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MEDIA RELEASE

PNG mining and petroleum industry provides sustainable food solutions across PNG

Success of existing projects and the development of new ventures to deliver further agricultural programs for local communities

The mining and petroleum industry in PNG continues to help many Papua New Guineans grow and trade sustainable, healthy and affordable food, according to the PNG Chamber of Mines and Petroleum.

As delegates from around the world meet in Port Moresby this week for the APEC Food Security summit, communities across PNG are benefiting from a range of agricultural initiatives developed and implemented by the resources industry to boost agriculture in project areas.

Recently, the Wafi-Golpu Joint Venture trained 39 women from Hengambu, Yanta, Babua and Wagang villages in the Morobe Province on food preparation. The training was conducted by the National Agriculture Research Institute (NARI) in Lae.

The program was designed to improve the food preparations and storage capabilities that enable common ingredients such as sweet potato, banana, taro, yam and cassava to be stored for a longer period, thus guaranteeing access to food between harvests.

“This initiative by WGJV represents just a single example of the widespread agricultural support mining and petroleum companies in PNG are delivering to local communities,” says Dr Albert Mellam, Executive Director of the PNG Chamber of Mines and Petroleum.

“Throughout PNG, resource companies are working with communities and NGOs to deliver seeds, tools, training as well as farming equipment and machinery to people living in remote areas to help guarantee their own food security while building the capacity of PNG’s agricultural industry.

Last year, Oil Search invested about USD\$344,000 in drought relief assistance programs. It also works closely with NARI to introduce drought-tolerant crops for farmers across their operational areas.

While earlier this year, the Ok Tedi Development Foundation announced the launch of a new project in collaboration with Innovative Agro Industries which will give six landowner villages in the Western Province the ability to produce over 3.6 million eggs, and 26,000 broiler chickens each year through the development of chicken sheds, feed mill and other associated facilities.

From an agri-business perspective, resource companies are major clients within PNG’s growing agriculture industry. The Hidden Valley mine purchases its fresh produce from local smallholder

vegetable farming households through local PNG company NKW Fresh, which supplies fruit and vegetables directly for the mine’s catering service.

“The resources industry is committed to supporting the goal of the government and local communities to harness PNG’s agriculture potential: just one of the ways the industry seeks to leave a positive, lasting footprint,” said Dr Mellam.

“As existing projects mature and new projects commence, the industry looks forward to delivering new support programs to the communities in which it operates.”

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Women sun-dry diced bananas as part of their food preparation training by NARI and the Wafi-Golpu Joint Venture.



Star Mountains women’s leader Clara Fred Dangkim (right) proudly displays packaged eggs produced from the Mt Fubilan Agro Farm.

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