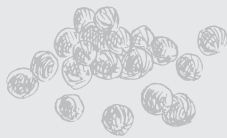




# New skills lead to labour mobility opportunities for PNG youth

Madang Butchery is a medium-scale butchery operation based in Madang. MDF started working with the butchery in December 2021 to support and build skills within the meat sector that would enable employment in PNG and Australia. With MDF support, the partner initiated a butchery training program that covers meat production, boning skills, hygiene and retail basics. Two cohorts of trainees have graduated from the program; to date, 18 have received jobs in Australia through the Pacific Australia Labour Mobility (PALM) scheme.

MDF spoke to Gary Litz, Madang Butchery's Managing Director, on the business and its partnership with MDF.



- MDF
- Gary Litz

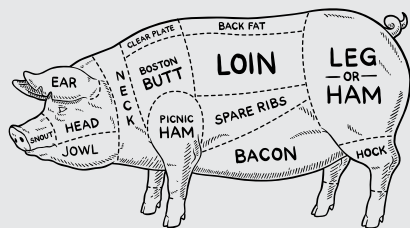
## Can you give us a brief background on the business?

Madang Butchery is a family business established in 1981 by my father, a master butcher from Germany. He is now retired, and I am currently running the business. We are a 100 per cent PNG-owned business. We supply wholesale and retail meats, small goods, and local products, including fresh vegetables. We are the only PNG-owned business in the local meat industry.

## Tell us about the Butchery Training Program you are currently running.

We saw an opportunity for butchery training, and with support from local leaders and MDF, we commenced the first training program for butchers in January 2022. We identified, screened and selected candidates for the program by working with local leaders. The program runs for about three months, and participants are trained in various butchery skills, workplace safety and first aid. So far, 70 trainees have graduated from the program and 18 are now working in butcheries across Australia. This has been made possible through the PALM scheme.





### What made Madang Butchery want to run this program?

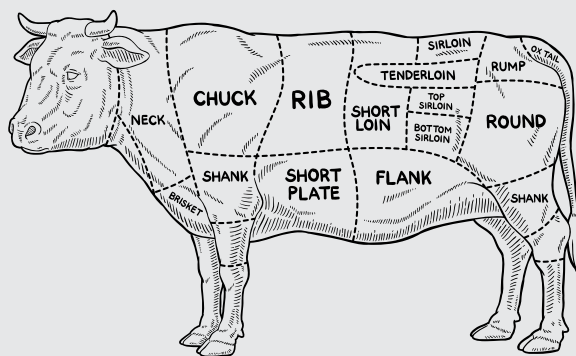
We saw a shortage of butchery skills in PNG, and there was also an opportunity for people to work in Australia in the meat industry. That was the idea behind this training program; participants learn new skills that can benefit this business, and they also benefit from employment opportunities. When they come back from Australia, they also bring back life skills to PNG and can utilise these skills to start their own businesses or help my business.



It comes back to investing in the future of PNG and the industry that Madang Butchery specialises in.

### Do you think this model is sustainable?

Yes, thanks to MDF's contribution, the training program has built up momentum, and there is high interest. Other PNG meat businesses have enrolled employees in the training program, and—due to labour shortages in the Australian meat sector—overseas opportunities will continue for many years. There is also interest from members of parliament from different electorates to support youth from their districts to participate in the training program.



### How do the trainees feel about this butchery program?

Across the board, they are all happy because they have learned something they had thought they never would. There are 18 trainees in Australia, and I look forward to learning about their experiences when they return. In general, it has been positive, and there has been a lot of excitement to get to Australia and learn about new things.

### What is the future of Madang Butchery, and do you think the training program will continue?

We plan to expand and grow and have outlets in other centres in PNG. And we also intend to increase the capacity for training. The meat industry in PNG is not doing well due to factors including a lack of skills, poor industry infrastructure, rudimentary animal husbandry, inadequate disease management practices and low productivity of livestock. We are trying to help get it back on track, and this skills improvement is a small step in the big picture.

