

# MiBank launch farmers loan product

BY RITA PEKI

MiBANK in Mt Hagen has launched an agriculture lending product for farmers to secure loans to expand their farming activities.

The launching of the loan program under the Market for Village Farmers (MVF) Project was held on Tuesday in front of MiBank branch in Mt Hagen.

MiBank's head of credit Wayne Honeyselt said the project aims at facilitating the access of farming households and others in the value chain to affordable and diversified financial services, including basic credit, savings, insurance, and remittance services through innovative and digital delivery channels.

"The project's goal is to improve the livelihood of village farming households in selected provinces by facilitating the transaction from semi-subsistence agriculture to market-oriented production and farming as a business," Mr Honeyselt said.

"We at MiBank recognise that village farmers should have adequate access to credit to enable them to play a more active role in economic development thus, we are prepared to consider the provision of loan facilities to farmers who would not normally be able to provide security of a type or in an amount which fi-

nancial institutions would otherwise require.

"We are pleased to launch this farmers loan product in Mt Hagen Western Highlands, a province well known for the quality of its fresh produce."

He said the loan product will be made available across their 16 branches nationwide, however, there will be a strong focus on Western Highlands and other selected provinces which are considered to be part of the food bowl in PNG.

Mr Honeyselt said the MiBank farmers' loan will allow farmers to access finance against their prior records of crop sale to local produce buyers.

"We trust that providing this access to credit will allow farmers to increase crop yields and quality through the purchase of seeds, fertilizers, solar equipment, machinery, water tanks, etc. so that the result will be better financial gains, improved living standards, and financial independence," he said.

**RIGHT: GEORGE Awap, Bank of PNG assistant governor speaks to farmers during the launching of the loan product.**



**DUSTY Kingsley selling his water melons on the side of the road at Kiam 16 Kona market.**

## Farmers taking advantage of climate change effects

BY MAL TAIME

THE effect of global warming is now becoming a reality because most of the coastal crops are now grown in the Highlands region.

Therefore the Highlanders are taking advantage to work their land and grow crops such as water melon.

Dusty Kingsley said Jiwaka Province has fertile land for people to work and grow cash crops to earn their living.

Therefore, he has decided to grow melons during his short term break from his official work.

Mr Kingsley said he planted almost 1000 melons and now he is happy to

harvest them.

He said when he goes to work, his wife takes care of the melons.

Mr Kingsley is now selling his melons at the Pepik roadside market and Kiam 16 Kona market for K50, K40, K30 and K20 depending on the sizes and also cuts them to sell for 50 toea and K1.

## NDB supports SME owners in Mt Hagen with training

BY KOLOPU WAIMA

THE NATIONAL Development Bank in Mt Hagen has assured villagers to support small and medium enterprises in Western Highlands.

Mt Hagen NDB branch manager Pati Kingal said this at a SME training graduation in Wila village near Mt Hagen last Thursday.

He assured 50 graduates that he will assist them secure loans with the National Development Bank in Mt Hagen.

"I will assist you in getting loans, I will let loan officers to talk with you," he said.

He urged the graduates to use the skills and knowledge they acquired through the training.

"You are now equipped with skills

and knowledge on how to operate your business, you must go out there in the field and practice what you have learnt," he said.

Small Medium Enterprise Corporation (SMEC) corporate affairs manager Rodney Sumale said the SME training is recognised by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and it must be utilised.

He said that businesses will grow when people cooperate.

"I see that more women are taking up this training. When women want to start up business, the men must give their full support and vice versa," Mr Sumale said.

He said that many business break down due to the lack of family cooperation and mismanagement.

Mr Sumale said the K200 million

SME funding from the government is only to support what SMEs already have.

"You must have money, family cooperation must be there and start up the business with the first training we are giving you, other stages of training will come after you put these first skills and knowledge into practice, we are here to help support grow your business and it is up to you," he said.

**RIGHT: THE SME training participants and representatives from the National Development Bank at Wila village last Thursday.**

## Kontla women's group complete Start Your Business training

BY RIODAN BEGUSHAR

KONTLA women's group in Hagen Central received certificates in Start Your Business after two weeks of training conducted by trainers from the Small to Medium Enterprise Corporation.

The training was timely according to the 47 participants.

"The training was an eye opener for us. We learnt the basics of how to be successful businessman and woman," a participant Patrick Doa said.

He said what he has learnt is an in-depth training on SYB.

SME Corp Managing Director Petrus Ralda while congratulating the participants said he was impressed with the report he received from the trainers.

"There was so much enthusiasm and co-operation shown by the 47 participants. The rating of 98 per

cent I've received from my trainers is a result of impressive participation in the training," he said.

Mr Ralda said the training program is recognised globally.

"The SYB certificate we issue after the training is recognised by more than 90 countries. The SME Corp with partnership from the National Development Bank and the Commerce Department is facilitating this training with the aim to reduce poverty in the country.

"There must be lot of business people involved in the MSME and SME space," he said.

Mr Ralda said business must not be compromised with other obligations.

"The profit and takings of your business must not be spent unnecessary. Do not take money from your business and try to meet other obligations, many businesses fail because of such attitude," he said.

