

April 12, 2011

Comments from Canada on Quality Review of SCF Investment Plans and Strategies

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the proposal entitled "Quality Review of SCF Investment Plans and Strategies" which is welcomed following our November 2010 SCF meetings. We are supportive of the approach proposed, which we trust will result in high quality investment plans, although we would like the following recommendations to be considered to further strengthen the process.

Establishment of a Roster of Experts:

- The Roster should aim to have a gender balance.
- In order to ensure full impartiality, we trust that the expert would not have worked on the development of a project proposal for an MDB that may be funded under the investment plan.

Annex A: Criteria for Undertaking the Review:

- We are pleased that the Review should ensure that the investment plan will consider whether social and environmental issues, including gender, have been adequately addressed, in addition to considering the technical merits. This lack of attention to gender has been recognised as a major weakness of the proposals to date. For the reference under "Principles and Objectives" in paragraph 4, the focus on social and environmental issues should carry equal weight to the focus on technical merits under the Review.
- We would like to propose that the Review should also include an assessment of the issue of additionality to on-going or planned MDB investments;
- There should be a link between the Review and the Results Framework for the proposed Investment Plan.

Additional Recommendations:

- It is still unclear to what extent the Reviews will be deemed as mandatory as part of the process in future. The SCF Committee may wish to clarify this, especially considering the process proposed for undertaking a second Review, if the first Review is rejected. We need to avoid a situation whereby undertaking a Review becomes optional, due to timing constraints.
- Finally, we suggest that a "meta-review" of all of the Reviews conducted for each SCF program be undertaken every year in order to contribute to the learning objective of the CIFs.

Regards,

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