform our authorities on the committed funds. In addition, the office will intensify its collaboration with Bank management and Executive Directors representing other countries in the Board on the appropriate frameworks and instruments to support regional HIV/AIDS programs, including access to concessional resources by IBRD countries in the region. Also, mechanisms need to be found to strengthen global partnerships and ensuring effective and efficient utilization of resources.

(iii) Water and Sanitation

Safe water and sanitation are essential to improving the health of the general population. A key element that has been emphasized by the World Bank in the development of water infrastructure is participation of the private sector. However, because the private sector in Africa is weak, meaningful public-private partnerships have been limited, leading to reduced investments in the sector. Scaling-up resources; building capacity of the private sector and communities; strengthening and up-scaling the role of IFC in public–private partnerships; and policy issues related to affordability, are issues on which the office will continue to proactively engage Bank management.

The maintenance of water infrastructure by rural communities provides the greatest challenge for sustainability. The office will encourage the up-scaling of the analytic and advisory work of the Bank with a view to devising cost-effective means of sustaining water provision in the rural areas. Related to capacity building is the urgent need for IFC to increase its involvement in water infrastructure development and financing as a means to strengthen public-private partnerships in the sector. Because water infrastructure development requires large capital outlays with low levels of cost recovery in rural areas,
coupled with a lack of interest by the private sector, there is need to have a new approach. In particular, the state needs to provide for this sector, which is regarded as a public good in the rural areas. Affordability issues need to be taken into account, and consideration given to the possibility of a policy shift towards subsidization.

XIV. Enhancing Africa’s participation in Bank Business

The World Bank lends in the region of $15 – 25 billion annually to developing country governments to fund projects for economic development and poverty reduction. For the three years starting in FY05 to FY07, the Bank’s operational plan shows a lending program for Africa of $3.857 billion, $7.258 billion and $2.873 billion respectively. This funding generates some 40,000 contracts each year for private companies to supply a wide range of goods and equipment, services and civil works to the bank’s client countries. The Bank itself uses a variety of consulting services from both individuals and firms, to carry on its analytical work and feasibility studies. Contracts range from several hundred million to a few thousand dollars.

At the beginning of the year 2004, a statistical desk review of procurements was carried out on IDA credits in Sub-Saharan Africa between 1998 and 2003. This analysis, carried out with the support of the Department of Procurement Policy & Services of the World Bank, highlighted a very limited number of African companies among the awardees of contracts.

Major World Bank donor countries provide extensive institutional support for their home companies to benefit from Bank procurement. Such institutional support is normally in the form of a business development function in the office of the Executive Director at the World Bank, working hand in hand with the country’s Washington-based embassy. However, African embassies do not have similar capacity to support their private sector here in DC, regardless of the existence of companies that may have the capacities to compete successfully for World Bank business.

In certain countries of our constituencies, aid-based credits or grants represent the single most important capital flows for the country. It would thus be normal to see such grants or loans contribute to generate work for national companies. This is an opportunity for national private sectors in our constituencies to develop know-how in certain types of works and consequently, to strengthen their capacity. This, we believe, will benefit the countries by introducing a changed dynamics in their private sector and widening the range of competences available for national procurement. Multinational companies also have an interest in developing qualified local partners in order to optimize their operations in foreign countries from a cost-efficiency standpoint.

African companies do not have access to bilateral, institutional and marketing mechanisms at the World Bank, as is the case with companies from developed countries. In addition, African companies have limited resources to individually market their companies across Africa. This lack of capacity and resources common to most African countries makes it even more urgent and necessary to start organizing our constituency in
a way that they too can benefit from the economic spill-over effect of aid-funded business.

The Strategy suggested to reinforce the participation of African companies in World Bank procurements is two-fold: (i) to encourage and help organize training of African private sector firms in Bank’s procurement and other capacity building activities to be able to effectively compete, and (ii) to help put together an integrated database on various businesses in Africa that could benefit from Bank procurement. On the latter, the staff working on various countries within our constituency office will endeavor to establish contact with private sector institutions in Africa with a view to receiving updates on African business companies. An important element of this enabling environment is the threshold for local procurement, which the office will monitor and advocate for raising it whenever necessary.

**Implementation Roadmap**

The realization of the vision and goals set for the Executive Director’s office will require a framework of actions that would maximize effectiveness and optimize resource use. It is a challenge that the office is committed to, and which will be implemented by adopting a proactive approach to organizational management. Given the complexity of the issues involved and limited capacities in the Executive Director’s office, realizing the objectives set forth in this strategic framework will require, inter-alia, forging strategic partnerships, effective communication, strengthening professionalism and technical competence of the office, selectivity and focus on high impact activities.

**(a) Forging Strategic Partnerships**

Establishing new partnerships and strengthening existing ones will be critical in pushing forward Africa’s development agenda in the Bretton Woods Institutions, as well as in other international fora, including bilateral relationships. This will entail, inter-alia:

- Strengthening partnership with other Executive Directors representing Africa, and outside Africa, including at the IMF;
- Strengthening the Group of eleven (11) Executive Directors representing developing countries commonly referred to as the “G-11”;
- Building a constructive relationship with Bank management; and
- Increasing collaboration with regional research organizations and economic groupings such as the Economic Council for Africa (ECA), African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF), Southern Africa Development Council (SADC), East African Cooperation (EAC) ECOWAS, COMESA, etc, particularly on identifying Africa’s priorities and developing common positions on issues pertinent to Africa’s development agenda.
• Strengthening the work and relevance of the Analytical Trust Fund activities, currently administered by the Bank, and implemented by the African Economic Research Consortium.

(b) Establishing Effective Communication linkage with Constituency Member States.

Establishing an electronic internet-based communication system will be critical for the timely participation of constituency member states in policy debates in the BWIs. In addition to strengthening the representative function of the Executive Director’s office, timely intervention of Governors in the formulation of policies, strategies, frameworks and instruments could greatly help to improve Bank assistance to Africa. Currently, faxing, telephones and postal mails are the primary mode of communication with constituency member states. Besides the very high cost of these modes of communication, it takes a long time to transmit large Bank documents to our member states. Moreover, in addition to the very low response rates, it takes an average of 2-3 weeks for member countries to respond to policy and other issues communicated to Governors. This works to undermine the effectiveness of the Executive Director’s office, and reduces the influence of member states in the BWIs.

This strategy attaches great importance to the development of a more effective system of communication with constituency countries to ensure the timely flow of information. In this connection the office will continue to work with management on speeding up the implementation of an internet-based communication linkage between the constituency and the office. This will go beyond the recently-developed Bank-wide extranet. Our intention is to get a secured site for direct communication between the office and our capitals. The office is actively working on this in concert with other Executive Directors as part of the effort to enhance the capacity of Executive Directors’ offices to more effectively represent their constituencies. In an effort to improve the response rate from Governors, the office will start communicating directly to line or sectoral ministries, relevant agencies and other technical staff by copying them, where appropriate, letter sent to Governors especially on policy and strategy discussions. This was endorsed by Governors during the Constituency meeting of May 2004. The office will establish a database of contact addresses for this purpose. The successful implementation of the Secondment Program, where country officials are seconded to various units within the Bank is part of a broader strategy to raise awareness and interest in Bank policies, strategies and instruments.

(c) Strengthening collaboration between the Constituency Offices at the World Bank and IMF.

In its efforts to implement this strategic framework and to strengthen the effective voice of Africa in the BWIs, greater collaboration and coordination of actions will be inevitable. This will help to improve internal consistency within the two institutions on Africa’s positions, and would therefore improve the quality of products and services provided to constituency member countries. We believe that this will also optimize resource use, particularly the small workforce. The ED’s office will treat collaboration
with the sister office at the IMF as a key element in enhancing efficiency and effectiveness in constituency office operations.

(d) Strengthening Professionalism and Technical Competence of the Office through Staffing and Training.

Carrying through the mandate of the office with a new focus requires a strong professional team that is committed to the goals set forth in this strategic framework. Through strategic partnership with other members of the Executive Board, significant progress has been made in this regard. The offices of the executive Directors representing SSA both in the Bank and IMF have each three additional professional staff, and the Analytical Trust Fund was also established to assist the respective EDs have a deeper look at strategic issues that come up for debate, and to help come up with a common position on the issues that helps to articulate the issues effectively. Going forward, the office will maintain a results focused work plan, and build a cohesive work team.

Because of the dynamic nature of the issues in the development arena, staff training in the relevant courses will be an integral part of the strategy to realize the office’s mission and goals. A professional and competent workforce will be crucial for building effective partnership, articulation of issues, and effective proactive engagement with the members of the Executive Board, Bank management and our constituency member states. In this regard, staff will be encouraged to benefit from internally organized training courses, however, this should not impact negatively on the office’s work plan.

(e) Financial Resources to the Executive Director’s office

The Executive Director’s office represents 22 constituency member countries in the World Bank. However, the budget allocation to the office does not reflect this reality, and the administrative complexity in trying to reach out to member countries. In order to improve outreach to member countries and build a closer relationship between the office and authorities, the office will consult with colleagues on the Executive Board and work with Bank management to up-scale budget allocation to the Executive Director’s office.

(f) Selectivity and Focus on High Impact Activities

In view of the financial and human constraints in the Executive Director’s office, the office will be selective in its work, focusing on high impact operations. However, this selectivity will be informed by the close relationship between the office and constituency member states. Emphasis shall be given to national as well as regional perspectives. Given the importance of focusing on high impact interventions in enhancing office effectiveness, the principle of selectivity needs to be adhered to. To implement this understanding, the office will make decisions on selectivity on a weekly basis as a routine procedure in reviewing and planning office work.

(g) Improving Work Culture

Work culture is important for the realization of organizational objectives. The Executive Director’s office Mission will be supported by asset of values, including teamwork, proactive engagement, an attitudinal change towards improving our services
to the constituency, respect, and accountability of office actions and performance to our authorities. The office will endeavor to respond to the needs of constituency member countries.