

Speech Delivered by Emmanuelle Collet, Acting UNICEF Country Representative in Timor-Leste

National Health Day 2022 – Announcement of USAID funding to UNICEF and launch of phase two of WASH improvements in CHCs.

21 July 2022, Ainaro Municipality



- Your Excellency, Sr. Bonifacio Maucoli dos Reis, Vice Minister of Health
- Your Excellency, Administrator of Ainaro Municipality
- Dr Odete da Silva Viegas, Director General of Health Services
- Sr Marcelo Amaral, DG for Corporate Services
- Sr Narciso Fernandes, Director of Cabinet for Policy, Planning and Cooperation
- MOH Directors, Directors from Municipalities, Heads of Departments and other staff from the MOH
- Colleagues from Development Partners and UN Agencies
- Administrator of Administrative Posts
- Xefe Suku and Xefe Aldeia
- UN colleagues,

- Representatives from the media,
- Children of Ainaro municipality,
- Ladies and gentlemen

Bom dia and a very good morning

1. I am pleased to be here today during celebrations to mark National Health Day.
2. Today, we mark two important points in UNICEF's COVID-19 response effort:
 - a. the announcement of an additional \$400,000 grant from USAID toward UNICEF's support to the national COVID-19 response
 - b. and the launch of phase two of UNICEF's joint work with the Ministry of Health and USAID to improve infection prevention and control through the improvement of water, sanitation and hygiene (or WASH) facilities at Community Health Centers.
3. The \$400,000 grant announced today will help expand ongoing interventions supported by USAID and UNICEF. It will support the continuation of essential maternal, newborn and child health services across the country; the COVID-19 vaccination campaign for eligible populations; and improvement

of infection prevention and control at 8 additional community health centers (CHCs).

4. On behalf of UNICEF, and the Ministry of Health led national COVID-19 response, I would like to thank USAID and the United States Government for its funding since 2020 that has:
 - Already helped us jointly reach thousands of people with information on how to protect themselves from COVID-19, including through vaccinations;
 - kept patients and healthworkers safe at health centers;
 - and supported the continued provision of essential health services.

5. Today, we launch work for WASH and interventions in the Ainaro Community Health Center.

6. Since our joint effort with USAID to support the national COVID-19 response began in 2020, we have done similar work together, and improved infection prevention and control at 33 community health centers in the 5 municipalities of Bacau, Covalima, Dili, Ermera and Manatuto.

7. Since 2020, we have also provided supplies and equipment to sustain WASH services and certain health interventions, helped train Ministry of

Health and CHC staff on infection prevention and control and undertake Social Behavior Change Communication activities in communities.

8. The upgrades we are implementing are in line with global SDG standards. We are also bringing together components of health, WASH and social behavior change actions that will help accelerate progress toward achieving health and WASH related SDGs;
9. To ensure sustainability, we are working with the environmental health department of the Ministry of Health to do continuous monitoring of WASH improvements and with BEE Timor-Leste to support continuous water supply to CHCs. We will also work toward increasing access to facilities for people with disabilities, and gender sensitive facilities.
10. I would like to thank USAID for its critical support to a sector that does not always get the funding or support needed.
11. In the future, we would continue to advocate with the Ministry of Health and development partners to help improve similar facilities in the other 332 health posts across the country.
12. The improvement of WASH facilities and better infection prevention and control is not just the fixing of broken facilities and improvement of water

systems. It goes beyond this. Improved WASH facilities means clean water, improved toilets, better waste collection measures, and the effective and safe functioning of maternity wards, laboratories and out-patient departments.

13. And with USAID support, we are helping make sure children and families get that support they need in a safe and clean environment.

14. Our joint actions are key to keeping children and families safe from COVID-19 and other diseases, while strengthening the health system so that it is better able to sustain crises, and to respond to the needs of Timorese people, particularly women and children

15. Before I end, I would also like to thank the Ministry of Health and its staff for the great collaboration in identifying critical needs and for the joint work that is helping ensure children and mothers get the care they need.

16. Thank you !