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## **MCC and Timor-Leste Partner to Strengthen Governance and Child Health**

Dili, Timor-Leste – On January 14, Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) Deputy Vice President Jim Parks, U.S. Ambassador to Timor-Leste Judith Fergin, United States Agency for International Development Acting Mission Director Cheryl Williams and Timorese Minister of Finance Emilia Pires held an event to highlight the new three-year, approximately \$10.5 million MCC threshold program in Timor-Leste, which will assist the country to fight corruption and raise childhood immunization rates. The event took place at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Dili.

Over the next three years, the threshold program will focus on rebuilding institutional foundations to strengthen accountability of public spending, and on improving the local community's access to effective health systems. The program will provide support and training to government agencies, the Timorese parliament, nongovernmental organizations, and the media.

"MCC congratulates Timor-Leste for initiating ambitious reforms to establish institutions to reduce corruption, strengthen accountability, and improve core health services," said MCC Deputy Vice President Jim Parks. "These actions will help Timor-Leste improve its policy performance in areas critical to sustainable economic growth and poverty reduction. Transparent and accountable institutions create the foundation for sustainably expanding infrastructure and public services," Mr. Parks added.

"The MCC threshold program is further proof of the friendship and cooperation between the United States and Timor-Leste," said U.S. Ambassador Judith Fergin. "The United States and Timor-Leste are permanent partners. This program adds a rich new dimension to our partnership. The United States is proud to help Timor-Leste as it tackles its most pressing and complex challenges."

"The government of Timor-Leste has made the fight against corruption one of its top priorities with efforts to make government institutions more transparent and accountable," said Acting USAID Mission Director Cheryl Williams. "In health, the focus on boosting immunization rates will help improve the overall health and survival rates for Timor-Leste's children. USAID looks forward to working with its partners and MCC to build on the progress already being made in these areas."

MCC's Threshold Program is designed to assist countries in becoming compact eligible by enabling them to demonstrate results in the broad policy areas underlying MCC eligibility criteria. Individual country threshold programs support specific policy and institutional reforms that are identified by MCC in coordination with country partners. A country's successful implementation of a threshold program is an important factor in assessing the potential of an eventual MCC compact with the country to stimulate long-term growth and poverty reduction.

USAID is administering the Timor-Leste threshold program on behalf of MCC, and is responsible for managing the day-to-day operations and overseeing the implementing partners.

For additional information on MCC's Threshold program, please [click here](#).

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