

**The Secretary of State for the Council of Ministers and
Official Spokesperson for the Government of Timor-Leste
Ágio Pereira**



**June 1, 2010
Dili, Timor-Leste**

**Program to strengthen Health Services and Institutional Integrity
approved by MCC**

A program proposed by the Government of Timor-Leste has secured a US \$10.5 million grant from the Millennium Challenge Corporation, a US Government agency designed to work with developing countries. The Threshold Country Program is a three year project based on the Country Plan submitted by the Government of Timor-Leste to the MCC on October 30, 2009. Countries that are on the threshold of eligibility for further compact assistance from the MCC are able to apply for this kind of assistance.

The plan, developed by the Government with support from USAID, has two distinct areas of focus: Immunization and Control of Corruption.

The program will work to continue improvements in the health sector, by supporting the National Immunization Strategy. Targeted outcomes include

- Increased immunization coverage, especially DPT3 (a vaccine for diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus) and measles,
- A more capable and effective community health system,
- Strengthened local community health units,
- Improved vaccine-preventable disease surveillance capacity and immunization
- An increased number of qualified health service providers.

Building on several significant steps already taken by the Government the program will support the reduction of corruption by “strengthening capacity, increasing coordination and improving processes and procedures.” This will increase capacity to detect, deter and prosecute instances of corruption. In this area the program will

- Support the establishment of the Anti-Corruption Commission,
- Strengthen the Prosecutor General’s Office and other relevant agencies to fight corruption,
- Strengthen the Procurement system, and
- Strengthen the role of Parliament and NGOs as oversight bodies.

USAID will manage Threshold Program which will be integrated into the structures and institutions already focused on these areas. After it’s successful implementation the way will be opened to further partnerships.

Spokesperson for the Government, Secretary of State Ágio Pereira noted “we value the partnership of Millennium Challenge Corporation in this program. The Government of Timor-Leste has a strong commitment to improving the health of our children and to fight against corruption; as we build our Nation we welcome integrated partnerships and look forward to the benefits flowing to the people of Timor-Leste.” **ENDS**

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