

**Support to the Government of Moldova
in development of the Compact proposal
to the Millennium Challenge Corporation**

Terms of Reference

Program Assistant

Background

The Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) is an initiative of the United States to support policies and programs that advance a country's progress in achieving sustainable economic growth and poverty reduction.

The Republic of Moldova has undertaken a number of structural reforms, among which the regulatory reform project leading to eased administrative burdens and more transparent regulation of the entrepreneurs; the central public administration reform project leading to a more effective and efficient governance; and the public finance management project aiming at increased accountability and transparency with regard to public finances. Besides these important projects, the Republic of Moldova has to strengthen its capacity to respond to the challenges of European integration.

The engagements of the Government of Moldova to continue the needed actions and reforms towards improving the investment climate, raising efficiency of the public sector resource management, strengthening the social protection system, providing investments for education and public health, as well as corruption control, offers a new boost for private sector development aimed to contribute to rendering quality services to people and ensuring a sustainable country growth.

To provide further incentive for policy reform, Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) established a Threshold Program for countries that demonstrate a significant commitment in meeting the eligibility criteria. By awarding a grant of USD 24.7 mln from MCC, the Republic of Moldova has been accepted to implement its Threshold Country Plan targeted to fight and prevent corruption in various areas.

On November 8, 2006 the MCC Council selected the Republic of Moldova as an eligible country for Millennium Challenge Account development assistance. Recognizing that development is achieved by country's own efforts, policies, and people, Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) gives the opportunity to identify priorities for achieving sustainable economic growth and poverty reduction in a broad consultation with the society.

The MCA program is reflected in a Compact Agreement that defines responsibilities and includes measurable objectives and targets to assess the progress in economic growth and poverty reduction. As an eligible country, Moldova was invited to develop and submit to Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) a proposal that can form the basis for future negotiation of Compact.

During Spring/Summer 2007, Republic of Moldova conducted a deep analysis of binding constraints to economic growth as a first step in developing country's proposal to MCC. The analysis identifies core barriers to growth and development and provides a logical basis for future proposal. According to it, the infrastructure and investment climate were the binding constraints at the moment. The analysis' results were widely discussed, tested and confirmed during extensive public consultation events in June-July 2007. In September 2007, MCC formally acknowledged the good quality of report. In February 2008, MCA Moldova has formally submitted to MCC a country proposal targeting at the reduction of identified constraints. The proposal had 4 investment projects, 2 of them had been selected by MCC for further study and refinement (Due Diligence), and namely the Roads Rehabilitation Project and Transition to High Value Added Agriculture Project.

During 2008-first half of 2009, further work has been carried together by MCC and MCA Moldova on refinement of the abovementioned two projects (Agriculture and Roads). Multiple background studies have been performed, including:

- Feasibility Study for 5 proposed segments of roads
- Feasibility Study of 16 proposed Central Irrigation Systems (CIS)
- Land rights study
- Access to Agricultural Finance Study
- Irrigation Management Transfer Study
- Legal study in the area of Water User Associations and Water Law
- Agricultural Market Overview report
- Farms Survey in proposed 16 CIS

The draft final project design was established. In July 2009, the MCC Investment Committee has reviewed the refined proposal and forwarded it to Investment Board, which notified US Congress on its intention to begin negotiations of Compact Agreement with the Government of Moldova. In September 2009, the two-week period of Congressional notification has ended with no objections recorded from US Congress.

The pre-final Compact Program design as proposed for negotiations at October 2009 consists of:

- A. Roads Rehabilitation Project (Sarateni-Sorooca-Drochia Junction road)
- B. Transition to High Value Agriculture Project, consisting of following sub-projects
 1. Rehabilitation of 11 Central Irrigation Systems which take water from Prut and Nistru rivers, with area of 15,500 hectares.
 2. Irrigation Sector Reform Project, targeting at transferring the management of rehabilitated CIS from state to newly formed Water Users Associations and at installing water management based on river basin principle.
 3. Access to Agricultural Finance Facility for investments in post-harvest infrastructure
 4. Growing the Sales of High Value Agriculture Products, a sub-project targeting the expansion of agricultural marketing opportunities.

It is expected that the Compact Program will be negotiated and signed until the end of 2009. In the meanwhile, the Government of Moldova will set up and launch Millennium Challenge Account, or MCA-Moldova, the national entity responsible on 5-year implementation of Compact Program in Moldova. The MCA Moldova will administer the Compact, directly or through procured Contractors, including but not limiting at, the activities related to:

- General program administration
- Supervision of contractors and works
- Procurement and financing of activities
- Monitoring and evaluation, impact evaluation
- Audit

Objective

The main objective is to provide support and assistance in various aspects of administrative management for the development of the Compact Program.

Inputs

The Assistant provides support to the MCA Compact development Team (MCA Core Team) through administrative actions aiming at efficient and effective conducting of the Compact proposal development process.

The incumbent works in close collaboration with the MCA Compact development Team and the MCA Communications Consultant and is expected to exercise its duties in full compliance with UNDP administrative rules and regulations.

The main responsibilities of the Assistant are:

- Perform secretarial duties for the MCA Core Team;
- Assume overall responsibility for administrative matters of a more general nature, such as registry and maintenance of project files and records;
- Make pertinent logistical arrangements for the prompt and effective implementation of the Core Team activities;
- Prepare and draw up project documentation and other similar documents;
- Provide support to MCA Core Team, MCC experts and local consultants in the implementation of their tasks for the achievement of project results (communication, contracts, agenda, external and internal meetings, etc);
- Ensure the circulation and dissemination of information within/outside the Project;
- Maintain records on all project personnel and local consultants and their respective status in accordance with accepted policies and procedures;
- Organize the delivery of goods, suppliers and equipment acquired during the Project activity;
- Maintain the equipment and spare inventory, including verification and transfer when required;
- Provide translation into English or Romanian at the request of MCA Compact development Team Leader;
- Fulfill and execute additional functions related to the held position, necessary to implement and to reach Project objectives.

Results:

The Assistant will conduct administrative support actions, according to the needs of the MCA Moldova Core Team aiming at a proper development and approval of the Moldovan Compact Program.

Time frame

The timeframe for the work of the Assistant is November 1, 2009 until March 31, 2010.

General Requirements for the Applicant:

- University degree in economics, finance, accounting, public administration or other related field;
- At least two years of experience in administrative work, accounting, finance, economics, public administration or other substantive area is required.
- Previous experience in development assistance or related work for a donor organization, governmental institutions, NGO or private sector / consulting firm;
- Fluency in both spoken and written Romanian and English. Knowledge of Russian desired.
- Experience in communicating and cooperating with governmental, non- governmental, donors and private agencies;
- Proficiency in using computer applications (MS Word, Excel, PowerPoint, internet and e-mail), experience in handling of web based management systems.
- Excellent interpersonal skills are essential part of the job.

Reporting and coordination issues

The Assistant will work under the guidance and direct supervision of the MCA Compact development Team Leader, to whom he/she will also submit monthly progress reports.