



## Press Release

# Millennium Challenge Corporation Visits Timor-Leste to Discuss New MCC Program to Advance Economic Growth

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DILI, Timor-Leste, February 16, 2018 – A delegation from the U.S. Government’s Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), including Robert Blau, Vice President for Compact Operations, Caroline Nguyen, Managing Director for Europe, Asia, Pacific, and Latin America, and Hana Freymiller, Country Team Lead, visited Timor-Leste this week to discuss the development of an MCC Compact to reduce poverty and promote economic growth in partnership with the Government of Timor-Leste. The MCC Board of Directors selected Timor-Leste for an MCC Compact in December 2017.

An MCC Compact involves five-year grants for selected countries that meet MCC’s stringent eligibility criteria. Timor-Leste’s strong performance in meeting these criteria led to the MCC’s decision to transition Timor-Leste from a smaller Threshold program to a full-fledged Compact.

During their visit, the U.S. delegation met with senior Timorese Government officials, political party leaders, civil society and private sector leaders to discuss MCC’s approach to fighting poverty through economic growth and the compact development process going forward.

“The MCC Board of Directors selection of Timor-Leste for a Compact reflects Timor-Leste’s

commitment to strengthening democratic institutions, maintaining sound economic policies and investing in its people,” MCC Vice President Robert Blau said. “This collaboration is an opportunity for Timor-Leste and the United States to strengthen our relationship around our shared goal of reducing poverty through economic growth.”

“The MCC Compact highlights Timor-Leste’s commitment to good governance and economic development,” said U.S. Ambassador to Timor-Leste Kathleen M. Fitzpatrick. “The Compact provides an excellent opportunity to further strengthen the partnership between the United States and Timor-Leste over several years.”

Using a country-led approach that reflects a country’s own priorities, MCC provides time-limited grants and assistance to developing countries that meet rigorous standards for good governance, from fighting corruption to respecting democratic rights. Working with local partners, MCC tackles some of the most pressing challenges that developing countries face, like access to electricity, clean water, land rights and roads.

During the compact development process, which can take between 24-36 months to complete, MCC and the Government of Timor-Leste will develop a program specifically aimed at addressing the country’s greatest constraints to growth. The compact development process also includes a consultative process, engaging civil society and the private sector in Timor-Leste.

*Note: This release was originally published by the U.S. Embassy in Timor-Leste.*

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*The Millennium Challenge Corporation is an independent U.S. Government agency working to reduce global poverty through economic growth. Created in 2004, MCC provides time-limited grants and assistance to poor countries that meet rigorous standards for good governance, from fighting corruption to respecting democratic rights. Learn more about MCC at [www.mcc.gov](http://www.mcc.gov).*