



Media Release

Australia Supports Small Businesses in Fiji

10 September 2008

Australia is supporting Fiji's first National Business Incubator workshop, organised by the National Centre for Small and Micro Enterprise Development (NCSMED). The workshop will be attended by government planners, policy makers, business managers, private investors and other interested members of the public and private sector.

The two day workshop, which began in Suva today, has the theme: *Making business incubators work for Fiji*". Australia is contributing over F\$22,000 to the workshop through its aid program.

A business incubator is a service that helps small businesses to start up and grow. For instance, an incubator can provide: work space; shared use of office equipment and secretarial services; and help in getting finance and specialist technical, legal, management, marketing and administrative advice. Business incubators have worked successfully in other countries.

"Australia continues to look for ways to support the people of Fiji in the current hard economic times. Supporting small businesses is one of these ways. After all, the private sector is the engine of the economy," Mr Batley said.

Funding for this workshop is part of the Australian Government's broader support for business development in Fiji. Through its aid program Australia is: supporting the garment industry to improve its international competitiveness; providing finance to expand businesses to increase employment opportunities through the Enterprise Challenge Fund; supporting training of farmers and their families through the proven Tutu Rural Training Centre in Taveuni; and providing technical and vocational training opportunities in partnership with the Fiji Ministry of Education and the Australia Pacific Technical College.

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