

# From little things, big things grow

Papua New Guinea

SHARE

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Pacific Women Shaping Pacific Development (Pacific Women) works through a model of ownership and leadership. Pacific Women's strategies and implementation are guided by the values and intentions of Pacific people and governments. Pacific Women is supported by the Australian Government and implemented through a series of partnerships, the majority of which are with Pacific based organisations.

Examples of Pacific ownership and leadership in Pacific Women include the consultative Country Plan design process, government endorsement of Country Plans, and Pacific stakeholder reference groups which provide strategic direction for program activities. The program also receives input from the Pacific Women Advisory Board, comprised of 12 eminent Pacific women and men.

The Kirapim Kaikai na Maket Project in the Tsak Valley of Enga Province in Papua New Guinea is an excellent example of Pacific Women working effectively with Pacific organisations at the community level.

The project enables Tsak Valley women to increase food production resilience in order to reliably produce a surplus. The women involved can then market the surplus produce as a network and increase their incomes.

The project has a goal to directly benefit 40 women each year, together with 160 indirect women beneficiaries and approximately 800 indirect family beneficiaries per year. This means that annually around 800 women and men across the Tsak Valley will receive extended training and the skills to improve their crop production and to benefit financially from their production.



Helen Londes with National Development Bank loan package brochures in the Fresh Produce Development Agency Hagen Office, where CDWAI staff work part time.

One participant in the project is Helen Londes.

Helen is a primary school teacher by profession. She is a young, educated leader in the Tsak Rural Women's Empowerment Foundation working with the Community Development Workers Association Inc. as a direct beneficiary under the Kirapim Kaikai na Maket Project.

Helen has received training in crop production, with topics mainly directed at improving soil and yield, such as the effects of drought, soil fertility management practices, soil water management, animal and plant manure, and pest and disease management. She has also received training in basic book keeping.

In 2017, Helen harvested good yields of potato and taro. In the Tsak Valley, taro is normally grown with the use of chemical pesticides, but Helen used techniques learned through participation in the project to grow taro without these chemicals. She also tried other crops in her gardens like African yam and soybean, which gave very good yields.

Helen's new book keeping skills helped her build and stock a trade store that had a deep freezer and generator in a community with no electricity. She simultaneously planted two plots of potatoes on her farm and kept separate books for her two projects.

After donating all her stock and some of her trade store money to her husband's political endeavours in 2017, Helen has now directed her attention to her potato project. In March 2018, she received training in developing a business plan. She has progressed to preparing a loan application for a small loan from the National Development Bank to build up her potato project.

This project was developed with complementary support provided by the Papua New Guinea Minister for Foreign Affairs and local Member of Parliament for Wapenamanda, Rimbink Pato. It demonstrates that with a small budget of just \$40,000 over two years, Pacific Women funding can have a big impact by working with Pacific, women's and community organisations.