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THE WORLD BANK

DISBURSEMENT GUIDELINES FOR PROJECTS

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LOAN DEPARTMENT
May 1, 2006

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World Bank Disbursement Guidelines for Projects

May 1, 2006

1. Purpose

1.1 The purpose of these Guidelines is to set out the Bank's procedures for disbursement of loan proceeds for projects.¹ Specifically, the Guidelines explain (a) the different methods used by the Bank to disburse loan proceeds, (b) the requirements for withdrawal from the Loan Account, (c) the types of supporting documentation that the borrower may be required to provide to demonstrate the use of loan proceeds for eligible expenditures, (d) the criteria for establishing designated accounts, (e) the terms and conditions applicable to advances, (f) the types of actions that the Bank may take if it determines that loan proceeds are not needed or have been used for ineligible purposes, and (g) the consequence of refunds.

¹ "Bank" includes IBRD and IDA; "loan" includes credit and grant; "borrower" includes the borrower of an IBRD loan, IDA credit, or Project Preparation Facility advance and the recipient of a grant; and "Loan Agreement" includes the agreement with the Bank providing for a credit, grant, or advance. These Disbursement Guidelines apply to all loans, credits, advances under the Project Preparation Facility, and grants financed under the Institutional Development Fund and Global Environment Facility unless otherwise provided in Operational Policy 10.20, *Global Environment Facility Operations* (forthcoming). These Guidelines also apply to other recipient-executed grants financed from trust funds unless, exceptionally, the terms of the agreement with the donor make provision for different requirements. They do not apply to Development Policy loans.



2. Disbursement Methods

- 2.1** The Bank establishes disbursement arrangements for an operation in consultation with the borrower and taking into consideration, *inter alia*, an assessment of the borrower's financial management and procurement arrangements, the procurement plan and cash flow needs of the operation, and its disbursement experience with the borrower.
- 2.2** The Bank disburses proceeds from the Loan Account established for each loan, to or on the order of the borrower, using one or more of the disbursement methods set forth below, as determined by the Bank.
- (a) **Reimbursement:** The Bank may reimburse the borrower for expenditures eligible for financing pursuant to the Loan Agreement ("eligible expenditures") that the borrower has prefunded from its own resources.
 - (b) **Advance:** The Bank may advance loan proceeds into a designated account of the borrower to finance eligible expenditures as they are incurred and for which supporting documents will be provided at a later date (see section 5, "Designated Accounts").
 - (c) **Direct Payment:** The Bank may make payments, at the borrower's request, directly to a third party (e.g., supplier, contractor, consultant) for eligible expenditures.
 - (d) **Special Commitment:** The Bank may pay amounts to a third party for eligible expenditures under special commitments entered into, in writing, at the borrower's request and on terms and conditions agreed between the Bank and the borrower.

3. Withdrawal of Loan Proceeds

- 3.1 Authorized Signatures.** Before loan proceeds may be withdrawn or committed from the Loan Account, the au-

thorized representative of the borrower (as designated in the Loan Agreement) must furnish to the Bank (a) the name(s) of the official(s) authorized to sign applications for withdrawal and applications for a special commitment (collectively, “Applications”), and (b) the authenticated specimen signature(s) of the official(s). The borrower must indicate clearly if more than one signature is required on Applications and must notify the Bank promptly of any changes in signature authority.

3.2 *Applications.* Applications must be provided to the Bank in such form and include such information as the Bank may reasonably request. Application forms are available online from the Client Connection Web site at <http://clientconnection.worldbank.org> or from the Bank upon request.

3.3 For withdrawal from the Loan Account for advances, the borrower should provide an original signed application for withdrawal. For withdrawal from the Loan Account for reimbursements and direct payments and for reporting on the use of advances, the borrower should provide an original signed application for withdrawal together with one copy of supporting documents (see section 4, “Supporting Documentation Requirements”). For a special commitment from the Loan Account, the borrower should provide an original signed application for a special commitment together with one copy of the letter of credit. The Bank reserves the right not to accept or review duplicate copies of Applications and supporting documents and may at its discretion return or destroy the duplicates.

3.4 *Electronic Delivery.* The Bank may authorize the borrower to use electronic means, in a manner and on terms and conditions specified by the Bank, to deliver Applications and supporting documentation to the Bank. Applications and supporting documentation delivered in accordance with this subsection will be deemed to have been provided to the Bank for the purposes of satisfying the requirements of subsections 3.2 and 3.3 of these Guidelines.



3.5 *Minimum Value of Applications.* The Bank establishes a minimum value for Applications for reimbursement, direct payment, and special commitment. The Bank reserves the right not to accept Applications that are below such minimum value.

3.6 *Loan Disbursing Period.* The Bank processes Applications only after the Loan Agreement has been declared effective in accordance with the terms of the Loan Agreement. The expenditures for which the Applications are made must be:

- (a) *paid* for (i) on or after the date of the Loan Agreement, or (ii) in the case of operations that permit retroactive financing, on or after the earlier date specified in the Loan Agreement for that purpose; and
- (b) *incurred* on or before the closing date specified or referred to in the Loan Agreement (“Closing Date”), except as otherwise specifically agreed with the Bank.

3.7 The loan disbursing period ends on the final date established by the Bank for receipt by the Bank of applications for withdrawal and supporting documentation (the “Disbursement Deadline Date”). The Disbursement Deadline Date may be the same as the Closing Date, or up to four months after the Closing Date. Normally, to support orderly project completion and closure of the Loan Account, the Bank does not accept applications for withdrawal or supporting documentation received after the Disbursement Deadline Date. The borrower should promptly inform the Bank of any expected implementation delays or exceptional administrative issues before these dates. The Bank notifies the borrower of any exception that the Bank may make to the Disbursement Deadline Date.

3.8 *Disbursement Conditions.* If the Loan Agreement contains a disbursement condition for a specific expenditure category, the Bank will disburse loan proceeds for that category only after the disbursement condition has been fulfilled and the Bank has notified the borrower to this effect.

4. Supporting Documentation Requirements

- 4.1 The borrower provides supporting documentation to the Bank to show that loan proceeds have been or are being used to finance eligible expenditures.
- 4.2 For special commitments, the commercial bank provides its confirmation directly to the Bank that conditions for release of payments committed for withdrawal have been met.
- 4.3 ***Types of Supporting Documentation.*** The Bank requires either copies of the original documents evidencing eligible expenditures (“Records”) or summary reports of expenditure (“Summary Reports”) in such form and substance as the Bank may specify. Records include such documents as invoices and receipts. A Summary Report may be either (a) the interim un-audited financial report required under the Loan Agreement (“Interim Financial Report”) or (b) a statement of expenditure summarizing eligible expenditures paid during a stated period (“Statement of Expenditure”). In all cases, the borrower is responsible for retaining the original documents evidencing eligible expenditures and making them available for audit or inspection.
- 4.4 The Bank determines the types of supporting documentation that the borrower should provide, taking into consideration the disbursement method used. The supporting documentation may be the following:
- (a) ***For applications for reimbursement:*** (i) Interim Financial Reports, (ii) Statements of Expenditure, (iii) Records, or (iv) Records required by the Bank for specific expenditures and Statements of Expenditure for all other expenditures;
 - (b) ***For reporting on the use of advances:*** (i) Interim Financial Reports, (ii) Statements of Expenditure, (iii) Records, or (iv) Records required by the Bank for specific expenditures and Statements of Expenditure for all other expenditures;



- (c) *For applications for direct payments:* Records; and
- (d) Any other supporting documentation that the Bank may request by notice to the borrower.

4.5 *Failure to Provide Audited Financial Statements.* If the borrower fails to provide any of the audited Financial Statements required in accordance with, and within the period of time specified in, the Loan Agreement, the Bank may at its discretion decide not to accept applications for withdrawal supported by Summary Reports, even if such reports are accompanied by Records.

5. Designated Accounts

- 5.1** The borrower may open one or more designated accounts into which the Bank may, at the borrower's request, deposit amounts withdrawn from the Loan Account for the purpose of paying for eligible expenditures as they are incurred ("Designated Account"). Before the Bank authorizes establishment of a Designated Account, the borrower must have adequate administrative capability, internal controls, and accounting and auditing procedures to ensure effective use of the Designated Account.
- 5.2** The Bank may decide not to permit the use of Designated Accounts in new projects if the borrower has failed to refund undocumented advances in the Designated Account of any other loan to, or guaranteed by, the borrower within two months after the Disbursement Deadline Date for such loan.
- 5.3 *Type of Designated Account.*** A Designated Account may be established in one of the two ways set out below, as appropriate for the operation concerned, as determined and notified by the Bank.

- (a) ***Segregated Account:*** this is an account of the borrower into which only proceeds of the loan may be deposited; or
- (b) ***Pooled Account:*** this is an account of the borrower into which the loan proceeds and proceeds of other financing for the operation (e.g., borrower resources and/or financing by other development partners) may be deposited.

5.4 *Currency of the Designated Account.* Designated Accounts must be in a currency acceptable to the Bank. In countries that have a freely convertible currency, Designated Accounts may be held in the currency of the borrower or any freely convertible currency. The Bank may also agree to local currency Designated Accounts when, *inter alia*, the country's currency (even if not freely convertible) is stable and the expenditures to be financed are primarily in local currency. The borrower bears all risks associated with foreign exchange fluctuations between (a) the currency of denomination of the loan and that of the borrower's Designated Account, and (b) the currency of denomination of the borrower's Designated Account and the currency or currencies of project expenditures.

5.5 *Financial Institution.* Designated Accounts must be opened and maintained in a financial institution acceptable to the Bank on terms and conditions acceptable to the Bank. To be acceptable to the Bank, the financial institution proposed by the borrower should generally meet all the following requirements:

- (a) be financially sound;
- (b) be authorized to maintain the Designated Account in the currency agreed between the Bank and the borrower;
- (c) be audited regularly, and receive satisfactory audit reports;



- (d) be able to execute a large number of transactions promptly;
- (e) be able to perform a wide range of banking services satisfactorily;
- (f) be able to provide a detailed statement of the Designated Account;
- (g) be part of a satisfactory correspondent banking network; and
- (h) charge reasonable fees for its services.

5.6 The Bank reserves the right not to accept a financial institution for the opening and/or maintenance of a Designated Account if such institution has asserted or asserts a claim to set off, seize, or attach the proceeds of any Bank loan on deposit in a Designated Account maintained by it.

6. Terms and Conditions Applicable to Advances

6.1 *Ceiling.* The Bank notifies the borrower of the maximum amount of loan proceeds that may be on deposit in a Designated Account (the “Ceiling”). The Bank, at its discretion, may establish the Ceiling as either (a) a fixed amount, or (b) an amount that is adjusted from time to time during project implementation based on periodic forecasts of project cash flow needs.

6.2 *Applications for Advances.* The borrower may apply for an advance in an amount up to the Ceiling less the aggregate amount of those advances previously received by the borrower for which the borrower has not yet provided supporting documentation. Normally, to support orderly closure of the Loan Account, the Bank does not advance loan proceeds into the Designated Account after the Closing Date.

6.3 *Frequency of Reporting Eligible Expenditures Paid from the Designated Account.* The borrower reports on the use of loan proceeds advanced to the Designated Account

at intervals specified by the Bank by notice to the borrower (“Reporting Period”). The borrower should ensure that all amounts deposited in the Designated Account are accounted for and their use reported prior to the Disbursement Deadline Date. After this date, the borrower must refund to the Bank any advances still unaccounted for or remaining in the Designated Account.

6.4 *Withholding Advances.* The Bank is not required to make any deposit into the Designated Account if:

- (a) The Bank determines that payment of the deposit would result in exceeding the Ceiling (see subsection 6.2, “Applications for Advances”);
- (b) The Bank is not satisfied that the borrower’s planned project expenditures justify the deposit. The Bank may, by notice to the borrower, adjust the amount it deposits or withhold further deposits into the Designated Account until it is satisfied that the financial needs of the project warrant further deposits;
- (c) The borrower fails to take the action required pursuant to the determinations made by the Bank under subsections 7.1 and 7.2 of these Guidelines;
- (d) The borrower fails to provide any of the audited Financial Statements required in accordance with, and within the period of time specified in, the Loan Agreement;
- (e) The Bank determines that all further withdrawals of loan proceeds should be made by the borrower directly from the Loan Account; or
- (f) The Bank has notified the borrower of its intention to suspend in whole or in part the borrower’s right to make withdrawals from the Loan Account.

6.5 *Excess Advances.* If at any time the Bank determines that any amount deposited in the Designated Account will not be required to cover further payments for eligible expenditures (“Excess Amount”), it may, at its discretion, require the borrower to take one of the two actions listed below. Upon



notification by the Bank, the borrower must promptly take the action requested:

- (a) Provide evidence satisfactory to the Bank within a period specified by the Bank that the Excess Amount will be used to pay for eligible expenditures. If the evidence is not furnished within the time period specified, the borrower must promptly refund the Excess Amount to the Bank; or
- (b) Refund the Excess Amount promptly.

7. Ineligible Expenditures

7.1 *Ineligible Expenditures Generally.* If the Bank determines that any amount of the loan was used to pay for an expenditure that is not eligible pursuant to the Loan Agreement (“ineligible expenditure”), the Bank may, at its discretion, require the borrower to take one of the two actions listed below. Upon notification by the Bank, the borrower must promptly take the action requested:

- (a) Refund an equivalent amount to the Bank; or
- (b) Exceptionally, provide substitute documentation evidencing other eligible expenditures.

7.2 *Ineligible Expenditures Paid from the Designated Account.* If the Bank determines that any payment out of the Designated Account was not justified by the evidence furnished to the Bank or was made for an ineligible expenditure, the Bank may, at its discretion, require the borrower to take one of the actions listed below. Upon notification by the Bank, the borrower must promptly take the action requested:

- (a) Provide the additional evidence requested by the Bank;
- (b) Deposit an equivalent amount into the Designated Account;

- (c) Refund an equivalent amount to the Bank; or
- (d) Exceptionally, provide substitute documentation evidencing other eligible expenditures.

8. Refunds

8.1 *Borrower Decision to Refund.* The borrower may, upon notice to the Bank, refund all or any amount of the loan on deposit in the Designated Account to the Bank for credit to the Loan Account.

8.2 *Consequence of Refunds.* The Bank shall determine whether refunds made to the Bank in accordance with sections 6 and 7 and subsection 8.1 of these Disbursement Guidelines will be credited to the Loan Account for subsequent withdrawal or for cancellation. Borrowers should be aware that refunds of loan proceeds may result in swap termination fees and/or unwinding costs for amounts for which the interest rate basis or currency has been converted or hedged.

8.3 *Other Obligations Unaffected by Refunds.* Refunds of amounts of the loan do not affect any remedies of the Bank under the Loan Agreement.



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