



MILLENNIUM
CHALLENGE CORPORATION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Gender Policy

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Submitted by:

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Gender Policy

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1 PURPOSE

The commitment of the Millennium Challenge Corporation (*MCC*) to gender¹ equality is grounded in our mission to promote economic growth and poverty reduction. MCC recognizes that many countries with high levels of gender inequality also experience high levels of poverty and that gender inequality can be a significant constraint to economic growth and poverty reduction. Therefore, in order to maximize the impact of Compacts on economic growth and poverty reduction, MCC requires that eligible countries analyze gender differences and inequalities to inform the development, design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of programs funded by MCC.

2 SCOPE

This policy applies to any assistance program funded under a Millennium Challenge Compact.

3 AUTHORITIES

Millennium Challenge Act of 2003 (22 U.S.C. 7701, *et seq.*)

This document is intended to provide overall guidance to country partners on their responsibilities for the integration of gender² in all stages of Compact development and implementation. Specific operational procedures and milestones for gender integration in all stages of Compact development and implementation can be found in the MCC Gender Integration Guidelines.

Additional gender-specific guidance is also included in the Compact development guidance documents listed below:

- Overview of the Compact Development Process
- Best Practices in Compact Development
- Guidelines for Conducting a Constraints Analysis
- Guidelines for the Consultative Process
- Characteristics of a Core Team
- Project Concept Paper Template and Guidance
- Guidelines for Economic and Beneficiary Analysis of a Compact
- Guidance for Environmental and Social Assessment
- Guidelines for Monitoring and Evaluation Plans
- Sector Guidance for Countries Proposing Agriculture
- Sector Guidance for Countries Proposing Infrastructure

¹ Gender is defined as the social roles, behaviors, and responsibilities assigned to women and men in any society. Unlike biology, gender is mutable, and women's and men's roles, behaviors, and responsibilities change over time and are different in different societies.

- Sector Guidance for Countries Proposing Activities of Land Tenure, Land Administration or Land Policy Reform
- Sector Guidance for Countries Proposing Health Programs
- Sector Guidance for Countries Proposing Education Programs
- Sector Guidance for Countries Proposing Private Sector Development Activities

4 POLICIES

A. MCA COUNTRY RESPONSIBILITY

The MCA-eligible country has the primary responsibility for integrating gender into the development, design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of a Compact program. The country is ultimately and primarily responsible for implementing the Compact, including any components designed to address gender inequalities that limit women's or men's opportunities to participate in or benefit from projects.

1. Consultation as a Tool for Gender Integration

Consultation is a key component of Compact development and implementation. It is also the first entry point and a continuing tool for an eligible country to integrate gender into its Compact program. As such, countries will ensure that both women and men have opportunities for meaningful participation throughout the consultative processes related to a Compact program. This consultative approach will inform program development, design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. If the results of prior planning processes are used to develop a country's MCA program priorities, the country will provide evidence of women's and men's meaningful participation in those planning processes as well as in any consultations held specifically for a Compact.

2. Gender Integration Throughout the Stages of a Compact

- a. Proposal Development and Program Design: Based on an analysis of gender differences and inequalities, countries will identify project beneficiaries disaggregated by sex and provide an explanation of how Compact program components are designed to take into account gender differences and correct gender inequalities that are constraints to economic growth and poverty reduction in a Compact program.

To meet this requirement, countries may want to utilize internationally recognized gender analytic frameworks such as the Harvard Analytical Framework or the Moser Gender Planning

Framework.³ Whatever tool is utilized, the following basic questions should inform the country's program design:

- (1) What are the policy, legal and socio-cultural constraints to women and men becoming full beneficiaries of MCC investments, and what design elements are required to remove or compensate for these constraints?
- (2) What are the different roles and responsibilities of women and men and how do any differences affect the proposed project? How do these gender differences vary by other demographic and social characteristics of the beneficiary population?
- (3) Are there gender inequalities in access and control of productive resources relevant to the proposed project, and how will they be corrected or mitigated in design?
- (4) How will the proposed projects meet both practical needs and strategic gender interests, or those interests that correct structural inequalities that are impediments to economic growth and poverty reduction in a Compact program?

- b. Due Diligence and Program Refinement:** Countries will analyze the impact of investments on beneficiary groups and refine projects to ensure that gender differences and inequalities that limit economic growth and poverty reduction are addressed in project design.

Monitoring and evaluation plans will include provisions to track impacts on specific beneficiary groups, such as women and children.

- c. Compact Implementation:** To the maximum extent possible, countries will ensure that sex-disaggregated data will be analyzed in monitoring performance and results and evaluating impacts. Where practicable, data should be analyzed at the household level. Where projects have specifically addressed gender differences and inequalities in design, countries will monitor indicators of gender equality in a Compact program.

³ These tools, and others, can be found in two publications: (1) March, C., Smyth, I., Mukhopadhyay, M. 1999. *A Guide to Gender-Analysis Frameworks*. Oxford: Oxfam Press; and (2) Moser, Caroline O. N. 1993. *Gender Planning and Development: Theory, Practice, and Training*. London: Routledge.

- d. Compact Closure: Countries are responsible for integrating the necessary gender considerations into all activities related to Compact closure.

B. MCC RESPONSIBILITY

MCC will consider gender in the selection of eligible countries, in due diligence on program and project design, in its oversight and assessment of Compact implementation, and in the monitoring and evaluation of impacts.

1. Selection of MCA Eligible Countries

Eligibility for MCA assistance is based, to the maximum extent possible, on performance against objective selection criteria measuring a country's commitment to rule justly, invest in its people and encourage economic freedom. Issues of gender equality are incorporated into several of the selection criteria and supplemental information considered by the MCC Board in determining country eligibility.

2. Consultation as a Tool for Gender Integration

MCC will provide guidance to a country on gender and other social considerations in the design of its consultative process and on gender integration in its proposed Compact program.⁴ This will occur early in the Compact development process before the partner country develops and submits its concept papers to MCC.

MCC will review the quality and content of a country's consultative process as one component of due diligence. The review will include an assessment of how social/gender analysis informed the country's involvement of different stakeholders and how a country plans to ensure the meaningful participation of women and men as the Compact is developed and the Compact program is implemented.

3. Gender Integration Throughout the Stages of a Compact

- a. Concept Development and Program Design: While the eligible country is responsible for developing the Concept Paper(s), MCC will provide guidance and other resources, as needed, on gender integration in a Compact program.
- b. Due Diligence and Program Refinement: MCC's due diligence of the social impacts of all programs involves gender analysis. MCC incorporates gender into the assessment of a program's feasibility

⁴ Because gender differences are structured by other social variables, gender is considered within the context of other relevant forms of social difference such as age and ethnicity.

and assesses the extent to which the proposed program design addresses gender differences and inequalities that limit economic growth and poverty reduction in a Compact program.

MCC will require that the monitoring and evaluation plans have adequately incorporated gender considerations, including the collection of sex-disaggregated data.

- c. Compact Implementation: MCC will integrate gender into its oversight and assessment of a country's performance during implementation. MCC will assess the extent to which Compact programs reflect findings on gender differences and inequalities and meet intended gender outcomes, where relevant.

Additionally, some disbursements of MCA funds may be conditioned upon the satisfaction of targets and progress on indicators measuring project performance.

- d. Compact Closure: MCC will integrate gender into Compact closure activities.

5 EFFECTIVENESS

This policy was approved as of date first written above and is effective immediately. For the avoidance of doubt, this policy will remain in effect with respect to any successor position or office performing the functions of its predecessor until this policy is modified, revoked, or superseded. In addition, this policy supersedes any prior policy, guidance, and/or delegation of authority with respect to the subject matter hereof.

6 AMENDMENTS TO THIS POLICY

This policy may be modified or amended at any time in writing with the approval of MCC's Chief Executive Officer.