

# Fijian-made Face Shields to Strengthen Fight Against COVID-19

MEDIA RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Suva, Fiji

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Fiji's frontline and healthcare workers will now have locally produced face-shields to enhance protection as they continue the battle against COVID-19.

Skyward Industries, in partnership with the Australian government-funded Market Development Facility (MDF), today donated the first set of locally-made 3D-printed face shields to the Ministry of Health and Medical Services (MoHMS) COVID-19 Incident Management Team (IMT).

“At a time of global shortages for the N-95 fully protective face masks, these face-shields provide a practical alternative that can be used with other PPE to make sure all our staff are adequately protected when dealing with potential COVID-19 cases. We are really appreciative of the Australian Government's support through MDF which has allowed a company like Skyward Industries to innovate and use technology to come up with a local solution that will greatly assist the Ministry,” said the Honourable Minister for Health, Dr. Iferemi Waqainabete.

“The donation of face shields from Skyward Industries could not have been more timely, as they will help with providing protection for frontline healthcare workers,” he added.

Skyward Industries is a Nadi-based technology solution company, which used its technical expertise and 3D printers to design and build Fiji's first locally made face shields.

“Research & Development is at the core of Skyward Industries and through our partnership with the Market Development Facility, we were able to innovate and locally manufacture face shields using our manufacturing equipment and engineers. We had worked closely with the Ministry of Health to ensure that our final prototypes met the demands and specifications of the health workers in Fiji. We are extremely pleased to be able to handover our first batch of face shields for the Ministry this morning,” said Skyward Industries Director, Mr. Kevin Rotsaert.

MDF has been supporting the private sector in Fiji in responding to the economic challenges presented by COVID-19 and is focused on assisting local businesses to prepare for future economic recover.

“Australia will continue to support the Fijian Government's efforts to tackle COVID-19, and through the MDF we are strengthening the relationship between the private sector and our two governments. These face shields are a wonderful example of how with the right support, local Fijian businesses can create their own innovative solutions to support health workers and secure jobs,” said Australian High Commissioner to Fiji, John Feakes.

Skyward Industries will produce up to 1,000 units which will support the Ministry with the growing need for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for Fijian health workers.

### Market Development Facility

Market Development Facility is an Australian Government funded multi-country initiative which promotes sustainable economic development, through higher incomes for women and men, in our partner countries.

We connect individuals, businesses, governments and NGOs with each other, and with markets at home and abroad. This enhances investment and coordination and allows partnerships to flourish, strengthening inclusive economic growth.

MDF is funded by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs (DFAT). It is implemented by Palladium in partnership with Swisscontact.

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#### FOR MEDIA USE

If you would like further information or interviews, please contact

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