

MEDIA RELEASE

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GROW AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH IMPACT THROUGH BROADER NETWORKS

Papua New Guinea has benefited immensely from Australian supported agricultural research and training projects focused on food and nutrition security. Even greater collaboration and communication will help build greater impact from past and future work.

This is the key message of Regina Bi Nukundj from the Food Security Branch of the Department of Agriculture and Livestock in PNG. Ms Nukundj will address the Crawford Fund's international conference *Celebrating Agriculture for Development – Outcomes, Impacts and the Way Ahead* being held on 15-16 August in Parliament House, Canberra. The conference will also be addressed by the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Senator the Hon Murray Watt.

"Australian agricultural projects over many decades and worth millions of dollars have been very relevant and impacted livelihoods of our rural farmers and smallholder farming communities," said Ms Nukundj, who is providing an in-country perspective on benefit and impact of agricultural research, the difficulties faced in-country for success and impact to be achieved, and how success and impact can be broadened in the future.

"There are many institutions in PNG which could bring bigger impact for food and nutrition security through even closer collaboration and communication with Australian partners, both inside and outside of the Government institutions with which we already have close partnerships."

"Australian institutions, especially the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) has had a big impact in PNG, working closely with the National Agriculture Research Institute. Other research partners in PNG's agriculture sector, such as the National Agriculture Quarantine & Inspection Authority, the Coffee Industry Corporation and Coffee Research Institute, the Fresh Produce Development Agency, the Cocoa Board and the Cocoa Coconut Research Institute, are also working on joint projects too."

"I also think that PNG agricultural policy and decision making would benefit from a broader distribution of Australian final project publications or project reports, particularly the Department of Agriculture and Livestock, as the main government body overseeing the sector."

"By doing so, the lessons from research projects can be shared with an even broader network to take out to our people. The important outcomes, impacts and innovations developed with Australian partners can also aid our policy makers, law makers, business partners and stakeholders in making informed decisions in the development sphere."

"One suggestion would be an annual or bi-annual project completion seminar on Australian Government funded projects for agricultural development in PNG," she concluded.

Other speakers include international affairs specialist Allan Gyngell, climate change and security specialist Dr Robert Glasser and renowned global wheat scientist Dr Alison Bentley.

