

**Vaccine Access and Health Security Initiative (VASHI) grant
Signing Ceremony**

17th May 2023, Time: 11.30 AM

Venue: Kofi Annan Meeting Room, UN House

**Speech delivered by Bilal Aurang Zeb Durrani, Country Representative of
UNICEF in Timor-Leste**



- The MoH Acting Director General for Service Delivery, Dr. Nilton do Carmo da Silva
- Charge d’Affairs Australian Embassy: Ms. Caitlin Wilson (Warm welcome to Timor-Leste Ms Wilson!)
- WHO Senior Technical Officer, Dr Sudath

- National Director, World Vision: Dr Jared Berends
- Staff from the Ministry of Health, Australian embassy, UN agencies and NGOs
- Representatives from the media
- Ladies and gentlemen

Bom dia

In 2021, Timor-Leste received the first batch of COVID-19 Vaccines and joined the world in keeping the ravaging pandemic at bay through vaccination.

Two years down the line, Timor-Leste has achieved remarkable milestones in COVID-19 vaccinations, reaching more than 90 percent of the eligible population with at least the first dose and 80 percent of the eligible population with a second dose.

I congratulate Her Excellency Minister of Health for the great leadership and commitment to lead the country's COVID-19 response.

I also acknowledge the Government of Australia for being the largest donor of COVID-19 Vaccines to Timor-Leste. We could not have done it without you.

In quarter one of this year, the support from the Government of Australia also contributed to the rollout of a successful national immunisation campaign, which integrated the COVID-19 vaccination for adults, introduction of PCV, boPV, Vitamin A supplement and deworming for under five children. Through this integrated campaign, Timor-Leste managed to achieve its immunisation target by 95 percent for each antigen and nutrition supplies.

These results are testimony of our joint efforts, dedication, and commitment to support Government's priority on post COVID-19 system strengthening, which will

include the integration of COVID-19 Vaccination into Routine Immunisation Services.



The Government of Australia's generous funding through existing VASHI grant provided operational and technical assistance at national and municipal level to scale up COVID-19 vaccination.

Through the support of the Government of Australia, UNICEF managed to strengthen the local health system and supply chain with procurement of pickup vehicles, cold chain equipment and vaccine management. UNICEF also leveraged DFAT funds to build the capacity of health professionals and frontline health workers to scale up essential health services including routine immunisation through static health facilities and mobile outreach services.

With these additional VASHI resources, Timor-Leste is set to reach the last mile of COVID-19 vaccination through strengthened integrated immunisation approach, and build the capacity of the health workers, biomedical technician and Mother Support Group. UNICEF as VASHI grant managing agency, will work with two other implementing partners; WHO and World Vision to ensure a comprehensive technical, logistics, and operational support to municipalities.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the Government of Australia for their unwavering support for COVID-19 response and overall health system building in Timor-Leste.

I take this opportunity once again to offer my big appreciation to national directorates, municipality health services, Mothers Support Group member and partners for the high dedication and commitment to deliver the essential health services together with COVID-19 vaccination.

I reiterate UNICEF's commitment to scale up integrated vaccination approach to keep every child and individual safe from vaccine preventable disease and COVID-19.



Obrigado barak