



Australian Government

MEDIA RELEASE

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PanAust and the Australian Government empowering women at Frieda River

The Government of Australia and PanAust Limited ('PanAust') are working together to empower women through the Frieda River Copper-Gold Project under a Papua New Guinean Women in Mining Project.

Under a memorandum of understanding (MOU) signed at the Frieda River Project on 8 November, a three-year work program will strengthen the participation of women in the Frieda River Project's Development Forum process and ensure women receive lasting benefits over the life of the mine and beyond.

The Project will provide a mentor to work with women from the Frieda River area to prepare them for participation in the Development Forum and help organise their governance and representative structures. Selected Frieda River employees will become women's empowerment and safety champions. The partners will also work to build literacy skills, and promote cooperative approaches to decision-making, workloads and budgeting, leadership and coalition building.

At a ceremony to mark the signing of the MOU, PanAust Managing Director, Dr Fred Hess emphasised the role mining can play in supporting women.

"Mining, perhaps more than any other industry, has the ability to empower women in remote communities. At PanAust, we consider it our responsibility to encourage that development. At our operations in Laos, we have provided pathways for women to acquire trades, become leaders in the company and start small businesses. Our partnership with the Australian Government will help us emulate this success in Papua New Guinea," Dr Hess said.

Australian High Commissioner, Mr Bruce Davis noted the significance of the program.

"Australia is partnering with PanAust on the Women in Mining Project to strengthen women's participation in resource development negotiations. We will help build literacy and financial skills, as well as support women to take on leadership and decision-making roles in the development negotiations, to ensure they directly benefit from mining activities in the region," Mr Davis said.

<p>2015 WINNER AUSTRALIAN CLIMATE LEADERSHIP AWARDS MOST PROFITABLE CARBON REDUCTION ACTIVITY</p> 	<p>2013 WINNER PROJECT DEVELOPMENT OF THE YEAR</p> 	<p>2013 WINNER SUSTAINABILITY LEADERSHIP 2010/11 WINNERS BEST COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT</p> 	<p>2011 LAO PDR LABOUR ORDER CLASS 1 BEST RURAL DEVELOPMENT</p> 	<p>2011 WINNER SOCIAL/COMMUNITY PRESENTED BY ETHICAL INVESTOR</p> 
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After an initial scoping visit, women from local communities strongly support the initiative, including Kathy John, from the Paupe Village.

“The women of the Frieda River communities want to participate in the development of the Project for our benefit and for the good of our families and future generations. We are glad that PanAust and the Australian Government are working to help us,” Kathy said.

The Papua New Guinea Women in Mining Project complements a range of programs in place at Frieda River including a program to combat family and sexual violence (FSV) in partnership with the PNG Mineral Resources Authority, the Australian Government and the World Bank.



Left: His Excellency Australian High Commissioner to Papua New Guinea, Bruce Davis and PanAust Managing Director, Dr Fred Hess signing the MOU watched on by Governor of East Sepik Province, Hon Allan Bird; Member for Ambunti-Drekkir, Hon Johnson Wapunai; Vice Minister for Mining, Bari Palme; Women’s Mentor, Fredah Wantum; women from the Paupe Village and PanAust employees

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