

AGRI PARTNERSHIPS

Bringing together business leaders, policy makers and farmers to collaboratively unlock growth in the agriculture sector and facilitate new opportunities for farming families in the Markham valley.



FOURTH QUARTER 2022

Women Farmers and MSMEs received their First Financial and Digital Literacy Training



A three-days training on Financial and Digital Literacy provided an excellent opportunity for 100 women MSMEs and farmers in the 5 different wards of Umi Atzera LLG in the Markham District to register and access digital savings through the Digicel Cell Moni Wallet product of Digicel PNG Limited.

The Training was an initiative of the UN Capital Development Fund -Rapid Finance Facility(RFF) program for women and was made possible through the partnership between Grow PNG, UNCDF, Digicel PNG Cell Moni, and Tokstret Consulting with the support from Markham District DDA, Ramu Agri Industries Limited, and smallholder farmers and MSMEs in Markham.

Markham District DDA CEO, Mr Bebinaso expressed his appreciation to Grow PNG's collaboration with partners and the district team for their tireless preparations to make the training possible for the women MSMEs and farmers. He also emphasized the importance of financial literacy as savings and budgeting remains a challenge at the household level. He was happy to see that the women MSMEs and farmers can now access savings through the Digicel Cell Moni Wallet product from Digicel PNG Limited. They can also make transactions and save from the income they make when selling their farm produce.

Women MSMEs and farmers participating in the training shared their challenges and thanked Grow PNG for mobilizing resources and support to bring the training right to their doorstep at a free cost.

A farmer from Ziampir Horticulture Business Group said there are many challenges faced by women farmers in accessing finance and making savings. She said with the training, she is now more informed about planning, budgeting, and digital savings products like the Digicel Cell Moni Wallet.

Another farmer from the Village Oil Palm scheme under Ramu Agri Industries (NBPOL) said they sell their oil palm to NBPOL and get paid fortnightly. However, she has no proper savings, and also selling Oil Palm is her only stream of income. The training has taught her how she can plan her budget, make savings and also venture into alternate streams of income like opening a trade store.

The Training was the first in a sequence of trainings that Grow PNG will roll out in collaboration with financial literacy training service providers.

Another similar set of training will take place in the next month.

Financial Literacy training for women MSMEs and Farmers in Markham District



Grow PNG continues to collaborate with its partners to roll out financial literacy training programs for women farmers in the Markham Valley.

Grow PNG with the support of AgBook delivered a three-day basic financial literacy training to Two Hundred and fifty women farmers and MSMEs of the Umi Atzera, Onga Waffa, and Leron wantoat LLGs in Markham district.

The training took place from 1st-3rd of November 2022.

The training was part of the continuous program that Grow PNG is facilitating, where the first batch of training took place last month.

The training provided insightful knowledge and understanding to facilitate the farmer's mindset to shift away from subsistence farming and transition into semi-commercial farming. With more emphasis on farming as a Business.

The women farmers said they have doubts about going into semi-commercial farming because they lack knowledge and understanding of the whole value chain from farm gate to market.

This training has provided an excellent opportunity for them to learn and acquire knowledge on the difference between the subsistence way of farming and contract farming as a business.

One of the fresh produce farmers shared her experience of contract farming, supplying supermarkets in Lae. She explained to the participants that contract farming is different from just selling at local open markets. Her experience gave confidence to the other women to scale up their farming but this time as a group.

The women said access to information has always been a challenge for them as mothers and caretakers of their homes. With the time spent on their household roles, they hardly get opportunities to access vital training which could build their knowledge and understanding.

The women farmers encourage more training of this sort, which should be roll-out to other women farmers in Markham valley as well.

Women MSMEs and farmers who participated in the training thanked Grow PNG and partners for mobilizing resources and support to bring the training right to their doorstep at a free cost.

Strengthening the Capacity of smallholders: Financial Literacy



Grow PNG continues to support training opportunities to strengthen the capacity of women farmers along its footprint in the Markham Valley.

Two Hundred and Fifty women farmers and MSMEs of the Wampar LLG in the Huon District had the opportunity to undergo basic financial literacy training in a three-day session at Erap Boys Town from the 29th of November – 1st of December.

The Training was a continuation of the financial literacy training roll-out program facilitated by Grow PNG with the support of AgBook.

The three days of training provided insightful knowledge on basic financial literacy as budgeting, planning and saving.

Marketing of fresh produce is mostly done by female farmers however, many of them have low levels of literacy, especially in financial decision-making on savings and budgeting. They also have less access to information on savings and credit services that could assist them with ways to invest or save the income they make from their produce.

Most of the women said they do marketing of the fresh produce, livestock, some are vendors others have cocoa farms.

Most are not aware of the savings and loan products that are available at the financial institutions where they can access. They have seen that the transportation cost of bringing fresh produce to the markets has also gone up. They said most of the time they face challenges with logistics and security.

The farmers themselves are thinking of forming and registering business groups to tap into semi-commercial, medium-scale markets but they still lack an understanding and knowledge of the supply and demand of the market.

The women were thankful that now with the training they acquired a fair understanding and knowledge to make informed financial decisions on planning, savings, and budgeting.

Our biggest challenge is cultural obligations and death ceremonies, as mothers, we can save but when it comes to family we don't get second thoughts about spending. This will always be a challenge but with training, we have learned to have an emergency or contingency budget apart from our savings budget.

We are happy to receive this training for free because most people pay to get such training. Thank you to Grow PNG and its partners for making this training possible for us mothers.

Grow PNG Gender Mainstreaming and Empowerment Program Launch



Grow PNG launched its Gender Mainstreaming and Empowerment Program at the Lae International Hotel, on November 24. The aim of the Launch was to promote and encourage Gender mainstreaming and inclusion within the agri-food systems and value chain in Papua New Guinea.

Over 50 participants from Agribusinesses, CSOs, NGOs, Government agency, academia, and farmers attended the one day event. A good number of women in agriculture also attended.

The theme of the event was 'Leverage Partnerships to set the pace for more inclusive and participatory efforts in mainstreaming gender and women's empowerment in our Agri-food systems'.

Two Reports were also launched 1) [Gender Mainstreaming case study report on ten organizations within Markham and Lae](#). 2) [GrowHer Inspirational stories of 10 women agripreneurs within Markham and Morobe Province](#).

There were two plenary discussions on 1) Mainstreaming Gender within the Agriculture Food System Based on Learning from the Current Practices and 2) Growing the Next Generation of Women Agripreneurs from the Inspirational Stories of Women within the Agriculture food system.

The Launch has set the next step to promote and encourage gender mainstreaming and inclusion practices within the agri-food systems in Markham, Ramu, Morobe, and PNG.

Moving forward, we will invite key partners and stakeholders using our working group model where all stakeholders can have a say in identifying key challenges and developing action plans to address those challenges and advocate for gender mainstreaming and inclusion within our agri-food systems.

Grow PNG will focus on supporting its partners' programs and practices that target the female population in the Markham Valley and provide support for women who depend on agriculture for an income. It will help partners improve or enhance their own programs by generating awareness, facilitating knowledge-sharing, training, and sharing tools about gender mainstreaming and inclusion.

Grow PNG would like to thank NKW Fresh Produce, Niugini Coffee Tea & Spices Limited, Ramu Agri Industries Limited, Fresh Produce Development Agency, Morobe Provincial Administration Government-DAL, PNG Women in Agriculture Development Foundation, Ziampir Horticulture Group, Takom Farms, Lutheran Development Services, Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), Trukai Industries Limited, Outspan Cocoa-PNG, DAL-Erap, Markham District DDA, Hore Agriculture Suppliers, University of Technology-Agriculture Department, the 10 Inspirational Agripreneur women and other valued partners who have participated to support the Launch.

Sixty-Seven Women Farmers graduated with certificates in Financial literacy



Grow PNG continues its focus to provide a multi-stakeholder platform for partnerships to strengthen smallholder capacity within its footprint of Markham Valley in Morobe Province.

Sixty-seven women farmers from 5 different clusters under the Ziampir Horticulture Group graduated with certificates in Financial Literacy, in a small but significant ceremony at Antiragen village, Markham District on December 14.

This wouldn't have been possible without the support and collaboration of amazing partners including Grow PNG, Taiwan Technical Mission, PNGWiA, AgBook, Tok Stret Consulting, UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), Markham District DDA, and smallholder rice farmers of Ziampir.

Through Grow PNG's network and engagement, MiBank PNG and Digicel Cell Moni were able to participate and talk about their financial products, in particular, to make awareness and assist the women farmers on how to access credits through their savings.

It was a great opportunity for the women farmers as they proceed to the next step to access financial products right at their doorstep. The women farmers have learned that it is important to have a transaction history every time they make a deposit to save the money they make from the sale of their produce.

Ms Beverley Postma, Grow Asia Executive Director who was a special guest at the occasion presented the certificates to the women farmers.

In her keynote remarks, she emphasized the importance of partnership which is the main model of operation for Grow Asia and Grow PNG.

"Grow Asia is all about partnership, we cannot do our work without our amazing partners. In Grow Asia and Grow PNG, we believe in partnership, and we believe in empowering women to be partners to the man and their families".

Grow PNG is thankful to its collaborating partners and will continue to support training opportunities for women farmers.

Women who graduated with the certificates can now use this certificate as one of the requirements to access financial services through local banks like the Women's Micro Bank(MiBank).

Ziampir Horticulture Group is a smallholder rice farming community led by chairman Nelson Sailas in the Markham valley. The group also farms other food crops, and vegetables to sustain them in between the rice seasons.

Other Highlights of Quarter 4

Grow PNG participated and presented a case study on Gender Mainstreaming along the agriculture value chain in Papua New Guinea at the 2022 PNG Update on the 20th-21st of October.

The event was a great opportunity for the academia and industry players to talk about development and policy agendas in the country.

Interesting papers were presented with a way forward and recommendations.

The Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea Hon James Marape was the keynote speaker at the opening.

The 2022 PNG UPDATE was organized by the School of Business and Public Policy, University of Papua New Guinea and Australian National University and supported by the PNG-Aus Partnership with assistance from the Asia Foundation.



2022 PNG Update conference at the University of Papua New Guinea



Grow PNG among other sustainable agriculture partners participated at the Annual Morobe Agriculture Show on the 8th-9th of October.

The two-day event saw an interesting number of individuals who came forward to learn about the work Grow PNG is doing and how they could become partners.

Grow PNG had interesting highlights in the first day of the show.

As the theme of this show "Be productive, "We introduced an agripreneur in Coffee Ms Rebecca Imbok, who represented Nakama Agri Business Group.

Ms Rebecca Imbok, Director of Nakama Agri Business Group Inc and a member of the Grow PNG SME Working Group, showcased her downstream processed arabica coffee all the way from the blue mountains of Naweab district, Morobe Province. Rebecca is an agripreneur and agriculturalist who is representing and advocating for smallholders and also in women's economic empowerment.

Officers from the Royal Constabulary of Papua New Guinea, were interested in the work of Grow PNG especially, working at the community household level, like farming different crops to generate income. They also thought of how agriculture can create employment opportunities and community-building engagement for the Youths in maintaining peace and law and order in the community.



Grow PNG through Agriculture Partnership

Partnerships to mainstream gender and inclusion within the agri-food systems in Papua New Guinea

Partnership and collaboration enhance support and accessibility of services to reach our smallholder farmers.

By networking and knowing what support services are out there, we can facilitate and mobilize support that adds value.

Strengthening capacity in our farming communities can be achieved through collaboration and partnership.

It is also encouraging that all entities are open-minded and willing to foster partnerships to deliver their programs and practices.

Grow PNG's multi-stakeholder platform remains the most viable approach to facilitate collaboration between network partners to deliver value to their farmer programs and practices.

The Grow PNG Gender Launch has paved the way for many more of the same work collaboration in mainstreaming gender along our agri-food systems.

Grow PNG will use its working group model to advocate for mainstreaming gender and inclusion within the agri-food systems in Markham, Ramu, Morobe, and PNG.

You can explore the cases studies on Gender Mainstreaming in Agriculture value chains in Papua New Guinea here: [Gender Mainstreaming in Agricultural Value Chains - Case Studies from Papua New Guinea - \(growpng.org\)](#)

Read more inspirational stories from women farmers in the Markham, Morobe, and Papua New Guinea here: [GrowHer \(growpng.org\)](#)



How We Work

Building Trust & Partnerships

Improving Knowledge and Information

Facilitating Working Groups



AGRI PARTNERSHIPS is a quarterly newsletter produced and published by Grow PNG.

It aims to communicate and create awareness about the work of Grow PNG and its partners.

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Established in 2019 in Lae, Morobe Province in Papua New Guinea, Grow PNG is a not-for-profit subsidiary of Grow Asia Partnership Ltd and an Australian-funded initiative under the PNGAus Partnership, supported by the World Economic Forum to help implement the United Nations Sustainable Development Strategy.

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