**PRESS RELEASE**

**Australia and Education Minister launch WASH initiative for 45 schools in the Suva-Nausori corridor**

**18 August 2025**

**Suva, Fiji –** Fiji and Australia today launched its Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) initiative that will deliver new ablution blocks to 45 schools in the Suva-Nausori area.

The initiative is part of Australia’s broader Fiji Social Infrastructure Program (FSIP) under the Fiji-Australia Vuvale Partnership, which supports upgrades to school and health infrastructure across Fiji.

A comprehensive infrastructure assessment of 86 schools in the Suva-Nausori corridor identified critical infrastructure needs at these schools to guide future investment decisions.

A key finding of the report was that additional WASH facilities were required, particularly for girls. As a result, Australia committed to working with the Ministry of Education to provide additional WASH facilities in 45 schools along the Suva Nausori area.

This investment should directly benefit approximately 30,000 students across these schools, and bring them into compliance with the Ministry of Education’s Minimum Standards on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in Schools Infrastructure (2012).

Poor or inadequate WASH facilities can increase the risk of infection within schools and can reduce school participation and absenteeism amongst students – an issue that is felt most acutely by female students where poor WASH facilities can limit the ability to balance education with menstrual hygiene management.

Following a design process of the ablution blocks, construction should commence in 2026.

Minister for Education, Hon. Aseri Radrodro, described the findings of the assessment report as a valuable roadmap for improving education infrastructure in the region.

He stated that “Fiji Government’s vision is clear that every Fijian child deserves world class education and a high-quality learning environment from rural to urban areas.”

Australian High Commissioner to Fiji, HE Peter Roberts, said “we are pleased to work alongside the Ministry of Education to deliver WASH facilities in schools and improve hygiene, access and learning environments for students and teachers.”

Australia is committed to working with Fiji to deliver cyclone-resilient and inclusive infrastructure, a shared priority under the Vuvale Partnership.

Australia’s support to school upgrades through its Fiji Social Infrastructure Program builds on the success of the Cyclone Recovery Program, which successfully rebuilt nine schools in Vanua Levu following Tropical Cyclone Yasa.

**ENDS**