

Strengthening district partnership

Grow PNG team met with Markham district administrator Bohage Bebinaso and Member of Parliament (MP) Koni Iguan recently and had a discussion about agriculture development in the Markham Valley.

The team led by Executive Director John Simango visited the district headquarters at Mutzing on May 26. The meeting was critical to continue strengthening the on-going partnership and work Grow PNG is doing in bringing partners together to unlock the Markham Valley for potential agribusiness investments and development.

Markham MP Iguan thanked Grow PNG for providing the platform to connect farmers, agribusiness and markets.

“It is important for partners to inform and involve the district on what they are doing in the valley, so that the district leadership and government continues to support and complement their efforts,” he said.

Land access, agriculture SME growth and cooperative societies participation in the food supply chain were the main discussion topics.

MP Iguan said there are registered land groups which the district administration supported through identification and registration that are now ready to participate in any agriculture investments.

District administrator Mr Bebinaso said it is important to ensure proper connection is made with farmers and potential investors in the country and abroad to develop the massive Markham Valley land.

A Land Access Guide was developed by Grow PNG’s Land Access Working Group in partnership with PNG Lands Department, government agencies, private sector partners and landowners. The guide aims to ensure ease of access for land for agriculture opportunities within the valley.

An SME Working Group has been established and focuses on developing agriculture SMEs and cooperatives. Its work will complement the district agriculture and economic plans.

Mr Simango said strong and transparent partnerships is important in agriculture development.

“Grow PNG is a partner who understands the importance of partnership and ensures the partnership landscape is properly networked to achieve successful farmers and agribusiness outcomes. Stronger partnerships and increased trust between civil society, government, agribusiness, and farmers is key to improving income for the rural farmers and will ensure an improved livelihood.

“District leadership and government partnership through ongoing dialogue, engagement and involvement is critical to create an enabling agribusiness growth environment,” he said.



Mr Simango. MP Iguan (centre) and Mr Bebinaso.

Any organisation is welcome to become a partner of Grow PNG and its Working Groups. Partners are expected to have an interest in the country and agriculture; a commitment to supporting smallholders and rural development and an openness to partner with other organisations in a pre-competitive space.