

# The Fiscal Year 2011 Selection Process for MCA Eligible Countries

To select countries as eligible for Millennium Challenge Account (“MCA”) compact funding, the Millennium Challenge Corporation (“MCC”) assesses the degree to which the political, social, and economic conditions in a country promote broad-based sustainable economic growth. In making its determinations, MCC’s Board of Directors considers three factors: performance on the defined policy criteria, the opportunity to reduce poverty and generate economic growth in the country, and the funds available to MCC. To assess policy performance, MCC uses third-party indicators to identify countries with policy environments that will allow MCA funding to be effective in reducing poverty and promoting economic growth. MCC evaluates performance in three areas—Ruling Justly, Investing in People, and Encouraging Economic Freedom. The Selection Process has four major steps:

1. Identification of Candidate Countries
2. Publication of MCC’s Selection Criteria and Methodology
3. Publication of MCC Scorecards
4. Selection of Compact-Eligible and Threshold-Eligible Countries

## Identification of Candidate Countries

Candidate countries for the fiscal year are identified based on their per capita income and whether they are legally eligible to receive U.S. economic assistance. MCC submits a report to Congress with a list of candidate countries prior to the selection of countries eligible for MCA assistance. For Fiscal Year 2011 (FY11), a “candidate country” must meet one of the following income criteria and cannot be statutorily ineligible to receive U.S. economic assistance under the Foreign Assistance Act or any other provision of law.

- ★ *Low Income Category*: countries with a per capita income less than or equal to \$1,905; or
- ★ *Lower Middle Income Category*: countries with a per capita income between \$1,906 and \$3,945.

# Publication of MCC's Selection Criteria & Methodology

MCC submits a report to Congress describing the criteria and the methodology—including the indicators—which MCC's Board of Directors ("the Board") will use to select countries as eligible for MCA assistance. MCC holds a formal public comment period following publication of the report.

## *Methodology*

When evaluating countries for eligibility, the Board considers whether countries perform above the median score of their income peer group (either the low income country group or the lower middle income country group) on at least half of the indicators in each of the three policy categories, as well as above the median on the Control of Corruption indicator. The Board may also take into consideration if a country performs substantially below the median on any indicator (i.e. the bottom 25th percentile) and has not taken appropriate measures to address the shortcoming.

## *Indicators*

To evaluate policy performance, MCC uses, to the maximum extent possible, objective and quantifiable policy indicators in three broad policy categories: Ruling Justly, Investing in People, and Encouraging Economic Freedom. MCC favors policy indicators developed by independent third party institutions that rely on objective, publicly available data and have an analytically rigorous methodology. MCC seeks indicators that have broad country coverage, cross-country comparability, and broad consistency in results from year to year. MCC also seeks indicators that are linked to economic growth, poverty reduction, and government policies. The 17 indicators that will be used in Fiscal Year 2011 are:

- ★ Ruling Justly
  - \* Civil Liberties (Freedom House)
  - \* Political Rights (Freedom House)
  - \* Control of Corruption (World Bank/Brookings Institution WGI)
  - \* Government Effectiveness (World Bank/Brookings Institution WGI)
  - \* Rule of Law (World Bank/Brookings Institution WGI)
  - \* Voice and Accountability (World Bank/Brookings Institution WGI)
- ★ Investing in People
  - \* Immunization Rates (World Health Organization and UNICEF)

- \* Public Expenditure on Health (World Health Organization)
- \* Girls' Primary Education Completion Rate (UNESCO)
- \* Public Expenditure on Primary Education (UNESCO and national sources)
- \* Natural Resource Management (CIESIN and YCELP)
- ★ Encouraging Economic Freedom
  - \* Business Start-Up (IFC)
  - \* Land Rights and Access (IFAD and IFC)
  - \* Trade Policy (Heritage Foundation)
  - \* Regulatory Quality (World Bank/Brookings Institution WGI)
  - \* Inflation (IMF WEO)
  - \* Fiscal Policy (IMF WEO)

### *Supplemental Information*

The Board may also consider information to address gaps, time lags, measurement error, or other weaknesses in the indicators to assist in assessing whether MCC funds might reduce poverty and promote economic growth in a country. For FY 2011, supplemental sources may include: the disabilities component of the U.S. Department of State's Human Rights Report, Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index, and the Global Integrity Report, among other sources.

## Publication of MCC Scorecards

Around a month before the MCC Board meets to select compact-eligible countries, MCC will publish country performance "scorecards" on its website ([www.mcc.gov](http://www.mcc.gov)) for all candidate countries and countries that would be candidates but for legal prohibitions.

## Selection of Compact-Eligible Countries

From the pool of candidate countries, the MCC Board selects compact-eligible countries according to the methodology described above and submits a report to Congress no later than 5 days after the determination. These countries are then eligible to begin developing compact proposals for MCC's consideration.