

MCC's Results-Focused Approach Reflects National Priorities in Malawi

The Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) is committed to the consultative process as a key driver of compact development and successful compact implementation. The inclusion of a consultative process not only improves the design of a compact, but reinforces MCC's commitment to the founding principle of strong country ownership. Based on the lessons learned from the countries that are now implementing programs, MCC improved its compact development process by incorporating a results-focused approach to strengthen the quality of a country's proposal and to enhance readiness for implementation. In Malawi, the MCC compact development process is providing the catalyst for a constructive debate on Malawi's development agenda.



MCA Malawi's extensive consultative process solicited feedback from a wide range of stakeholders throughout the country.

During MCC introductory visits in early 2008, a common refrain heard was that Malawi had already determined its development priorities and further consultation was not needed. There was some skepticism about the value of a constraints analysis and public consultations. However, after five months, numerous stakeholders such as government representatives, praised MCC's results-focused approach. Several observers noted that while Malawi's economy had been studied before, the constraints to growth had never before been presented in such a clear, transparent and comprehensive manner as with this MCC-driven analysis.

In May 2008, the Malawi MCA team conducted a constraints analysis in collaboration with the World Bank, African Development Bank and DFID, to help identify the most significant obstacles to long-term economic growth in Malawi. Beginning in June, the team held tailored consultations throughout Malawi, presenting the initial results of the constraints analysis and soliciting feedback from a wide range of stakeholders, including government, traditional authorities, the private sector, the donor community and civil society. As a result of this interactive process, four sectors emerged as the primary constraints to development: energy, transportation, water and human development.

On September 10, 2008, the Malawi MCA team convened a National Stakeholder's Conference, inviting the key players in each sector to present and undertake a problem tree analysis (see a slideshow detailing the Consultative Process on [mcc.gov: *http://www.mcc.gov/media/slideshow-121708-consultprocess.php*](http://www.mcc.gov/media/slideshow-121708-consultprocess.php)), setting forth the major policy issues and constraints. Over 100 key stakeholders attended the conference. The findings from their analysis proved to be a useful tool for the stakeholders to assess where development efforts stand in the country.

The stakeholders recognized that the National Stakeholder Conference promoted transparency around the compact decision-making process and that the analysis was accurate, persuasive and insightful. As noted by Malawian Professor Charles Mataya, who attended the conference, "these sessions were owned and developed by us and provided a framework where we can clearly view and analyze the problems at stake."

The Malawi MCA team will continue the extensive consultative process by targeting rural areas and different stakeholders as they finalize the results-focused framework to define projects that will be included in the Concept Papers. By bolstering country ownership, this process results in programs that reflect national priorities and have a higher likelihood of effectively reducing poverty in a sustainable manner.