Guidance on the Accountability and Decision-Making Framework
1. **PURPOSE.** This document describes the Accountability and Decision-Making (ADM) framework and provides guidance on its application. The purpose of ADM is to clarify accountability, define roles, protocols and behaviors to promote more effective decision-making processes. In applying ADM, particular attention should be paid to the decision behaviors described in section 6 below.

2. **APPLICATION.** On April 8, 2013, the ADM roles described in section 4 were incorporated into the materials issued by Operations Policy and Country Services (OPCS) and applied as guidance to Investment Project Financing, Program-for-Results financing and to Knowledge Services supported by the Operations Portal. After April 8, 2013, Management will adopt a learning approach and will review processes, practices and organizational structures to identify further opportunities for promoting decision effectiveness and deeper implementation of ADM roles, protocols and behaviors described in this Guidance (harmonization). This part of the harmonization effort will continue through early FY14. Management will also monitor the impact of the ADM and how best to advance its implementation.

3. **DEFINITIONS.** For purposes of this document:
   a. **Accountability** means being answerable for managing quality, risks, results, institutional initiatives, and compliance with Bank policies and procedures applicable to one's assigned responsibilities.
   b. **Authority** means the power to manage activities and make decisions in a Functional Area.
   c. **Decision** means selection of a course of action in a particular situation.
   d. **Direct-Report** means a staff member or a Manager who reports directly to a Manager.
   e. **Functional Area** means a group of business activities undertaken to achieve an organizational objective, such as operations, finance, knowledge management and human resources.
   f. **Management** means the President and Managers of the IBRD and IDA.
   g. **Manager** means a person who directs the work in one or more Functional Areas and is identified as a manager in the Human Resources system.
   h. **Responsibility** means the duty to perform activities and make Decisions in a Functional Area.

4. **ROLES IN THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS.** The following roles should be applied to participants in the decision-making process:
   a. **Recommendation Role.** A staff member performing the recommendation role (Recommender) is responsible for gathering facts, analyzing information and preparing a proposal for the Decider. In developing a proposal, the Recommender obtains the required advice, clearances and concurrences; addresses different views and approaches; and evaluates options.
   b. **Advisory Role.** A staff member in the advisory role (Advisor) is responsible for rendering relevant and current advice with respect to the portion of the proposal that is within his or her specialty. An Advisor’s input should be requested and given as early in the process as
possible when it is likely to have most impact. The Recommender considers the advice, but determines whether the advice should be taken or not, subject to resolution of differences of views as provided in section 5(e) below.

c. **Clearance Role.** A staff member in the clearance role (Clearer) is responsible for attesting that the proposal complies with essential requirements in his or her specialty. A Clearer’s input should be requested and given as early in the process as possible when it is likely to have the most impact. Without a sign-off from a Clearer, the proposal cannot be forwarded to the Concurrer or the Decider. A Clearer is also responsible for providing advice. When a Clearer is providing advice, the provisions in section 4(b) apply.

d. **Concurrence Role.** A staff member in the concurrence role (Concurrer) is responsible for reviewing the entire proposal. Without an agreement from the Concurrer, the proposal cannot be forwarded to the Decider. The Concurrer is responsible for engaging with the Recommender to test all aspects of the proposal and for understanding the risks and trade-offs.

e. **Decision Role.** A staff member performing this role (Decider) is responsible for considering the entire proposal and making a decision. The Decider has the authority and responsibility for all aspects of the decision and commits the organization to action.

5. **Decision Protocols**

a. **General Practices Applicable to Roles.** The following practices should be followed to ensure effective functioning of the decision-making roles described in section 4.

i. **Recommendation Role**

1. Ideally, there should be one Recommender.
2. The Recommender should have visibility, credibility and access to all participants in the decision-making process.
3. This role is responsible for driving a proposal to a decision.
4. The Recommender should have access to relevant information, either directly or through Advisors and Clearers, to prepare a high quality proposal.
5. The Recommender should make every effort to resolve differences of opinion with or among Clearers and Advisors, and escalate issues promptly if resolution is not possible.
6. The Recommender is accountable for the entire recommendation.

ii. **Advisory Role**

1. Typically, there are multiple Advisors providing input into a proposal.
2. Proliferation of Advisors should be avoided, however. A common but undesirable practice is to consult with more Advisors than is necessary to produce a high quality proposal.
3. This role should be given only to those whose knowledge, experience, or information is crucial to developing a high quality proposal. The role may also be assigned to those who will be significantly impacted by a decision.
4. The Recommender considers the Advisor’s input, but determines whether the advice should be taken or not and promptly seeks resolution when conflicts arise.
5. The role is responsible for advising on the portion of the proposal within the Advisor’s specialty.
6. The Advisor should engage with the Recommender as needed throughout the process to identify issues and risks, and propose feasible solutions.
7. The Advisor may also advise the Decider.
8. The scope of advice that the Advisor is responsible for delivering should be established by the Advisor’s Vice President.

iii. Clearance Role

1. The Clearance role should be assigned sparingly.
2. The role should be typically given only to those that verify compliance with essential or mandatory rules or requirements.
3. If the Clearer does not sign off on the portion of the proposal that falls within his or her area of specialty, the recommendation cannot be forwarded to the Decider.
4. The Clearer should indicate which portions of his or her input fall into the clearance category and which portions fall into the advice category.
5. The role is responsible for the portion of the proposal within the Clearer’s specialty.
6. The Clearer should engage with the Recommender as needed throughout the process to identify issues and risks, and propose feasible solutions.
7. The scope of the requirements that the Clearer is responsible for verifying should be established by the Clearer’s Vice President.

iv. Concurrence Role

1. The Concurrence role should be assigned sparingly.
2. The Concurrer should test inputs from Advisors and Clearers, but should not trigger a second round of discussions unless concrete issues are identified.
3. The Concurrer is accountable for the entire proposal.
4. The Concurrer should ensure that only outstanding issues are discussed in decision-meetings.

v. Decision Role

1. The staff member in this role makes the decision.
2. There should be only one Decider.
3. The Decider should communicate the decision and rationale for it to the relevant parties.
4. The Decider should ensure that proper resources are available to implement the decision.
5. The role is accountable for the entire decision.

b. Assignment of Roles to Positions within a Manager’s Unit. A Manager responsible for the decision process determines which positions in his or her unit should be assigned to decision roles.

c. Assignment of Roles to a Position Outside of a Manager’s Unit. If a Manager wishes to assign a role to a position outside of his or her unit, the Manager responsible for that position should agree to the assignment in advance.
d. **Assignment of Roles When an Activity is Regulated by a Corporate Unit.** A Manager of a corporate unit, such as Human Resources, Operations Policy and Country Services, and Controller’s, issues procedures that prescribe roles in decision processes in his or her area of responsibility. Decisions on who should be included in such decision processes, and in what roles, should be made pursuant to a consultative institutional process applicable to formulation of such procedures.

e. **Resolving Disagreements among Participants in Decisions.** The Recommender is responsible for resolving substantive disagreements with advice received. If the disagreement is: (a) material to the proposal, and (b) cannot be resolved at that level, the Recommender brings the matter to the Concurrer for resolution. If there is no Concurrer, or if the Concurrer is unable to resolve the matter, the Recommender initiates a discussion with the Decider. The Decider either resolves the matter or escalates it further up the management chain. Differences of views that require escalation to the Concurrer and above are to be recorded to facilitate a productive discussion, and ensure focused consideration at higher levels. The Concurrer, the Decider, or a higher level manager, as the case may be, communicates resolution of each issue to the Recommender and other relevant parties. This process may also be used to escalate other issues that materially impact the decision process, such as timeliness of Clearers’ and Advisors’ responses.

f. **Distinction between Accountability and Responsibility.** A Manager who assigns Responsibility for a Functional Area or a Decision to a Direct-Report is no longer required to perform specific tasks with regard to that Functional Area or Decision. However, the Manager retains Accountability for actions of the Direct-Report and for managing quality, risks, results, institutional initiatives, and compliance with Bank policies, procedures applicable to the Responsibilities being carried out by the Direct-Report.

6. **DECISION-MAKING BEHAVIORS.** The following behaviors should be followed by staff members and managers to facilitate effective decision-making:

   a. **Play ADM Roles.** Each participant in the decision-making process should:
      
      i. Know how his or her role contributes to the decision process and focus on parts of the proposal relevant to that role.
      
      ii. Provide constructive input at the appropriate time.
      
      iii. Speak for the function that he or she represents, including higher level Managers within that function.

   b. **Run Decision-Focused Meetings.** The person running a meeting should:
      
      i. Ensure that relevant information is shared with meeting participants before the meeting.
      
      ii. Clarify the agenda or objectives and decision roles at the start of each meeting and guide discussions to meet that agenda or objectives.
      
      iii. End every meeting with clear decisions, next steps, timing, and assignment of tasks.
      
      iv. Communicate outcome of the meeting to relevant parties.
      
      v. Align attendance with meeting objectives to facilitate an efficient decision-making process.
c. **Demonstrate Mutual Trust and Teamwork.** Each participant in the decision-making process should:

i. Trust team members to deliver in their area of responsibility, avoiding duplication of effort.

ii. Refrain from venturing into areas covered by other participants in the decision process.

iii. Ensure that contributions are productive and further the meeting objectives and the goals of the team.

d. **Support Decisions Once Made.** Each participant in the decision-making process should:

i. Help implement the decision even if not in full agreement with the final outcome.

ii. Not reopen the decision unless significant factors have changed.

iii. If significant factors have changed, provide input directly to the Recommender and raise issues with the Concurren or the Decider only in exceptional circumstances.

iv. Escalate issues above the Decider only in exceptional circumstances.

7. **ISSUER.** This document is issued by a Managing Director.

8. **PERIODIC REVIEW.** This document will be reviewed by April 1, 2014. Thereafter, an annual review will be completed by April 1. Vice President, OPCS, shall conduct the review and recommend revisions, if any, to the Issuer based on advice from Regional and Network Operations Directors and Chief Counsel, Operations Policy, Legal Vice Presidency.

9. **REVISION.** Revisions to this document, if any, will be issued by a Managing Director.


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*Questions regarding the ADM Framework should be addressed to the OPCS Help Desk*