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Revised Plan for Flagship Reports in Calendar Year 2017

Background

When I joined the Bank in October, the Development Economics unit that I joined had already made a commitment to publish four institutional flagship reports in the fall of 2017: the *World Development Report*, *The Poverty and Shared Prosperity Report*, the *Doing Business Report*, and the *Global Development Outlook*. As you know, DEC also publishes the main *Global Economics Prospects* report in January and a shorter update in June.

Decision: At Most *Doing Business* plus one Flagship Report in Fall 2017

This fall, we plan to publish the *Doing Business Report* as usual but in addition, only the *World Development Report* and only if it only if it meets an absolute quality standard. We are canceling the *Global Development Outlook* and shifting the *Poverty and Shared Prosperity Report* to a two-year cycle, so the next volume in this series will be published in calendar 2018.

Rationale

The only way for the Bank to live up to its full potential as a knowledge bank is to give our clients access to knowledge they can put to work. To do this, we must be able to write documents that are clear and concise. In the discussion that is scheduled with you for Jan. 23 about a knowledge strategy, we will have chance to discuss other elements of a knowledge strategy.

Unfortunately, over the last five decades, we have fallen into a pattern of publishing ever more documents, with more words per document, and a meaning that is harder to extract. What we need is our own version of the quality revolution in manufacturing, which shifted attention from quantity to quality. I have made a personal commitment that DEC will be the leader in this quality movement at the Bank.

With our current resources, we will only be able to commit to dramatically higher quality if we reduce the quantity. So setting aside the *Doing Business Report* and the *GEP*, the rest of DEC is switching from a plan that commits us to produce 3 flagship reports in Fall 2018 to a contingent plan to publish a single flagship report if it meets an absolute quality standard.

The *Poverty and Shared Prosperity* report will continue on its two-year cycle, but will not be a corporate flagship. So this commitment to quality will also offer reduce the total number of corporate flagships as members of the Board have requested.

Complementary Commitment: Quicker Response to Requests on Specific Topics

In conjunction with this commitment to publish fewer, more readable flagship reports, I am also committing that those of us who do research in the Bank will respond to requests for information on policy issues with shorter, well written reports that we deliver more quickly.