

Millennium Challenge Corporation

Characteristics of a Core Team

Last Updated December 2009



MILLENNIUM
CHALLENGE CORPORATION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

A. Characteristics of a Core Team

Early identification of a National Program Coordinator (NPC) to lead the eligible country's compact development process, and establishment of a country core team, is essential to concluding a quality Compact quickly. The NPC and core team must be empowered to run the process, enjoy a high level of political commitment, have adequate funding and support resources, and have access to senior officials who can quickly make decisions and stay actively engaged.

The NPC should be assigned full-time to the compact development process. The NPC will need dedicated financial and administrative resources to carry out a timely, participatory and meaningful consultative process and to coordinate technical project design. This individual should have a clear mandate to develop the Compact; delegated authority to make decisions; and possess the skills and mandate to manage cooperation by relevant ministries, coordinate with existing donors, and build and implement a strategy for public consultations.

The NPC will need to access resources from ministries, projects, the private sector, etc., since project design and compact development are the responsibility of the eligible country core team, and not MCC. Previously successful eligible countries have allocated budgets of between \$500,000 and \$3 million for their core teams. It is likely that the eligible country core team will change over time as the compact development process progresses and probably will comprise both full-time and part-time resources.

B. Initial Team Composition

In addition to the NPC, MCC believes that the most effective MCA country core teams will initially include at least the following individuals:

Outreach/Participation Coordinator:

This person develops and implements a strategy for public consultation on the Compact so that there is a timely, participatory, and meaningful consultative process. This person should have experience building participatory processes for development programs and experience working with civil society, the private sector, women, rural and urban poor and other key constituencies. These functions can be outsourced if the specialized skills are available in the market.

Economist/Development Expert:

The country core team should include one or more economists with development experience to oversee the constraints analyses, conduct economic analysis of project concepts, build the economic logic of the Compact, and demonstrate how the program will lead to poverty reduction through economic growth. Such person(s) should

ensure that measurement for results is fully integrated into compact development; that the potential economic rate of return is analyzed coherently; and that project goals and expected results, including how they will be measured, are all set forth clearly.

Environment Specialist and Social Impact Expert:

It is important from the beginning of the compact development process to consider environmental and social issues and sustainability in the conduct of the Constraints Analysis, in public outreach and consultations, and in the consideration of alternative approaches to dealing with economic constraints in the definition and design of investment projects. The country core team should include team members who have a broad strategic understanding of environmental and social issues and opportunities; environmental regulations and requirements; who have experience conducting or reviewing environment and social impact assessments; and who can work with the country core team to ensure that environmental and social/gender considerations are factored into the design, feasibility, timing, and cost of compact projects. Experience has shown that it is sometimes difficult to identify individuals with both environment and social/gender impact expertise. If this is the case, MCC recommends that the core team consist of either two experts with complementary skills or that environment or social/gender expertise is captured in another core team member's skill set.

Monitoring and Evaluation Expert:

The country core team should include a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) expert who will work closely with the team economist. This country core team member will be ultimately responsible for formulating the M&E Plan and for refinement of the compact logic; identification of performance indicators and appropriate baseline data; setting indicator targets and working with the entity responsible for collecting data; and monitoring results and evaluating performance.

C. Expanding the Team over Time

As compact design progresses, the country core team will need to access specialized resources related to the specific compact projects throughout the compact development process. As priorities emerge from the consultative process and projects are designed to stimulate poverty-reducing economic growth, the NPC will need to identify additional experts to participate as country core team members, including:

Technical/Sector Experts:

The priorities that emerge from a consultation process focused on projects to reduce poverty through economic growth will determine the type of technical and sector expertise the country core team will require. As the com-

pact projects are defined, the NPC should identify and bring on board the technical experts needed to supplement the country core team.

Legal/Financial/Procurement Experts:

Legal, financial management, and procurement expertise will be required at various stages of the process to integrate adequate planning for compact negotiation and implementation. Early identification of experts that will remain committed throughout the process, even on a part-time basis, will enable the team to design a Compact that can be implemented expeditiously.