

Sugar communities and resilience to change: Opportunities for enhancing women's participation in sustainability initiatives.

Final Report of SRDC Research Project CSE016

Authors:

Dr Emma Jakku, CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems

Jenny Bellamy, University of Queensland

Dr Iris Bohnet, CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems

Sandra Webb, Isis Women in Sugar, Project Coordinator (South)

Wendy Finlayson, Wet Tropic Women in Sugar, Project Coordinator (North)

25 November 2008

SRDC Research Project

Final Report

Title of the Project: Sugar communities and resilience to change: Opportunities for enhancing women's participation in sustainability initiatives.

Project Reference Number: CSE016

Research Organisation(s): CSIRO and University of Queensland

Principal Investigators:

Emma Jakku
Tropical Landscapes Program, CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems
306 Carmody Road, St Lucia QLD 4067
Phone: (07) 3214 2231
Email: emma.jakku@csiro.au

Jenny Bellamy
School of Natural and Rural Systems Management, University of Queensland, Level 5 Hartley Teakle building, St Lucia QLD 4067
Phone: (07) 3365 2163
Email: jenny.bellamy@uq.edu.au

Iris Bohnet
Tropical Landscapes Program, CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems
Cairns QLD 6811
Phone: (07) 4091 8826
Email: iris.bohnet@csiro.au

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study was supported by funds from the Australian sugar industry and Australian Government through the Sugar Research and Development Corporation as well as from CSIRO and The University of Queensland, which are gratefully acknowledged. The authors would also like to thank our many collaborators, including: our northern and southern Project Reference Panel members, Bundaberg Women in Sugar, Isis Women in Sugar and Wet Tropics Women in Sugar groups and all the people who took part in our project interviews and workshops. We would also like to thank Tracy Cooper and Maria Nolan from Seachange Consulting and our colleagues Christine Painter and Cristine Hall for their assistance.



Australian Government

Sugar Research and
Development Corporation

The Research Organisation is not a partner, joint venturer, employee or agent of SRDC and has no authority to legally bind SRDC, in any publication of substantive details or results of this Project.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	2
TABLE OF CONTENTS	3
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
THE ISSUE.....	4
THE R&D METHODOLOGY.....	4
OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES	4
IMPACT.....	5
BACKGROUND	6
OBJECTIVES	9
1A. A SHARED UNDERSTANDING OF THE MAJOR INFLUENCES ON WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION	10
1B. A SHARED UNDERSTANDING OF THE VALUE OF AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENHANCING WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION	15
2. IDENTIFY, IMPLEMENT AND EVALUATE STRATEGIES THAT IMPROVE WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION..	18
3. FACILITATE WIDE, ONGOING COMMUNICATION AND UPTAKE OF FINDINGS ON STRATEGIES	27
METHODOLOGY	33
PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH APPROACH	33
PROJECT EVALUATION	37
OUTPUTS	39
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY	41
IMPACTS	41
EXPECTED OUTCOMES	42
FUTURE RESEARCH NEEDS	46
RECOMMENDATIONS	46
LIST OF PUBLICATIONS	47
APPENDICES	48
REFERENCES	49

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This project was funded by SRDC, in partnership with CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems and the University of Queensland. The project commenced in November 2005 and this final report, completed in November 2008, summarises the key outputs, outcomes and lessons that have emerged from the project.

The issue

The focus of this project was to build industry and community capacity for change by targeting the participation of women in a broad range of sustainability initiatives, as a key opportunity to strengthen industry decision-making and the resilience or adaptive capacity of sugar communities in the face of change. This project explored women's experiences with 'sustainability initiatives', which were defined broadly as 'formal activities, processes, relationships or tools focused on making the industry economically, socially and/or environmentally sustainable'.

Previous research has shown that gender relations are a significant factor influencing farm, industry and community decision-making and that women are a poorly utilised resource in the agricultural sector. It is also well recognised that communities and industries closely dependent on natural resources need to enhance their capacity to cope with and adapt to the impacts of uncertainty and on-going change and to shape sustainable futures. Although it is recognised that women have the potential to provide a largely untapped opportunity for fostering innovation and facilitating change, many women are marginalised from knowledge exchange and decision-making roles within the sugar industry, with many industry-based initiatives and advice networks failing to meet their needs or appeal to them.

The challenge for the sugar industry is that reducing the barriers to communication, information flow, and feedback and creating opportunities for new interactions and knowledge creation, generation and capture can lead to enhanced resilience and increased ability of both communities and individuals to cope with and adapt to uncertainty and change. Importantly, a clear need exists for new approaches to enhance the participation and engagement of women in sugar industry decision-making and training/educational initiatives and to help them embrace change.

The R&D methodology

The project's research was based on a multiple method approach involving a combination of: case study research, participatory research and evaluation, action research, literature review, regional profiling, stakeholder analysis and synthesis and reflection. The delivery of the project outputs and outcomes was embedded within ongoing stakeholder participation, through the project's Reference Panels, interactive workshops, and formal and informal meetings and interviews. This stakeholder participation occurred within two contrasting sugar regions:

- A northern region extending from the Tully mill area in the south to the Babinda mill area in the north; and
- A southern region including the Bundaberg and Isis mill areas.

Participatory evaluation was an integral part of the project's R&D methodology.

Outputs and outcomes

Through bringing a gender perspective on the practice of participation in the sugar industry in two case study regions, the project identified a broader range of opportunities and strategies

for those currently marginalised in decision-making and participation in the sugar industry, which has the potential to foster innovation and facilitate change.

Many substantial outputs were derived from the project, including:

- A Literature Review and Analytical Framework Report identifying issues and concepts relevant to the research focus on enhancing women's participation.
- A Report documenting the findings from in-depth interviews with women and men across the sugar industry, which captures experiences of the major influences on women's participation within the sugar industry.
- A Strategies Report outlining recommendations for improving the participation of women in sustainability initiatives, which recognises the links to improving the adaptive capacity of sugar communities in the face of uncertainty and change.
- Ongoing communication products for a broad range of stakeholders, including fact sheets, e-newsletters and newspaper articles.
- The establishment of a cross-regional internet-based e-Network developed by women in the sugar industry to help keep them in touch, to exchange and access information, and potentially empowering them to make a difference in the way the sugar industry responds to challenges in their industry.

The project has also contributed to outcomes that are already benefiting the Australian sugar industry. Feedback from the project's Reference Panel members and other research collaborators identify significant improvements have been achieved in regard to increased understanding of strategies for enhancing women's participation in sustainability initiatives, with improved opportunities emerging in the case study regions. There is also evidence that the project has contributed to enhancing women's leadership roles, building women's confidence to participate in industry decision-making and improving women's networking options and opportunities now and in the future in the case study regions.

Through working collaboratively with women and other key sugar industry stakeholders, a framework of principles, strategies and tactics for 'good practice' for fostering women's participation in sustainability initiatives and decision-making processes in the sugar industry has been established. The framework is linked closely to improving resilience or adaptive capacity in sugar communities to deal with uncertainty and change.

Impact

Our research collaborators identified a range of project impacts, which relate to the following social benefits:

- Raised awareness within the industry in two case study regions of the issues of marginalisation of women in the sugar industry and the implications for the industry of improving options and opportunities for women's participation;
- Increased sugar women's confidence in their ability to deal with current industry challenges and built their capacity to participate;
- Improved industry, government and community stakeholder capacity to foster the involvement of women in sustainability initiatives relevant to the sugar industry; and
- Improved networking capabilities for women in the industry that have the potential to facilitate community resilience in the face of uncertainty and change that the industry is experiencing and will continue to in the future.

BACKGROUND

There are a complex range of global to local trends and challenges that are impacting on Australian sugar communities, including globalisation and agricultural restructuring, changing community expectations about sustainability, transitions in sugar communities driven by trends such as ‘sea change’ and challenges associated with technological changes, diversification and climate change (e.g. Sugar Industry Review Working Party 1996; Hildebrand 2002; Boston Consulting Group 2003; OESR 2003; Jakku *et al.* 2006; Sugar Industry Oversight Group 2006). These trends and challenges impact on the ability of sugar communities to manage change, which is essential for their economic, environmental and social sustainability.

Strengthening the capacity of rural communities to adapt to and deal with change is increasingly being recognised as critical to pursuing sustainable development and it is particularly pertinent to the Australian sugar industry and the communities it is embedded in. The adaptive capacity of individuals and communities is considered to be an aspect of the resilience of societies that reflects learning, flexibility to experiment and adopt novel solutions, and the development of generalised responses to broad classes of challenges without losing options for the future (Walker *et al.* 2002; Folke *et al.* 2003).

Emerging insights from the community-based natural resource management and social-ecological systems literature however emphasise that communities and industries closely dependent on natural resources need to enhance their capacity to cope with and adapt to the impacts of uncertainty and change and to shape sustainable futures (e.g. Walker *et al.* 2004). Significantly, it is recognised that women are a largely untapped opportunity for fostering innovation and facilitating change in the Australian sugar industry (Pini 1999, 2001; Bellamy and Webb 2003).

Women therefore have a potentially valuable role to play in dealing with and managing on-going change and fostering adaptive responses in rural communities. It is increasingly recognised that women play an important role in rural industries, often bringing a more holistic and future-oriented perspective to social, economic and environmental issues (e.g. The Rural Women and ICTs Research Team 1999; Black *et al.* 2000). SCARM (1998b) found that in general women see themselves as being responsible for innovation to the farming operation, and concluded that “women in agricultural enterprises are both the ‘glue’ that holds the family farm together – by taking responsibility for family maintenance and hands-on farming - as well as being business partners and creative strategists” (SCARM 1998b). In addition, Elix and Lambert (1998) point to certainly anecdotal, if not statistical evidence, that women have a clearer understanding of sustainability in agricultural practice. Alston (2000) describes rural women’s broader perspective as a commitment to “holistic development of rural communities and agricultural production leading to enhanced quality of life”. SCARM (2001) identifies women as major drivers of change particularly in the areas of natural resource management and rural adjustment and concludes that “if we are to increase women’s influence at the decision-making level we need to continually refine our understanding of what motivates women to become involved”. The potential of women to take a major role in the changes taking place in agriculture and in rural communities in general must also be seen as an essential contribution to increasing competitiveness and efficiency in the sector (SCARM 1998a; 1998b).

Women in agriculture in Australia and elsewhere make significant and valuable contributions to their enterprises, families and communities, through their diverse roles, including on-farm work, off-farm employment and voluntary community work (Sachs 1983; Whatmore 1991; Leckie 1993; Alston 1995; Gooday 1995; McCartney and Ross 2003). However, it is also acknowledged that women's contributions to Australia's agricultural industries and rural communities are largely under-recognised and undervalued (Alston 1998, 2003, 2004; Elix and Lambert 1998; Dimopoulous and Sheridan 2000; Pini 2002). The lack of recognition of the role rural women play in rural life obscures the way in which rural communities and industry depend on the contributions of women (Alston 1995, 1998, 2000).

Previous research has shown that gender relations are a significant factor influencing farm, industry and community decision-making (e.g. SCARM 1998b; Bellamy *et al.* 2002; Alston 2004). For example, gender biased definitions of work, which tend to exclude much of women's labour, have led to the 'invisibility' of women's contributions to their enterprises, families and communities (Gibson *et al.* 1990; Williams 1992; Alston 1998, 2003; Argent 1999; McCartney and Ross, 2003). A study of women from five different rural industries in Australia (Bellamy *et al.* 2002; Bellamy and Webb 2003), found that although there are considerable variations in the ways that farm and household tasks are allocated to women, overall women's roles are changing with women increasingly becoming involved in a broader range of activities that in the past would have been traditionally regarded as men's work, with many women now clearly identifying themselves as joint partners or business managers with their spouse (and/or other family members) rather than having the traditional role of a 'farmers wife' or 'book keeper'.

Although there is limited data to quantify women's overall contribution to the Australian sugar industry, women's on-farm work in the sugar industry includes farm management, administration and book-keeping, and farm labour including 'gofering', in addition to women's other roles such as wife, householder and primary carer (e.g. Pini 1999; Bellamy and Webb 2003; McGowan Consulting 2006). Women also contribute to the sugar industry outside of the commercial family farm business, through their roles as small farmers, new farmers, farm labourers, harvest operators, contractors, farm consultants, accountants, bankers, administrators, small business owners, health professionals, community workers, educators, trainers, researchers, media and government representatives (Pini 1999; Bellamy and Webb 2003; McGowan Consulting 2006). Women in the sugar industry are also highly involved in their local communities. Pini (1999) found that many of the women that she surveyed in the sugar industry were active in multiple community organisations, including church groups, sporting clubs, cultural / craft clubs and school associations. Rural decline and the withdrawal of rural services in recent years in Australia have made the voluntary contributions of women increasingly essential for sustaining the well-being of rural families, enterprises and communities (Alston, 1998; Elix and Lambert, 1998; McCartney and Ross, 2003).

Notwithstanding, the male-dominated nature of Australian agricultural industries and their associated organisations, which translates into the well documented low levels of representation of women on agricultural industry representative bodies, means that women's interests tend to be under-represented and marginalised in the agricultural sector and rural communities (Dimopoulous and Sheridan 2000; Alston 2003). As Alston (2003) argues the current marginalisation of women from agricultural organisations and policy-making means that the "possibility of a wider vision incorporating the environment, land management, social issues and the interconnectedness of people, communities and the earth is lost" (p.

486). Alston (1998) argues that the absence of women in leadership is not a reflection of lack of interest but of obstruction by those who hold power to determine who shall lead the industry. Nevertheless, progress towards better representation of women in decision-making in Australia is improving, although slowly (SCARM 2001).

Critics however have challenged the way in which some of the literature interprets the role women play and the link between women and sustainability (e.g. Beilin 1995). Just increasing the number of women participating is not sufficient. Cornwall (2003) points to evidence that suggests that the very projects and processes that appear so inclusive and transformative may turn out to be supportive of a status quo that is highly inequitable for women. She argues making a difference requires rethinking 'gender' by changing the frame to focus on relations and positions of power and powerlessness. While Beilin (1995) suggests that women's participation in Landcare in Australia may actually operate as a form of environmental community service, which assumes a female responsibility for protecting the environment and amounts to further unrewarded voluntary work for women. Further, Grace and Lennie (1998: 365) argue that the danger of portraying women as a 'untapped human resource' is that the agenda for increasing women's participation in decision-making may be more about a "pragmatic and economics-driven desire to maximize and fully utilize all of the available human resource potential" and less about empowering women in decision-making. Therefore, although it is important to recognise the valuable contribution that women make to the sugar industry and their regional communities, it is also important to be aware of the broader power dynamics that shape the role of women in agricultural industries and rural communities.

Bringing a gender perspective on the practice of participation in the sugar industry may help to identify a broader range of strategies for all those currently marginalised in decision-making and participation at all levels of the sugar industry. Importantly, a clear need exists for new approaches to enhance the participation and engagement of women in industry decision-making and training/educational initiatives and to help them embrace change.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives that guided this project were to work with women in the sugar industry, in two case study regions, in collaboration with other sugar industry, government, community, research and extension stakeholders, to:

1. Develop a shared understanding amongst collaborators and researchers of:
 - a. The major social, economic and institutional influences on women's participation in initiatives relevant to sustainability and the sugar industry; and
 - b. The value of and opportunities for enhancing women's participation in such initiatives.
2. Identify, implement and evaluate strategies that improve women's participation in initiatives relevant to environmental, economic and social sustainability in the sugar industry, using participatory action research.
3. Facilitate wide, ongoing communication and uptake of findings on strategies for strengthening the participation of women in sustainability initiatives to enhance sugar communities' capacity to deal with change within and beyond the case study regions.

To address these objectives, the project worked collaboratively in two contrasting sugar regions (in terms of environment, economy and social and institutional arrangements):

- A northern case study region extending from the Tully mill area in the south to the Babinda mill area in the north; and
- A southern case study region including the Bundaberg and Isis mill areas.

In these case study regions, the project focused on women's experiences with participation in 'sustainability initiatives', which were defined broadly as 'formal activities, processes, relationships or tools focused on making the industry economically, socially and/or environmentally sustainable'. For example, sustainability initiatives may include initiatives supporting best management practices (BMPs), farm management systems (FMS) or business management or systems approaches (Ipe *et al.* 2001; Welch and Marc-Aurele 2001; Ice 2004; Benham *et al.* 2005). Sustainability initiatives also include other community-based activities for implementing sustainability, including Landcare, catchment management, local and regional economic development, regional natural resource management and social planning (Chamala and Keith 1995; Curtis and De Lacy 1996; Bellamy *et al.* 2002a; Bellamy and Johnson 2000), as well as informal industry networks (e.g. Olsson *et al.* 2006; Bellamy and Webb 2003).

This section details below what the project achieved in relation to each of these objectives.

1a. Develop a shared understanding amongst collaborators and researchers of the major social, economic and institutional influences on women's participation in initiatives relevant to sustainability and the sugar industry.

The project's literature review and scoping study (Appendix 1), in-depth interviews with women and men in two case study regions (Appendix 2), interactive facilitated workshops with women (Appendices 3 and 4), Project Reference Panel meetings (Appendix 5) over the life of the project and project evaluation and synthesis activities (Appendices 6 and 7), all contributed to achieving a shared understanding amongst the research team and our collaborators of the major influences on women's participation in sustainability initiatives in the sugar industry.

The Australian sugar industry: a changing context

The sugar industry in Australia has experienced major changes in the last two decades, for example, with volatility in world sugar prices, industry deregulation, and increased international competitiveness. In the last five years in particular, low world sugar prices at various times, drought, cyclones, sugar cane smut outbreaks, urban encroachment, increased use of rotation crops (mainly soybeans and peanuts) and higher returns from alternative land uses, particularly forestry, have all contributed to a decline in the harvested area of sugar cane in Australia (Foster and Sheales 2008). These challenges raise significant questions and concerns for the long-term sustainability of the industry in Australia.

Although small privately-owned family farms and harvesting enterprises continue to dominate the sugar industry in Australia (Hooper 2008), interviewees from both of the case study regions have identified that there are major adaptations occurring in the character of family farming within the Australian sugar industry as a consequence of these major changes. These adaptations include:

- Greater diversity of farm structures (e.g. size, management arrangements);
- Alteration of farming goals (including make-up of farm activities and/or diversification either within sugar or into other industries);
- Changes in household labour arrangements;
- Increasing reliance on sources of income outside traditional sugar production (both on-farm and off-farm); and
- A shift in local cultural norms (e.g. towards a mindset more sensitive to variable circumstances and the need for change in farm practices or 'ways of doing things').

Changing roles of women in the Australian sugarcane industry

In the context of a changing sugar industry, women in this study identified that they are not a uniform group but a diverse range of people whose roles are multiple, diverse and changing. Importantly, gender differences exist in the opportunities, powers and capacity for women to participate in sugar industry decision-making at all levels due, for example, to the pressures of women's diverse workloads, and to values and attitudes characteristic to the traditional sugar industry culture on decision-making processes at all levels, as well as power over assets.

Given the changing Australian sugar industry context and women's evolving roles, women involved in this study identify significant challenges for enhancing their participation in industry initiatives and decision-making processes. Barriers and constraints to women's

participation are common to many rural industries and communities in Australia (e.g. Claridge, 1998; Standing Committee on Agriculture and Resource Management, 1998; McCartney and Ross 2003). The specific barriers and constraint to sugar women's participation identified by this study are summarised in Box 1.

Box 1. Barriers and constraints on women's participation in the Australian sugar industry.

Socialised, cultural and attitudinal barriers and constraints

- Gender role socialisation and stereotyping within a male-dominated industry culture;
- Self-confidence, especially in relation to operating in the public sphere;
- Undervaluing of women's role;
- Lack of industry knowledge and experience;
- Different gender styles of operation (including communication, decision-making and leadership);
- Lack of support from partners, family and peers; and
- A sense of guilt associated with compromising family and enterprise commitments.

Structural and organisational barriers and constraints

- Gender-biased social and organisational structures, which limit women's access to assets and power and therefore limit their access to information and opportunities to gain experience in agricultural decision-making processes;
- Limited voting rights in sugar industry representative bodies; and
- Lack of financial control within farm businesses.

Situational and practical barriers and constraints

- Lack of time, due to multiple roles women undertake, including on- and off-farm work commitments and family responsibilities;
- Stage of life;
- Timing of industry events and activities;
- Limited access to childcare or family-unfriendly venues or events; and
- Individual's personal priorities.

The project's research activities have provided a wealth of information on the major social, economic and institutional influences on women's participation in decision-making within the sugar industry and their preferences for involvement. This section briefly summarises the relevant findings that emerge from the in-depth interviews (see Appendix 2) and were further endorsed at the project's interactive forums with women and also by members of the Project's Reference Panels.

Social influences on women's participation

An important finding of the project was that the role and status of women in the sugar industry has changed, albeit slowly, over the past 20 years: these days more women are involved in decision making across the

Women are taking more active roles and they [e.g. CANEGROWERS] are taking more notice of women. (Northern interviewee)

spectrum of the industry, and there is also greater recognition of the role of women in the industry. Women's diverse roles include on-farm work, off-farm employment and voluntary community work as well as a primary carer role in the family. There is also growing recognition, by both men and women alike, that women often bring new or different thinking to a decision situation including a more holistic and long-term perspective to social, environmental and economic issues.

Most of the women interviewed personally consider it very important to be involved in the industry because they felt as women they often see things from a different perspective. They often provide support in stressful times within an industry that is undergoing change. They believe that this different, female perspective is as important at the scale of the family business as it is at the scale of the industry organisation.

Women cited many motivations for wanting to be involved: a strong one was a direct benefit for their business. Many women also highlighted the interconnections between information seeking and networking and emphasised the importance of keeping up to date with the latest information in order to improve their farming practices.

Because we all need knowledge of what's happening and knowledge empowers, but also to get different points of view. (Northern interviewee)

I guess I have a general passion for the industry, being born and bred on the cane farm, I guess it's instilled in you. (Northern interviewee)

Other women indicated they got involved because they had an interest or passion for the industry that often stemmed from a long family involvement, or they just wanted to make a contribution or learn something new.

However, not everyone indicated they had an interest in participating in the industry: in particular some women indicated they would prefer not be involved at the industry organisation level. Some felt they were too old to participate and would leave that to the younger generation: others simply felt burnt out. Women also identified a range of social barriers that influenced their participation.

The male-dominated and conservative culture of the sugar industry was a recurring theme among women's discussion of the social factors that influenced women's participation in the industry. Many women commented on the intimidating nature of the entrenched attitudes towards women's participation within the industry, based on gender stereotyping.

...I think it's historically and culturally, it has been the man's position to go to the meetings. (Northern interviewee)

Now my mother was a cane farmer, and I said I was going off to the Canegrowers meeting. And she said 'Oh dear, women don't go to that.' And I said 'Mum, now they do.' (Southern interviewee)

Many women also discussed the way in which confidence, especially in relation to operating in the public sphere, was another challenge regarding women's participation in the industry. Several women commented more generally on the way that upbringing or generation influenced both male and female attitudes towards women's participation.

Other hindrances cited were a lack of supportive environment for women, as well as structural constraints such as rules about voting rights within industry organisations, which only allow for one vote per farm assignment. It was also recognised by interviewees that there are significant personal and practical

Well my major challenge is balancing family, farm and still that meanie called time. So that everybody's happy, keeping everybody happy. (Southern interviewee)

barriers that affected women's engagement in this industry such as time constraints, the multiple roles played by women in a family farm context and the timing of industry events.

Economic influences on women's participation

The project research also revealed a range of economic factors that influenced women's participation in the sugar industry. Some women noted that changes in the industry's operating environment have meant that women have to do more to keep their enterprises viable. This was linked to deregulation, changes in wages and low prices. The broader context of the economics of sugarcane growing have meant that many women have had to either spend more time working on the farm or have had to seek work off-farm. The economic pressure that is making this off-farm work necessary was an underlying theme in many interviews and during other project interactions with women.

Wages are through the roof and the farmers can't afford to employ people so the wives get out and do it. (Northern interviewee)

I was spending around 50 or so hours off-farm working, as well as my own farm work. Now I spend, on average, 30-35. ...It's allowed the farm to stay operating. Otherwise, we wouldn't eat; it's as simple as that. (Southern interviewee)

While off farm work is challenging for many women to juggle with their farm and family commitments, it is increasingly becoming significant for many farming families as a source of income. However, many women specifically nominated off-farm work commitments as a major constraint on women's participation in the sugar industry.

Furthermore, some women identified financial constraints as a factor that influenced their ability to participate in sugar industry events or activities.

... [It is] the affordability of doing a lot of things, travelling. A lot of things entail travelling. Travelling costs money. (Northern interviewee)

Institutional influences on women's participation

...we're continually bombarded with additional compliance; it just goes on and on and on. ...They are very much needed, to get out there to get that information, to bring it home to make sure we are complying with all these acts and regulations. (Southern interviewee)

The interviews identified changes in the industry's regulatory context as one of the institutional factors that were influencing women's participation. This was related to the way in which women often play an important role in ensuring that their enterprises are compliant with relevant acts and regulations.

In terms of barriers to women's participation, several women highlighted the specific, gender-based institutional structures within the sugar industry that limit women's participation within industry organisations, especially the voting rights within CANEGROWERS, and the perceived 'hostile' environment posed by many industry-based meetings.

... You can only have one authorised representative per farming enterprise. So there is one vote. So it really hasn't encouraged participation. (Northern interviewee)

Implications of social, economic and institutional influences on women's participation

Some of the implications of these issues emerging from the project's research that relate to women's roles and participation in the Australian sugar industry can be summarised as:

- *Gender differences do exist and women's motivations and preferences for industry participation are diverse and change over time:* for example, women's identities and

consequently needs vary over time with changes in women's work situations (on- and off-farm), as well as their relationships, personal history and stage of life.

- *Knowledge and education is empowering for many women in the context of uncertainty and change, for example:*
 - Increasingly women want to learn more about a wide variety of agricultural / farm business and industry-related topics; and
 - Many women want to have more influence on, or be able to make a more effective contribution to, decision-making.
- *Non-participation in industry initiatives (education/training/extension) and broader decision-making does not always necessarily mean the 'exclusion' of women; rather in many instances it may be women's choice. In particular, male-dominated and traditional forms of information exchange and industry involvement are frequently viewed as 'hostile' or 'unfriendly' rather than 'helpful' or preferred environments for women.*
- *The marginalization, or exclusion in some instances, of women from participation in industry initiatives and decision-making processes remains a significant gender difference. There is a long held common conception in Australia and worldwide of rural women as being in support roles (e.g. as 'farmwives' or 'the book keepers' or 'gofer' or 'administrative assistants') rather than being 'farmers' or 'managers' or contributing to farm or broader level industry decision-making. Moreover, there is the well documented exclusion of women from male-dominated rural networks both in the Australian sugar industry (e.g. Pini 2002, 2006) and in other rural industries and contexts in Australia and internationally (e.g. Grant and Rainnie 2005; McCartney and Ross 2003; Trauger et al. 2008; Shortall 2008). Women involved in this current research project have identified that such gender differences in the Australian sugar industry are contributing to:*
 - The continued marginalization of women from knowledge exchange and decision-making roles within the industry at all levels (from farm to whole-of-industry);
 - Many industry-based extension or educational initiatives and advice networks failing to meet sugar women's needs and/or appeal to them;
 - The common dominant focus of industry initiatives on conventional production marginalising many sugar women because their needs for information may be more focussed on, for example, alternative approaches, diversification, etc.; and
 - A continuing practice both in industry and local communities that women's participation is largely expected to be provided on a voluntary basis and/or limited to implementation.

Although these emerging issues of marginalization in the Australian sugar industry are not necessarily confined to only women, bringing a gender perspective on the practice of participation within the industry may help identify a broader range of strategies for all those marginalized in decision-making and participation in sustainability initiatives at all levels of the sugar industry. Importantly, a clear need emerges for new approaches to enhance the participation and engagement of women in industry decision-making and training/educational initiatives and to help them embrace change.

1b. Develop a shared understanding amongst collaborators and researchers of the value of and opportunities for enhancing women's participation in such initiatives.

The project's literature review and scoping study, in-depth interviews with women and men in two case study regions, interactive facilitated workshops with women ('What Works for Women' in June 2007 and 'Connections Matter' in August 2008), Project Reference Panel meetings over the life of the project and final project evaluation and synthesis activities, captured learnings and experiences of women who have been involved in 'sustainability initiatives', which helped achieve a shared understanding of the value of and opportunities for enhancing women's participation in sugar industry sustainability initiatives. 'Sustainability initiatives' were defined broadly as 'formal activities, processes, relationships or tools focused on making the industry economically, socially and/or environmentally sustainable'.

Women from the two case study regions have participated in a broad range of industry-related activities, processes or programs which focussed on moving the sugar industry to be more socially, economically or environmentally sustainable. Many of these initiatives were focused on addressing more than one aspect of sustainability and they were variously government, industry and community or grower-driven. They included:

- Grower-led initiatives (e.g. Women in Sugar (WIS) groups; Babinda Farming for the Future);
- Industry-based/driven partnerships or projects (e.g. Isis Target 100; Bundaberg Grain and Cane; SRDC Travel and Learning projects); and
- State Government collaborative programs (e.g. the FEAT and New Farming Systems initiatives under the FutureCane program).

Although there is a rich debate about, and a long history of, the promotion of community-based approaches to regional natural resource management and regional development and planning, women from the sugar industry involved in this study did not identify being involved in such initiatives or that they were considered important to them.

Women's experiences with sustainability initiatives relevant to the sugar industry, although varied, are generally regarded by women in this current study as very important opportunities for improving women's participation in the industry decision-making. Women identified that these initiatives bring them improved understanding of the industry to the farm enterprise and greater confidence in taking up new options for the farm business. Women are also better able to contribute to decision making on on-farm activities as well as respond to crises impacting on the industry.

It's very good to be proactive. Don't wait for people to make things better for you. We have to get in there and get on with it. If you've got something that you think's going to happen, well make it happen. I think that's probably the most important and be prepared to look at other options. (Southern interviewee)

Women in this current study identified a range of ways that they preferred to participate in the industry initiatives and decision making processes, in particular through:

- Interactive forums and workshops;
- Learning something new;
- Practical, hands-on activities with clear outcomes;
- Field days and farm walks; and
- Women's networks (including WIS groups).

The industry context is changing, which is leading to new imperatives and also new opportunities for greater participation in decision making for women at the farm, industry, community levels. Both men and women interviewed in this project felt that the sugar

There's women in various roles now that were probably a little bit unheard of [in the past] that might have raised a few eyebrows going back some years. ...not only being involved but they've proved to all and sundry, including all the local menfolk that they can do a damn fine job. (Southern interviewee)

industry is now accepting women's participation in what were traditionally male roles, although there is still a long way to go. They also felt that there is greater recognition of the contribution women make to the industry, with less focus on gender and an increasing focus on 'doing the job well' in changing times. Although challenges persist, one important change is that a few women have been accepted on some industry boards and they are contributing more to industry meetings. Also they are increasingly being employed in different sectors within the industry.

New opportunities have arisen through unexpected routes, for example, the recent outbreak of smut meant that the 'manpower' needed to deal with this crisis often came from women. In more routine ways, interviewees nominated a range of opportunities for women to participate within different sugar industry sectors, including training, courses or workshops, industry meetings, including shed meetings, employment opportunities, research projects, Productivity Services, industry boards, WIS groups and also dealing with and adapting to change through pushing for new industries, technologies or practices.

When smut broke out the people that stood up and were available immediately to go into the fields to inspect the fields for smut were women and they were very, very good at it; probably better than any men we had in the field. (Southern interviewee)

Through interviews and other interactive forums, women identified some critical sustainability initiatives, programs and processes mostly in the sugar industry which women considered as 'good practice' for women's participation for sustainability. They fall into four categories of participation practice:

1. Networks for connecting women: which can enhance connections and information flows, facilitating creative thinking, and fostering innovation within groups, organisations, industries and communities and are critical for enhancing community resilience and improving individuals' capacity to adapt to change (see Section 3.5.1 of Strategies Report in Appendix 8 for details). Key examples of relevant women's networks in this study identified as involving good participation practice are:

- Women in Sugar (WIS) groups; and
- The emerging WIS e-Network.

2. Partnerships for innovation or fostering Best Management Practices (BMPs): The call for more environmentally responsible and sustainable agriculture has encouraged an emphasis on 'best management practices' (BMPs), which Ingram (2008) identifies as knowledge-intensive practices requiring new ways of exchanging information, learning through mutual interaction and shared understanding rather than dissemination or knowledge transfer.

Key examples of relevant partnerships that women in this study identified as involving such good participation practice are:

- Babinda Farming for the Future: Alternative cane products;
- Isis Target 100 implementation: Diversification for sustainable production; and
- SRDC/Regional Advisory Group Integrated Pest Management course: Bug checking in break crops (Bundaberg and Isis).

3. ‘Mixed’ participation on tools for improving business systems/practices: which were targeted activities focusing on ‘participation with your partner’ (generally both partners of the family farm business) and also on ‘a whole of business systems’ approach (i.e. rather than a single component) that included:

- *Co-production of knowledge* – e.g. linking women’s common pivotal knowledge of the business aspects of the farm enterprise with the male partner’s knowledge of production aspects; and
- *Improving women’s understanding of the industry* (including how the farm operates and how industry systems work).

Key examples of relevant initiatives women in this study identified as involving good participation practice are:

- Farm Economic Assessment Tool (FEAT): Assessing alternate business strategies; and
- Isis Target 100 activities.

4. Learning from others (sugar regions or rural industries): The concept of social learning recognises the learning that individuals obtain through observing others and their social interactions within a group (e.g. through imitation of role models). Key examples of ‘learning from others’ initiatives that women identified as involving good participation practice are:

- SRDC Travel and Learning: Learning from the Ord experience with smut;
- SRDC Travel and Learning: Women in Sugar Bus Trips (Narrabri cotton industry, northern NSW sugar industry; Brisbane sugar organisations); and
- Women in Sugar Australia (WISA) Conferences.

Bi-annual meetings with the northern and southern Reference Panels over the life of the project endorsed the project findings and also revealed a range of opportunities related to women’s participation in decision-making in the sugar industry in both case study regions. This helped to exchange views and develop a shared understanding of the opportunities for improving women’s participation in the industry between the research team and collaborators. Ongoing advice from the Reference Panels on the establishment and implementation of the WIS e-network also helped to further develop a shared understanding of opportunities for improving women’s participation. Further detail on feedback from the project’s Reference Panels is presented in the section on Objective 3.

The ‘What Works for Women’ workshops were also important for developing a shared understanding of the value of and opportunities for improving women’s participation in the

industry. An important activity in the ‘What Works for Women’ workshops was group exercises to identify opportunities for strategies to enhance women’s participation (see the workshop report in Appendix 3 for details). Further detail on feedback from the project’s workshops is presented in the section on Objective 3. Importantly, the in-depth interviews and the ‘What Works for Women’ and ‘Connections Matter’ workshops identified the opportunity for better cross-regional communication, networking and information exchange among women in the sugar industry, through a website and email network as critical for enhancing women’s participation in the sugar industry. This is addressed in the next objective.

2. Identify, implement and evaluate strategies that improve women’s participation in initiatives relevant to environmental, economic and social sustainability in the sugar industry, using participatory action research.

Through the project’s participatory action research, networks emerged as an important strategy for improving women’s participation within the Australian sugar industry and a cross-regional network capability emerged as a focus of interest to women. In the final action research phase of the project, therefore, the collaborative identification, implementation and evaluation of strategies to improve women’s participation the sugar industry focused on the value of women’s networks and other connections and, in particular, establishing an e-network to improve communication among women in the sugar industry. The project also developed a series of principles, strategies and tactics as recommendations for improving women’s participation in the sugar industry. This section details the achievements of each of these interrelated activities in turn.

Networks and Women in the Sugar Industry

Networks can be defined as the web of relationships or linkages, both formal and informal, between individuals, groups or organisations that connect actors with different interests, experiences, ideas and knowledge systems, both within and external to an industry or region. Networks are commonly used to support decision-making and are recognised as critical mechanisms for:

- Enhancing connections and information flows, facilitating creative thinking, and fostering innovation within organisations, industries and regional communities (e.g. Granovetter 1973; Westley 1995; Morgan and Murdoch 2000; Cross *et al.* 2001a, 2001b); and
- Enhancing community resilience and improving individuals’ capacity to adapt to change (Paton *et al.* 2001, Paton 2005; Thomkins and Adger 2004; Olsson *et al.* 2006; Davidson-Hunt 2006; Bodin *et al.* 2006).

Through interactive workshops with women, this project found that the webs of networks that women in the sugar industry identify with and use in their daily lives are influenced by a number of specific characteristics of sugar communities. In particular, sugar farm businesses are typically run from home and, as a consequence, women’s personal and business environments and their associated networks overlap and intermesh in a variety of ways. In addition, the Australian sugar industry value chain is complex comprising (Higgins *et al.* 2007):

- *Multiple sectors* (i.e. growing, harvesting, cane transport, mill processing, sugar transport and storage / shipping / marketing); and

- *Multiple scales of decision-making* between the paddock, farm, harvester and mill levels for sugar farming businesses.

As such, the webs of networks or links that women in the sugar industry identify with and use in their daily lives to enhance their businesses are:

- *Complex* – variously encompassing the multiple scales of industry and community decision-making (e.g. paddock, farm, mill area, and region) and within each of those the multiple entities involved (including government, industry, community and private);
- *Multi-purpose* – reflecting both the ‘social’ and ‘economic’ aspects of women’s lives;
- *Diverse and involving a mix of ‘bonding’ and ‘bridging’ links, i.e.:*
 - Strong social ties or ‘*bonding*’ networks (such as to family; local businesses and service providers; local sugar industry groups/organisations; and community groups); and
 - Loose ‘*bridging*’ links or networks that potentially provide access to dispersed resources and sources of information. They may span multiple scales of decision-making or involve direct linkages to ‘brokers’, ‘gate keepers’, etc. (i.e. individuals, local groups and other organisations) who bridge to other individuals, groups or organisational levels (both horizontally and vertically).

Importantly, women involved in this study through in-depth interviews, workshops and other interactive forums identified that a number of the sustainability initiatives that they had been involved with also incorporated an informal networking function, which they valued highly (e.g. Isis Target 100 industry partnership initiative; Women in Sugar groups).

One key initiative with both ‘bonding’ and ‘bridging’ functions that enable women to network and share information on a regular basis are the Women in Sugar (WIS) groups. These groups are self-organising informal networks that have developed in a number of Australian sugar regions over time with various degrees of longevity and impact amongst women who share a common interest (see Strategies Report, Appendix 8 for more details). The WIS groups have created networks and communication mechanisms focused on addressing the issues and needs of women in the sugar industry, although they do also focus on issues relevant to the wider farming family unit. In the study of women in the sugar industry by Bellamy and Webb (2003), women identified that the establishment of these sugar industry women’s groups had personally made a real difference to them; it has improved their knowledge on matters influencing the industry and it has also given the women more confidence to contribute to decision-making on-farm.

WIS groups were nominated by a number of women in this current study as providing a key opportunity for women to participate within the sugar industry. WIS groups have arisen partially because of the difficult economic times for the industry but also in response to the common issue of isolation of women due to limited networking opportunities for them in the sugar industry. These locally-based groups have been established with quite different histories and have tended to fluctuate in membership and evolve over time.

So I think that [WIS] will be a unique solution in each region, and it should be, and it should be a grass roots solution and then, as capacity and capability increases, then their willingness and ability to take on more challenges will improve. (Southern interviewee)

WIS groups provide a variety of ways for women to be involved in their industry. Many women like to be involved through WIS groups as these enable networking and interaction with like minded women. The groups also provide an entry point for women into what has been a traditional male culture. Many women also appreciated the practical focus of WIS, with training and travel and learning opportunities a popular function of the WIS groups.

Women in Sugar have given them that forum to voice their opinions and they're being taken notice of now... (Northern interviewee)

Women from both case study regions however commonly identify in interviews and other interactive forums associated with this current study that WIS groups are generally not highly valued or taken seriously within the sugar industry, and they are also not without controversy for some women in the industry. However, those women who have been involved in WIS groups were very positive about their importance and they identify the benefits as much more than 'tea and scones', including:

- Social support in response to hard times / stressed families; for example, finding out what others were doing (e.g. on their farms) and that others were in the same situation;
- Gaining information to improve farm businesses and finding out about the industry, including options for embracing change;
- Gaining confidence to learn;
- Learning in a comfortable non-hostile environment, with "like-minded women";
- Meeting people/other women in their own sugar area; and
- Providing opportunities for networking with women in other sugar regions and other industries in Australia.

Notwithstanding, WIS groups are locally-focused mill area entities, and sugar women have identified a need for better cross-regional connections for women across all sugar regions or mill areas that can build on and complement existing local WIS group networks.

Women in Sugar E-Network: a key strategy and legacy of the research project

The need for better communication, networking and information exchange among women in the sugar industry, through a cross-regional website and/or email network, was one of the key opportunities identified in both the in-depth interviews and the 'What works for women' workshops and continued to be endorsed by members of the Reference Panel and participants of the 'Connections Matter' workshops over the life of the project.

In response to this need, a Women in Sugar (WIS) e-Network has been initiated through the action research phase of the CSE016 project. It will be an ongoing legacy of the CSE016 research project beyond its completion in November 2008. Initiated in June 2007, the WIS e-Network was established through an Organising Committee of women from a broad range of sugar regions in Queensland working together with key members of the research team and facilitated by two Network Co-ordinators, who collectively developed guidelines for implementing the e-network, including initial objectives and its rules of operation.

The Organising Committee identified the objectives for the network in July 2007 as:

- Provide a point of contact and support for women across the sugar industry;

- Encourage sharing of experiences and learnings among Women In Sugar groups across the sugar industry;
- Facilitate networking between people who are passionate about their industry; and
- Encourage sharing of information about relevant news and events across the industry, which can be easily accessed by people when it suits them.

At the ‘Connections Matter’ Workshops held in August 2008 in each case study region, participants re-confirmed the role of the WIS e-Network as:

- Providing an *information source* for women participating in the sugar industry:
 - To help women in sugar access information.
 - Collect up to-date (current) information.
 - Provide positive and progressive information which is valued.
- Improving *networking* for women participating in the sugar industry:
 - To help keep people from the different sugar areas across the State connected.
 - Sharing of ideas.
- Improving *business* for women involved in the sugar industry:
 - Provide information, ideas, support.
 - Keep people focused and progressing.
- Developing a *shared understanding* of women participating in the sugar industry.

In addition, at the workshops participants also overwhelmingly supported the WIS e-Network as being on the right track for women in the sugar industry and noted in particular that:

- ‘It is the way of the future – also the way of the present’;
- ‘It is linking people’; and
- ‘A clear benefit is that women can access information (internet/newsletter) whenever it suits them’.

The WIS e-Network is still evolving as a viable entity and its progress to-date includes:

- A growing membership, if slowly. Current membership is over 50 and it is developing a shared understanding across both the northern and southern project groups.
- Establishment of an interactive WIS Google page for women in the sugar industry to use. Currently an improved website for the e-Network is planned which will be freestanding and not hosted by anyone and so it will provide much easier and more reliable and open access for women. The domain name will be: www.womeninsugar.com. The Google page however may not be dropped completely as it may need to be maintained for membership and registration purposes.
- Production and distribution of an email newsletter (also available on the website) with three newsletters produced to-date (February, April and September).
- A small amount of sponsorship and financial support sourced to help the network continue beyond the life of the research project, which will end in November 2008. These will be used as seed funding to further develop the website to a more user-friendly platform as well as to leverage further sponsorship funds.

- The Terrain NRM regional group based in Innisfail is providing administrative support for the WIS e-Network for a small fee as part of their sustainability focus. This link was considered to be very important for the network's future by Reference Panel members, for example:
 - For administering funding;
 - For insurance purposes and applying for funding support; and
 - For its 'green-side' linkages.
- Bundaberg Sugar, Bundaberg, will sponsor the domain name for the e-network for two years.
- Promotion of the network through various methods including:
 - In the media (newspapers, magazine articles, local ABC radio);
 - Email distribution of a promotional flyer;
 - Links on websites (e.g. SRDC, CANEGROWERS); and
 - Presentations at functions (e.g. SugarShaker events, the annual WISA conference, and at local WIS group meetings, this project's 'Connections Matter' workshops).

Women with an interest in the sugar industry now have the opportunity to use and further be involved in developing and shaping a cross-regional e-Network to suit their needs and to help keep them in touch, to exchange and access information, and potentially empowering them to make a difference in the way the sugar industry responds to challenges in their industry.

Notwithstanding these achievements, there are a number of challenges which have been, and in some cases continue to be, faced in the WIS e-network development process and there are some lessons emerging including:

- The e-Network development took a lot of time to get going – much more than initially anticipated.
- Rules and guidelines for the e-Network have been set up by its Organising Committee, but although necessary, the decision process was considered tedious by some participating women.
- Membership is currently dominated by people from industry organisations (e.g. BSES, CANEGROWERS) with only a few of the original Organising Committee members currently actively committed to the e-Network.
- There is a stigma attached to WIS initiatives and a strong perception prevails that overall the industry does not currently actively support women's initiatives.
- The e-network relies on voluntary contributions of material from e-Network members which is not always readily forthcoming. The biggest challenge is in finding people with the time to devote to keeping the e-Network going. An urgent need exists for one contact person from each sugar region to volunteer to act as a coordinator and provide information for newsletters and the website on a regular basis.
- The e-Newsletter has experienced on-going difficulties in getting original articles, with the majority of the current information being recycled from other sources.
- Challenges in the development of the website have included:

- Technical difficulties with the “Google Site” such that some members have been unable to join up completely to the site;
- People find the Google site hard to locate on the internet;
- Not much information from WIS groups being forwarded on for the site.
- Privacy issues requiring careful management.
- The current Coordinators are in danger of burning out and need some help. A paid coordinator’s position for the e-Network is needed to enable the network to function more effectively and sustainably.
- A key challenge for the industry is that many sugar households have limited or nil access to a computer and/or an Internet connection. In particular, flow-on implications and issues are:
 - Women without computers or Internet access may still be looking for a network;
 - Photocopying and distributing hard copy newsletters however is not seen as a sustainable method of distribution for the e-Network newsletters; and
 - Some newsletters file sizes can also be too large for slow Internet connections.

The Project’s two Reference Panels supported the development and implementation of the e-network and provided some important advice and assistance to help ensure its success. At their final meetings in September/October 2008, members identified the key current needs for the further development of the WIS e-Network as:

- *Management* – more people to help drive the e-Network. It is too much work for two people – it needs a committee/team approach and the Organising Committee needs to be re-constituted as a Management Committee.
- *Membership* – broad membership is essential and there is a need to actively promote the e-Network and target potential new members. For example, mills would probably be willing to become sponsors, if its membership is broadened and increased.
- *Sponsorship* – an attractive business proposition is needed. In particular, the sponsorship opportunities need to offer the sponsor value for money. The network is seen to eliminate women’s isolation and offers support to them, but currently it is mostly industry organisational people on the membership list and this is not highly attractive to potential sponsors. It would be beneficial to get more members before implementing a sponsorship drive. However, the e-network can offer better value than magazine advertising, due to its clear focus and local networks.

Principles, strategies and tactics for enhancing women’s participation

As a final product of the research, the project developed a set of recommendations for enhancing women’s participation in initiatives and decision-making processes relevant to environmental, economic and social sustainability in the sugar industry, as reported in detail in the Strategies Report (see Appendix 8).

These recommendations are presented in the form of a set of principles, strategies and tactics to guide improved participation practice for women in the sugar industry-based on the appraisal of a combination of:

- Theoretical principles relevant to women, participation and sustainability.
- Social research involving women from the sugar industry in two contrasting sugar regions (e.g. in-depth interviews, workshops and other interactive forums, participant observation).
- Reflection and Synthesis through stakeholder participation (e.g. Project Reference Panels, participatory action research, research evaluation activities).

The outcome of this participatory and integrated approach to developing and testing recommendations was the identification of:

- Four preferred categories or types of participation opportunities;
- Four broad guiding principles of good participation practices; and
- A number of suggested strategies and tactics for implementation that underpin these guiding principles.

The four categories or types of participation opportunities that women prefer identified in the Strategies Report (Appendix 8) as constituting good participation practice are:

1. Networks for connecting women;
2. Partnerships for innovation and/or fostering best management practices;
3. 'Mixed participation' on tools for improving business systems/practices; and
4. Learning from others (sugar regions or industries).

The four broad but interrelated principles to guide participation practice for improving women's participation in initiatives and decision-making relevant to environmental, economic and social sustainability in the sugar industry are:

1. Recognising and addressing the traditional male culture that dominates industry decision-making and initiatives;
2. Recognising and addressing the competing and broadening demands of women's roles and responsibilities;
3. Building women's confidence and skills to participate; and
4. Building on women's capacity to recognise and deal with change.

Each of these principles is underpinned by a number of strategies and associated implementation tactics that relate to the recommended practice of participation, as outlined below.

1. Recognising and addressing the traditional male culture that dominates industry decision-making and initiatives.

Key strategies are:

- Actively supporting women's networks (e.g. WIS groups and the WIS e-Network) in a non-patronising way to provide targeted workshops, field days or walks and other activities that can create opportunities for women. Some tactics include, for example:

- Become an active part of an industry network;
- Actively engage in the industry in a sympathetic environment, and
- Build their confidence through learning from others and learning in a group.
- Encouraging both partners or all members of the family business to participate in industry meetings, activities, processes and events. Some tactics include, for example:
 - Industry organisations specifically targeting invitations through women's networks;
 - Encourage men to invite their partners;
 - Including a social component or ensuring activities and events are 'family friendly'.
- Highlighting the relevance of an activity, process or event for the farm business. Some tactics include, for example:
 - Supporting initiatives with a financial or business focus that may particularly interest women (vs. production focus);
 - Including guest speakers of interest to women.

2. Recognising and addressing the competing and broadening demands of women's roles and responsibilities.

Key strategies are:

- Examining the timing of events to ensure that they are suitable for either family women and/or suitability for all partners of the farm business.
- Industry supporting and promoting women's networks and groups as they provide:
 - Social support for women particularly in hard times;
 - Opportunities for women to talk about and compare their competing demands and responsibilities; and
 - Ready access to information resources or knowledge brokers – 'knowing what you don't know'.
- Industry organisations actively acknowledging the diverse contributions women are making in the industry and the diversity of their roles and responsibilities.

3. Building women's confidence to participate.

Key strategies are:

- Establishing specific opportunities for women to learn and develop their skills in a 'friendly', 'non-hostile' environment. Some tactics include, for example:
 - Targeted courses offered to women;
 - Supporting women's participation in activities that involve learning from others (i.e. other industries or sugar regions) either in mixed participation or women only events;
 - Disseminate information about such opportunities through direct contact with women and through the use of women's networks, newsletters, internet sites, events and gatherings.

- Providing forums for women that profile women's multiple and diverse roles on-farm and off-farm and in industry crises (e.g. smut crisis, cyclone recovery). Some tactics include, for example:
 - Involving women as presenters and speakers at industry events;
 - Emphasising the positive outcomes that result from women's multiple and diverse roles;
 - Including images of women performing their roles in industry publications and media.
- Industry organisations specifically and widely recognising key women from all sectors of the industry in a non-patronising way.
- Industry actively supporting and providing opportunities or processes for interested women to build appropriate skills for executive positions within industry organisations.
- Specifically inviting women to forums, meetings, industry activities and field events, etc. who might otherwise lack the confidence to participate. Some tactics include, for example:
 - Ensuring a number of other women are participating;
 - Get other women to bring them along.

4. Building on women's capacity to recognise and deal with change.

Key strategies are:

- Industry organisations and related support services actively supporting local women's groups and networks to enhance their capacity to provide value to women for:
 - Learning and acquiring new skills;
 - Sharing of information; and
 - Networking (both within and outside their local community and the sugar industry).
- Establishing more effective cross-regional communication processes among women in the sugar industry:
 - To exchange information and ideas and know what is going on in all areas and sectors of the industry; and
 - Actively supporting and promoting the WIS e-Network and the annual WISA Conference.
- Recognising innovative initiatives involving women as well as individual visionary sugar women who are leading innovation and diversification in the sugar industry. Some tactics include, for example:
 - Industry awards;
 - Promoting them in industry networks and the media.
- Providing forums, workshops, field events and farm walks, etc. that employ processes for the 'co-production of knowledge' amongst event organisers or promoters and all other participants (i.e. rather than more traditional expert-farmer dissemination approaches). Some tactics include, for example:
 - Promoting sustainable agricultural systems or best management practices;

- Promoting innovative technologies, business systems, alternative products, etc; and
- Being family friendly.

Some suggested performance criteria are also identified to help the sugar industry to assess its performance in implementing these principles, strategies and tactics for enhancing women's participation in initiatives relevant to environmental, economic and social sustainability in the sugar industry (see Table 4.1 of the Strategies Report in Appendix 8).

3. Facilitate wide, ongoing communication and uptake of findings on strategies for strengthening the participation of women in sustainability initiatives to enhance sugar communities' capacity to deal with change within and beyond the case study regions.

The project has conducted workshops, meetings and interviews, and distributed reports, articles and fact sheets to achieve wide and ongoing communication and uptake of findings on key strategies for strengthening the participation of women in the sugar industry to enhance the capacity of sugar communities to deal with uncertainty and change within and beyond the case study regions.

The rationale behind the project's communication activities is outlined in the Communication and Stakeholder Involvement Strategy, which was prepared in collaboration with the Reference Panels (see Appendix 9). Table 1 summarises the various communication activities that have contributed to sharing findings on strategies for enhancing women's participation in the sugarcane industry over the three year life of the project (see Appendix 10 for a detailed list of communication activities and outputs).

Table 1: Activities undertaken by the CSE016 Project to facilitate communication and uptake of research findings over the three year life of the project.

Communication activities	Purpose
On-going personal contact with industry co-investigators and the engagement of Project Reference Panels in each of the project's case study sugar communities, comprising representatives of key regional stakeholders of the research (from industry, Government, extension and research, and community bodies).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop research partnerships; ● Provide input, feedback and advice on project direction; ● Link the project into relevant sustainability initiatives in each case study region; ● Provide input into project progress and deliverables; ● Ensure that the project delivers practical outcomes; ● Provide the conduit for reporting into and communication with relevant institutions; ● Reviewing the project's progress against its overall objectives.
Face-to-face initial meetings to scope the project with representatives of key sugar industry organisations in the two case study regions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Developing research partnerships; ● Scoping the regional context; ● Understanding local issues influencing women's participation.
Participation in local activities and initiatives (e.g. Women in Sugar meetings, Women in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Developing research partnerships; ● Understanding local issues;

Communication activities	Purpose
Sugar Australia conference).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying factors that influence women's participation in the sugar industry; • Sharing research findings.
Linkages with other key research projects in case study regions and with women in other rural industries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding local issues and identifying synergies; • Identifying opportunities strategies for improving participation; • Sharing research findings.
In-depth interviews with over 60 women and men involved in the sugar industry in the two case study regions about issues, preferences and experiences concerning women's participation in the sugar industry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop research partnerships; • Understanding local issues; • Identifying factors that influence women's participation in the sugar industry; and opportunities for improving this participation.
Communication of research findings and activities through wide dissemination of fact sheets and articles (newsletter and newspaper) and via local radio and television interviews.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing research findings; • Promoting research activities.
'What Works for Women' workshops for women from the sugar industry and as well as women from other rural industries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationship building and networking; • Sharing of ideas across industries; • Identification of key women to be involved in future action research project work; • Identification of opportunities for strategies for improving women's participation in the sugar industry (based in part on learnings from other agricultural industries); • Feedback from the participants on the key themes that have emerged form the interviews.
'Connections Matter' workshops for women across all sectors of the sugar industry and sugar regions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness of the project and its progress with women in the sugar industry; • Relationship building and networking; • A better understanding developed of how some women in the industry utilise connections and networks to enhance their business's sustainability and to address issues they face in the industry; • Improved insights on 'connections' and 'networks' in general as strategies for enhancing women's participation in initiatives relevant to sustainability in the sugar industry; • Raised awareness of the WIS e-Network and feedback obtained from participants on its role, function, form, value and its future directions.
Developing and disseminating a Strategies Report identifying a final set of recommendations for enhancing women's participation in initiatives and decision-making relevant to environmental, economic and social sustainability in the sugar industry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing research findings; • Promoting research activities; • Contributing to a better understanding of issues relating to women's involvement in sustainability initiatives and the implications for improving adaptive capacity of sugar communities.

Each of these activities for fostering communication and uptake of research findings are briefly discussed in turn below.

Project Reference Panels

Two regionally-based Project Reference Panels comprising representatives of key regional stakeholders of the research were established in each of the project's case study regions at the commencement of the project (see Appendix 5 for details). The agreed roles and functions of the Project's Reference Panels were to:

- Provide input, feedback and advice on project direction;
- Link the project into relevant sustainability initiatives in each case study region;
- Provide input into project progress and deliverables;
- Ensure that the project delivers practical outcomes;
- Provide the conduit for reporting into and communication with relevant institutions;
- Contribute once or twice a year to face to face meetings, supplemented with phone and email interaction throughout the year; and
- Progressive review of project's direction and progress against its objectives.

The Reference Panels involved key stakeholders of the research from industry, government, extension and community bodies drawn from each case study region. Bi-annual meetings were held over the life of the project with each panel in order to progressively review project progress, gain member input to the identification of issues and strategies relevant to women's participation in the sugar industry, and to identify opportunities for women's participation in the sugar industry in their region as reported in Project Milestone Reports Nos. 2 to 7. They also contributed to the stakeholder mapping for each case study region at the commencement of the project (as detailed in Milestone Report No. 2, April 2006).

The Panel meetings and deliberations were pivotal to the CSE016 project's participative research approach, to the on-going evaluation of the project, and for communicating the research findings more broadly. The Reference Panels have continually endorsed the research direction and findings and in particular the project's participatory action research approach. They have also provided valuable insights and local advice as well as identifying opportunities for the project. As reported to SRDC in each project Milestone Report over the life of the project (Milestone Report Nos. 2 to 7 inclusive), summary notes from all Panel meetings and other project outputs were provided to Panel members following each meeting, who then could circulate them in their own organisational networks.

At these meetings, information, ideas and key lessons were shared in an on-going way amongst members of the Reference Panel, as well as providing invaluable feedback to the project's research team over the life of the project. At the final two meetings of each Reference Panel held in March 2008 and September/October 2008 respectively, members endorsed:

- The value of the project's research progress and findings, including the strategies identified to foster women's involvement in the sugar industry;
- The progress on the implementation and evaluation of the Women in Sugar e-Network as a key strategy for enhancing women's involvement in the sugar industry; they also identified their commitment to continue to support it in the future beyond the life of the project; and

- The valuable opportunity provided to Panel members to interact with and learn about others involved in the sugar industry through participating on the Reference Panel.

Some of the members of the Panel were also responsible for securing core funding from the Regional Advisory Group (RAG) process to help seed fund the WIS e-Network beyond the life of the CSE016 project. Finally, Reference Panel members in September/October 2008 endorsed the final set of strategies as a key contribution to improving the industry's capacity to better involve women in the sugar industry.

Meetings and Participation in Local Activities and Initiatives

Activities such as face-to-face meetings and project team participation in local events helped to develop research partnerships for the project, raise awareness of the project and of women's issues in the sugar industry, and improved the research team's understanding of local issues.

These meetings and participation in local events also allowed for sharing of research findings. For instance, the project team attended various industry meetings to share project findings, such as meetings held by both the Bundaberg and Wet Tropics WIS groups. To share the project's findings on key strategies for strengthening the participation of women in the sugar industry, Jenny Bellamy and Wendy Finlayson presented on the project and WIS E-network at the Women in Sugar Australia Conference in March 2008. Wendy Finlayson also demonstrated the WIS E-Network's web site to participants at two Wet Tropics Women In Sugar Basic Computer Courses, in May and July 2008.

Linkages with other research projects and other rural industries

The project actively developed linkages and synergies with other research projects within the case study regions as well as women from other rural industries and other women's networks. These linkages evolved over the project's life and included:

- Sherry Kaurila from Ingham (Principal Investigator of the Sugar Shaker's project and member of the CSE016 northern Reference panel; Hinchinbrook Shire Councillor, and partner in a sugar harvesting business; participant in project's 'What Works for Women' Mission Beach workshop and guest speaker at the 'Connections Matter' Mission Beach workshop);
- Cathy McGowan from Indigo Valley, Victoria (Principal Investigator of the CMC001 project, *CANEGROWERS' strategy for women and teams*, experience with the dairy industry and rural women's networks e.g. Australian Women in Agriculture; and guest speaker in the 'What works for women' Mission Beach workshop);
- Kate Schwagger from Narrabri, New South Wales (Coordinator of Wincott, the national cotton women's network; cotton grower; guest speaker at the 'What works for women' Bundaberg workshop and on-going linkage through WIS e-network support);
- Joy Deguara from Mackay (cattle producer and local government councillor, and Principal Investigator of the CMC001 project, *CANEGROWERS' strategy for women and teams*, AgForce State Councillor and Director of Beef Australia and guest speaker at the 'What works for women' Bundaberg workshop);

- Robyn Boundy from Mareeba (pork producer, Director of Queensland Pork Producers Incorporated and guest speaker at the ‘What works for women’ Mission Beach workshop);
- Leila Muller from Childers (member of the Childers and District Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association Inc. and Isis sugarcane grower involved in scoping the project);
- Lorraine Pyefinch (Mayor of Bundaberg Regional Council and local business woman in health sector; guest speaker at the ‘Connections Matter’ Bundaberg workshop).

These linkages were critical for helping the project team understand experiences of women within the sugar industry and other agricultural industries and identify strategies for improving women’s participation. The linkages were also important for sharing research findings.

Fact Sheets and other Media Activities

Fact sheets were another important means of communicating project findings. Three fact sheets were produced over the life of the project (see Appendix 11 for copies):

1. A fact sheet entitled *Research Overview*, summarising background on the project, the research objectives and plan and the expected deliverables and outcomes of the project.
2. A fact sheet entitled *Changing role of women in decision making for the sugar industry*, summarising project findings on changes in the role of women in the sugar industry, including the motivations for and barriers to women’s participation in the industry, as well as new opportunities for their participation.
3. A fact sheet entitled *Supporting women’s participation in the sugar industry: more than tea and scones*, summarising project findings on women’s participation in sustainability initiatives in the sugar industry, including Women in Sugar groups, and strategies to increase women’s participation.

These fact sheets were distributed at meetings of the Reference Panels, at project workshops and at other industry events, including Women in Sugar meetings and the Women in Sugar Australia Conference, and via email to people participating in some way with the project. They have also been posted on the WIS e-network website.

Media activities, such as publication of newspaper and newsletter articles and radio and television coverage were valuable opportunities for communication of project findings and promotion of project activities, including project workshops and the e-network. The newspaper and newsletter articles can be grouped into the following three categories (see Appendix 10 for the full list):

1. Reporting on the project objectives and sharing project findings (10 articles).
2. Promoting project workshops (9 articles).
3. Promoting the e-network (12 articles).

There were also two radio interviews with Emma Jakku, the first introducing the project and the second sharing key project findings. Sandra Webb appeared on the Channel 7 Local

News (Wide Bay) on 26 March 2008, discussing the WIS E-Network. Sandra Webb also produced and distributed three issues of *Connecting Women*, the WIS E-Network's e-newsletter (see Appendix 12 for copies).

Interactive Workshops with Women

The 'What Works for Women' (June 2007) and 'Connections Matter' (August 2008) workshops were particularly significant to this project's communication activities, fulfilling a range of purposes, including relationship building and networking, sharing of ideas and communication of and feedback on research findings. Although of limited numbers on the day, workshop participants came from both within and beyond the case study regions, ensuring widespread communication and uptake of project findings.

The 'What Works for Women' workshops (see Appendix 3 for details) featured guest speakers from other rural industries, who shared their personal experiences on participation in agricultural industries with participants. More specifically, these workshops were important to the project through:

- Providing an important opportunity to share key lessons emerging on women's experiences with participation in sustainability initiatives in the sugar industry in a friendly and openly interactive environment;
- Identifying that building women's confidence to participate in industry decision-making at all levels as a key opportunities for improving women's participation;
- Highlighting the need for better communication, networking and information exchange among women in the sugar industry across regions, through a website and/or email network. Based on this finding, the 'Women In Sugar (WIS) E-network' formed in July 2007 through an Organising Committee; and
- Identifying key women who wanted to be involved in the future action research project work.

The 'Connections Matter' workshops (see Appendix 4 for details) also involved women guest speakers from each local region and they were particularly valuable to the project and the participants in:

- Creating a better understanding of how some women in the industry utilise connections and networks to enhance their business's sustainability and to address issues they face in the industry;
- Developing improved insights on 'connections' and 'networks' in general as strategies for enhancing women's participation in initiatives relevant to sustainability in the sugar industry;
- Identifying the web of relationships that women identify with and use in their daily lives; and
- Helping to raise awareness amongst participants about the WIS e-Network and providing valuable feedback from participants on its role, function, form, value and its future directions.

Strategies Report

The project team produced as a final project product, a Strategies Report (see Appendix 8), which describes in detail the background to the development of a set of recommendations identified through the CSE016 project's research for enhancing women's participation in initiatives and decision-making relevant to environmental, economic and social sustainability in the sugar industry. These strategies were endorsed by the project's Northern and Southern Reference Panels at their final September/October 2008 meetings.

The report was a core outcome of the project's final 'Reflection and Synthesis' phase and importantly reflects the project's participatory and integrated research approach, as it is based on the appraisal of a combination of:

- *Theoretical principles* relevant to the relationship between women, participation, community resilience and sustainability;
- *Social research* involving women from the sugar industry in two contrasting sugar regions (including in-depth interviews, workshops and other interactive forums, participant observation); and
- *Reflection and Synthesis* through stakeholder participation (e.g. Project Reference Panels, participatory action research, research evaluation activities).

It is also pivotal to the project's final communications to its diverse stakeholders through providing:

- Documented evidence that the research builds on previous experience in the case study regions and the relevant theoretical base on sustainability, community resilience and the involvement of women in sugar industry decision-making;
- A document for communicating the project's findings to research, industry and participation practitioners at relevant forums in the future; and
- Providing the basis for the final preparation of three peer-reviewed publications based on the project's research findings.

The Strategies Report has been distributed to all Reference Panel members and will be posted on the WIS e- Network website.

The variety of communication activities that have occurred over the life of this project have ensured that the project findings on strategies for strengthening the participation of women in the sugar industry have been shared broadly both within and beyond the project's case study regions.

METHODOLOGY

Participatory Research Approach

The methodology that guided project management was based on a multiple method approach involving a combination of: case study research, participatory research (includes participatory evaluation), action research, literature review, regional profiling, stakeholder analysis (including interviews, workshops, interactive forums, participant observation) and synthesis and reflection. In addition to ensuring methodological rigor, this methodology ensured that the delivery of the project outputs and outcomes was embedded within ongoing stakeholder participation, through the project's Reference Panels, interactive workshops, and formal and informal meetings and interviews. This stakeholder participation occurred within two

contrasting sugar regions (in terms of environment, economy and social and institutional arrangements):

- A northern case study region extending from the Tully mill area in the south to the Babinda mill area in the north; and
- A southern case study region including the Bundaberg and Isis mill areas.

The participatory research approach involved the project's research team working collaboratively with two key sets of actors who played an important role across the project's four phases (see below). These two sets of actors were:

- Key women involved in the sugar industry from the project's two case study regions; and
- Two regionally-based Project Reference Panels comprising representatives of key regional stakeholders of the research in each case study region (from industry, Government, extension and research, and community bodies) as previously discussed above.

To deliver the project outputs and outcomes, the project activities were implemented through four major and partly concurrent phases:

- Phase 1 – Scoping the issues and regional context through:
 - Reviewing the academic and grey literature (see Appendix 1);
 - Establishing a Reference Panel in each case study region, consisting of representatives of key regional stakeholders to inform the research process and facilitate broad communication (Appendix 5);
 - Learning from people in the case study regions, through individual face-to-face interviews and small group interactive sessions, including stakeholder mapping (Appendix 2);
 - Learning from other industries or sugar regions, focused on experiences with women's participation in other industries and other sugar regions based largely on literature review, supplemented with a limited number of key informant interviews and involvement of invited women from other industries in project workshops (Appendices 1 and 13);
 - Developing linkages and synergies with other research projects within the case study regions as well as other rural industries and existing women's networks;
 - Developing partnerships by making links in the region as a basis for developing specific partnerships to undertake collaborative action-based research activities.
- Phase 2 – Learning from the regions through:
 - Conducting and analysing over 60 in-depth interviews with both women and men involved in the sugar industry in the two case study regions, to capture their personal experiences on women's participation in the sugar industry and other sustainability initiatives in the case regions and their perspectives on how to improve it (Appendix 2).
 - Identifying opportunities for enhancing women's participation at the 'What works for women' workshop, involving 35 women from both the sugar industry and other agricultural industries (see Appendices 3 and 13).

- Phase 3 – Working collaboratively with our research partners to:
 - Apply and evaluate strategies for improving women’s participation in sustainability initiatives relevant to the sugar industry across a range of levels of decision-making (see Appendix 8).
 - Develop, implement and evaluate the establishment of a cross-regional e-network to improve communication and networking among women from all sectors of the sugar industry (see Appendix 8); and
 - Explore the web of ‘connections’ and ‘networks’ that women in the sugar industry identify with and use in their daily lives to enhance their business’ sustainability and to address the issues they face in the industry at the ‘Connections Matter’ workshops, involving 21 women from all sectors of the sugar industry (see Appendix 4).
- Phase 4 – Reflection and Synthesis to produce:
 - A *Strategies Report* documenting in detail the final set of recommendations for enhancing women’s participation in initiatives and decision-making relevant to environmental, economic and social sustainability in the sugar industry (see Appendix 8);
 - A *Final Evaluation Report* for the project documenting the on-going participatory evaluation of the project over its life including reflection of the two Reference Panels on their participatory experience with the research (see Appendix 7), including:
 - A detailed assessment of the project’s progress against the evaluation criteria and measures of performance identified in the Evaluation Strategy; and
 - An assessment of the Project’s performance against the project’s expected outputs and outcomes identified in the SRDC/CSIRO contract for CSE016.
 - A *Final Project Report* (this current document).

Underpinning the implementation of these four phases of the project were three critical frameworks established at the commencement of the project that guided the research over its three year lifetime:

1. An *Analytical Framework* that guided the overall research: that included a ‘context-motivations-preferences-capacity’ framework for analysing women’s participation and engagement, i.e.:
 - *Context* of decision-making at all levels (e.g. farm, community, industry, region): including industry drivers and inherent decision-making ‘culture’; farm business structures; labour shortages and other economic constraints; age / demographic issues; community expectations and legislative requirements;
 - *Motivations* for engagement: including why be involved and when; importance of ‘female politics’; family self-interest, past experience;
 - *Preferences*: including how to be involved, where/what level and in what; and
 - *Capacity* to be involved: including opportunities, skills and knowledge, confidence, support, family self-interest issues, off-farm work.

2. An *Evaluation Strategy* and related performance assessment framework implemented as an integral part of the research methodology and periodically reviewed over the life of the project (see next section of this report and Appendix 6 for further details). This strategy provided a rigorous framework for the project to:
 - Test the theories and assumptions on which the project is based;
 - Improve the research implementation process;
 - Periodically assess the project's achievements, impacts and likely outcomes; and
 - Support the capture of learnings emerging in the research process.
3. A *Communication and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy* (Appendix 9) that identified a framework for communication planning and stakeholder involvement in the research (see Objective 3 above of this report for further details), which identified:
 - Key stakeholders of the research; and
 - Methods for sharing key lessons and recommendations on practical, industry relevant strategies for strengthening the participation of women in the sugar industry.

Other significant project research activities over the life of the project that underpinned the participatory research approach and were integral to the project evaluation process included:

- Inter-disciplinary literature review to contribute to conceptual understanding and to developing an analytical framework for the research (see Appendix 1);
- In-depth interviews and other interactive forums with 44 women and 19 men involved in the sugar industry in the two case study regions to identify motivations, preferences and experiences relating to women's participation in the sugar industry (see Appendix 2);
- Four one-day interactive workshops with women from the sugar industry emphasising 'learning from others' and 'learning together' in an attractive environment. These all-women facilitated activities involved diverse participants from across the different sectors of the sugar industry and they were conducted in a relaxed, friendly and inclusive way that was sensitive to differences among participants. Two different types of facilitated workshops were held in each of the case study regions:
 - '*What Works for Women: Planting the seeds and growing the opportunities to enhance the participation of women in the sugar industry*' held in June 2007 (see Appendix 3).
 - '*Connections Matter: Enhancing women's involvement in a changing sugar industry*' held in August 2008 (see Appendix 4).
- Action research activities with women in the sugar industry from the two case study regions including:
 - Participation in Women in Sugar meetings and forums in each case study region; and
 - Participatory action research to collaboratively establish the cross-regional Women in Sugar e-network.

Project Evaluation: Assessing Project Impacts and Outcomes and Capturing Research Learnings

Evaluation was an integral part of the CSE016 project's methodology, to improve the project performance, assess impact and likely outcomes and capture learnings emerging. An Evaluation Strategy (Appendix 6) was developed at the commencement of the project and endorsed by the project's Northern and Southern Reference Panels in April 2006. Importantly this Evaluation Strategy identified:

- A set of evaluation objectives, outputs, outcomes and methods; and
- A set of evaluation criteria and related performance measures that provided a framework for progressively assessing the project's achievement of key objectives, planned outputs and outcomes of the CSE016 Project.

The Evaluation Strategy was periodically reviewed over the 3-year life of the project, including at bi-annual Reference Panel Meetings. Table 2 below identifies the linkages between the project's evaluation objectives and planned outcomes and outputs. The Final Evaluation Report (Appendix 7) clearly demonstrates the achievement of planned outcomes and outputs for the evaluation.

Table 2: Evaluation Objective/Outcome/Output Linkages

Specific Objectives	Outcomes	Outputs
1. To provide periodic and reflective feedback over the life of the project on its progress including the evolving expectations and perceptions of key stakeholders on the project to support the participatory research methodology and an adaptive learning approach to project implementation and reporting.	An adaptive learning approach to CSE016 project implementation that informs the project's research process.	Briefings to project Reference Panels and other key stakeholders and contributions to project Milestone reporting to SRDC.
2. To annually assess the impacts and evaluate the likely outcomes of the project in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - relevance to improving women's involvement in sustainability initiatives and processes; - intended changes in practices of key project stakeholders; - the strengthening of community resilience/adaptive capacity; and - uptake of research findings, technical products and recommendations. 	Progressive synthesis of findings on process, outcomes and impacts of project to key stakeholders through the project's Reference Panels.	Formal documentation on the longitudinal evaluation of process and impacts of the CSE016 project (see Appendix 7).
3. To support the project's accountability reporting requirements to key funders/clients in terms of how the project is meeting its objectives.	Rigorous accountability reporting to SRDC and other research investors on CSE016 progress and how the project is meeting its objectives.	Brief reports included in 6-monthly Milestone reporting to SRDC as contractually required.

To achieve these evaluation outcomes and outputs the project's evaluation methods involved a combination of:

- *Interactive evaluation sessions with key regional stakeholders* (e.g. Reference Panel meetings; project workshops and other interactive forums);
- *Key informant interviews* (e.g. participant in-depth interviews); and
- *Document/content analysis* (including project milestone and research reports, stakeholder communications and related correspondence).

The set of evaluative criteria and related performance measures identified in the Project Evaluation Strategy) recognised the multi-dimensionality of likely impacts and outcomes of the CSE016 project. They related to four core project outcome areas:

1. *Improving the knowledge base:* Contribution to an improved understanding of women's current roles and level of influence in decision-making on sustainability in sugar communities.
 - 1.1 Project outputs that contribute to an improved understanding of the role and influence of women's participation in decision-making on sustainability in sugar communities.
 - 1.2 Communication of project findings over the life of the project that improves the options available to key stakeholders for enhancing the engagement of women in sustainability initiatives in sugar communities.
2. *Enabling opportunities and on-ground outcomes:* Improvement in the opportunities and strategies available for involving women in sustainability initiatives in two case study sugar communities.
 - 2.1 Relevance of project research to engagement processes for sustainability initiatives in the two case study communities.
 - 2.2 Contribution to building skills of key sugar industry stakeholders for involving women in sustainability initiatives.
3. *Supporting a participatory research approach:* Effectiveness of the participatory research approach as an informing and inclusive research process that adds value to the CSE016 project's research and improves the capacity of two case study sugar communities to involve women in sustainability initiatives.
 - 3.1 Research reflects an effective participatory and adaptive learning approach.
4. *Capturing learnings:* Contribution of CSE016 to the theory and practice relating to women's participation in sustainability initiatives and its implications for improving community resilience/adaptive capacity.
 - 4.1 Contribution to improved understanding on women's involvement in sustainability initiatives and the implications for improving community resilience/adaptive capacity.
 - 4.2 An accountable research process.

A full summary of the project's final performance against these evaluation criteria and their related performance measures is provided in the Final Evaluation Report (see Table 2.1 of Appendix 7). The project's performance against the planned outputs is discussed in the next section of this report, while the project's performance against expected outcomes is discussed later in this report.

OUTPUTS

Many substantial outputs were derived from the project. A summary assessment of the project's achievements against specific expected project outputs as identified in the SRDC/CSIRO contractual agreement for the CSE016 project is provided in Table 3 below. This assessment clearly identifies that the project has successfully delivered all expected outputs and contributed some additional products as well.

Table 3: Achievements Against Planned Project Outputs

Planned Outputs	Achievements
<p>1. Recommendations for improving the participation of women in sustainability initiatives, developed in collaboration with women in the sugar industry and other government and community stakeholders in the case study regions based on the experience of implementation of strategies in these regions.</p>	<p>Achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on the experiences of women in the project's case study regions and with the e-Network action research activity, two Fact sheets were produced in February 2008 and distributed widely, entitled: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 'Changing role of women in decision making in the sugar industry' ○ 'Supporting women's participation in the sugar industry: more than tea and scones'. • The Fact sheets (see Appendix 11) summarize the issues underpinning women's participation in sustainability initiatives and decision-making processes and make recommendations for improving women's participation in the sugar industry. Recommendations were developed in collaboration with women in the sugar industry and other industry and community stakeholders from project's two case study regions. • A Strategies Report (see Appendix 8) recommends a final set of strategies that were endorsed by the project's Reference panels in September/October 2008.
<p>2. An interim report developed with women and other key stakeholders, capturing learnings and experiences of women who have been or are involved in sustainability initiatives.</p>	<p>Achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Interview Findings Report (see Appendix 2) documented the findings from extensive in-depth interviews carried out with 44 women and 19 men across the north and south case regions, including growers, extension officers, mill staff and other local industry representatives. The report analysed findings on the major influences on women's participation in decision-making within the sugar industry and their preferences for involvement. It also captured learnings and experiences from women who had been involved in sustainability initiatives.

Planned Outputs	Achievements
<p>3. A report developed with women and other key stakeholders, which provides a framework for evaluating community resilience to change and identifies strategies for fostering the involvement of women in sustainability initiatives. The framework and strategies will be based on collaborative reflection on the implementation of strategies in the case studies. The report will identify key lessons that are relevant to other regions.</p>	<p>Achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Strategies Report (see Appendix 8) provides a framework of strategies for fostering the involvement of women in sustainability initiatives and decision-making processes in the sugar industry and links them to improving resilience or adaptive capacity in sugar communities in the face of continuing uncertainty and change. These strategies were developed and refined in collaboration with women from the project's case study regions involved in the project and other industry and community stakeholders involved in the project's two Reference Panels over the life of the project. • The report documents key lessons from the project's research that are relevant to other sugar regions and broadly applicable to other rural industries.
<p>4. Ongoing communication activities (e.g. newsletter articles, conference papers, workshops) to ensure awareness of and involvement in the project by potential users of the research in industry, extension and research sectors.</p>	<p>Achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing communication activities (see Appendix 10), which ensured awareness of and involvement in the project by potential users of the research in industry, extension and research sectors, including the newsletter and newspaper articles and other communication activities, progressively reported on in all project Milestone reports (i.e. Milestone Report Nos. 2 to 7). • Three fact sheets (a Project Overview fact sheet and two fact sheets summarising project findings) have been distributed to research collaborators and participants, including participants of the Communicate Electronically course, the Women in Sugar Australia Conference and the Reference Panel meetings as well as posted on the e-network website (see Appendix 11).

Additional outputs that were achieved through the project are:

- The establishment of a cross-regional internet-based e-Network developed by women in the sugar industry to help keep them in touch, to exchange and access information, and potentially empowering them to make a difference in the way the sugar industry responds to challenges in their industry.
- A Literature Review and Analytical Framework report, which identified the issues and concepts relevant to the research focus on opportunities for enhancing women's participation in sustainability initiatives in the context of sugar communities and their capacity to adapt to change (Appendix 1).
- Two reports documenting the key learnings from the two successful interactive workshops with women held in each case study region, 'What works for women' in June 2007 (Appendix 3), and 'Connections Matter' in August 2008 (Appendix 4).
- A report on 'Learning from Other Industries' (Appendix 13).

- A report documenting the project's Evaluation Strategy (Appendix 6) and another on the final assessment of the project's achievements against criteria identified in the strategy (Appendix 7).
- A Communication and Stakeholder Involvement Strategy (Appendix 9).

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

The IP produced from this project is owned by CSIRO. However, the outputs of this project are freely available to use to help improve the participation of women in sustainability initiatives within and beyond the sugar industry.

IMPACTS

At November 2008, the actual impacts of the project relate primarily to social benefits occurring in the project's two case study research regions. These social benefits include:

- Raised awareness within the industry in two case study regions of the issues of marginalisation of women in the sugar industry and the implications for the industry of improving options and opportunities for women's participation;
- Increased sugar women's confidence in their ability to deal with current industry challenges and built their capacity to participate;
- Improved industry, government and community stakeholder capacity to foster the involvement of women in sustainability initiatives relevant to the sugar industry; and
- Improved networking capabilities for women in the industry that have the potential to facilitate community resilience in the face of uncertainty and change that the industry is experiencing and will continue to in the future.

These impacts were identified by key collaborators of the CSE016 research project. For example, at the final meetings of these two Reference Panels in September/October 2008, members reflected very favourably on the project's impact on the sugar industry and their personal experiences as Panel members, commenting for example:

"The project has made the industry now more conscious of women in the industry and it has also made industry managers more aware of the roles women could play."

"The project has helped to make sure women got opportunities to participate in industry initiatives in this region (e.g. bug-checking / IPM initiatives, smut and plant inspection process) ... This has helped to break down some attitudes to women."

"The project's important contributions have been to networking and confidence building for women in the sugar industry. It has provided women participating in the project over the last three years with opportunities to express their attitudes, pursue goals and to break down the isolation they experience in the industry through communication and networking. It has created the WIS e-Network and brought resources to support it in the longer term."

"The project has brought together people who would not have been involved in this type of activity without their interest having been raised by the research project and the Reference Panel formed."

“The project has provided opportunities for some women to take a leadership role in the industry.”

“The Women in Sugar groups and the new WIS e-Network are emerging as proactive initiatives for innovation and agents of change in the sugar industry.”

Women involved in the sugar industry who participated in the project’s final interactive ‘Connections Matter’ workshops, which were held in August 2008 and focussed on women’s networks in the sugar industry, overwhelmingly identified the WIS e-network as “the way of the future, also the way of the present” for women in the industry (see Appendix 4 for details). Other participant feedback on the WIS e-network included:

“Contact and support for women across the sugar industry. Gaining confidence to learn with and meeting like-minded women.”

“To learn more about the industry and understand problems being faced.”

“It is a resource and an opportunity to deliver some great things in time and, a valuable experience”.

“About a new way of connecting people with similar interests to improve way of life and income.”

“The networking allows improvement in business through information sharing and open friendly positive communication.”

“Networks were built.”

“It is linking people.”

“An advantage is that women can access information (internet/newsletter) whenever it suits them.”

“The way to go.”

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The CSE016 project has contributed to outcomes that are already benefiting the Australian sugar industry. Bringing a gender perspective on the practice of participation in the sugar industry has identified a broader range of opportunities and strategies for all those currently marginalised in decision-making and participation at all levels of the sugar industry. In particular, they will continue to contribute to enhancing women’s participation in sustainability initiatives and industry decision-making for some time to come.

More specifically, a summary assessment of the project achievements against planned project outcomes as identified in the SRDC/CSIRO contractual agreement for the CSE016 project is provided in Table 4 below. This assessment clearly identifies that the project has made significant progress towards the achievement of all expected outcomes.

Table 4: Achievements Against Expected Outcomes

Achievements Against Expected Outcomes
<p>Expected Outcome 1: Increased understanding by industry, government, community, research and extension stakeholders of opportunities and strategies for enhancing women’s participation in sustainability initiatives.</p>
<p>Significant improvements achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the outset of the project, two Project Reference Panels were established for the northern and southern case study regions that involved representatives of key industry, government, community and research and extension organisations. Bi-annual meetings were held over the life of the project with these panels to review project progress, gain their input on the identification of issues and strategies relevant to women’s participation in the sugar industry, and identify opportunities for women’s participation in the sugar industry in their region. As reported to SRDC in each project Milestone Report (Nos. 2 to 7 inclusive), summary notes from all these meetings and other project outputs were sent back to Panel members following each meeting who then could circulate them in their own organisations. • At the final meetings of these two Reference Panels in September/October 2008, members reflected very favourably on their experience with the project (as detailed in Appendix 4 of Milestone Report No. 7). Some key relevant comments made in their evaluation included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “The project has made the industry now more conscious of women in the industry and it has also made industry managers more aware of the roles women could play.” “The project has brought together people who would not have been involved in this type of activity without their interest having been raised by the research project and the Reference Panel formed.” “It has been an interesting experience being on the Reference Panel, and although there have been some changing faces in membership this had not had a negative effect; it has been a good rather than a bad thing.” “The project’s approach and not having too many meetings has been a very good experience for Panel members.” • Women from the sugar industry in the two case study regions have been active collaborators of the project over its three year lifespan and a number have participated in all its action research activities. In addition, two women (one from each of the case study regions) were appointed as Regional Coordinators to the project’s research team and they have championed the research and communicated the project’s activities and findings at diverse forums and in local media and communication channels.
<p>Expected Outcome 2: Increased participation of women in sustainability initiatives, through the collaborative development and implementation of locally driven action plans that foster women’s involvement in these initiatives.</p>
<p>Significant improvements in women’s options and opportunities achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the final meetings of the project’s Reference Panels in Sept/Oct 2008 (see Appendix 4, Milestone Report No. 7) relevant feedback provided by members in their evaluation of their experiences with the project included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “The project has helped to make sure women got opportunities to participate in industry initiatives in this region (e.g. bug-checking / IPM initiatives, smut and plant inspection process)

Achievements Against Expected Outcomes

... This has helped to break down some attitudes to women.”

“The project’s important contributions have been to networking and confidence building for women in the sugar industry. It has provided women participating in the project over the last three years with opportunities to express their attitudes, pursue goals and to break down the isolation they experience in the industry through communication and networking. It has created the WIS e-Network and brought resources to support it in the longer term.”

- At the ‘Connections Matter’ workshops in August 2008, participants were asked about their experiences with the action research activities of the project and their expectations for the future of the WIS e-Network. Their feedback clearly recognised the project’s contribution to building women’s confidence, enhancing leadership opportunities and leaving a legacy for improving women’s participation in the industry across all regions (see details in Appendix 4, this report). For example, comments women made include:

“Contact and support for women across the sugar industry. Gaining confidence to learn with and meeting like-minded women.”

“About a new way of connecting people with similar interests to improve way of life and income.”

“It is a resource and an opportunity to deliver some great things in time and, a valuable experience”.

“It’s the way to go.”

“The way of the future – also the way of the present.”

“Being able to connect with women from the whole area.”

“Identified existing and potential linkages. Helped with ideas and some motivation”.

Expected Outcome 3:

Improved capacity of sugar communities to deal with change.

Significant contributions achieved:

- There is clear evidence that the project has contributed to enhancing women’s leadership roles in the case study regions, building women’s confidence to participate in industry decision-making and improving women’s networking options and opportunities through, for example, raising the issues and backing them with substantive evidence from the research activities regarding gender differences relating to sugar women’s needs, preferences and capacity for participation, as well as providing support for the local WIS groups and establishing an on-going cross-regional e-Network capability for all women in the industry.
- At the final meetings of the project’s Reference Panels in September/October 2008, (see Appendix 4, Milestone Report No. 7), relevant comments made by members in their evaluation included:
 - “The project has provided opportunities for some women to take a leadership role in the industry.”
 - “The Women in Sugar groups and the new WIS e-Network are emerging as proactive initiatives for innovation and agents of change in the sugar industry.”
- Participant feedback on women’s experiences with the project from the ‘What Works for Women’ workshops held in June 2007 and ‘Connections Matter’ workshops in August 2008 relevant to improving sugar community capacity to deal with change include:
 - “Felt it opened your mind to new strategies.”
 - “Generating focus for women in the sugar industry to communicate, actively participate within

Achievements Against Expected Outcomes
<p>the industry and with each other.”</p> <p>“Networks were built.”</p> <p>“The networking allows improvement in business through information sharing and open friendly positive communication.”</p> <p>“Being able to connect with women from the whole area.”</p> <p>“To learn more about the industry and understand problems being faced.”</p> <p>“Great to hear others perspective and what other women are doing.”</p> <p>“An advantage is that women can access information (internet/newsletter) whenever it suits them.”</p>
<p>Expected Outcome 4: More effective capacity building strategies to encourage an increased uptake of sustainable farming practices.</p>
<p><i>Significant improvements achieved:</i></p> <p>Through working collaboratively with women and other key sugar industry stakeholders in two sugar regions, a framework of principles, strategies and tactics for ‘good practice’ for fostering women’s participation in sustainability initiatives and decision-making processes in the sugar industry has been established and tested (see Strategies Report, Appendix 8 and Section 2.3.1 of the Final Project Evaluation Report, Appendix 7).</p> <p>The framework is linked closely to improving resilience or adaptive capacity in sugar communities to deal with uncertainty and change. The effectiveness of these strategies is demonstrated by the success of the WIS e-network and its impact, as identified above in Outcomes 1 and 3.</p>

FUTURE RESEARCH NEEDS

The future research needs that this project has identified are:

- Further research on opportunities for enhancing resilience and adaptive capacity within the Australian sugarcane industry, including research that:
 - Identifies the key characteristics of sugar communities that need to be present for them to be better able to adapt to and embrace change and shape sustainable futures; and
 - Evaluates the implications for community resilience of improving women's participation in sustainability initiatives and industry decision-making.
- Evaluation of the impact of the WIS e-network over time and the factors that influence its capacity to contribute to enhanced adaptive capacity in the sugar industry.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that capacity be built within the sugarcane industry to implement and evaluate the principles, strategies and tactics developed in this project, to help improve women's participation in initiatives relevant to environmental, economic and social sustainability in the sugar industry. To support this process, further communication of this project's research findings in sugar industry forums is recommended.

We also recommend that the WIS e-network should receive further support from the industry for ongoing development and evaluation.

Finally, we recommend that SRDC continues to invest in research that explores opportunities for enhancing the resilience and adaptive capacity of the Australian sugarcane industry to deal with ongoing uncertainty and build sustainable futures for the industry.

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

1. Jakku, E., Bellamy, J. and Bohnet, I. (2006) *Literature Review and Analytical Framework Report*, submitted to SRDC as part of Milestone Report No. 3, October 2006.
2. Jakku, E., Bellamy, J. and Bohnet, I. (2007) *In-depth Interview Findings Report: Learning from the regions*, submitted to SRDC as part of Milestone Report No. 4, August 2007.
3. Cooper, T. and Nolan, M. (2007) *What Works for Women: Planting the seeds and growing the opportunities to enhance the participation of women in the sugar industry – Post-Workshop Report*, submitted to SRDC as part of Milestone Report No. 4, August 2007.
4. Jakku, E. and Bellamy, J. (2007) *Learning from Other Industries: Working Report*, submitted to SRDC as part of Milestone Report No. 4, August 2007.
5. Bellamy, J., Bohnet, I., Finlayson, W., Webb, S. and Painter, C. (2008) *Connections Matter: Enhancing women's involvement in a changing sugar industry – Workshop Report*, submitted to SRDC as part of Milestone Report No. 7, October 2008.
6. Bellamy, J., Jakku, E., Bohnet, I., Finlayson, W. and Webb, S. (2008) *Strategies for enhancing women's participation in the sugar industry*, submitted to SRDC as part of Milestone Report No. 7, October 2008.
7. Bellamy, J. and Jakku, E. (2008) *Final Project Evaluation Report*, submitted to SRDC as part of Milestone Report No. 7, October 2008.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Literature Review Report

Appendix 2: Interview Report

Appendix 3: 'What Works for Women' Workshop Report

Appendix 4: 'Connections Matter' Workshop Report

Appendix 5: Project Reference Panels

Appendix 6: Project Evaluation Strategy

Appendix 7: Final Project Evaluation Report

Appendix 8: Strategies Report

Appendix 9: Communication and Stakeholder Involvement Strategy

Appendix 10: Communication Activities and Outputs

Appendix 11: Project Fact Sheets

Appendix 12: *Connecting Women* Newsletters

Appendix 13: Learning From Other Industries Report

REFERENCES

- Alston, M. 1995. *Women on the Land: Hidden Heart of Rural Australia*, Sydney: University of New South Wales Press.
- Alston, M. 1998. Farm women and their work: Why is it not recognised?, *Journal of Sociology* 34 (1): 23-34.
- Alston, M. 2003. Women's representation in an Australian rural context. *Sociologia Ruralis* 43(4): 474-487.
- Alston, M. 2004. Who is down on the farm? Social aspects of Australian agriculture in the 21st century. *Agriculture and Human Values* 21: 37-46.
- Argent, N. 1999. Inside the black box: Dimensions of gender, generation and scale in the Australian rural restructuring process. *Journal of Rural Studies* 15 (1): 1-15
- Beilin, R. 1995. The construction of women in Landcare: Does it make a difference?. *Rural Society* 5 (2-3): 20-29.
- Bellamy, J.A. and Johnson, A.K.L. 2000. Integrated resource management: moving from rhetoric to practice in Australian Agriculture. *Environmental Management* 25(3), 265-280.
- Bellamy, J. and Webb, V. 2003 *Benchmarking the use of new technologies for natural resource management: A pilot study on innovation and change in the sugar industry*. Final Report to the CRC for Sustainable Sugar Production, St Lucia: CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems.
- Bellamy, J., Ross, H., Ewing, S. and Meppem, T. 2002 *Integrated Catchment Management: Learning from the Australian Experience for the Murray-Darling Basin. Final Report. January 2002*. A Report for the Murray Darling Basin Commission. CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems, Brisbane.
URL: http://www2.mdbc.gov.au/naturalresources/icm/icm_aus_x_overview.html
- Benham, B., Robbins, J., Brannan, K., Mostaghimi, S., Dillaha, T., Pease, J. and Smith, E. 2005. Development of survey-like assessment tools to assess agricultural best management practice performance potential. *Journal of Soil and Water Conservation*, 60 (5): 251-259.
- Black, A., Duff, J., Siggers, S., Baines, P., Jennings, A. and Bowen, P. 2000 *Rural Communities and Rural Social Issues: Priorities for Research. A report for the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation*. RIRDC Publication No 00/130, RIRDC Project No ECU-4A.
- Bodin, O., Crona, B., Ernston, H. 2006. Social Networks in Natural Resource Management: What Is There to Learn from a Structural Perspective? *Ecology and Society*, 11(2): r2. [online] URL: <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol11/iss2/resp2/>
- Boston Consulting Group 2003. *BCG report to CANEGROWERS, review of constraints on industry competitiveness and innovation*, Brisbane.
- Chamala, S. and Keith, K. 1995. *Participative approaches for Landcare: Perspectives, policies and programs*. Brisbane: Australian Academic Press.
- Claridge, C. 1998. Rural women, decision making and leadership within environmental and Landcare groups. *Rural Society*, 8(3): 183-195.
- Cornwall, A. 2003. Whose Voices? Whose Choices? Reflections on gender and participatory development. *World Development* 31(8): 1325-1342.
- Cross, R., Borgatti, S.P. and Parker, A. 2001a. Beyond answers: dimensions of the social network. *Social Networks* 23: 215-235.
- Cross, R., Rice, R.E. and Parker, A. 2001b. Information Seeking in Social Context: Structural Influences and Receipt of Information Benefits. *IEEE Transactions on Systems, Man, and Cybernetics—Part C: Applications and Reviews* 31 (4): 438-448.

- Curtis, A. and De Lacy, T. 1996. Landcare in Australia: Beyond the expert farmer. *Agriculture and Human Values* 13 (1): 22
- Davidson-Hunt, I.J. 2006. Adaptive learning networks: developing resource management knowledge through social learning forums. *Human Ecology* 34 (4): 593-614.
- Dimopoulous, M. and Sheridan, M. 2000 *Missed Opportunities. Unlocking the future of women in Australian agriculture. Stage 2 Report.* RIRDC Publication No. 00/44. Canberra: RIRDC.
- Elix, J. and Lambert, J. 1998. *Missed Opportunities. Harnessing the potential of women in Australian agriculture. Volume 1: Social Survey and Analysis.* Canberra: RIRDC and Department of Primary Industries and Energy.
- Folke, C., Colding, J. and Berkes, F. 2003. Synthesis: building resilience and adaptive capacity in socio-ecological systems. In: Berkes, F., Colding, J. and Folke, C. (eds) 2003. *Navigating Social-Ecological Systems. Building Resilience for Complexity and Change.* Cambridge, UK.: Cambridge University Press, pp. 352-387.
- Foster, M. and Sheales, T. 2008. Sugar: Outlook to 2012-13. *Australian Commodities* 15 (1; March Quarter 2008): 49-55.
- Gibson, D., Baxter, J. and Kingston, C. 1990. *Beyond the Dichotomy: The paid and unpaid work of rural women.* Centre for Rural Welfare Research: Wagga Wagga.
- Gooday, J. 1995. *Women on farms. A survey of women on Australian broadacre and dairy farms, 1993-1994.* ABARE Research Report 95.10, Canberra: ABARE.
- Grace, M. and Lennie, J. 1998. Constructing and reconstructing rural women in Australia: The politics of change, diversity and identity. *Sociologia Ruralis*, 38 (3): 351-370.
- Granovetter, M.S. 1973. The strength of weak ties. *The American Journal of Sociology* 78 (6): 1360-1380.
- Higgins, A., Thorburn, P., Archer, A. and Jakku, E. 2007. Opportunities for value chain research in sugar industries. *Agricultural Systems* 94: 611-621.
- Hildebrand, C. 2002. *Independent assessment of the sugar industry.* Report to the Hon. Warren Truss MP, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.
- Hooper, S. 2008. *Financial performance of Australian sugar cane producers 2005-06 to 2007-08.* ABARE Research Report 08.8 for the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Canberra, September 2008.
- Ice, G. 2004. History of innovative best management practice development and its role in addressing water quality limited bodies. *Journal of Environmental Engineering*, 130 (6): 684-689.
- Ipe, V., De Vuyst, E., Braden, J. and White, D. 2001. Simulation of a group incentive program for farmer adoption of best management practices. *Agricultural and Resource Economics Review* 30 (2): 139-150.
- Jakku, E., Bellamy, J., Kelly, G., Ross, H., Darbas, T., Lawrence, G., Benn, K., Bohnet, I. and Smith, T. 2007. Social drivers and processes of change: Community and regional issues and opportunities for people development in the Australian sugar industry. In: SRDC, *Research and Development Strategies to Advance the Australian Sugarcane Industry.* SRDC: Brisbane.
- Leckie, G. 1993. Female farmers in Canada and the gender relations of a restructuring agricultural system. *The Canadian Geographer* 37: 212-230.
- McCartney, F. and Ross, H. 2003. *Looking Beyond the Boundary Fence: Rural Women, Natural Resource Management and Sustainable Development.* Gatton: School of Natural and Rural Systems Management, The University of Queensland.
- McGowan Consulting. 2006. *CANEGROWER'S Strategy for Women and Teams,* Report prepared for CANEGROWERS,

- URL: http://www.canegrowers.com.au/docs/Women_Research_Sept06.pdf, accessed 18/10/06.
- Morgan, K. and Murdoch, J. 2000. Organic vs. conventional agriculture: knowledge, power and innovation in the food chain. *Geoforum* 31: 159-173.
- OESR, 2003. *Sugar. The Way Forward: A Statement of the Queensland Government's Position on Regulatory Reform of the Sugar Industry*. Brisbane: Queensland Government.
- Olsson, P., Gunderson, L.H., Carpenter, S.R., Ryan, P., Lebel, L., Folke, C. and Holling, C.S. 2006. Shooting the rapids: Navigating transitions to adaptive governance of Social-Ecological Systems. *Ecology and Society* 11(1): 18. [online] URL:<http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol11/iss1/art18/>
- Paton, D., Millar, M. and Johnston, D. 2001. Community resilience to volcanic hazard consequences. *Natural Hazards* 24: 157-169.
- Paton, D. 2005. Community resilience: Integrating hazard management and community engagement. Paper presented at the 'International Conference on Engaging Communities', 14-17 August 2005, Brisbane, Australia.
- Pini, B. 1999. *Women's Participation in the Sugar Industry: Survey Report*. Unpublished document.
- Pini, B. 2001. *From the paddock to the boardroom: The gendered path to agricultural leadership in the Australian sugar industry*. Thesis (Ph.D.). Brisbane: Queensland University of Technology.
- Pini, B. 2002. Focus groups, feminist research and farm women: Opportunities for empowerment in rural social research. *Journal of Rural Studies* 18, 339-351.
- Pini, B. 2006. The critique of 'new' rural local governance: The case of gender in a rural Australian setting. *Journal of Rural Studies* 22: 217-231.
- The Rural Women and ICT's Research Team, 1999. *The New Pioneers. Women in rural Queensland collaboratively exploring the potential for communication and information technologies for personal, business and community development*. The Communication Centre, Queensland University of Technology: Brisbane.
- Sachs, C. 1983. *The Invisible Farmers: Women in Agricultural Production*. Totowa, New Jersey, USA: Rowman and Allenheld.
- Standing Committee on Agriculture and Resource Management (SCARM) 1998a. *A National Plan for Women in Agriculture and resource management: A Vision for Change*. AGPS: Canberra.
- Standing Committee on Agriculture and Resource Management (SCARM) 1998b. *A Vision for Change: National Plan for Women in Agriculture and Resource Management*, Canberra: Standing Committee on Agriculture and Resource Management.
- Standing Committee on Agriculture and Resource Management (SCARM) 2001. *A Vision for Change. National Plan for Women in Agriculture and Resource Management. Second Implementation Report 1999-2000*. SCARM: July 2001.
- Sugar Industry Oversight Group. 2006. *Strategic Vision for a Commercially Vibrant Sustainable and Self-Reliant Industry in Australia*. Report to the Hon. Peter McGauran MP, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.
- Sugar Industry Review Working Party. 1996. *Sugar – Winning Globally. Main Report*, Brisbane: Queensland and Commonwealth Governments.
- Tompkins, E.L. and Adger, W.N. 2004. Does adaptive management of natural resources enhance resilience to climatic change? *Ecology and Society* 9(2): 10. [online] URL: <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol9/iss2/art10>
- Walker, B.H., Carpenter, S.R., Anderies, N., Abel, N., Cumming, G.S., Janssen, M.A., Lebel, L., Norberg, J., Peterson, G.D. and Pritchard, R. 2002. Resilience management in

- social-ecological systems: a working hypothesis for a participatory approach. *Conservation Ecology* 6(1): 14. [on-line]
URL: <http://www.consecol.org/vol6/iss1/art14/>.
- Walker, B, Holling, C.S., Carpenter, S.R. and Kinzig, A. 2004. Resilience, adaptability and transformability in social-ecological systems. *Ecology and Society* 9(2): 5. [online]
URL: <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol9/iss2/art5>
- Welch, E. and Marc-Aurele, F. 2001. 'Determinants of farmer behavior: Adoption of and compliance with best management practices for nonpoint source pollution in the Skaneateles Lake Watershed'. *Journal of Lake and Reservoir Management* 17(3): 233-245.
- Westley, F. 1995. Governing design: the management of social systems and ecological management. In: L.H. Gunderson, C.S. Holling, and S.S. Light (eds.). *Barriers and Bridges to the Renewal of Ecosystems and Institutions*. Columbia University Press, New York.
- Whatmore, S. 1991. *Farming Women: Gender, Work and Family Enterprise*. Basingstoke, Hants: Macmillian.
- Williams, J. 1992. *The Invisible Farmer: A Report on Australian Farm Women*. Canberra: Commonwealth Department of Primary Industries and Energy.

SRDC Research Project

CSE016 Final Report

Appendix 1: Literature Review

Project CSE016
**Sugar communities and resilience to change: Opportunities for
enhancing women's participation in sustainability initiatives**

**LITERATURE REVIEW
AND
ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK**

E. Jakku, J. Bellamy and I. Bohnet

TABLE OF CONTENTS

• INTRODUCTION	4
• PART 1: LITERATURE REVIEW	6
1.1 Trends and challenges impacting on Australian sugar communities	6
1.1.1 Global to local trends and influences.....	6
1.1.2 Changes in society and community expectations	7
1.1.3 Sugar communities in transition	7
1.1.4 Innovation and risk management.....	8
1.2 Women’s contribution to and participation in agricultural industries and rural communities	10
1.2.1 Women’s contribution to agriculture and rural communities	10
1.2.2 Barriers to women’s participation in agriculture and rural communities	12
1.2.3 The Women in Agriculture movement	13
1.2.4 The Women in Sugar movement	14
1.2.5 Women and CANEGROWERS.....	15
1.2.6 Strategies for improving women’s participation.....	16
1.2.7 Women’s contributions to sustainability	20
1.3 Sustainability, systems thinking and community resilience.....	22
1.3.1 Sustainable development	22
1.3.2 Sustainability initiatives.....	23
1.3.3 Systems thinking.....	24
1.3.4 Resilience theory and linked social and natural systems	26
1.3.5 Resilience.....	26
1.3.6 Vulnerability	29
1.3.7 Adaptation and adaptive management	30
1.3.8 Social learning and learning from experience.....	31
1.4 Participation and Collaboration.....	33
1.4.1 Concepts and definitions of participation	33
1.4.2 Models of participation	34
1.4.3 Participatory research	36
1.4.4 Partnerships and collaboration.....	38
1.4.5 Regional partnerships and other multi-stakeholder processes	41
1.4.6 Women and participatory processes	42
1.5 Community capacity and dealing with change	44
1.5.1 Social capital and networks	44
1.5.2 Community capacity	46
1.5.3 Adaptive capacity	48
1.5.4 Community Readiness	50
1.5.5 Capacity building.....	52
• PART 2: ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK.....	54
2.1 Introduction	54
2.2 Research Problem Framing	54
2.1.1 Underpinning theories and concepts.....	54
2.1.2 ‘Understanding, implications and enabling’ framework.....	54
2.1.3 ‘Context-motivations-preferences-capacity’ framework	55
2.3 Key Research Questions.....	55
2.4 Research Method	56
2.5 Summarising the Analytical Approach	57
• References.....	59

INTRODUCTION

Previous research has shown that gender relations are a significant factor influencing farm, industry and community decision-making and that women are an under-utilised resource in the agricultural sector (e.g. Standing Committee on Agriculture and Resource Management 1998; Bellamy et al. 2002; Alston 2004). Significantly, it is recognised that women have the potential to provide an untapped opportunity for fostering innovation and facilitating change in the sugar industry (Pini 1999, 2001; Bellamy and Webb 2003). In addition, increasing involvement in sustainability activities has potential ‘flow on’ effects in generating greater awareness and adoption of more sustainable practices in rural communities (e.g. Grasby 2005). Notwithstanding, gender relations are often overlooked when considering the capacity and willingness of land users to adopt more sustainable management practices (e.g. Productivity Commission 2003).

To address these issues, a three year research project, “Sugar communities and resilience to change: Opportunities for enhancing women’s participation in sustainability initiatives” (CSE016) commenced in November 2005. The CSE016 project is funded by the Sugar Research and Development Corporation (SRDC) and involves a research collaboration between CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems (CSE), the University of Queensland (UQ) and a number of key stakeholders in two contrasting sugar regions in north and south coastal Queensland.

The key focus of the project is to build industry and community capacity for change by targeting the participation of women in a broad range of sustainability initiatives as a key opportunity to strengthen industry decision-making and the resilience/adaptive capacity of sugar communities in the face of change.

The specific objectives of this research project are:

In two case study regions, work with women in the sugar industry, in collaboration with other sugar industry, government, community, research and extension stakeholders, to concurrently:

- Develop a shared understanding amongst collaborators and researchers of:
 - a) The major social, economic and institutional influences on women’s participation in initiatives relevant to sustainability and the sugar industry; and
 - b) The value of and opportunities for enhancing women’s participation in such initiatives.
- Identify, implement and evaluate strategies that improve women’s participation in initiatives relevant to environmental, economic and social sustainability in the sugar industry, using participatory action research.
- Facilitate wide, ongoing communication and uptake of findings on strategies for strengthening the participation of women in sustainability initiatives to enhance sugar communities’ capacity to deal with change within and beyond the case study regions.

The initial scoping phase of the project was undertaken from January to October 2006 and involved:

- Scoping the issues and regional context through:
 - Reviewing the academic literature; and
 - Learning from people in the region, through individual face-to-face interviews and small group interactive sessions.
- Establishing a Reference Panel in each region
 - Representatives of key regional stakeholders to inform the research process and facilitate broad communication
- Developing partnerships:
 - Making links in the region as a basis for developing specific partnerships to undertake collaborative action-based research activities.

This report provides the conceptual framework for addressing these objectives in the context of the overall research focus on opportunities for enhancing women's participation in sustainability initiatives in the context of sugar communities and their capacity to adapt to change.

The report has two main components:

- A review of literature (Part 1 of this report); and
- An analytical framework (Part 2 of this report).

The literature review identifies issues and needs relating to women's participation in decision-making and the relationship to community resilience that will underpin and inform this research.

The analytical framework crystallises the conceptual and theoretical underpinnings of the research. It draws on both the literature review and issues and consideration emerging from the initial scoping phase. The analytical framework identifies the links between:

- Four core research elements;
- Theories and concepts underpinning the research; and
- Multiple research methods.

PART 1: LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1 Trends and challenges impacting on Australian sugar communities

This section explores the complex range of trends and challenges that are impacting on Australian sugar communities, including globalisation and agricultural restructuring, changing community expectations about sustainability, transitions in sugar communities driven by trends such as ‘sea change’ and challenges associated with technological changes, diversification and climate change. These trends and challenges impact on the ability of sugar communities to manage change, which is essential for their economic, environmental and social sustainability. Women can play a valuable role in dealing with and managing such change.

Several reviews and reports have highlighted the complex range of global to local trends and challenges that are affecting the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the Australian sugar industry and its communities (Sugar Industry Review Working Party, 1996; Hildebrand, 2002; Boston Consulting Group, 2003; OESR, 2003; Jakku et al., 2006; Sugar Industry Oversight Group, 2006). Box 1 summarises some of the key trends identified by these reports, which are affecting the future of the Australian sugar industry and its communities.

BOX 1: Global to local trends influencing the future of the Australian sugar industry

Global to local trends and influences

- Globalisation
- Global sugar commodity markets and long-term price decline
- Agricultural restructuring, deregulation and industry reform

Changes in society and community expectations

- Sustainability and sustainable regional development

Sugar communities in transition

- Post-productivist landscapes
- Sea change and tree change
- Changes in farming demographics

Innovation and risk management

- Technological advancements in agriculture
- Diversification
- Climate change and climate variability

Source: adapted from Jakku et al. 2006.

1.1.1 Global to local trends and influences

Globalisation involves several wide-ranging processes, including the expansion of economic linkages across the globe, the integration of nations via markets and the global dissemination of technologies, ideas and cultures (Friedman, 1999). Globalisation and the associated processes of agricultural restructuring, deregulation and industry reform have had a dramatic

impact on the Australian sugar industry (Hildebrand, 2002). The Australian sugar industry is more exposed to the highly volatile global free market and international competitiveness is now a key driver for the industry (Hildebrand, 2002; Sugar Industry Oversight Group, 2006). The long-term price decline that is affecting the global price of raw sugar means that the industry must deal with fluctuating but generally low world sugar prices, which is creating a ‘cost / price squeeze’ and threatening the social and economic sustainability of the industry and its communities (OESR, 2003). In this context, pressure for further reform of the Australian sugar industry continues. Such calls for reform emphasise the need for the industry to become more flexible in order to improve its self-reliance and its capacity to respond to market forces (Hildebrand, 2002; Sugar Industry Oversight Group, 2006).

1.1.2 Changes in society and community expectations

Changes in society and community expectations have also affected the Australian sugar industry. In particular, the quest for sustainability, which involves changing community expectations about farming and environmental protection, has resulted in increasing pressure on sugarcane growers to implement sustainable farming practices (Jakku et al., 2006). The rise in ‘green consumers’ has also affected the demands placed upon the Australian sugar industry. Furthermore, there is an increasing recognition of the need for a regional focus on sustainable development, involving a move towards more collaborative and inclusive approaches to sustainable regional development (AFFA 1999b; Dore and Woodhill, 1999; Gray and Lawrence, 2001; Bellamy et al 2002).

The Australian sugar industry has responded to the quest for sustainability by seeking to improve environmental management within the industry through a number of programs, including COMPASS, property planning initiatives and the Code of Practice (Hildebrand, 2002). The proximity of the Queensland sugar industry to the Great Barrier Reef means that water quality is a particularly pressing issue (Hildebrand, 2002). The sugar industry is also responding to increased demand for already scarce water, and greater public scrutiny of water use and environmental impacts. Notably, since 1999, the sugar industry has participated in the Queensland Rural Water Use Efficiency Initiative (Hildebrand, 2002). Furthermore, both the Hildebrand (2002) and the Sugar Industry Oversight Group (2006) reports identify the importance of a regional / mill area focus for implementing reform within the sugar industry, and this has led to the industry’s establishment of Regional Advisory Groups, partly to address the increasing emphasis on sustainable regional development.

1.1.3 Sugar communities in transition

The trend towards post-productivist transition refers to changes in the way in which rural land is used and valued, whereby the agricultural sector and rural areas are becoming increasingly dominated by non-agricultural uses (Holmes, 1996). While there is debate over whether or not Australian agricultural landscapes, including sugar communities, are undergoing this post-productivist transition, there is agreement that Australia’s rural lands are undergoing a significant process of re-evaluation.

The terms sea change and its extrapolation, tree change, refer to the trend of people wanting to escape the city to pursue idyllic, alternative lifestyles in beachside or picturesque inland places, usually a small town or hamlet (Burnely and Murphy, 2004; Kelly and McKenzie, in press). Due to the Australian sugar industry’s predominantly coastal location, the sea change and tree change phenomenon are likely to influence the future of sugar industry communities.

The major implications for the sugar industry of the sea change and tree change phenomenon include:

- A changing regional economy with a relatively reduced importance of the sugar industry and new sectors of growing importance emerging (e.g. tourism, alternative crops, service industries, etc);
- Loss of sugarcane land to urban and rural residential development;
- A regional context in which the sugar industry is no longer the dominant 'player' in decision-making in the region;
- Increasing move to off-farm work within farm businesses;
- Loss of youth moving to the cities for employment; and
- Changed regional social and economic dynamism involving accommodating different values and cultural ideals, which means that communities may no longer have a traditional sugar 'culture' of the past. (Jakku et al., 2006)

The changes associated with the post-productivist transition and sea change / tree change phenomenon are resulting in changes in farming demographics (Jakku et al., 2006). Age is one farmer characteristic often investigated for its relevance to land management practices and willingness to adopt new practices (Cary et al., 2001). Within the sugar industry, Windle and Rolfe's (2005) survey of sugarcane growers in the Mackay, Proserpine and Bundaberg regions found that the average age of growers was 53 years for Mackay and Bundaberg and 52 years for Proserpine. However, the high median age of farmers does not account for the active participation of younger family members in farm business decision making (Agriculture and Food Policy Reference Group, 2006). Changes in the demographic profile of farming communities are affecting the role of women and youth in the sugar industry. As the sugar industry is increasingly only one possible land user in a post-productivist landscape, stronger succession strategies and roles that are perceived by women partners in farming as rewarding will be necessary if the sugar industry is to remain socially and economically sustainable and vibrant (Jakku et al., 2006).

1.1.4 Innovation and risk management

Technological advancements in agriculture can play an important role in maintaining profitability (Agriculture and Food Policy Reference Group, 2006). However, it is important that the broader social and environmental impacts of emerging technologies are also considered. Historically, sugarcane farmers are more amenable to adopting certain technological innovations, such as mechanisation and green-cane trash blanketing, more readily than other types of innovations (e.g. reduction in the application of nitrogen-based fertilisers) (Jakku et al., 2006). The innovations most readily adopted are usually those which promise to either increase production and thereby income or reduce time and labour costs. Farmers have been willing to go into debt to purchase machinery that offers increased farming efficiency, but have been less enthusiastic about non-production innovations, even though these may require very low financial investment (Griggs 2004).

The search for diversification options for the Australian sugar industry has focused on the development of alternative sugarcane products, which could include cane trash, molasses or bagasse for use in co-generation fuel plants, stock feed and ethanol (Hildebrand, 2002). In the future, diversification options may include environmental income, with farmers receiving stewardship payments for providing the community with a combination of agricultural and environmental services (Agriculture and Food Policy Reference Group, 2006). Although

genuine diversification options appear to be currently limited, diversification is seen as vital for the long-term sustainability of the industry (Sugar Industry Oversight Group, 2006).

Climate variability events in Australia (e.g. drought) are predicted to become more frequent. This recognition is forcing increased self-reliance on farmers, and the need to factor drought and other climatic extremes into their expectations and management plans (Macadam et al. 2004). Climate change is expected to continue and perhaps accelerate (Pittock, 2005). The sugar industry and its members will need to adapt to possible long term climatic changes and risk management strategies must evolve to meet these challenges. The sugar industry's increased focus on water use efficiency is an important step towards developing risk management strategies to adapt to climate change and climate variability.

The trends and influences outlined above highlight the many challenges that the Australian sugar industry and its communities are facing. Combined, they amount to a context that requires the industry and its members to constantly deal with uncertainty and change. The ability to manage change is central to the economic, social and environmental sustainability of industries and communities alike:

Being sustainable is to be better prepared, and to be proactive in developing new ideas for the future that sustain the social, economic and environmental systems ...It is about a process of managing change and knowing when and how to initiate strategic change. (Kelly and Walker, 2004: 1, 14)

Women can play a valuable role in this process of managing change in the Australian sugar industry. Later sections of our review will address this issue of the capacity to recognise, respond to and shape change. In the next section, we review the literature on women's involvement in agricultural industries and rural communities, which provides a foundation for understanding the role and value of women's contribution to the sugar industry and for identifying opportunities and strategies for enhancing women's participation in the sugar industry.

1.2 Women's contribution to and participation in agricultural industries and rural communities

This section highlights the significant contribution that women make to their agricultural industries and rural communities and identifies the many barriers to their participation and representation in these industries and communities. It also shows how women in agriculture, including women in the sugar industry, have mobilised to form groups to support each other and raise their profile. This section identifies valuable insights into the many opportunities and strategies for increasing women's participation in agricultural industries and rural communities. It concludes by exploring the argument that increasing women's participation is an important part of ensuring the long term sustainability of agricultural industries and rural communities.

1.2.1 Women's contribution to agriculture and rural communities

There is a substantial body of literature on the role of women in agricultural industries and their rural communities. It is well documented that women in Australia and elsewhere make significant and valuable contributions to their enterprises, families and communities, through their diverse roles, including on-farm work, off-farm employment and voluntary community work (Sachs, 1983; Whatmore, 1991; Leckie, 1993; Alston, 1995; Gooday, 1995; McCartney and Ross, 2003). In Australia, 40% of farm business partners are women and 48% of the real farm income is earned by women through their on- and off-farm work (RIRDC and DIPE 1998). This on- and off-farm work by women is critical to the survival of family farm production in Australia (Lawrence, 1987; Alston, 2003). Rickson (1997) lists several factors that influence women's contribution to agriculture production, including: demographic factors (e.g. age, ethnicity and class); agricultural structures and production related variables (e.g. region, crop, labour demands and product price variation); and site specific constraints, such as whether the farm land is freehold or leasehold. McCartney and Ross (2003: 130) highlight the complex arrangement of farming women's roles, tasks and skills (see Figure 1).

Although there is limited data to quantify women's overall contribution to the Australian sugar industry, women's on-farm work in the sugar industry includes farm management, administration and book-keeping, farm labour, including 'gofering', in addition to their roles such as wife, householder and primary carer (Pini, 1999; McGowan Consulting, 2006). Women also contribute to the sugar industry outside of the commercial family farm business, through their roles as small farmers, new farmers, farm labourers, harvest operators, contractors, farm consultants, accountants, bankers, administrators, small business owners, health professionals, community workers, educators, trainers, researchers, media and government representatives (Pini, 1999; McGowan Consulting, 2006).

Women in the sugar industry are also highly involved in their local communities. Pini (1999) found that many of the women that she surveyed in the sugar industry were active in multiple community organisations, including church groups, sporting clubs, cultural / craft clubs and school associations. Pini (1999: 14) emphasised that her study revealed that "there is great diversity in the lives and experiences of women involved in the sugar industry, and that every attempt should be made to acknowledge this diversity."

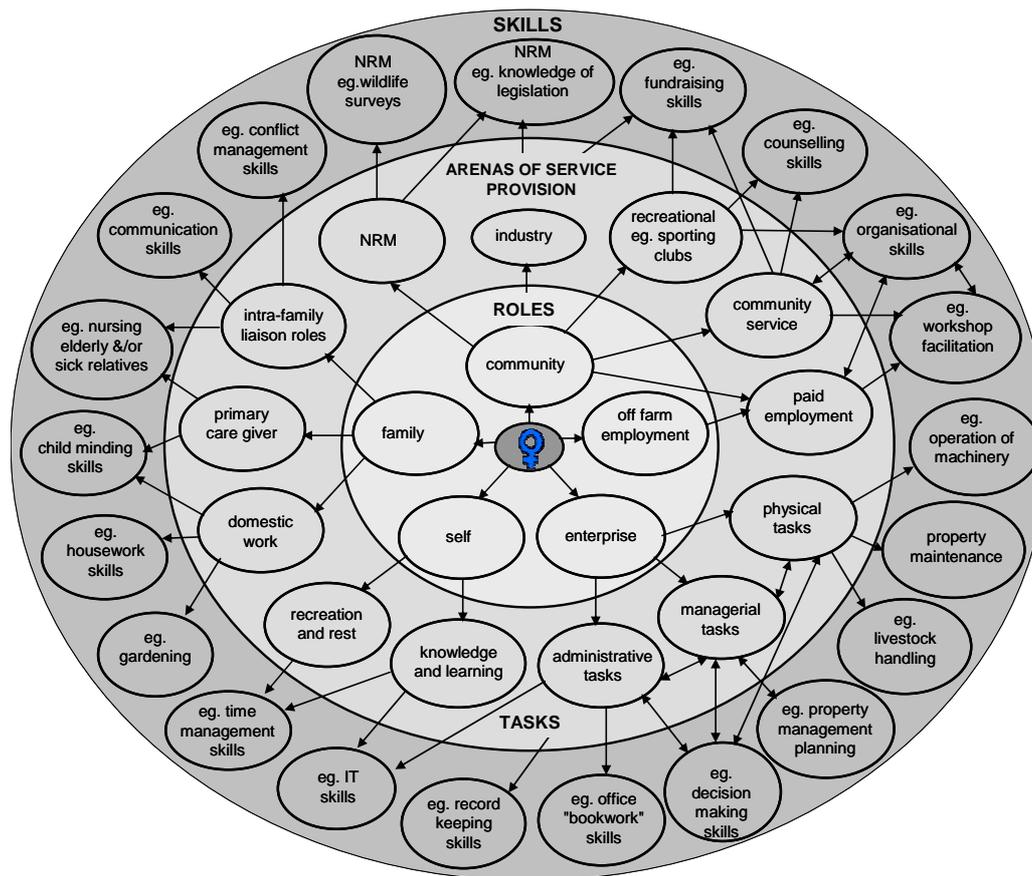


Figure 1: The complexity of farming women's lives (McCartney and Ross, 2003: 130)

Nevertheless, it is widely acknowledged that women's contributions to Australia's agricultural industries and rural communities are under-recognised and undervalued (Alston, 1998, 2003, 2004; Elix and Lambert, 1998; Dimopoulous and Sheridan, 2000). Gender biased definitions of work, which tend to exclude much of women's labour, have led to the 'invisibility' of women's contributions to their enterprises, families and communities (Gibson, Baxter and Kingston, 1990; Williams, 1992; Alston, 1998, 2003; Argent, 1999; McCartney and Ross, 2003).

Pini (1999; 2001) highlighted the specific challenges that women in the sugar industry face, particularly in regard to their marginalisation within the industry and the lack of recognition of their contributions to the industry:

In summary women are absent in leadership positions across the whole of the sugar industry and so, non-existent as mentors, role models or change agents. Further more, women and the nature of their contributions to industry are invisible in the publications of CANEGROWERS, the wider industry and broader media. The work they do is not afforded value in these publications, nor the knowledge they have, given status. (Pini, 2001, cited in McGowan Consulting, 2006: 9).

Therefore, the male-dominated nature of agricultural industries and their associated organisations, which translates into low levels of representation of women on agricultural industry representative bodies, means that women's interests tend to be under-represented and marginalised in the agricultural sector and rural communities (Dimopoulos and Sheridan, 2000; Alston, 2003). The next section examines in more detail the barriers to women's participation in their agricultural sectors and communities.

1.2.2 Barriers to women's participation in agriculture and rural communities

Alston and Wilkinson (1998) argued that the participation of women in agriculture and their rural communities is limited by the exclusion of women in agriculture from traditional sources of power. They summarised the various barriers to women's participation and the way in which these are linked to gender and power relations, noting that:

Women's access to power is limited by their position in the gendered hierarchy of agriculture, by their lack of access to the resources associated with farming, by the continuing dominance of agricultural decision-making organizations by males and by the shaping and exercise of power within these organizations. (Alston and Wilkinson, 1998: 391)

Claridge (1998) grouped the constraints and barriers which limit women's participation, especially in agricultural decision-making and leadership, into three categories: socialised, situational and structural constraints. Similarly, the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Resource Management (1998) report identifies three types of barriers to women's greater participation in leadership roles in agriculture: cultural and attitudinal barriers; structural and organisational barriers and practical barriers and multiple roles. Box 2 summarises the range of constraints to women's participation in agricultural decision-making and leadership that fall under these broad categories.

McCartney and Ross's (2003) study of the role of rural women in natural resource management also identified a range of barriers to women's participation in decision-making and leadership:

Participants in this study suggested several reasons for why women are not participating more at the local level. These included: a lack of time, a lack of confidence, growing 'tiredness' due to the multi-faceted roles of women, a lack of support from partners and peers, prevailing community and family perceptions about the gender roles and 'women's work', fears about the potential over utilisation and exploitation of women in development activities, the exclusive nature of some organisations creating cultural barriers to participation, and a sense of guilt associated with compromising family and enterprise commitments. (McCartney and Ross, 2003: 127)

Therefore, a myriad of barriers and constraints exist, which limit women's opportunities to participate in their agricultural sectors and communities.

BOX 2: Barriers and constraints on women's participation in agriculture and rural communities

Socialised, cultural and attitudinal barriers and constraints

- Gender role socialisation and stereotyping;
- Entrenched, conservative community attitudes towards women's participation;
- Self-confidence, especially in relation to operating in the public sphere;
- Undervaluing of women's role;
- Different gender styles of operation (including communication, decision-making and leadership).

Structural and organisational barriers and constraints

- Gender-biased social and organisational structures, which limit women's access to power and therefore limit their access to information and opportunities to gain experience in agricultural decision-making processes;
- Rigid and hierarchical organisational structures and processes, which can deter and/or intimidate women;
- Limited voting rights in agricultural representative bodies;
- Lack of financial control within farm businesses.

Situational and practical barriers and constraints

- Lack of time, due to multiple roles women undertake, including on- and off-farm work commitments and family responsibilities;
- Stage of life;
- Distance to travel to e.g. meetings or training;
- Timing of meetings or training;
- Cost e.g. of transport and skills development;
- Limited access to childcare;
- Reductions in community resources and services, which mean that women often have to 'pick up the slack' and therefore have limited opportunity to focus on other issues.

Source: Claridge, 1998 and Standing Committee on Agriculture and Resource Management, 1998.

1.2.3 The Women in Agriculture movement

The Australian 'women in agriculture' movement, which emerged in the 1980s and gained momentum in the 1990s, has challenged the invisibility of women's contributions to their agricultural industries and communities and sought to overcome some of the barriers to women's participation in the agricultural sectors and communities (Alston, 1996; 1998; 2003; Liepins, 1998a; McCartney and Ross, 2003; Pini, Brown and Simpson, 2003; Panelli and Pini, 2005). The women in agriculture movement, also known as the rural women's movement, is a "collective of informally linked groups and networks which are related through their interest in promoting women's greater recognition and involvement in agriculture" (Liepins, 1998a: 4). This movement allows women in agriculture to access seminars, skills courses, gatherings and a national lobby group, Australian Women in Agriculture, formed in 1992, as well as a national, independent philanthropic network,

Foundation for Australian Agricultural Women, formed in 1994 (Liepins, 1998c; Pini, Brown and Simpson, 2003; Panelli and Pini, 2005).

The women in agriculture movement focuses on farm and agricultural issues, but also engages with wider rural and social interests and has provided Australian farm women with the opportunity to contest their social positions within agriculture and contribute to shaping the future of Australian agriculture (Liepins, 1998a; 1998c). This movement has been credited with increasing women's confidence, encouraging greater participation of women in all aspects of farming and promoting an increased sensitivity to women's involvement in farming and in industry decision-making (Liepins, 1998a). The agenda of the women in agriculture movement is therefore quite different from more traditional rural and farm women's groups, such as the Country Women's Association, which have typically focused on women's domestic role and have been described as perpetuating the patriarchal gender relations that often define rural communities (Teather, 1996; Pini, Brown and Simpson, 2003).

Some state governments have established rural women's networks or units within relevant departments, including the Queensland Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries' Women in Rural Industries Unit. At the Federal level, the Women in Rural Industries Unit was established within the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, in 1996 (Pini, Brown and Simpson, 2003). These units were set up to link government with women in rural industries, increase opportunities for women in decision-making and improve the recognition of women's contributions to rural industries (Pini, Brown and Simpson, 2003; Foundation for Australian Agricultural Women, 2005). They have produced various policy statements and action plans aimed at increasing women's involvement in agriculture and natural resource management (e.g. Kerby et al., 1996; Elix and Lambert, 1998; Standing Committee on Agriculture and Resource Management, 1998; AFFA, 1999a; Dimopoulos and Sheridan, 2000). However, restructuring within AFFA has resulted in its Women in Rural Industries Unit being subsumed under the Industry Partnerships Program, which is part of the Agriculture Advancing Australia package (AFFA 2006). Critics have described this as part of a trend whereby "rural affairs and wider social component have gradually been eroded from AFFA", which they argue is associated with a broader shift towards conservative and neo-liberal approaches (Panelli and Pini, 2005: 497).

1.2.4 The Women in Sugar movement

Within the Australian sugar industry, there are Women in Sugar groups in most of the major cane growing regions (see Box 3). The Women in Sugar groups have created networks and communication mechanisms focused on addressing the issues and needs of women in the sugar industry, although they do also focus on issues relevant to the wider farming family unit (McGowan Consulting, 2006). For instance, the Bundaberg Women in Sugar group's corporate plan states that:

Our mission is to unite, support and represent women in Bundaberg district sugar industry through information and training and by being active participants within the industry.

The objectives of the Bundaberg Women in Sugar group range from educational objectives, such as providing information and training in all aspects of the sugar industry and promoting team work, group dynamics and skills development within the industry, through to social

objectives, such as encouraging more women to be involved in the industry, providing and promoting more social interaction within the industry and embracing challenges of change in the industry (Bundaberg Women in Sugar group Corporate Plan).

Similarly, the Mackay District's CANEGROWERS Network provides a forum for supporting, informing and educating Mackay District women, developing self-confidence and creating opportunities to discuss and act on issues that impact on the industry and community (Mackay District CANEGROWERS Network, 2002). Nevertheless, many of the Women in Sugar groups face challenges associated with their voluntary nature, structure and focus, as well as a lack of funds (McGowan Consulting, 2006).

BOX 3: Established women's groups in the Australian sugar industry

Mackay – CANEGROWERS District Network

- Formed in 1993
- Chair – Ann Jansen
- Secretary – Barbara Walker

Herbert River – DEFOS

- Formed in 1999
- Chair – Josie Vecchio
- Dorothy Hatfield

Bundaberg Women in Sugar Group

- Formed in 2000
- Chair – Dianne Bush
- Vice Chairs – Jenny Rule and Coral Zunker
- Secretary – Anne Slattery
- Project co-ordinators – Lynne Thomas, Nancy Chapman, Robyn Poulsen and Desley Ford
- Information Co-ordinator – Lyn Arnicar

Isis Women in Sugar Group

- Formed in 2004
- Key contacts – Sandra Webb, Leila Muller and Robyn Rapley

Burdekin – Sugar Network

- Chair – Colleen Setter
- Secretary – Cecilia Swideny

North Queensland – Sugar Shakers

- Formed in 2005
- Key contact – Sherry Kaurila

Wet Tropics Women in Sugar Group

- Formed in 2006
- Key contacts – Gwen Arcidiacono (Tully), Kirsten Brooks (Innisfail) and Judy Rehbein (Babinda)

Sources: Mackay District CANEGROWERS Network, 2002; van de Wetering, 2004; Bundaberg Women in Sugar Corporate Plan 2005; McGowan Consulting, 2006.

1.2.5 Women and CANEGROWERS

Pini's (1999; 2001) studies of women's participation in the sugar industry has highlighted the low level of women's participation and representation in CANEGROWERS and detailed the various constraints on women's involvement in CANEGROWERS. However, she also highlighted the opportunities that exist for CANEGROWERS to improve the participation of women in its activities:

It is a mistake however, to assume that behind this 'public' face women are not participating in their industry or, on the whole, lacking an interest in their

industry. The women who participated in this survey...described the way in which they seek information about the sugar industry. This is despite the constraints of domestic responsibilities, paid work, or other attitudinal, organisational or personal barriers. Many expressed a keen interest in issues related to industry management and leadership.

...The opportunity then, exists for CANEGROWERS to demonstrate leadership in working towards strategies which are framed around change in organisational practice and culture. (Pini, 1999: 34)

The recent report by McGowan Consulting (2006) also pointed to the continuing low level of participation in women in CANEGROWERS activities. This report is linked to the Women on CANEGROWERS Boards project, which is partly funded by CANEGROWERS. The report develops recommendations for CANEGROWERS, outlining a strategy to increase the participation of women, and indeed all members of the farm family team, in all aspects of the sugar industry. These recommendations will be discussed in the next section on strategies for improving women's participation in agriculture and rural communities.

1.2.6 Strategies for improving women's participation

There is a significant body of literature outlining various strategies for improving women's participation in agriculture and rural communities (Kerby et al., 1996; Grace, 1997; Alston, 1998; RIRDC and DIPE 1998; Standing Committee on Agriculture and Resource Management, 1998; Pini, 1999 and 2001; Dimopoulous and Sheridan, 2000; McCartney and Ross, 2003; Fulton and McGowan, 2005; McGowan Consulting, 2006).

Elix and Lambert (1998: 114) identified three common issues that strategies for improving women's participation in agriculture and rural communities:

- The culture within the agricultural sector and rural communities, which is seen as male-oriented and unwelcoming, or exclusive of women as leaders and managers;
- The competing demands of women's on- and off-farm work and family responsibilities;
- The extent to which women's self-perceptions or lack of confidence inhibits their progress to positions as leaders and managers within the sector.

Elix and Lambert (1998) also identified a range of sector specific strategies, aimed at the grower and producer organisations, government agricultural agencies, agriculture related R&D organisations, agribusiness, financial institutions and rural media. They also highlighted the role of new communication technologies in assisting women to take a greater role in leadership and management across the agricultural sector.

Dimopoulos and Sheridan (2000: viii) build on Elix and Lambert's (1998) work and identified and implemented best practice strategies for involving women in rural sector organisations. These strategies included:

- Strategies to enable women with family responsibilities to participate;
- Steps taken to remove gender inequalities;
- Steps taken to address inequalities caused by geographic barriers;
- Use of mentorship and role modelling by organisations;

- Access to training which recognises and builds on women's skills.

Box 4 provides more detail on the strategies recommended by Elix and Lambert (1998) and Dimopoulos and Sheridan (2000).

Dimopoulos and Sheridan (2000) also identified critical success factors, which they maintain are essential for successfully applying organisational cultural change in rural organisations (see Box 5).

BOX 4: Strategies for improving women's participation in agriculture

Addressing impacts of the culture within the sector

- Ensuring selection on merit for positions on Boards or in senior management;
- Ensuring that selection criteria positions on Boards or in senior management encompass not only agricultural and traditional business management skills, but also communication and other social skills, as well as ensuring a diversity of representation;
- Modifying the selection process for positions on Boards or in senior management to recognise the range of skills of applications and ensure that selection panels encompass the diversity of views required in senior positions;
- Training for decision-makers to make them aware of the potential for bias in their approaches to recruitment and selection for positions on Boards or in senior management;
- Modifying the membership rules and administration of agricultural representative bodies, to increase participation of women at the local level (e.g. dual membership, directly encouraging women to nominate for Board or committee positions);
- Improving linkages between agricultural representative bodies and rural women's groups;
- Promoting greater recognition of rural women's groups.

Competing demands of work and family responsibilities

- Examining meeting processes, locations and timing to ensure they are as 'family friendly' as possible (e.g. rotating meeting venues, alternating meeting times and providing child care);
- Exploring opportunities for newer technologies (e.g. phone and video-conferencing) as alternative to face-to-face meetings.

Changing women's self-perceptions and building self-confidence

- Establishment of formal mentoring programs;
- Supporting peer networks either within or across organisations, e.g. among women approaching management level;
- Leadership courses to increase women's personal awareness, confidence and leadership skills.

Source: Elix and Lambert (1998) and Dimopoulos and Sheridan (2000)

BOX 5: Critical success factors for organisational change**Understanding the need for change**

- By identifying women as significant contributors to their social capital, organisations can create opportunities for working together to achieve common goals.

Strong leadership

- Leaders within organisations must have the credibility, authority, trust and skills to successfully implement best practice strategies.

Change agents

- Change agents must have high communication and facilitation skills and enthusiasm to encourage the desired change in behaviour.

Involvement of the target group and stakeholders

- The attitudes, beliefs and information held by the organisation must be established and a strategy devised to involve the audience in the development and implementation of the solution.

Evaluation

- Evaluation should include measurement of inputs, activities, people involvement, reactions of participants, practice change and end results.

Reporting of the results

- In sharing the results with other rural organisations, the messages must:
 - Be relevant to the other organisations and address the interests / concerns of all participants;
 - Integrate existing knowledge / information;
 - Demonstrate the benefits and costs;
 - Focus on good practices, where possible;
 - Discuss the practical implications of the behaviour change; and
 - Avoid exceeding the saturation point of the group.

Sharing of results with other organisations

- In sharing information with other groups, the following principles should be applied:
 - Identify core beliefs that could be targeted to provide motivation for behaviour change;
 - Understand the stages that groups go through when adopting new practices, including the different information sources that groups will draw on when adopting new practices; and
 - Understand the factors that may influence the diffusion of the new practice.

Recognising diversity

- Recognising that different women have different ways of contributing to their rural industries and communities and that each has merit and worth is one of the key success factors for improving women's participation in rural organisations.

Source: Dimopoulos and Sheridan (2000: xii-xiii)

Kerby et al.'s (1996) report is another important source of strategies for improving women's participation in agriculture and rural communities. Kerby et al. (1996) provided recommendations to the Department of Primary Industries for South Australia (PISA), focusing on guidelines to assist the PISA to recognise and value diversity and deliver include programs and policies to its clients, many of whom are women (Standing Committee on Agriculture and Resource Management, 1998) (see Box 6).

BOX 6: Checklist for valuing women as customers / members and clients

Changing the mindset

Are you:

- Listening to the ideas, opinions and perceptions of both men and women?
- Recognising the varied skills, knowledge and experiences of our customers?
- Acknowledging the varied and sometimes different learning needs of men and women?
- Accommodating the learning needs of men and women?

Networking

Have you used networks by:

- Referring to your own list of women customers?
- Asking these women to invite other women?
- Sending the information to relevant organisations and groups?

Consultation and planning

In your planning:

- Are women involved in the process?
- Do women have some ownership of the activity?
- Does the activity address the priorities of all customers, including women?

In designing the program:

- Have you discussed with women an appropriate format, venue and content for them?
- Do they prefer separate activities (to men) or combined?
- Do the speakers/contributors you have engaged reflect the input of the planning group? Is it possible to include women as speakers or contributors?
- Have you briefed your speakers about inviting participation from the women present?

Inclusive language

Are you using language in which:

- People are treated equally?
- No irrelevance is introduced?
- No one is excluded?
- The style is consistent?

Planning an activity

Is the venue:

- Appropriate for women?
- Known to women?
- Comfortable, inviting and accessible?
- Used by the community for other activities?
- Offering appropriate facilities for women and men?
- Are the timing, costs and childcare appropriate for women?

In organising childcare arrangements:

- Have you included the costs in your administrative costs?
- Does the venue have childcare facilities?
- Have you encouraged the attendance of children if childcare is not available and provided activities for them in the program?
- Have you offered to reimburse parents for the cost of childcare?

Promotion

In your promotion:

- Have you targeted women?
- Have you directed mail to both partners?
- Have you personally invited women by telephone, word of mouth or letter?
- Have you informed community and school newsletters?
- Have you used daytime television and radio?

Evaluation

In evaluating the activity:

- How will you measure the outcomes of the activity against the objectives?
- Have you allowed feedback from participants?

Source: Kerby et al. (1996), cited in McGowan Consulting (2006)

McGowan Consulting (2006) used the checklist developed by Kerby et al. (1996) to investigate the extent to which CANEGROWERS focused on women as clients / customers and members. Based on this checklist, McGowan Consulting (2006: 18) found that:

...there is greatest potential for improving the participation of women in CANEGROWER activities by addressing all areas for focusing on women as clients, customers and members; and particularly in the areas of networking, childcare arrangements, evaluation and promotion.

In view of this, McGowan Consulting (2006) identified a series of recommendations to help CANEGROWERS increase the participation and representation of women in their activities. These recommendations form a strategy that is based on the following principles:

- Linking CANEGROWERS activities to existing women's programs and activities;
- Addressing the specific barriers to participation experienced by women in the sugar industry;
- Developing a culture focused on working with all members of the farm team;
- Capitalising on the existing skilled network of sugar women who are considered community/industry leaders;
- Partnering with other organisations with common objectives (McGowan Consulting, 2006: 20).

The development of participatory regional action plans are a core element of the overall strategy that McGowan Consulting (2006) recommend. McGowan Consulting (2006) noted that these plans should be developed in partnership between regional CANEGROWERS managers, staff, members, elected representatives and women's groups and should specifically address barriers to participation and steps necessary to increase the participation of all members of the farm family team.

1.2.7 Women's contributions to sustainability

The literature reviewed so far highlights the significant contribution that women make to their agricultural industries and rural communities and identifies the many barriers to their participation and representation in these industries and communities. It also shows how women in agriculture, including women in the sugar industry, have mobilised to form groups to support each other and raise their profile. Furthermore, this literature offers valuable insights into the many opportunities and strategies for increasing women's participation in agricultural industries and rural communities. This section explores one of the implicit assumption underlying much of this literature, namely that increasing women's participation is an important part of ensuring the long term sustainability of agricultural industries and their rural communities.

Rural decline and the withdrawal of rural services have made the voluntary contributions of women increasingly essential for sustaining the well-being of rural families, enterprises and communities (Alston, 1998; Elix and Lambert, 1998; McCartney and Ross, 2003). For instance, Grace and Lennie (1998: 366) highlighted the valuable contribution that women can make to their industries and communities:

The diversity of rural women's personal identities, skills and knowledge, ain in terms of the wide range of issues they bring to public forums, is one of their

greatest strengths and needs greater recognition. Our research has shown that women bring a holistic and future-oriented perspective to complex social, environmental and economic issues... We would argue that such a perspective is necessary in our rapidly changing world where innovative solutions to problematic issues are urgently needed.

Similarly, Elix and Lambert (1998) pointed to evidence that women have a clearer understanding of sustainability and Alston and Wilkinson (1998) argued that increasing women's representation in agricultural leadership could broaden the agricultural agenda. Alston (2003) maintained that the current marginalisation of women from agricultural organisations and policy-making means that the "possibility of a wider vision incorporating the environment, land management, social issues and the interconnectedness of people, communities and the earth is lost" (Alston, 2003: 486).

There is also a body of literature that recognises the contribution of women to the Australian Landcare movement (Beilin, 1995; Chamala and Keith, 1995; Lockie, 1995; Leipins, 1998c; Lockie and Lyons, 2001). This literature highlights the importance of women to the Landcare movement and often relates this to their attitudes, working styles and skills (McCartney et al., 2005). For instance, Chamala and Keith (1995, cited in McCartney and Ross, 2003: 27) argued that:

The contribution of women is a key element in the success of Landcare. Their natural and acquired skills are often just what is needed for a group to cooperate effectively. Their ability to see beyond the constraints of current difficult circumstance and their willingness to give time to social interaction help give Landcare a long-term foundation.

Claridge (1998: 192) also concluded that "it is clear that women have valuable skills and attributes to bring to decision making and leadership within environmental and Landcare groups." Moreover, Lockie (1995: 75) argued that Landcare "offers women an acceptance and legitimacy denied to them by other farm-based organizations", while Lockie (1997) and Leipins (1998) suggested that Landcare offers a form of political skill building and can therefore act as a springboard for many women into a range of other farm-based organisations.

However, critics have challenged the way in which some of the literature on Landcare interprets the role women and the link between women and sustainability. In particular, Beilin (1995) warned that that women's participation in Landcare may actually operate as a form of environmental community service, which assumes a female responsibility for protecting the environment and amounts to further unrewarded voluntary work for women. This argument is supported by Grace and Lennie's (1998) cautionary remarks about the 'women as saviour' discourse, which they identified in their study of the way in which rural women are represented in a range of forums. Grace and Lennie (1998: 365) argued that the danger of portraying women as a 'untapped human resource' was that the agenda for increasing women's participation in decision-making may be more about a "pragmatic and economics-driven desire to maximize and fully utilize all of the available human resource potential" and less about empowering women. Therefore, although it is important to recognise the valuable contribution that women can make to their industries and communities, it is also important to be aware of the broader power dynamics that shape the role of women in agricultural industries and rural communities.

1.3 Sustainability, systems thinking and community resilience

This section examines the concepts and policy context surrounding sustainability and highlights the implications for improving the participation of women in sustainability initiatives. It identifies the importance of systems thinking in the context of sustainability and introduces the concepts of resilience, vulnerability and adaptive management, which are increasingly recognised as fundamental to understanding, managing and governing complex linked systems of people and nature. This section demonstrates that strengthening the capacity of sugar communities to manage resilience is critical to pursuing sustainable development in sugar regions. The concepts of resilience, vulnerability, adaptation and social learning emerge therefore as essential frameworks for understanding and analysing the way in which sugar communities manage and adapt to change, using a systems perspective.

1.3.1 Sustainable development

Sustainable development is an important synthesising concept that emerged in 1987 from the World Commission of Environment Report (Boulding 1987) as an integrated concept across environmental, economic and social dimensions of development. It was defined as development that meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Boulding 1987). It became a major international political agenda moving in 1992 into actual sustainability policy internationally as ‘Agenda 21’ at the UN Rio Conference on Environment and Development (UN 1992). Since the early 1990s, the concept of sustainable development has expanded to encompass the ‘triple bottom line’ of economic vitality, social cohesion and environmental integrity.

More recently, sustainable development has often given way to ‘sustainability’ as the holistic interpretation of the synthesising process with the emergence of sustainability science, sustainability councils, sustainable cities and sustainable communities all becoming part of the language of decision-making and all offering an integrated approach (Brown 2004). This trend reflects a major shift in public decision-making towards looking at issues as a whole in a society long organised around separate contributions from a range of specialisations (Brown 2004; Bammer 2006). Holling (2001: 399) points out that:

Sustainability is the capacity to create, test and maintain adaptive capacity. Development is the process of creating, testing, and maintaining opportunity. The phrase that combines the two “sustainable development” therefore refers to the goal of fostering adaptive capabilities while simultaneously creating opportunities.

In this context, there has been an increasing recognition, both nationally and internationally, of the need for a regional focus on sustainability involving a move towards more collaborative, inclusive and deliberative approaches to decision-making (e.g. Dale and Bellamy 1998; AFFA 1999; Dore and Woodhill, 1999; Bellamy et al 2002, 2005). For example, Gray and Lawrence (2001) advocate a regional focus on sustainability as an avenue for empowering communities to generate solutions to regional problems, while satisfying present and future needs:

The challenge for regional Australia at the beginning of the twenty-first century is not just to fix its social and economic policies, but rather to build socially, economically and environmentally strong communities which have the necessary linkages with global capital, but which have a prospect beyond this season's price for traditional products like coal, beef or wheat (Gray and Lawrence, 2001: 188).

Sustainability however is a complex and contested concept. Pretty (1998) points out, for example, that to some it implies persistence and the capacity of something to continue for a long time, while for others it implies not damaging or degrading natural resources. Gunderson and Holling (2002) argue that sustainable systems are linked natural and social systems that not only persist, but also evolve and change. Following this line of thinking, Berkes et al. (2003: 2) argue that sustainability is “a process, rather than an end product, a dynamic process that requires adaptive capacity for societies to deal with change.”

1.3.2 Sustainability initiatives

The operationalisation of sustainability in practice however has proven challenging for both individuals and communities alike. Sustainability in practice involves multiple scales of relevance (local to global), multiple actors and their networks, multiple perceptions of the problem, multiple strategies and instruments, and multiple resources and organisations for implementation (e.g. Bellamy et al. 2005). Importantly, markedly different decision-making cultures which characterise this multidimensional context are one of the fundamental constraints to sustainability in practice. Holling (2003: xviii) argues that:

Sustainable development and management of global and regional resources are not an ecological problem, nor an economic one, nor a social one. They are a combination of all three. And yet actions to integrate all three in the developed nations have short-changed one or more. Sustainable designs driven by conservation interests ignore the need for an adaptive form of economic development that emphasises individual enterprise and flexibility. Those driven by industrial interests act as if the uncertainty of nature can be replaced with human engineering and management controls, or ignored altogether. Those driven by social interests act as if community development and empowerment alone can surmount any constraints of nature or of external forces.

Brown (2004: 42) argues that the strongest dividing lines in decision-making are between community, specialists and government-decision-making systems with few linking strands – “systems so different that they resemble different cultures with different languages, goals and sources of knowledge.” This situation has strong implications for improving the participation of women in initiatives designed to embrace sustainability issues from an holistic focus across all scales of relevance (e.g. local, community, regional, national, global) to the sugar industry.

In recognition of these challenges, *sustainability initiatives* in the context of this research project need to be broadly defined as:

Specific processes, relationships, activities, and tools or mechanisms that:

- (i) Seek to ensure that farming practices and related management systems maintain or enhance the natural resource base, while also enabling the economic and social viability of agriculture and the local community.
- (ii) Bring together industry, the community interest, community change agents and government interests (across all tiers) in the change agenda.

For example, sustainability initiatives may include initiatives supporting best management practices (BMPs), farm management systems (FMS) or business management approaches (Ipe et al., 2001; Welch and Marc-Aurele, 2001; Ice, 2004; Benham et al., 2005). Sustainability initiatives also include other community-based activities for implementing sustainability, including Landcare, catchment management, local and regional economic development, regional natural resource management and social planning (Chamala and Keith, 1995; Curtis and De Lacy, 1996; Bellamy et al., 2002; Bellamy and McDonald, 2005).

1.3.3 Systems thinking

In the context of sustainability and triple bottom line outcomes, there is growing recognition of the importance of systems thinking. Midgley (2006: 11) contends that:

The term “systems thinking” is commonly used as an umbrella term to refer to approaches that seek to be more holistic than those scientific (and other) methodologies that concentrate attention on a relatively narrow set of predefined variables.

Systems approaches highlight the need to see things as wholes and think about systems from the perspectives of interconnectedness, context, process, structure, meaning and knowledge / power (Barton et al. 2004). Systems thinking also involves an appreciation of emergent properties, which are properties that exist at one scale and not at another and appear when a system is examined as a whole instead of separate parts, or when separate parts of a system are examined as a coupled framework (Bammer 2006).

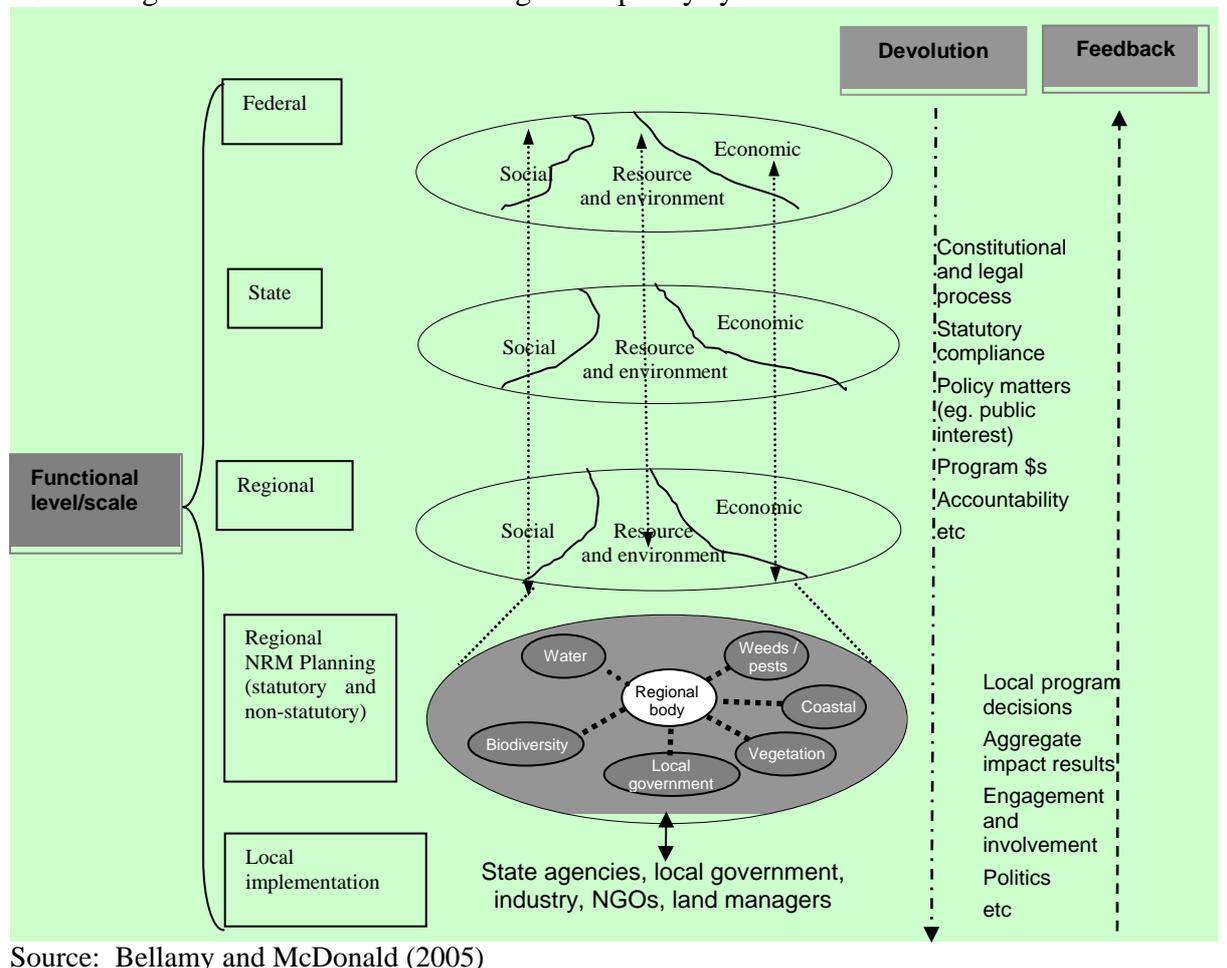
There is not one single systems thinking approach, but multiple systems approaches that have evolved over time (e.g. see Williams and Imam 2006). General systems theory developed in the 1930s and 1940s emphasised connectedness, context and feedback (e.g. Lee 1993; Berkes et al. 2003). With the more recent focus on the science of complexity and linked natural and social systems (e.g. Gunderson and Holling 2002; Berkes et al. 2003), a new understanding of complex systems is emerging to augment general systems theory. A complex system is characterised by nonlinearity, uncertainty, emergence, scale and self-organisation. From a complex systems approach, ‘wicked’ problems such as regional development (Eversole and Martin 2005) or natural resource management planning and policy issues (Innes and Booher 1999; Bellamy and McDonald 2005) are seen to be embedded in systems that are characterised by complexity, fragmentation, and uncertainty and in which learning, feedback and adaptation take place through highly linked self-organised networks (e.g. Lee 1993; Gunderson et al. 1995; Berkes et al. 2003).

Scale is important in dealing with such complex systems. Sustainability problems tend to be neither small-scale nor large-scale but *cross-scale* in both time and space (Folke et al 1998; Gunderson and Holling 2002). Many such complex systems are hierarchic with each subsystem nested in a larger subsystem, and so on (Allen and Starr 1982). For example,

institutions may be considered hierarchically, as a nested set of systems from the local level, through regional and national to international. Phenomenon at each level of the scale tend to have their own emergent properties, and different levels may be coupled by feedback relationships (Gunderson and Holling 2002; Berkes et al. 2003). Therefore complex systems need to be managed simultaneously at several levels (Folke et al. 1998; Berkes et al. 2003).

Because of multiple scales of interaction and response; a high frequency of nonlinearity and uncertainty; long time lags between actions and consequences; and multiple stakeholders with often contrasting objectives and activities, (e.g. Functowicz and Ravetz 1991; Gunderson and Holling 2002; Berkes et al. 2003), systems approaches to research are challenging. From a systems thinking perspective, there is no single correct level to study. A phenomenon occurring at any one level is affected by mechanisms occurring at the same level, by the level immediately below, and the level immediately above (Gibson et al. 1998). Moreover, it is difficult or impossible to understand a social system without considering its history, as well as its social, institutional and political context (Bellamy et al. 1999; Berkes et al. 2003). Thus, complex systems can best be understood through the use of a multiplicity of perspectives embedded in an understanding of context. Bellamy and McDonald (2005) for example have described the regional natural resource management policy and planning environment as a complex system comprising numerous 'nested' activities being carried out concurrently across a hierarchy of functional scales (federal, state, region, local) and across a number of different dimensions across the so-called triple bottom line (social / institutional, economic, environmental). This system is schematically presented in Box 7.

Box 7: Regional natural resource management policy system



Source: Bellamy and McDonald (2005)

As phenomenon at each functional level will tend to have their own emergent properties, and different levels may be coupled by feedback relationships, criteria or measures of system function (i.e. social, economic, biophysical, institutional) may not necessarily be aggregated from a smaller scale to higher scales (or disaggregated from a higher scale with integrity). Importantly, at each level there are different problems, different questions to be asked and different theories to be formulated (Gibson et al. 1998). Moreover, across the different functional levels (e.g. local to national and vice versa) there will be an iterative process of devolution and feedback of functions, as illustrated in Box 7.

1.3.4 Resilience theory and linked social and natural systems

Human and natural systems are dynamic, interacting and interdependent. Interest in the resilience, adaptation and transformation of linked human and natural systems is growing both nationally and internationally in both science and policy, with major implications for issues such as social and economic development, sustainable livelihoods, health and natural resource management from local to global scales. In the context of sustainable development and systems thinking, resilience is increasingly recognised as fundamental concept for understanding, managing and governing complex linked systems of people and nature (Gunderson et al. 1995; Holling 2001; Gunderson and Holling 2002; Walker et al. 2002, 2006; Berkes et al. 2003; Folke et al. 2002, 2005). As such, resilience theory provides a conceptual basis for sustainable development.

Emerging theories and approaches are increasingly pointing to the importance of assessing and actively managing resilience not only from an ecological outcomes perspective (e.g. Carpenter et al. 2001; Gunderson and Holling 2002; Lebel et al. 2006) but also in terms of the social dimensions that enable the adaptive management of human-environmental interactions (e.g. Berkes et al. 2003; Folke et al. 2005) and community sustainability (e.g. Tobin 1999; Kulig 2000; Paton 2005; Rolfe 2006).

Strengthening the capacity of sugar communities to manage resilience is critical to pursuing sustainable development in sugar regions. The interrelated concepts of resilience, vulnerability and adaptation are critical to understanding and framing sustainability and managing and adapting to change in sugar communities. They are briefly reviewed below.

1.3.5 Resilience

As a relatively new theoretical concept in the sustainability literature, resilience (and its surrogate adaptive capacity) has multiple levels of meaning, for example, as (Carpenter 2001; Holling 2001; Berkes et al. 2003; Kulig 2000):

- a metaphor related to sustainability,
- a property of dynamic models of linked social and ecological systems, and
- a measurable quantity that can be assessed in field studies of linked social and natural systems;
- a process in, and an emergent property of, dynamic social systems responding as a collective unit to significant adversity and risk.

Diverse definitions of resilience can be found across a broad range of research fields, for example, ecology (e.g. Holling 1973, 2001; Gunderson et al. 1995; Gunderson and Holling

2002; Berkes et al. 2003; Resilience Alliance 2005), community health (Kulig 2000; Rolfe 2006), community and social psychology (e.g. Sonn and Fisher 1998; Richardson 2002); natural hazard management (e.g. Tobin 1999; Paton et al. 2001; Paton 2005; Sapountzaki and Chalkias 2005), business management (e.g. Luthans 2002; Ascher 2001).

The concept of resilience was initially introduced by ecologist C.S. Holling (1973) based on studies that recognised ecosystem dynamics were intertwined with human actions. According to Holling (1973: 17) “resilience determines the persistence of relationships within a system and is a measure of the ability of these systems to absorb change of state variables, driving variables, and parameters, and still persist”. The concept was initially used in the analysis of population ecology and in the study of managing ecosystems and as such is mathematically based and model-oriented (Janssen and Ostrom 2006). More recently the concept has increasingly been used in the analysis of human-environmental interactions in social-ecological systems (e.g. The Resilience Alliance 2005). In this literature, resilience as applied to ecosystems, or to linked systems of people and the natural environment, has three defining characteristics (Carpenter et al. 2001; Holling 2001; The Resilience Alliance 2005):

- The amount of change the system can undergo and still retain the same controls on function and structure;
- The degree to which the system is capable of self-organization; and
- The ability to build and increase the capacity for learning and adaptation.

As an emergent property of complex linked human and natural systems, resilience relates to the functioning of linked systems, rather than the stability of the component parts or their ability to maintain a steady ecological state (Gunderson et al. 1995, Gunderson and Holling 2002). Resilience may not however necessarily be desirable. Some system configurations that decrease social wellbeing (e.g. polluted water supplies) can be highly resistant to change (Walker et al. 2002). Some social systems may be resistant, yet not resilient (i.e. they do not allow for self-organisation and learning), while some undesired ecological configurations may be both resistant and resilient (e.g. dryland salinity). Sustainability, in contrast, is proposed as an overarching goal that generally involves preferences about which system configurations are desirable (Walker et al. 2002).

The dynamics of linked social and ecological systems are variable and complex and they are not easily observed (e.g. Walker et al. 2006). However, as Carpenter (2001) argues “Resilient social-ecological systems incorporate diverse mechanisms for living with, and learning from, change and unexpected shocks; however the transition from theory into practice does require estimation or assessment of resilience”. To this end, adaptive capacity has been identified as a surrogate for resilience in social-ecological systems. It is further examined in Section 1.5.3.

The concept of resilience has also been drawn on and developed for application by social scientists to human systems. Vadya and McCay (1975) drew from the work of Holling (1973) “to suggest that resilience may be a more useful concept to understand human adaptation than stability and resistance”. Much of the earlier work focused on analyzing communities as individuals, clients or aggregates in the face of adversity. More recently emerging theories and approaches in this domain are focusing on community as dynamic social systems responding as a collective unit to significant adversity and risk to address issues such as oppression in communities (Sonn and Fisher 1998) and rural health (Kulig 2000; Rolfe 2006).

Community resilience is defined by Kulig (2000) as the ability of the community to not only respond to adversity but in so doing reach a higher level of functioning. As for complex linked human and natural systems, community resilience is an emergent property of the social system in context. “It does not define the community, but describes the collective response of the community as it undergoes adversity. The response is based on internal and external influences and considers the human relationships within communities” as well as the social, political and economic structure of the community environment and everyday life of individuals (Kulig, 2000: 376). Box 8 identifies some characteristics of community resilience that emerge in this literature.

BOX 8: Premises underpinning the concept of community resilience

- Communities are dynamic entities
- Community resilience needs to be viewed as a process (rather than a product) given the changing nature of communities
- The resilience process includes two aspects: one proactive and one reactive
- Time is an important factor when considering resiliency because it implies the necessity of either an immediate or delayed reaction.
- Resiliency can change over time.
- Studies are needed to better understand factors that create or enhance resiliency.
- Understanding individual resiliency does not necessarily lead to community resiliency.
- Resiliency can be intervenable, or altered by specific interventions.

Source: Kulig (2000)

Kulig (2000: 381) views resiliency as:

Resiliency is a positive way in which to view and describe rural communities. It does not define communities but helps to describe the process they undergo as a result of the interaction and the interrelationships with, for example, the socioeconomic political systems that surround it.

To describe the process through which rural communities engage as a result of continually responding to situations that test their ability to remain as collective units, Kulig (2000) developed a model of community resiliency. The model has three interlinked components (Kulig 2000: 380):

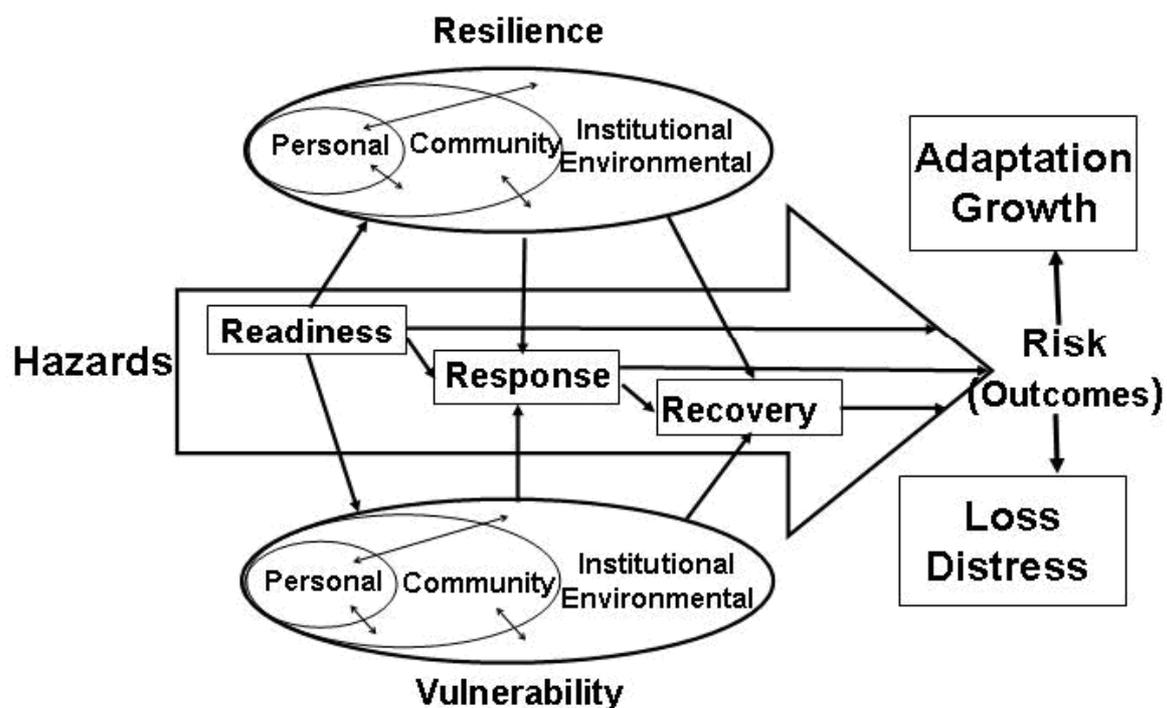
- Interactions experienced as a collective unit (includes getting along, a sense of belonging, and networks);
- Expression of a sense of community (includes community togetherness, and community mentality/outlook); and
- Community action (includes community cohesiveness, ability to cope with divisions, the presence of community problem-solving, the presence of visionary leadership, and dealing with change in a positive way).

1.3.6 Vulnerability

The concept of vulnerability has its roots in the study of natural hazards (e.g. Blaikie et al. 1994; Tobin 1999; Paton 2005; Sapountzaki and Chalkias 2005). Blaikie et al. (1994: 9) define vulnerability as “the characteristics of a person or group in terms of their capacity to anticipate, cope with, resist, and recover from the impact of natural hazards.”

Drawing on a rich literature on natural hazard management, Paton (2005) argues for a focus on the capacity of individuals and communities to adapt, grow and develop in the face of adverse or challenging circumstances. In this context Paton argues that vulnerability and resilience co-exist in communities and he defines factors that contribute to susceptibility to loss as vulnerability and those predicting adaptation and possible growth as resilience. Emphasising the importance of understanding the interdependencies between people, their communities, and societal institutions and organisations and how these influence a community’s capacity to adapt and shape change, Paton (2005) argues that hazard management can be described in terms of the choices made regarding the reduction of vulnerability and the development of resilience or adaptive capacity. Box 9 presents a risk-resilience-vulnerability management model for hazard management that identifies resilience and vulnerability as parallel/concurrent processes (rather than either ends of a continuum) and the relationship with risk, readiness, response and recovery.

BOX 9: A risk–resilience–vulnerability management model relevant to community sustainability in the face of adversity



Source: Paton (2005)

1.3.7 Adaptation and adaptive management

Adaptation has been defined by the International Panel on Climate Change as (McCarthy et al. 2001: 643) as:

... an adjustment in ecological, social, or economic systems, to actual or expected climatic stimuli and their effects or impacts. The term refers to processes, practices, or structures to moderate or offset potential damages or take advantage of opportunities associated with change in climate. It involves adjustment to reduce the vulnerability of communities, regions, or activities to climatic change and variability.

As identified above, adaptation and change are fundamental to the concept of resilience are also closely linked to the concept of vulnerability. Folke et al. (2003: 352-352) point out that the concept of resilience (or the capacity to lead a continued existence by incorporating change) “stresses the importance of assuming change and explaining stability, instead of assuming stability and explaining change. ...Facing complex co-evolving systems for sustainability requires the ability to cope with, adapt to, and shape change without losing options for future adaptation.” Berkes et al. (2003) argue that adaptability in a resilience framework implies the capacity not only to respond within the social domain but also to respond and shape ecosystem dynamics and change in an informed manner.

The concept of adaptive management has arisen from mainstream acceptance of ecological uncertainty (Gunderson et al. 1995) and recognition that science is subjective and needs to be undertaken in a way that is not disconnected from end-users (Functowicz et al. 2000). It is also associated with acknowledgement of the flaws of traditional top-down governmental control approaches to the design of resource management frameworks (Bellamy et al. 2001). Adaptive management approaches treat policies as hypotheses, and the enactment of these policies as experiments from which managers can learn, accepting uncertainty and expecting surprise (Functowicz et al., 2000; Folke et al. 2003; Berkes et al 2003). Such approaches use learning through feedback and reflection to evaluate and adapt in a continuous improvement model. They are promoted widely for dealing with uncertain and complex interactions between people and nature. Key premises underpinning adaptive management approaches are summarised in Box 10.

BOX 10: Key premises of adaptive management

- Knowledge of the system (e.g. social, ecological and their interaction) is always incomplete and commonly biased;
- The system is continually evolving (e.g. because of human influences, climate change; market forces) and uncertainties and non-linearity pervade;
- Building knowledge and skills requires learning from experimentation (i.e. hypothesis testing and learning by doing);
- Monitoring and evaluation is essential for reflection and learning about management action (e.g. provides a feedback loop on practice and theory);
- Collaboration and integration across traditional boundaries (e.g. disciplinary, spatial, social / sectoral, institutional / political) is fundamental for learning, adaptation and change.

Source: Walters and Holling (1990), Functowicz and Ravetz (1991), Functowicz et al. (2000), Berkes et al. (2003) and Label et al. (2006)

1.3.8 Social learning and learning from experience

Social learning is a popular concept underpinning adaptive management approaches (see Box 11 for key elements of social learning). The concept was originally conceived to explain the need for a citizenry that is continually learning to guide directions for sustainability set by governments (Milbrath 1989), and also to ground recommendations by researchers (Lee 1993). However, Smith and Lazarow (2004) point out that the concept of social learning has evolved to recognise the nexus between various actors and is suggested to include on-going learning on the part of citizens, researchers, decision makers, and institutions.

Lee (1993) uses the example of a compass and a gyroscope to describe why social learning is fundamental to the quest for sustainability. Lee states that science is needed to point society in the right direction (the compass), but also needs to be coupled with open public debate or “bounded conflict” regarding the science (the gyroscope) to match the desired path of science with the desired path of society. Using the compass and gyroscope analogy, Lee maintains that social learning must exist to allow effective adaptive management – so that society can constantly re-chart the course towards sustainability.

BOX 11: Key elements of social learning

The processes of learning and changes in individuals and social systems, which encompass:

- The learning that individuals obtain through observing others and their social interactions within a group (e.g. through imitation of role models); and
- The learning from informal institutional settings and participatory approaches, which draws on the concept of “communities of practice” that emphasises learning through participation with the expectation that learning will lead to joint practices and collective action; and
- The learning through structured processes that capture people’s knowledge and experience and contribute directly to strategy development and decision-making.

Source: Pahl-Wostl (2006) and Wenger (1998)

Experiential learning relates to developing the capacity for individuals and groups to learn effectively from their experiences is an essential part of fostering innovation and building the knowledge and skills in individuals and communities for adaptive management. Fazy et al.

(2005) found that the development of an individual's ability to deal with new situations requires individuals to:

- Vary and reflect on their experiences and to become adept at seeking out and taking different perspectives; and
- Become proficient at making balanced judgments about how or if an experience will change their current perspective or working representation of a social, economic and environmental system by applying principles of good thinking.

The development of such an expertise can open the possibilities of changing current ways of thinking (Fazy et al 2005). Importantly, information needs to be combined with experience, context, interpretation and reflection to create knowledge (Davenport et al. 1998). Hence, traditional reliance on information flows as a source of knowledge is insufficient to inform a continuously improving decision-making cycle. The effective exchange of knowledge between a diversity of stakeholders forms the basis for improving inputs to environmental decision-making. Hence, a commitment to social learning requires a complex process of experiential learning combined with collaborative learning.

1.4 Participation and Collaboration

This section highlights the importance of participation and collaboration for sustainability initiatives and outlines the many models of participation, which illustrate the different forms and functions of participation. This section includes a discussion of participatory research approaches, including the many challenges associated with designing and implementing such research. These issues inform the underpinning participatory research approach of this project. This section also highlights the overarching trends and challenges associated with regional partnerships and multi-stakeholder processes and identifies the implications of this for women's participation in the sugar industry.

1.4.1 Concepts and definitions of participation

One of the defining features of the development of 'Agenda 21' at the UN Rio Conference on Environment and Development (UN 1992) was the recognition of the need for an emphasis on community involvement and participation in the move toward sustainability. The rhetoric of 'community engagement' and 'stakeholder participation' now underpins many of the Australian Government's policies and initiatives on sustainability. Participation involves individual, interest groups and various communities having a say in and contributing to both understanding and decision-making processes about an issue and/or which affect them. The challenge of participation is to deal with the vast heterogeneity of interests and social values in our society:

There is no such thing as a single 'public interest'. Rather, society consists of individuals with unique sets of interests, some of which are identical to those of others, and collectivities of people which form shared interests (Renn et al. 1995: 2).

Community participation in decision-making through the use of deliberative processes is widely promoted as the means of enhancing institutional legitimacy, citizen influence, and social responsibility and learning particularly in multi-stakeholder contexts (Putnam 1993; Pretty 1995; Renn et al. 1995; Petts 2001). Lebel et al. (2006) refer to deliberation as a process of open communication, discussion and reflection among actors who have alternative political viewpoints and understandings.

Community participation is aimed at replacing one power with many and creating a situation where decisions made are informed and owned by all participants (Hemmati 2002). Sharing through participation however does not necessarily mean sharing in power (White 1996). A model that empowers some parties may disempower others. Moreover, Rockloff and Lockie (2006) assert that community participation without an explicit strategy for democratisation and capacity building is likely to mask decisions made in the interests of elite groups. Nevertheless, Petts (2001) argues a decision process which is inclusive of the range of different interests and allows for deliberation may lead to more environmentally and socially acceptable decisions.

Over the last two decades, many sustainability initiatives have focused on enhancing modes of participation to provide citizens with formal opportunities to influence decision-making. Examples include community empowerment programs, collaborative planning, community consultation, citizens' advisory councils, citizens' juries and participatory research. The

theoretical basis for community participation in decision-making rests largely with the notion of participatory democracy. Participatory democracy involves decentralised or dispersed forms of decision-making and the direct involvement of citizens in the making of decisions (Cook and Morgan 1971).

1.4.2 Models of participation

Efforts to enable participation in decision-making have a long history embracing a range of perspectives and methods (e.g. see Arnstein 1969; Pretty 1995; Cornwall 2003). Arnstein (1969), for example, argues that participation is the sharing of power, the ability to negotiate, compromise and be directly involved in the decisions made. Forms of participation that do not devolve some form of power to the public to determine the final outcome are regarded as tokenism. Genuine participation involves having the real power to influence decisions. The idea of participation as ‘empowerment’ is that the practical experience of being involved in considering options, making decisions and taking collective action is itself transformative.

Various typologies of public participation have been developed that classify levels of participation by citizens particularly in development programs. In these typologies, the focus of conceptualising and classifying participation is largely on the roles people play in the process rather than on whoever has initiated it (Buchy and Race 2001).

For example, Arnstein’s (1969) seminal work based primarily on urban development and welfare programs in the United States developed a ‘ladder of participation’ comprising eight levels that citizens commonly participate in government programs. Arnstein aligns each rung in the ladder with the levels of the purpose of the development agency, ranging from ‘citizen manipulation’ on the lowest rung to ‘control by citizens’ at the highest rung.

Box 12 presents and adaptation Arnstein ladder developed by Syme et al. (1997) to distinguish participation in terms of seven levels of influence in water management planning.

BOX 12: A typology of levels of influence or participation in water management planning

- **No interaction** between organisations and the community
- **Informing** the community of the decisions that have been made
- **Consulting** the community through advertisements and invitations for formal submissions with the final decision being made by the department/authority.
- **Involving** the community in workshops and meetings to help define the problem and scope the community’s issues with the final decision being made by the department.
- **Shared planning and decision making** between the government departments and the community (ie. a partnership that enables negotiation and engagement in strategy development, determining trade-offs and implementation of actions).
- **Decisions made by the community**
- **Community control and management**

Source: Syme et al. 1997

In contrast, Table 1 presents a typology of four major types of participation based on their form, function and interests developed by White (1996). This typology distinguishes not only form and role but also the function of the engagement process by distinguishing for each form of participation:

- ‘Top-down’ interests, that is the interest that those who design and implement programmes have in the participation of others;
- ‘Bottom-up’ interests, that is how the participants themselves see their participation, and what they expect to get out of it; and
- Function, that is the overall function of each type of participation.

Table 1: Classification of form, function and interests in participation

Form	Top-down	Bottom-up	Function
Nominal	<i>Legitimation</i> – to show they are doing something	<i>Inclusion</i> – to retain some access to potential benefits	<i>Display</i>
Instrumental	<i>Efficiency</i> – to limit funders’ inputs, draw on community contributions and make projects more cost effective	<i>Cost</i> – of time spent on project related labour and other related activities	<i>Means</i> – as a means to achieving cost effectiveness and local facilities
Representative	<i>Sustainability</i> – to avoid creating dependency and to capture diversity of views	<i>Leverage</i> – to influence the shape the project or activity takes and its management	<i>Voice</i> – to give people a voice in determining their own development
Transformative	<i>Empowerment</i> – to strengthen people’s capacities to make decisions, change views or behaviour and act for themselves	<i>Empowerment</i> – to establish a capacity to be able to decide and act for themselves.	<i>Means/end</i> – both as a means and an end, a continuing dynamic

Source: White 1996

Cornwall’s (2003) typology presented in Table 2 distinguishes four different modes of participation based on the mode of participation, the reason for initiating the involvement and the role of participants. The different reasons or purposes for initiating participation range from enlisting people in predetermined ventures and securing their compliance through pre-shaped agendas to those modes that genuinely open up the possibilities for participants to realise their rights and exercise voice.

Participation therefore may take many forms not all of which result in empowerment. What form participation should take, how much participation there should be, when and by whom, are key issues.

Importantly, participation has a range of perceived values depending on the form and function of participation:

- Participation as a normative value relates to the proposition that people should have the opportunity to have a say in decision-making that affects them (Chambers 1997).
- Instrumental participation uses participation as a tool or means of achieving a specific end, rather than participation being valued in itself (Buchy and Race 2001). Participation's instrumental value therefore is the value of tapping into local knowledge and other local inputs, which can lead to more efficient and effective outcomes (Webler et al. 1999; Eversole and Martin 2005).
- Participation can also have transformative value where local communities have control of the decision-making agenda (White 1996). Transformative participation embraces participation as a mechanism for social change; a means to empowerment and an end in itself in the sense that it transforms people's reality and their sense of it (Buchy and Race 2001).

This distinction has significant implications for the role of participants or stakeholders, the resources needed to support the process (finances, skills and powers), the expected outcomes and for the role participation plays in the decision-making process (Buchy and Race 2001; Cornwall 2003).

Enabling participation however is a complex undertaking because participation in practice unfolds in a dynamic context of social, economic, political and cultural institutions and arrangements. Agrawal et al. (2006) argue that these contextual relationships reinforce power and resource asymmetries, privilege some citizens while disadvantaging and marginalising others, and guide individual and collective behaviour.

Table 2: Modes of participation

Mode of participation	Associated with ...	Why invite/involve?	Participants viewed as
Functional	Beneficiary participation	To enlist people in projects or processes, so as to secure compliance, minimise dissent, lend legitimacy	<i>Objects</i>
Instrumental	Community participation	To make projects or interventions more effective, by enlisting contributions, delegating responsibilities	<i>Instruments</i>
Consultative	Stakeholder participation	To get in tune with public views and values, to garner good ideas, to diffuse opposition, to enhance responsiveness	<i>Actors</i>
Transformative	Citizen participation	To build political capabilities, critical consciousness and confidence; to enable to demand rights; to enhance accountability	<i>Agents</i>

Source: Cornwall 2003

1.4.3 Participatory research

Participatory research is promoted widely in the rhetoric of capacity building, community development and sustainability science. These approaches are part of more collaborative and communicative forms of enquiry that both public and private players have been

experimenting since the early 1990s (e.g. McAllister 1999; Bellamy et al. 2001; Ashby 2003; Campbell and Sayer 2003). These new research approaches involve multiple players with different perceptions of the problem and divergent interests, strategies and knowledge systems. Based on an extensive review of the literature from a broad range of health, environment and development fields of research, Parkes and Panelli (2001) identified seven common characteristics of these participatory approaches:

- Complex partnerships and networks;
- Integration of resources and knowledge exchange;
- Cycles of research and action;
- Iterative problem solving and planning;
- Evaluation;
- Capacity building for sustainability of social and ecological systems; and
- Multiple potential outcomes.

As a relatively new approach, both conceptually and operationally in the sustainability science field, there is no one model for participatory research. Rather participatory research draw on a wide range of theoretical backgrounds, including (Bellamy, in press): civic science (O’Riordan 1998), citizen science (Irwin 1995), community science (Carr 2004), participatory research and participatory action research (McAllister 1999; Ashby 2003; Probst and Hagmann 2003), integrated research (Campbell and Sayer 2003), community-based research (Thompson 2003) and collaborative research partnerships (Bellamy et al. 2004). Although not directly interchangeable, all of these approaches are promoted as delivering science and research focussed on ways to deal with uncertain, complex and controversial management, planning and policy issues.

Participatory approaches to research have often been seen solely as an ‘instrument’ or means of getting communities and the general public involved in the research in order to improve its usefulness and relevance, that is to improve technology transfer (Probst and Hagmann 2003; Ashby 2003; Campbell and Sayer 2003). However, increasingly participatory research is also seen as having a ‘transformative’ function, that is, as a mechanism for social change, a means to empowerment and an end in itself that strengthens people’s capacity in decision-making and improves their awareness of options (e.g. McAllister 1999; Buchy and Race 2001; Probst and Hagmann 2003) and also as a potential tool for transformative learning for researchers (Vernooy and McDougall 2003). In recognition, Parkes and Panelli (2001) developed a typology of participatory research that recognises six different modes participatory research relationships (see Table 3).

However, participatory research is not without significant challenges and it is frequently unpredictable in outcome. For example, Ashby (2003: 6) identifies three main challenges in designing participatory research:

- To engage stakeholders in processes of systematic enquiry to uncover and understand the ‘knock on’ effects of different management regimes and their cross-scale effects;
- To link this enquiry to knowledge sharing, so that information produced by research is relevant to common goals, is socialised and provides a basis for action; and

To find the appropriate scales at which stakeholders’ enquiry, learning and action need to mesh with each other in order to change (or maintain) resource regimes.

Table 3: Types of Participatory Research

Mode of participation	Involvement of local/researched people	Relationship of research to people
CO-OPTION	Token representatives are chosen but here is no real input or power-sharing	ON
COMPLIANCE	Tasks are assigned with incentives but outsiders decide the agenda and direct the actions	FOR
CONSULTATION	Local opinions are sought but outsiders decide the agenda and direct the actions	FOR/WITH
COOPERATION	Local people work together with outsiders to determine the priorities but responsibility remains with outsiders for directing the process	WITH
CO-LEARNING	Local people and outsiders share their knowledge to create new understandings and they work together to form action plans with outside facilitation	WITH/BY
COLLECTIVE ACTION	Local people set their own agenda and mobilise to carry it out in the absence of outside initiators and with or without outside facilitation	BY

Source: adapted from Parkes and Panelli (2001)

1.4.4 Partnerships and collaboration

Collaboration has emerged as an important tool for resolving conflict in multi-stakeholder arenas (contexts) and managing complex, evolving and linked natural and social systems (e.g. Lee 1993; Gunderson et al. 1995; Wondolleck and Yaffee 2000). Collaboration is a participatory process through which parties who see a situation very differently can constructively explore those differences and seek solutions that go beyond their own limited vision of what is possible (Gray 1989):

... a process in which those parties with a stake in the problem actively seek a mutually determined position. They join forces, pool information, knock heads, construct alternative solutions, and forge an agreement. Collaboration involves more than just organised participation – because, in collaborative management, stakeholders must come to the table with a desire to develop shared goals and then work out strategies for achieving those goals.

Arguments for collaborative approaches draw on three core works on social theory: Habermas's (1981) theory of communicative rationality, Giddens' (1984) recognition of the importance of forums, arenas and courts in societal decision-making and Dryzek's (2000) arguments relating to the importance of legitimacy and accountability in democracy. Giddens perceives interaction as being "oriented toward individual and shared goals of the actors through a coordinated process of discourse", and the related constructs of 'discursive' and 'deliberative' democracy are founded on Habermas's ideal of "no force but the force of the better argument". Deliberative democracy emphasises dialogue and debate with the community in decision-making and is underpinned by the notion that participation has a developmental value, and not merely an instrumental one (Dryzek 2000). This

developmental quality is linked with benefits derived from fostering a sense of belonging, civic responsibility, better political knowledge and increased participation (Putnam 1993).

Petheram et al. (2003) argues that the process of collaboration is ‘emergent’ (i.e. comes from the efforts of the participants) rather than a prescribed state of an organisation. This is in sharp contrast to cooperation and coordination, which indicate static patterns of inter-organisational relations.

Actively promoted by national and international agencies, broad participation and consensus decision-making have become central concepts underpinning partnership or other collaborative approaches to regional development and natural resource management and planning (e.g. Innes and Booher 1999, 2003; Wodolleck and Yaffee 2000; Kenney 2000; Bellamy and Johnson 2000; Bellamy et al. 2001, 2002). Stakeholder involvement or ownership is crucial for identifying acceptable tradeoffs, negotiating distribution of costs and benefits and reaching consensus about decisions and actions through collaborative processes.

Complex and difficult issues or ‘wicked’ problems that have caused conflict and evaded simple solution in the past are usually the focus of collaboration. In the organisational and management science literature, partnering and the formation of collaborative alliances among organisations has been long touted as a significant strategy that organisations can use to cope with the turbulence and complexity of their environments (e.g. Gray and Wood 1991; Kanter 1994). The enormous challenge of the on-going process of collaboration and in particular the process of value creation and value capture is widely recognised (Doz and Hamel 1998). Box 13 presents identifies a number of characteristics of collaborative alliances that are important to managing complex problems.

BOX 13: Key characteristics of partnerships relevant managing complex systems

- Alliances are now forged increasingly to develop complex systems and solutions that call for the resources of many partners;
- There is great uncertainty and ambiguity, both in terms of the resources they bring together and in the external turbulence they confront;
- The manner in which value is created – and the way in which partners capture it – is not preordained;
- The partner relationship evolves in ways that are hard to predict;
- Today’s ally may be tomorrow’s rival – or may be a current rival in some other market;
- Managing the alliance relationship over time is usually more important than crafting the initial formal design; and
- Initial agreements have less to do with success than does adaptability to change.

Source: Doz and Hamel 1998

Importantly, Doz and Hamel (1998) argue that the initial context of an alliance seldom encourages cooperation: the partners generally lack mutual familiarity, understanding and trust, and the absence of these can lead to an adversarial relationship. There are bound to be gaps between allies’ expectations and initial results. Partners may differ on which rules and

behaviours will lead to success. Such differences lead to a number of gaps that need to be actively managed. These gaps are summarised in Box 14.

BOX 14 Types of gaps that can emerge in partnerships and other collaborative approaches

Frame gap – in which each partner’s assumptions about the alliance may be quite different.

Expectation gap – partners may harbour different or unrealistic expectations.

Organisational context gap – differences among partners in styles, values, beliefs, and approaches to decision-making.

Confidence gap – between partners who may have doubts about their ability to make the alliance work and their private fears about their roles in it.

Skills understanding gap – a partners’ skills may appear to fail to match up to earlier assumptions – but the problem often is inability to understand those skills.

Task definition gap – it is seldom possible at inception to have a precise operational definition of the tasks to be carried out.

Information gap – alliances depend on the sharing of information but information may not be shared openly in negotiations. Power in an alliance depends partly on who controls and who uses the information. Thus, despite the best intentions, an enduring information gaps exists in most alliances.

Time gap – caused by differences in the partner’s timing of the costs and benefits of collaboration.

Source: Doz and Hamel 1998

Doz and Hamel (1998) stress that the success of most partnerships is contingent not only on the strength of their value creation logic and on the integrity of their design, but also on the effectiveness of each partner’s learning about the others and their joint learning about the environment, the task and the cooperation processes of the partnership.

Although collaboration is not a panacea for ending conflict (Petheram et al., 2003), collaborative initiatives have become part of a new adaptive approach to resource management and environmental problem solving. The new relationships and institutionalised practices, norms and behaviours that emerge in a collaborative process are critical outcomes that are often not appropriately valued (e.g. Innes and Booher 1999; Bellamy et al. 2001, 2002) but are fundamental to achieving adaptive capacity. Box 15 identifies four key outcomes of participation in collaborative processes in natural resource management identified by Wondolleck and Yaffee (2000).

BOX 15: Benefits of participation in collaborative natural resource management processes

- Building understanding by fostering exchange of information among agencies, organisations and the public and providing a mechanism for resolving uncertainty.
- Providing a mechanism for effective decision-making through processes that focus on common problems and build support for decisions.
- Generating a means of getting necessary work done by coordinating cross-boundary activities, fostering joint management activities, and mobilising an expanded set of resources.
- Developing the capacity of agencies, organizations, and communities to deal with the challenges of the future.

Source: Wondolleck and Yaffee (2000)

1.4.5 Regional partnerships and other multi-stakeholder processes

Since the late 1980s, a multiplication of regional initiatives by all spheres of government has seen the emergence of a proliferation in regional governance approaches in Australia aimed at dealing with global pressures, accelerating technological advances, increasing productivity growth from commodity sectors, and other pressures on sustainable development (see Section 1.1; Bellamy et al. 2005). In this context, Hildebrand (2002) and the Sugar Industry Oversight Group (2006) have identified the importance of a regional or mill area focus for implementing reform within the sugar industry.

These new regional approaches are promoted as important mechanisms for addressing both conflict in multi-stakeholder contexts and the management of complex evolving regional systems to achieve a sustainable future. Specifically, participation in these processes is seen to serve two main objectives: increasing the quality of decisions and generating necessary commitment (Hemmati 2002), both of which are of importance to the sugar industry.

Regional systems involve a complex system of goods and services (social, economic and environmental) each with its own set of stakeholders. Managing regional systems therefore requires dealing with multiple players and diverse trade-offs and in which priorities among social, economic and environmental objectives are ultimately political (Lebel et al. 2006). In response, the emerging focus in regional sustainable development emphasises community involvement and empowerment as part of a broader strategy of ‘governing through community’ (e.g. Jennings and Moore 2000; MacKinnon 2002; Bellamy et al. 2002; 2003a). Importantly there is an increasing recognition of the need for more collaborative and inclusive participative regional approaches to address the “big issues” relating to sustainable development (e.g. AFFA 1999b; Bellamy and Johnson 2000; Bellamy et al., 2002, 2005; Dore et al. 2003; Head and Ryan 2004; Eversole and Martin 2005). It is anticipated that this trend to participatory regional governance will remain for the foreseeable future (Head and Ryan 2004), as exemplified in the sugar reform process (Sugar Industry Oversight Group 2006) as well as in regional approaches to natural resource management (e.g. Bellamy et al 2001, 2002, 2005; Wondolleck and Yaffee 2000; Eversole and Martin 2005) and regional economic development (Beer et al. 2003; Bellamy et al 2003a; Eversole and Martin 2005).

Importantly there are many explicit and increasing expectations of regional communities and rural industry stakeholders in the new participatory governance approaches including, for example:

- In the context of neo-liberalism, less public resources are available to public regulation of policy domains relevant to regional sustainable development including natural resource management, economic development and social service delivery. One of the implications being that industry and regional bodies are becoming an interface between governments, land managers and resource users through which to secure landholder compliance to natural resource management policies through co-regulative arrangements.
- Holism and systems thinking, bottom up approaches and community engagement, innovation, diversity and the need for a strategic and systems-based approach have moved firmly into the mainstream of sustainable regional development policy. This situation has significant implications relating to the role and influence of the sugar industry in these new governance approaches. These implications include legitimacy of representation, engagement options, awareness of issues, the inclusion of local and

industry knowledge, contribution of social values, innovation and learning, the need for new leadership skills as well as capabilities for conflict resolution and recognizing and analyzing trade-offs.

The emergence of a range of governance frameworks at the local community and regional levels creates significant opportunities for the sugar industry to participate in and have influence in local community and regional decision-making that affects landholder and industry futures. Participation can occur through (Hemmati 2002; Eversole and Martin 2005):

- formal structured arrangements or ‘partnerships’ among multiple stakeholders (e.g. long-term regional governance partnerships, or short term deliberative committees); or
- informal collaborations or ‘multi-stakeholder processes’ (e.g. networks of relationships that allow stakeholders to exchange information, learn of ‘others’ values and motivations, and provide input into policy processes and other levels of local and regional decision-making).

However, bringing individuals, organisations and regional communities together to collaborate on common problems has its challenges, including differences in perceptions about the nature of the problem, the need for action, and the type of action that should be taken (Pahl-Wostl 2002). Regardless, policy and management frameworks for participative regional governance are increasingly being based on partnerships that include deliberative processes, effective stakeholder and community engagement, knowledge integration and social learning.

Questions of participation and governance are part of a broader trends identified in Section 1.4.4 above, which include decentralisation or devolution of control to ‘grassroots’ front-line actors (whether local communities, regions, or even individuals) and the acknowledgement of diversity as important to the sustainable regional process. The concept of participation in these processes is relatively new; “much touted in rhetoric, yet often poorly understood in practice” (Eversole and Martin 2005). How much participation and why, what form it should best take, when and by whom, are issues for the sugar industry.

1.4.6 Women and participatory processes

There has been a shift in the participation discourse beyond beneficiary participation (see Table 2 in Section 1.4.2 above) to a focus on citizenship, agency, governance and rights and making a difference in outcomes of decision-making (e.g. Cornwall 2003; Agrawal et al. 2006; Pahl-Wostl 2002, 2006). With this shift, equity considerations now require that efforts are made to enable marginal voices in development (such as women, youth or particular cultural groups) to be raised and heard. Cornwall (2003) argues that participatory approaches have much to offer but will only make a difference if they are used with sensitivity to issues of difference. Requiring the representation of women on committees or ensuring women are consulted are necessary but not sufficient for making a difference (Cornwall 2003). Rather Cornwall (2003: 1338) advocates that making a difference in participation for development calls for:

- An approach that deals with the diversity of experiences and interactions of everyday life; and

- Strategies that are sensitive to local dynamics of difference and build on the “gender issues” that men and women can identify with and mobilise around rather than essentialising sexual difference.

Importantly, it is argued that such an approach:

...would not preclude a direct focus on issues that women in general might commonly identify with, for example, property rights. But it would go beyond the assumption that all women identify with “gender issues” and that bringing about change is a zero sum game in which women-in-general are pitted against men-in-general. It would recognise that some men may also be affronted by the exclusion of women and may prove allies. Moreover, it would tackle some of the consequences of defining interventions in terms that fail to embrace the needs of people who fall outside the boundaries created by assumptions of “women’s needs” (Cornwall 2003: 1338).

These concepts from the development literature is fundamentally relevant also to the form and function of approaches to women’s participation in the sugar industry decision making, particularly given the context in Australia of the dominance of small family farm businesses.

1.5 Community capacity and dealing with change

This section focuses on the importance of developing capacity within communities to deal with sudden events and emerging trends and challenges to the sugar industry. It describes a number of key constructs and definitional frameworks for understanding the various dimensions and requirements of capacity for change in communities including: social capital, social networks, community capacity, collaborative capacity, adaptive capacity, community readiness and capacity building. These constructs and definitional frameworks also identify critical criteria and models for assessing capacity and ways of improving capacity in a variety of contexts and decision-making levels (e.g. individual, local, community and regional). They are fundamental to identifying effective strategies for improving women's involvement in sustainability initiatives for the sugar industry and ultimately an improved capacity to anticipate, respond to and shape change within sugar communities.

It is commonly recognised that there is a lack of capacity in societal institutions and practices to deal with the era of globalisation, rapid growth of technology, instantaneous worldwide communication, and fragmentation of institutions and communities (e.g. Gunderson et al. 1995; Ostrom et al. 1999; Gunderson and Holling 2002; Innes and Booher 2003). There are a number of interrelated constructs of capacity in the literature that are relevant to understanding and assessing the issues relating to women's involvement in decision-making. They include social capital, social networks, community capacity, adaptive capacity, community readiness and capacity building.

1.5.1 Social capital and networks

Social capital has gained increasing popularity in the economic, social, and political sciences since the 1990s (Pawar, 2006). It is a much-discussed and critiqued topic in government, bureaucratic and academic circles (Falk and Kilpatrick, 1999; Edwards and Foley, 1997; Portes, 1998). Box 16 provides some definitions of social capital.

BOX 16: Definitions of social capital

“...features of social life – networks, norms and trust – that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives...Social capital, in short, refers to social connections and the attendant norms and trust” (Putnam 1995).

“...features of social organisation, such as civic participation, norms of reciprocity and trust in others, that facilitate cooperation for mutual benefit” (Kawachi et.al. 1997).

“...defined simply as a set of informal values or norms shared among members of a group that permits cooperation among them. If members of the group come to expect that others will behave reliably and honestly, then they will come to trust one another. Trust is like a lubricant that makes the running of any group or organisation more efficient” (Fukuyama 1999)

“...the networks, norms and relationships that help communities and organisations work more effectively” (MacGillivray 2002)

“...the institutions, relationships and norms that shape the quality and quantity of a society's social interactions” (World Bank web-site)

Source: Kearns (2004)

These definitions show that there is often confusion between what social capital *is*, what social capital is *used for*, and what the *outcomes* of this use are (Kearns, 2004). Indeed, Fine (2001: 190) critically described social capital as “a sack of analytical potatoes” and notes that what is striking about social capital is “its ready acceptance as both analytical, empirical and policy panacea” (Fine 2001: 189).

Social capital has been noted in economic texts as early as 1935 (Silverman, 1935). O’Connor (1973) recognises social capital as contributing to the development of economic outcomes. From a sociological perspective, Bourdieu identifies and describes a number of different kinds of capital: cultural, economic, functional, linguistic, personal, political, professional, social and symbolic (1991), which serve to constitute the social position of a person. Coleman’s sociological work on social capital (1988) is part of a social theory that merges micro and macro levels of concern. For Coleman (1994), social capital was a set of resources within family relationships and community social organisation that completed human capital and supported educational achievement.

Table 4 distinguishes between: the three core elements of social capital; the intermediate outcomes or manifestations of social capital; and the different scales at which social capital may operate.

Table 4: Social capital: components, outcomes and operation

Components	Intermediate Outcomes	Scales of Operation
Social Networks	Quality and Quantity of Social Interactions	Bonding Capital
Social Norms	Shared Objectives	Bridging Capital
Levels of Trust	Co-operative Action Reciprocity Civic Engagement Access to Resources and Opportunities	Linking Capital

Source: Kearns (2004). Note: this table is meant to be read vertically, along the columns.

Social networks used by people are a core component of social capital. Keith and Ross (2005: 9) explain that social network analysis is a method of “analysing the structure of a community, society, or group by examining the network of linkages between individuals or organisations in a community (or even between cities or nations).” Social norms are adhered to in people’s behaviour, and in particular whether these norms are widely shared; and the levels of trust people have either in their neighbours, in people in general, or in institutions.

The relationships between the three main components of social capital is unclear, particularly the role of trust. Do networks generate trust or is trust a prerequisite to participate in networks? Social capital is valuable in examining relationships within a community or industry group. *Bonding capital* relates to strong social ties between like individuals, e.g. sugarcane growers in a particular region with a similar ethnic background. However, strong bonding among growers may lead to a reduced interest in outside interactions that can bring social learning and innovation. *Bridging capital* involves weaker social ties between heterogeneous individuals and can foster connections between groups and sectors, bringing new influences and contacts (Putnam 2000). *Linking capital* refers to vertical rather than

horizontal connections such as relations between the powerful and the less powerful (Aldridge et al., 2002).

Putnam (2000) relates volunteering to social capital by arguing that each act of volunteering is a tiny investment in social capital like pennies dropped in a cookie jar. A recent Australian report by Bittman and Fisher (2006) confirms that volunteering plays a crucial role in building and maintaining social capital and that Australians spent about half the amount of time volunteering as people in Canada, Finland, France and the United Kingdom.

Although it has generated much debate and criticism, social capital is still regarded by many as a concept with much promise and heuristic value (Schuller et al., 2000; Colclough and Bhavani, 2005; Grenier and Wright, 2006; Svendsen, 2006; Van Oorschot, Arts and Gelissen, 2006; Wilson, 2006; Woodhouse, 2006).

1.5.2 Community capacity

The concept of community capacity is a construct similar to social capital commonly drawn from the community development field. Key elements of community capacity identified in this literature are:

- The existence of resources (ranging from the skills of individuals to the strengths of organisations to access to financial capital);
- Networks of relationships;
- Leadership; and
- Support for some kind of mechanisms for, or processes of, participation by community members in collective action and problem solving (Chaskin 2001).

Community capacity resides in a community's individuals, formal organisations, and the relational networks tying them to each other and to the broader system of which they are a part (Chaskin 2001). Innes and Booher (2003) identify that capacity is not an absolute but a relative quality and that it has to be built at four levels in a community:

- Within members;
- Within their relationships;
- Within their organisational structures; and
- Within the programs they sponsor.

Chaskin (2001: 95) defines community capacity as:

...the interaction of human capital, organisational resources, and social capital existing within a given community that can be leveraged to solve collective problems and improve and maintain the well being of a given community. It may operate through informal social processes and/or organised effort.

Chaskin (2001) operationalises this definition through a relational model that has six dimensions. Three dimensions concern community capacity per se: its fundamental characteristics, the levels of social agency in which capacity is embedded and through which it may be engaged or enhanced, and its particular functions. The fourth dimension focuses on the strategies that may intentionally promote community capacity. The fifth describes

context- conditioning influences that support or inhibit capacity or attempts to build it. While the sixth concerns particular community-level outcomes that may be sought after by community initiatives or engendered by communities exercising their capacity toward particular ends. Chaskin's (2001) six dimensions are detailed in Box 17.

BOX 17: A definitional framework for understanding community capacity

1. Fundamental characteristics covering:

- *Sense of community* (reflects a degree of connectedness among members and a recognition of mutuality of circumstance, including a threshold level of collectively held values, norms, and vision);
- *Level of commitment* (describes the responsibility that particular individuals, groups, or organizations take for what happens in the community);
- *Ability to solve problems* (that is, to translate commitment into action); and
- *Access to resources* (i.e. economic, human, physical, and political within and beyond the neighbourhood).

2. Levels of social agency that is:

- *Individuals* (which concerns human capital and leadership - the skills, knowledge, and resources of individual residents in the community and their participation in community-improving activities);
- *Organisations* (focuses on organizations created largely for the purpose of producing goods and services. They include community-based organizations (including service providers, local businesses, and development organizations) as well as local branches of larger institutions (including banks, schools, and major retail establishments); and
- *Networks* (concerns social structure-patterns of relations among individuals and organizations or other collectivities).

3. Functions of community capacity relate to the intent of engaging particular capacities (such as for planning, decision-making and governance) through particular levels of social interaction (i.e. Dimension 2) for;

- Informing, organising or mobilising people toward collective action; or
- The production of particular goods and services.

4. Strategies for building community capacity refer to the means through which community capacity is built or engaged such as leadership, organisational development, collaboration. These strategies may operate through any of a number of means, including:

- *Informal social processes* (e.g., voluntary self-help networks);
- *Organized, community-based processes* (e.g., work of community-based organisations and associations); and
- *Formal, targeted efforts* (e.g., externally catalysed community-building initiatives).

5. Conditioning influences concerns those mediating influences or circumstances that may facilitate or inhibit community capacity and efforts to build it; and

6. Outcomes that result from the functions of community capacity that already exist or are built through a capacity building initiative (such as social and economic well being, influences on decision-making, or better services).

Source: Chaskin (2001)

Partnerships and other multi-stakeholder arrangements fundamentally hinge on community capacity to engage, to negotiate collaborative strategy and to resolve conflict (see Sections 1.4.4 and 1.4.5 of this report). Innes and Booher (2003) argue that a society with capacity is self-organising and works in real-time through networked, shared and distributed intelligence. An individual, organisation, or system with capacity therefore is one that is constantly learning and evolving. Importantly, an interactive and communicative system is an essential pre-requisite to building community and collective capacities to participate at the local community and broader regional levels. In particular, it is critical for creating and strengthening networks and social ties within the regional community, building relationships between sectors, for supporting the integrity of stakeholder representation and engaging a broader base of non-aligned people in the process (Bellamy et al. 2002). Innes and Booher (2003) identify critical factors relating to collaborative capacity as:

...personal skills and knowledge have to be developed including how to communicate, cooperate, resolve conflicts and respect others, as well as how to plan, design and evaluate programs, how to build coalition infrastructure, and how to understand the various roles and responsibilities in a collaborative effort. Attitudes about collaboration and about other stakeholders are important, as is motivation.

Other key capacity factors identified by Innes and Booher (2003) include a diversity of stakeholders, access to a range of skills and knowledge, strong working relationships among participants, a shared vision and an inclusive culture, positive external relationships, and own organisational capacity and roles and responsibilities as well as financial and human resources.

1.5.3 Adaptive capacity

Strengthening the capacity of regions and sugar communities to adapt to and manage change is critical to pursuing sustainable development. Adaptive capacity is considered to be an aspect of resilience (see Section 1.3.5 above) that reflects learning, flexibility to experiment and adopt novel solutions, and development of generalized responses to broad classes of challenges without losing options for the future (Walker et al. 2002; Folke et al. 2003). In particular, it is a measure of resilience in terms of society's capacity to recognise, respond to and shape change in an informed manner (e.g. reducing the impacts of change or taking advantage of new opportunities created by change) to ensure a transition toward sustainable development.

Adaptive capacity resides in:

- *Actors* (e.g. individuals and organisations);
- *Social networks* (i.e. structures that enable a community to solve problems that require collective action and to build up social capital); and
- *Institutions* (i.e. formal rules, laws, customs and norms of behaviour).

Box 18 identifies critical factors required by individuals or communities for adaptive capacity to manage linked social and natural systems.

BOX 18: Individual and regional or community level requirements for adaptive capacity

- Learning to live with change and uncertainty;
- Nurturing self-organisation and renewal (i.e. ways to maintain and recreate identity and buffer impacts);
- Innovation (including combining different types of knowledge for learning:); and
- Adaptation and learning, (implies an ability to pursue a particular set of management objectives and strategies over time and respond with new objectives and strategies when the context changes).

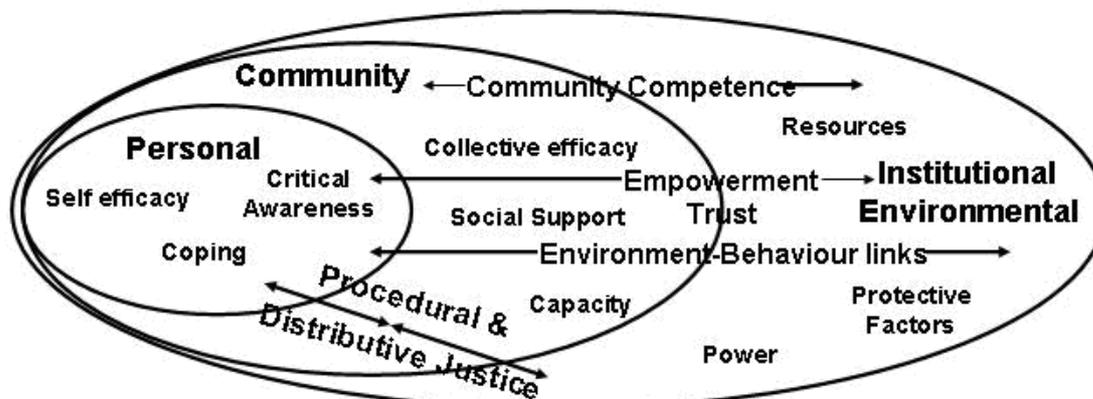
Source: Adger 2000, Folke et al. 2003, Lebel et al. 2006 and Janssen et al. 2006

Drawing on theoretical and concepts from disaster management domain, Paton (2005) postulates that a capacity to adapt comprises two elements:

- (i) the existence of resources required to facilitate coping with the disruption and loss associated with hazard activity.
- (ii) the systems and competencies required by people and communities to coordinate and utilize these resources to confront challenging circumstances and to adapt or adjust to the consequences of hazard activity.

Moreover, Paton (2005) argues that resilience or adaptive capacity must be conceptualized as comprising several interdependent levels, that is it is a function of the quality of interaction between people and between communities and societal-level institutions. Paton (2005) conceptualizes adaptive capacity as the integration of personal (e.g. self-efficacy, sense of belonging), community (e.g. social support, collective efficacy) and institutional ((e.g. business continuity planning) levels and includes the processes to bind them together (e.g. social justice, community competence, trust and empowerment).

Paton (2005) points out that the quality of adaptive capacity is not just a function of the ability of a community to formulate and represent its views but that its effectiveness will be a function of the degree of civic reciprocity. That is, the degree to which civic agencies distribute power, resources and expertise in ways that empower community members and the degree to which community capacity is sustained by institutional practices and procedures (e.g. empowerment) (Paton 2005). These relationships are summarised in a multi-level model of community resilience or adaptive capacity that emphasises community engagement in Box 19. This model also incorporates the construct of *community competence* developed by Eng and Parker (1994, quoted in Paton 2005) for predicting community adaptation to challenging circumstances. The construct refers to a community with regard to, for example, participation and commitment to community issues and the inclusion of members in salient decisions, capacity to articulate collective views, and procedures for managing relations with the wider society.

BOX 19: A multi-level model of community resilience or adaptive capacity

Source: Paton 2005

In the context of sustainable development and the sugar industry, there is a need to understand adaptive capacity to manage change (social, economic and environmental). This requires a better understanding of what a community or region needs in order to be able to deal with change and develop an improved capacity to analyse:

- The culture, motivations and values of the people who are an integral part of and live in that regional social system (e.g. Kay et al. 1999);
- The types of structures and processes needed to enable a community to recognise, respond to and shape change in an efficient, effective, accountable, informed and equitable way that ensures an on-going transition towards sustainable development; and
- Potential strategies for individuals and regional communities to deal with change and its related conflicts in social learning and decision making processes.

1.5.4 Community Readiness

Communities vary greatly in their interest and willingness for accepting and implementing change. Community readiness is identified as a major factor by practitioners and researchers from the community health and alcohol and drug prevention fields in determining whether a local prevention process or initiative can be effectively supported and implemented by the community, and whether arrangements or organisations within a community are developed sufficiently to enable effective cooperation, mutual support and engagement (e.g. Edwards et al. 2000; Slater et al. 2005; Lewis et al. 2005). The readiness of the community in terms, for example, of leadership capacity, organisational resources and networks, and public and local leadership attitudes have been identified as key determinants of initiative success (e.g. Feinberg et al. 2004).

The Community Readiness Model (Edwards et al. 2000) provides a framework and a diagnostic tool for understanding, monitoring and developing community capacity through characterising and assessing a community's readiness to take action on an issue:

Community readiness is a similar construct to community capacity and social capital. Whereas the latter are expressed as generic qualities or characteristics of communities, community readiness is conceptualised as issue-specific, and is seen as a model that can guide community change. As such, it is promoting a method of working in communities, and is presented as a practical way to identify what kinds of strategies might be effective given a particular community's level of readiness (Lewis et al. 2005: 1).

The model identifies six dimensions of readiness as detailed in Box 20. These are assessed through interviews with a broad range of key informants in the community based on a survey instrument consisting of 32 open-ended questions.

BOX 20: Dimensions of community readiness to manage change.

- *Existing community efforts* (i.e. programs, activities, policies, etc.);
- *Community knowledge of efforts* ;
- *Leadership* (including appointed leaders and influential community members);
- *Community climate* (prevailing attitudes in the community about the issue);
- *Knowledge* about the issue; and
- *Resources* (e.g. funding, staff) related to the issue.

Source: (e.g. Edwards et al. 2000; Lewis et al. 2005)

The model classifies a community into one of nine stages of readiness as identified in Table 5. The approach then makes use of the concept of readiness to recommend the kind of activities that may suit the different stages of readiness.

The community readiness approach is designed to help communities understand their strengths and vulnerabilities to manage change. Besides in the health domain, the model has also been applied in Australia to natural resource management by Grasby et al. (2005) to examine the extent to which members of regional natural resource management groups engage in, and make use of, formal and informal networks in the Queensland Murray Darling Basin region. Arguing that new and innovative solutions to NRM problems can be more easily transmitted through social relationships and that effective social networks are essential ingredients of healthy and sustainable rural communities, Grasby et al. (2005) found that the use of the community readiness model to examine social networks and social capital was an effective means of facilitating engagement and fostering change within regional communities. Specifically, it provided (Grasby et al. 2005: 8):

- An effective way of examining the degree of preparedness of groups and organisations to engage in network-building; and
- A means by which communities and organisations can progress towards higher stages of network-building readiness.

Table 5: Stages of community readiness

1. No awareness	Lack of awareness that the issue is a problem in the community or community norms actively tolerate the behaviour
2. Denial/resistance	At least some community members recognise that it is a problem, but there is little or no recognition that it is a local problem or that local solutions can be effective
3. Vague awareness	General acceptance that there is a local problem, but no immediate motivation or leadership to do anything about it
4. Preplanning	Clear recognition that something must be done, but efforts are not focussed or detailed, for example, understanding of the problem and solutions tend to be stereotyped and leaders and community are incapacitated in real planning
5. Preparation	Active and energetic leadership and trail programs begun – includes focussed planning and modest community support
6. Initiation	Distinguished by launch of new programs and activities. Enthusiasm still exists because limitation and problems have not been experienced.
7. Institutionalisation / stabilisation	Characterised by experienced project staff and firm support (e.g. funding) from administrators and community leaders. No sense of the need for change or expansion though limitations may be recognised.
8. Confirmation / expansion	Programs are marked by on-going evaluation and public support to expand existing efforts. Funds for new programs being sought or committed, programs viewed as valuable and authorities support expansion through new programs or outreach of current programs.
9. Professionalisation / community ownership	The community is fully vested in the issue: detailed, sophisticated, and accessible knowledge exists of the related issues which is used to test and modify the programs; highly trained staff running the program, supportive authorities and community involvement; and often communities find it necessary to begin addressing related issues.

Source: Edwards et al. (2000) Slater et al. (2005) and Grasby (2005)

1.5.5 Capacity building

Capacity building is a widely used term that is variously defined as processes and activities for improving capacity in communities for dealing with change and it is frequently used in the context of community engagement. In relation to rural communities and industries, Macadam et al., (2004) defined capacity building as:

...externally or internally initiated processes designed to help individuals and groups associated with rural Australia to appreciate and manage their changing circumstances, with the objective of improving the stock of human, social, financial, physical and natural capital in an ethically defensible way.

In the context of natural resource management (NRM) in Australia, capacity building has been defined in the National NRM Capacity Building Framework:

Capacity building relates to a range of activities by which individuals, groups and organisations improve their capacity to achieve sustainable NRM. Capacity in this context includes awareness, skills, knowledge, motivation, commitment and confidence. While regional bodies are the target audience for capacity building, it is equally an issue for diverse players such as landcare groups, indigenous communities, industry sectors, local government and State/Territory and Commonwealth Government agencies.

Capacity building for NRM goes beyond the traditional top down approach of enhancing skills and knowledge through training and the provision of technical advice. It focuses on enhancing genuine community engagement in all aspects of NRM from planning to on-ground actions. Therefore, in addition to the transfer of technology and technical capability, capacity building should foster social cohesion within communities, and build both human and social capital. (<http://www.rirdc.gov.au/capacitybuilding/>)

Therefore, an underlying interest in capacity building at the government level is a perceived need to develop the skills of land managers to ensure wider adoption of sustainable land and water use practices (Council of Australian Governments, 2000).

Capacity building is often used as a synonym for community development (Ife, 1995), with the essential difference that community development centres on a community-focused process, whereas capacity building can be externally initiated and driven (e. g. to achieve specific NRM outcomes). In this context, capacity is generally accepted as encompassing social and human capital and is concerned with available resources as well as knowledge and skills which help the ability to act with confidence (Thomson and Pepperdine, 2003: 9).

PART 2: ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

In the context of the project objectives identified in the Introduction to this report, the analytical framework for the project identifies the conceptual underpinnings, key research questions, assessment areas and research methods that underpin the research. It draws on a two key project inputs:

1. Outcomes of the literature review (Part 1 of this Report);
2. Issues and consideration emerging from the initial scoping phase of the project (as identified in the Introduction to this report).

2.2 Research Problem Framing

The analytical framework is underpinned by concepts drawn from relevant theoretical and empirical research literature, along with two practical frameworks developed in the scoping phase of this project.

2.1.1 Underpinning theories and concepts

The theoretical frameworks that underpin our research approach include:

- Resilience theory and systems thinking
- Adaptive capacity and social learning
- Vulnerability and community readiness theory
- Participation theory
- Collaboration, partnerships and collective action theories
- Institutional theory and nested hierarchies
- Social capital and networks
- Extension models and capacity building
- Evaluation theory

2.1.2 ‘Understanding, implications and enabling’ framework

The project’s research objectives identified in the Introduction to this report relate to three interrelated and concurrent areas of research focus:

1. *Understanding*: improving understanding on women’s role and influence in decision-making on sustainability in sugar communities;
2. *Implications*: identifying implications of improved participation of women in community and industry based sustainability initiatives for decision-making in the sugar industry and community resilience in the face of change; and

3. *Enabling*: enabling learning and capacity building on opportunities and strategies for improving women's involvement in sustainability initiatives within sugar communities.

These three analytical areas help frame the research questions (see Table 6 below).

2.1.3 'Context-motivations-preferences-capacity' framework

Research on community engagement and the experience of people in the project's case study regions of this project have highlighted the importance of:

- *Context* of decision-making at all levels (e.g. farm, community, industry, region): including industry drivers and inherent decision-making 'culture'; farm business structures; labour shortages and other economic constraints; age / demographic issues; community expectations and legislative requirements;
- *Motivations* for engagement: including why be involved and when?; importance of 'female politics'; family self-interest, past experience;
- *Preferences*: including how to be involved, where/what level and in what; and
- *Capacity* to be involved: including opportunities, skills and knowledge, confidence, support, family self-interest issues, off-farm work.

This provides an evaluative framework that contributes to assessing engagement and participation issues.

2.3 Key Research Questions

The key research questions emerge from considerations of issues and themes identified from:

- The literature review (Part 1 of this report)
- The scoping phase of the project (identified in the Introduction to this report).

Table 6 identifies these key research questions, according to the three core areas of research focus identified in Section 2.1.2.

Table 6: Key research questions across three areas of research focus

Areas of research focus	Key Research questions
Understanding	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What roles, level of influence and satisfaction do women have in decision-making on sustainability in sugar communities? 2. What are the major social, economic and institutional factors that influence women's participation in sustainability initiatives? 3. How are women (as individuals and collectively) going to be able to influence community capacity to adapt and shape change?
Implications	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. What are some key characteristics of a sugar community that need to be present for the community to be able to adapt to and shape change? 5. What are the implications for community resilience of improving the participation of women in sustainability initiatives?
Enabling	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. What strategies might improve the involvement of women in sustainability

initiatives in sugar communities and enhance community capacity to deal with change and why?

7. What are the recommendations on strategies for other industry sectors and stakeholders?

2.4 Research Method

Multiple methods and triangulation of observation can contribute to methodological rigor (Patton 1986; Chambers 1997). The project will involve multiple methods including:

- Case study research
- Participatory research (includes participatory evaluation)
- Action research
- Literature review
- Document analysis
- Regional profiling
- Stakeholder analysis (includes interviews, focus groups, workshops/interactive forums)
- Participant observation
- Synthesis and reflection (includes development of analytical and evaluative frameworks).

The case study research involves two contrasting sugar regions (in terms of environment, economy and social and institutional arrangements):

1. *Northern region covering wet tropics areas* (i.e. extending from the Herbert in the south to Mossman in the north, which includes the Mossman, Tableland, Mulgrave, Babinda, Mourilyan, South Johnstone, Tully and Herbert River mill areas).
2. *Southern region in the Lower Mary and coastal Burnett areas* focussing on the Bundaberg and Isis mill areas.

Within each case study, four different types of research activities will be involved:

1. *Learning from current or past initiatives/activities in the case study regions*
 - Small focused studies documenting current or past experiences of women's participation in specified general sustainability, sugar industry or other relevant initiatives in the two case regions across a range of decision-making levels (e.g. farm, industry, regional community);
2. *Learning from other industries or sugar regions*
 - Small focused studies of experiences in other industries and sugar regions with women's participation based largely on literature review supplemented with a limited number of key informant interviews and/or involvement of invited women from other industries in project workshops;
3. *Sugar women's perspectives*

- In-depth interviews , focus groups and interactive forums with ‘sugar’ women from within the two case study regions to capture their personal experiences on participation in the sugar industry and other sustainability initiatives in the case regions and their perspectives on how to improve it.
4. *Embedded collaborative case studies*
- Two or three small focused studies in each of the case study regions using action research methods to apply and evaluate strategies for improving women’s participation in sustainability initiatives relevant to the sugar industry across a range of levels of decision-making (farm, industry and regional community). These will be undertaken with research collaborators and other stakeholders in the region.

2.5 Summarising the Analytical Approach

The project has four core research elements, which are not mutually exclusive but interrelated and partly concurrent:

1. Assessing women’s involvement experiences and their perspectives on motivations, preferences and capacity to be involved (i.e. on farm and in sugar industry and broader community decision-making):
 - a. In the two case study regions
 - b. From other industries
2. Developing and evaluating strategies to improve women’s involvement.
3. Assessing community capacity (includes developing frameworks to contextualise and evaluate community capacity to deal with change).
4. Synthesising lessons (from the other research elements to develop more general strategies for improving women’s involvement in sustainability initiatives and to inform theory and practice).

Table 7 presents the links between these four core research elements, the theories and concepts underpinning the research and the multiple research methods.

Table 7: Relationship between core research elements, theoretical frameworks and research methods

Core Research Element	Key Concepts/theoretical framework	Research Methods
1. Assessing women's experiences and perspectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community resilience theory ▪ Adaptive capacity and social learning ▪ Community readiness theory ▪ Participation theory ▪ Social capital and networks ▪ Extension models and capacity building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Case study research ▪ Participatory research ▪ Literature review ▪ Regional profiling ▪ Stakeholder analysis ▪ Participant observation ▪ Document analysis
2. Developing and evaluating strategies to improve women's involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adaptive capacity and social learning ▪ Community readiness theory ▪ Participation and engagement theory ▪ Collective action ▪ Extension models and capacity building ▪ Evaluation theory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Embedded case study research ▪ Action research ▪ Stakeholder analysis ▪ Participatory evaluation
3. Assessing community capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Adaptive capacity and social learning ▪ Community resilience theory ▪ Vulnerability / community readiness ▪ Participation theory ▪ Institutional theory and nested hierarchies ▪ Collaboration /partnering and collective action ▪ Social capital and networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Case study research ▪ Literature review ▪ Participatory research ▪ Regional profiling ▪ Stakeholder analysis ▪ Participant observation
4. Synthesising lessons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community resilience theory ▪ Adaptive capacity and social learning ▪ Vulnerability /community readiness ▪ Participation theory ▪ Institutional theory and nested hierarchies ▪ Collaboration /partnering and collective action ▪ Social capital and networks ▪ Extension models and capacity building ▪ Evaluation theory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Case study research ▪ Participatory research ▪ Synthesis and reflection

References

- Adger, W.N. 2000. Social and ecological resilience: are they related? *Progress in Human Geography* 24 (3): 347-364.
- AFFA, 1999a *Guidelines for Reaching Our Clients – Women*, Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Australia, Canberra
- AFFA 1999b *Managing Natural Resources in Rural Australia for a Sustainable Future: A discussion paper for developing a national policy*. AFFA, Canberra.
- AFFA 2006 *Industry Partnership Programme*, URL: <http://www.daff.gov.au/industrypartnerships>, accessed 20/10/06
- Agrawal, A., Yadama, G., Andrade, R. and Bhattacharya, A. 2006. *Decentralisation and environmental conservation: Gender effects from participation in joint forest management*. CGIAR Systemwide Program on Collective Action and Property Rights (CAPRI) Working Paper No.53, July 2006. Eashington: CAPRI.
- Agriculture and Food Policy Reference Group, 2006 *Creating Our Future: Agriculture and Food Policy for the Next Generation*. Report to the Hon. Peter McGauran MP, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. Alston, 1995 (cited in Liepins, 1998: 1180)
- Aldridge, S., Halpern, D. and Fitzpatrick, S. 2002 *Social Capital. A Discussion Paper*. London: Performance and Innovation Unit.
- Allen, T.F.H. and Starr, T.B. 1982. *Hierarchy: Perspectives for Ecological Complexity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Alston, M. 1995 *Women on the Land: Hidden Heart of Rural Australia*, Sydney: University of New South Wales Press.
- Alston, M. 1996 'Backs to the wall: Australian farm women make formidable activists', in G. Lawrence, K. Lyons and S. Momtaz (eds) *Social Change in Rural Australia*, Rural Social and Economic Research Centre, Rockhampton: Central Queensland University.
- Alston, M. 1998 'Farm women and their work: Why is it not recognised?', *Journal of Sociology*, 34 (1): 23-34.
- Alston, M. 2003 'Women's representation in an Australian rural context', *Sociologia Ruralis*, 43(4): 474-487.
- Alston, M. 2004 'Who is down on the farm? Social aspects of Australian agriculture in the 21st century', *Agriculture and Human Values*, 21: 37-46.
- Alston, M. and Wilkinson, J. 1998 'Australian farm women: Shut out or fenced in? The lack of women in agricultural leadership', *Sociologia Ruralis*, 38 (3): 391-408.
- Argent, N. 1999 'Inside the black box: Dimensions of gender, generation and scale in the Australian rural restructuring process', *Journal of Rural Studies*, 15 (1): 1-15
- Argent, N. 2002 'From Pillar to Post? In search of the post-productivist countryside in Australia', *Australian Geographer*, 33 (1): 97-114.
- Arnstein, S. R. 1969. Eight rungs on the ladder of citizen participation. *Journal of the American Institute of Planners* 35: 217-223.
- Ascher, W. 2001. Coping with complexity and organisational interests in natural resource management. *Ecosystems* 4: 742-757.
- Ashby, J. 2003. Introduction: Uniting science and participation in the process of innovation - Research for development. In B. Pound, S. Snapp, C. McDougall & A. Braun (Eds.), *Managing natural resources for sustainable livelihoods*:

- Uniting science and participation.* London: Earthscan Publications and International Development Research Centre, pp. 1-19.
- Bammer, G. 2005 Integration and implementation sciences: Building a new specialization. *Ecology and Society* 10 (2): 6 [on-line] URL: <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol10/iss2/art6/>.
- Barton, J., Emery, M., Flood, R., Selsky, J. and Wolestenholme, E. 2004 A maturing of systems thinking? Evidence from three perspectives, *Systemic Practice and Action Research*, 17 (1): 3-36.
- Beer, A., Maude, A. and Pritchard, B. 2003. *Developing Australia's Regions: Theory and Practice.* Sydney: UNSW Press.
- Beilin, R. 1995 'The construction of women in Landcare: Does it make a difference?', *Rural Society*, 5 (2-3): 20-29.
- Bellamy, J. (ed), 2005. *Regional natural resource management planning: the challenges of evaluation as seen through different lenses.* CIRM Monograph Series, June 2005. Papers from an Occasional Symposium held on 15 October 2004 by CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems and CIRM Social Dimensions of NRM Working Group. Indooroopilly: The State of Queensland, Department of Natural Resources and Mines, <http://www.cirm.org.au/publications/Monograph.pdf>
- Bellamy, J. In Press. Community-based Research. In: A.G. Pereira, S.G. Vaz and S. Tognetti (eds), *Interfaces Between Science and Society*: Greenleaf Publishing, Chapter 14.
- Bellamy, J., Bishop, B. and Browne, A. 2004. *Ord Bonaparte Program Evaluation: Process and Impact.* OBP Project 1.3 Final Report, Brisbane: CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems.
- Bellamy, J.A. and Dale, A.P., 2000, *Evaluation of the Central Highlands Regional Resource Use Planning Project: A synthesis of findings.* Final Report to LWRDC, Project CTC13, Brisbane: CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems, November 2000. <http://irum.sl.csiro.au/>
- Bellamy, J.A. and Johnson, A.K.L. 2000. Integrated resource management: moving from rhetoric to practice in Australian Agriculture. *Environmental Management* 25(3), 265-280.
- Bellamy, J. and McDonald, G. 2005. Through multi-scaled lenses: A systems approach to evaluating natural resource management policy and planning. In: J. Bellamy (ed), *Regional natural resource management planning: the challenges of evaluation as seen through different lenses.* Papers from an Occasional Symposium held on 15 October 2004 by CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems and CIRM Social Dimensions of NRM Working Group. CIRM Monograph Series, June 2005. Indooroopilly: The State of Queensland, Department of Natural Resources and Mines, pp.3-10. <http://www.cirm.org.au/publications/Monograph.pdf>
- Bellamy, J., G. McDonald and A. J. Brown 2003b. *The Future of Australian Regional Governance: Ideas for a national interdisciplinary collaborative research program on regional governance frameworks.* CSIRO/Griffith University, unpublished.
- Bellamy, J.A., McDonald, G.T., Syme, G.J. and Butterworth, J.E. 1999a. Evaluating integrated resource management. *Society and Natural Resources*, 12, 337-353.
- Bellamy, J.A., McDonald, G.T., Syme, G.J. and Walker, D.A. 1999b. Planning and implementing Integrated Catchment Management. Volume 1, pp229-250 in: *Evaluation of Integrated Catchment Management in a Wet Tropical*

- Environment: Collected Papers of LWRRDC R&D Project CTC7*, Brisbane: CSIRO Tropical Agriculture, <http://irum.sl.csiro.au/icm/>
- Bellamy, J., Meppem, T., Gorddard, R and Dawson, S. 2003a. The changing face of regional governance for economic development: Implications for Local Government. *Sustaining Regions 2* (3) Winter 2003, 7-17.
- Bellamy, J., Ross, H., Ewing, S. and Meppem, T. 2002 *Integrated Catchment Management: Learning from the Australian Experience for the Murray-Darling Basin. Final Report. January 2002*. A Report for the Murray Darling Basin Commission. CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems, Brisbane.
http://www2.mdbc.gov.au/naturalresources/icm/icm_au_x_overview.html
- Bellamy, J., Smith, T., Taylor, B. and Walker, M. 2005. Regional natural resource management planning arrangements: Evaluating through the regional lens. In: J. Bellamy (ed), *Regional natural resource management planning: the challenges of evaluation as seen through different lenses*. Papers from an Occasional Symposium held on 15 October 2004 by CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems and CIRM Social Dimensions of NRM Working Group. CIRM Monograph Series, June 2005. Indooroopilly: The State of Queensland, Department of Natural Resources and Mines, pp.19-26.
<http://www.cirm.org.au/publications/Monograph.pdf>
- Bellamy, J.A., Walker, D.H., McDonald, G.T. and Syme, G.J. 2001. A systems approach to the evaluation of natural resource management initiatives. *Journal of Environmental Management* 63(4), 407-423.
- Bellamy, J. and Webb, V. 2003 *Benchmarking the use of new technologies for natural resource management: A pilot study on innovation and change in the sugar industry*. Final Report, St Lucia: CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems.
- Benham, B., Robbins, J., Brannan, K., Mostaghimi, S., Dillaha, T., Pease, J. and Smith, E. 2005 'Development of survey-like assessment tools to assess agricultural best management practice performance potential', *Journal of Soil and Water Conservation*, 60 (5): 251-259.
- Berkes, F., Colding, J. and Folke, C. 2003. *Navigating Social-Ecological Systems. Building Resilience for Complexity and Change*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Bittman, M., and Fisher, K. 2006 *Exploring the economic and social value of present patterns of volunteering in Australia*. Social Policy Research Paper No 28. Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.
- Blaikie, P., Cannon, T., Davis, I. and Wisner, B. 1994. *At Risk: Natural Hazards, People's Vulnerability, and Disasters*. New York: Routledge.
- Born, S. M. and Genskow, K.D. 1999. *Exploring the "Watershed Approach" – Critical dimensions of state-local partnerships*. Extension Report 99-1. Madison: Department of Urban and Regional Planning, University of Madison.
- Boston Consulting Group 2003, *BCG report to canegrowers, review of constraints on industry competitiveness and innovation*, Brisbane.
- Boulding, K. 1966. The economics of coming spaceship Earth. In: H. Jarratt (Ed.), *Environmental quality in a growing economy*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.

- Bourdieu, P. 1991. *Language and Symbolic Power*, Edited and introduced by John B. Thompson. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- Brown, V.A. 2004. The more we are together ... Collaborative decision-making, social planning and sustainability. *Australian Planner* 41 (3): 42-45.
- Buchy, M., & Race, D. 2001. The twists and turns of community participation in natural resource management in Australia: What is missing? *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management* 44: 293-308.
- Bundaberg Women in Sugar group, 2006 *Corporate Plan*, unpublished document.
- Burnley, I. and Murphy, P. 2004 *Sea Change: Movement from metropolitan to Arcadian Australia*, University of New South Wales Press, Sydney.
- Carr, A. 2004. Why do we all need community science? *Society and Natural Resources* 17: 841-849.
- Cary, J., Barr, N., Aslin, H., Webb, T., and Kelson, S. 2001 *Human and Social Aspects of Capacity to Change to Sustainable Management Practices*, Bureau of Rural Sciences, Canberra.
- Chamala, S. and Keith, K. 1995 *Participative approaches for Landcare: Perspectives, policies and programs*, Brisbane: Australian Academic Press.
- Chambers, R. 1997. *Whose reality counts? Putting the First last*. London: Intermediate Technology Publications.
- Chaskin, R.J. 2001. Building community capacity: A definitional framework for case studies from a comprehensive community initiative. *Urban Affairs Review* 36 (3): 291-323.
- Claridge, C. 1998 'Rural women, decision making and leadership within environmental and Landcare groups', *Rural Society*, 8(3): 183-195.
- Cook, T.E. and Morgan, P.M. 1971. *Participatory Democracy*. San Francisco: Canfield Press.
- Coleman, J. 1988. 'Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital.' *American Journal of Sociology* 94 Supplement S95-120.
- Coleman, J. 1994. *Foundations of Social theory*, Cambridge MA: Belknap Press.
- Colclough, G. and Bhavani, S. 2005 'Community and Social Capital: What is the difference?', *Sociological Inquiry*, 75 (4): 474-496.
- Cornwall, A. 2003. Whose Voices? Whose Choices? Reflections on gender and participatory development. *World Development* 31(8): 1325-1342.
- Council of Australian Governments, 2000. Communiqué. Available at: <http://www.coag.gov.au/meetings/031100/index.htm#natural>
- Curtis, A. and De Lacy, T. 1996 'Landcare in Australia: Beyond the expert farmer', *Agriculture and Human Values*, 13 (1): 22.
- Dale, A. and Bellamy, J. (eds) 1998. *Regional resource use planning in rangelands: an Australian review*, Occasional Paper 06/98, Canberra: Land and Water Resources Research and Development Corporation. http://www.lwa.gov.au/downloads/publications_pdf/PR980234.pdf
- Davenport, T.H. and Prusak, L. 1998. *Working knowledge: How organisations manage what they know*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.
- Dimopoulous, M. and Sheridan, M. 2000 *Missed Opportunities. Unlocking the future of women in Australian agriculture. Stage 2 Report*. RIRDC Publication No. 00/44. Canberra: RIRDC.
- Dore, J. and Woodhill, J. 1999 *Sustainable Regional development: final report. An Australian wide study of regionalism highlighting efforts to improve the community, economy and environment*. Greening Australia Limited, February 1999.

- Dore, J., Woodhill, J., Andrews, K. and Keating, K. 2003. Sustainable Regional Development: Lessons from Australian Efforts. In: Dovers, S. and Wild River, S. (eds). *Managing Australia's Environment*. Sydney: The Federation Press.
- Doz, Y.L. and Hamel, G. 1998. *Alliance advantage: The art of creating value through partnering*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
- Dryzek, J. S. 2000. *Deliberative Democracy and Beyond: Liberals, critics and contestations*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Edwards, R., and M. Foley, 1997. 'Social Capital and the Political Economy of our Discontent.' *American Behavioral Scientist* 40 (5): 669-678.
- Edwards, R.W., Jumper-Thurman, P., Plested, B.A., Oetting, E.R. and Swanson, L. 2000. Community Readiness: Research to Practice. *Journal of Community Psychology* 28(3):291-307.
- Eng, E. and Parker, E. 1994. Measuring community competence in the Mississippi deltas: The interface between program evaluation and empowerment. *Health Education Quarterly* 21: 199-220.
- Eversole, R. and Martin, J. (eds) 2005 *Participation and Governance in Regional Development: Global Trends in and Australian Context*. Ashgate: Hampshire, England.
- Elix, J. and Lambert, J. 1998 *Missed Opportunities. Harnessing the potential of women in Australian agriculture. Volume 1: Social Survey and Analysis*. Canberra: RIRDC and Department of Primary Industries and Energy.
- Falk I., and Kilpatrick, S. 1999 *What is Social Capital? A study of interaction in a rural community*. Centre for Research and Learning in Regional Australia.
- Fazey, J., Fazey, J.A. and Fazey D.M.A. 2005. Learning more effectively from experience. *Ecology and Society* 10(2): 4 [on-line] URL: <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol10/iss2/art4/>.
- Feinberg, M.E., Greenberg, M.T. and Osgood, D.W. 2004. Readiness, functioning, and perceived effectiveness in community prevention coalitions: A study of communities that care. *American Journal of Community Psychology* 33(3/4): 163-176.
- Fine, B., 2001 *Social Capital Versus Social Theory. Political Economy and Social Science at the Turn of the Millennium*. London: Routledge.
- Folke, C., Carpenter, S., Elmqvist, T., Gunderson, L., Holling, C.S. and Walker, B. 2002. Resilience and sustainable development: Building adaptive capacity in a world of transformations. *Ambio* 31 (5): 437-440.
- Folke, C., Colding, J. and Berkes, F. 2003. Synthesis: building resilience and adaptive capacity in socio-ecological systems. In: Berkes, F., Colding, J. and Folke, C. (eds) 2003. *Navigating Social-Ecological Systems. Building Resilience for Complexity and Change*. Cambridge, UK.: Cambridge University Press, pp. 352-387.
- Folke, C., Hahn, T., Olsson, P., and Norberg, J. 2005. Adaptive governance of social-ecological systems. *Annual Review of Environmental Resources* 30: 441-473.
- Folke, C., Pritchard, L., Berkes, F., Colding, J. and Svedin, U. 1998. *The problem of fit between ecosystems and institutions*. IHDP Working Paper 2, Washington DC: International Human Dimensions Programme Global Environmental Change.

- Foundation for Australian Agricultural Women (2005) Governments working with Australian rural women, URL: <http://www.faaw.org.au/pubs/d2002s/20-21.htm>, accessed 20/10/06.
- Friedman, T. 1999 *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*. Harper Collins, London.
- Fulton, A. and McGowan, C. 2005 *Fostering women's participation in on-farm programs. Final Report*. North Sydney: Meat and Livestock Australia.
- Funtowicz, S. O. and Ravetz, J. R. 1991, 'A new scientific methodology for global environmental issues', In Costanza, R. (ed.), *Ecological Economics: The Science and Management of Sustainability*, pp. 137-152. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Funtowicz, S. Shepherd, I., Wilkinson, D. and Ravetz, J. 2000. Science and governance in the European union: a contribution to the debate. *Science and Public Policy* 27(5), 327-336.
- Galaz, V. 2005. Does the EC water Framework Directive Build Resilience? Harnessing Socio-ecological complexity in European water management. *Policy Paper 1, The resilience and Freshwater initiative, Swedish Water House*. Downloaded 8 March 2005, <http://www.resalliance.org/index.php?id=698>
- Gibson, C., Ostrom, E. and Toh-Kyeong Ahn 1998. Scaling issues in the social sciences. International Human Dimensions Programme on Global Environmental Change (IHDP) Working Paper No. 1. May 1998. www.ihdp.uni-bonn.de/ihdp
- Gibson, D., Baxter, J. and Kingston, C. 1990 *Beyond the Dichotomy: The paid and unpaid work of rural women*, Centre for Rural Welfare Research: Wagga Wagga.
- Giddens, A. 1984. *The constitution of society: Outline of the theory of structuration*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Gooday, J. 1995 *Women on farms. A survey of women on Australian broadacre and dairy farms, 1993-1994*. ABARE Research Report 95.10, Canberra: ABARE.
- Grace, M. 1997 *Networking Systems for Rural Women*, RIRDC Publications No 97/4, Canberra: RIRDC.
- Grace, M. and Lennie, J. 1998 'Constructing and reconstructing rural women in Australia: The politics of change, diversity and identity', *Sociologia Ruralis*, 38 (3): 351-370.
- Grasby, D., Zammit, C., Pretty, G. and Bramston, P. 2005. "Ready, Set, Go!: Using the 'Community-Readiness' Method to engage social networks for sustainable natural resource management in the Queensland Murray Darling Basin. Paper presented at the International Symposium on Engaging Communities. An initiative of the United Nations and the Queensland Government. Held 14-17 August 2005, Brisbane Australia. <http://www.engagingcommunities2005.org/abstracts.html>
- Gray, B. 1989. *Collaborating*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Gray, B. and Wood, D.J. 1991. Collaborative alliances: moving from practice to theory. *Journal of Applied Behavioural Science* 27(1), 3-22.
- Gray, I. and Lawrence, G. 2001 *A Future for Regional Australia: Escaping global misfortune*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Grenier, P. and Wright, K. 2006 'Social capital in Britain: Exploring the Hall Paradox', *Policy Studies*, 27 (1): 27-53.
- Griggs, P. 2004 'Improving Agricultural Practices. Science and the Australian Sugarcane Grower, 1864-1915', *Agricultural History*, 78(1), 1-33.

- Gunderson, L. and Holling, C. (Eds) 2002 *Panarchy: Understanding Transformations in Human and Natural Systems*. Island Press: Washington.
- Gunderson, L.H., Holling, C.S. and Light, S.S. (1995). *Barriers and Bridges to the Renewal of Ecosystems and Institutions*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Habermas, J. 1981. *The theory of communicative action: Reason and the rationalisation of society*. Boston: Beacon.
- Head, B. and Ryan, N. 2004. Can cogovernance work? Regional natural resource management in Queensland, Australia. *Society and Economy* 26 (2/3): 371-393.
- Hemmati, M. 2002. *Multi-stakeholder processes for governance and sustainability. Beyond deadlock and conflict*. London: Earthscan Publications Ltd.
- Hildebrand, C. 2002 *Independent assessment of the sugar industry*. Report to the Hon. Warren Truss MP, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.
- Holling, C.S. 1973. Resilience and stability of ecological systems. *Annual Review of Ecology and Systematics* 4: 1-23.
- Holling, C.S. 2001. Understanding the complexity of economic, ecological, and social systems. *Ecosystems* 4:390-405.
- Holling, C.S. 2003. Foreword: The backloop to sustainability. In: Berkes, F., Colding, J. and Folke, C. (eds) 2003a. *Navigating Social-Ecological Systems. Building Resilience for Complexity and Change*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. xv - xxi.
- Holmes, J. 1996 'Diversity and Change in Australia's Rangeland Regions: Translating resource values into regional benefits', *Rangeland Journal*, 19 (1): 3-25.
- Ice, G. 2004 'History of innovative best management practice development and its role in addressing water quality limited bodies', *Journal of Environmental Engineering*, June: 684-689.
- Ife, J. 1995. *Community development: creating community alternatives – vision, analysis and practice*, Sydney: Longman.
- Innes, J.E. and Booher, D.E. 1999. Consensus building and complex adaptive systems. A framework for evaluating collaborative planning. *Journal of the American Planning Association* 65 (4), 412-423.
- Innes, J.E. and Booher, D.E. 2003. The impact of collaborative planning on governance capacity. Working Paper 2003-03. Berkeley: Institute of Urban and Regional Development, University of California.
- Ipe, V., De Vuyst, E., Braden, J. and White, D. 2001 'Simulation of a group incentive program for farmer adoption of best management practices', *Agricultural and Resource Economics Review*, 30 (2): 139-150.
- Irwin, A. 1995. *Citizen science: A study of people, expertise and sustainable development*. London: Routledge.
- Jakku, E., Bellamy, J., Kelly, G., Ross, H., Darbas, T., Lawrence, G., Benn, K., Bohnet, I. and Smith, T. 2006 *Social drivers and processes of change: Community and regional issues and opportunities for people development in the Australian sugar industry*, Discussion Paper Report, submitted to SRDC.
- Janssen, M.A., Bodin, O., Anderies, J.M., Elmqvist, T., Ernstson, H., McAllister, R.J., Olsson, P. and Ryan, P. 2006. Toward a network theory perspective of the

- study of resilience in social-ecological systems. *Ecology and Society* 11(1): 15 [on-line] URL: <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol11/iss1/art15/>.
- Janssen, M.A. and Ostrom, E. 2006. *Resilience, vulnerability and adaptation*. Newsletter of the International Human Dimensions Programme on Global Environmental Change 01/2006, pp. 10-11.
- Jennings, S.F. and Moore, S.A. 2000. The rhetoric behind regionalization in Australian natural resource management: Myth, reality and moving forward. *Journal of Environmental Policy and Planning* 2: 177-191.
- Kanter, R.M. 1994. Collaborative advantage: The art of alliances. *Harvard Business Review* July/August 1994, 96-108.
- Kay, J.J., Regier, H.A., Boyle, M. and Francis, G. 1999. An ecosystem approach for sustainability: addressing the challenge of complexity. *Futures* 31(7): 721-742.
- Kearns, A., 2004 *Social Capital, regeneration and Urban Policy*. United Kingdom: Economic and Social Research Council, Centre for Neighbourhood Research.
- Kelly, G. and McKenzie 2006 Housing affordability in sea change community: a complex issue, *Housing Studies*. In press.
- Kelly G. and Walker P. 2004 Community-level systems thinking. In: *Proceedings from the 22nd International Conference of the System Dynamics Society*. Oxford. July 2004.
- Kenney, D.S. 2000. *Arguing about consensus; Examining the case against Western watershed initiatives and other collaborative groups active in natural resource management*. Boulder: Natural Resource Law Centre, University of Colorado School of Law.
- Kerby, J., McClure, L., Westley, A. and Young, M. 1996 *Valuing women as customers*, Technical report No 245, Primary Industries South Australia.
- Kulig, J.C. 2000. Community resilience: The potential for community health nursing theory development. *Public Health Nursing* 17(5): 374-385.
- Lawrence, G. 1987 *Capitalism and the Countryside: The Rural Crisis in Australia*, Sydney: Pluto Press.
- Lebel, L., Anderies, J.M., Campbell, B., Folke, C., Hatfield_Dodds, S., Hughes T.P. and Wilson J. 2006. Governance and the capacity to manage resilience in regional social-ecological systems. *Ecology and Society* 11(1): 19 [on-line] URL: <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol11/iss1/art19/>.
- Leckie, G. 1993 'Female farmers in Canada and the gender relations of a restructuring agricultural system', *The Canadian Geographer*, 37: 212-230.
- Lee, K.N. 1993. *Compass and Gyroscope: Integrating Science and Politics for the Environment*. Island Press: Washington, DC.
- Lewis, V., Jones, S. and Ruck, E. 2005. Community readiness: Compatibility of theory, policy and practice. Paper presented at the International Symposium on Engaging Communities. An initiative of the United Nations and the Queensland Government. Held 14-17 August 2005, Brisbane Australia. <http://www.engagingcommunities2005.org/abstracts.html>
- Liepins, R. 1998a 'Fields of action: Australian women's agricultural activism in the 1990s', *Rural Sociology*, 63 (1): 128-156 [1-16 online].
- Liepins, R. 1998b 'The gendering of farming and agricultural politics: A matter of discourse', *Australian Geographer*, 29 (3): 371-388.
- Liepins, R. 1998c "'Women of broad vision': Nature and gender in the environmental activism of Australia's 'Women in Agriculture' movement", *Environment and Planning A*, 30: 1179-1196.

- Lockie, S. 1995 'Rural gender relations and Landcare', in F. Vanclay (ed.) *With a Rural Focus*, Wagga Wagga: Centre for Rural Social Research, Charles Sturt University.
- Lockie, S. 1997 'Rural gender relations and Landcare', in S. Lockie and F. Vanclay, *Critical Landcare*, Wagga Wagga: Centre for Rural Social Research, Charles Sturt University.
- Lockie, S. and Lyons, K. 2001 'Renegotiating gender and the symbolic transformation of Australian Rural Environments', *International Journal of Sociology of Agriculture and Food*, 9 (1): 43-58.
- Luthans, F. 2002. The need for and meaning of positive organisational behaviour. *Journal of Organizational Behaviour* 23: 695-206.
- Macadam, R., Drinian, J., Inall, N., and McKenzie, B. 2004 *Growing the capital of Australia: The task of capacity building*. RIRDC Publication No. 04/034, Winmalee, NSW: Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation.
- Mackay District CANEGROWERS Network, 2002 (Submission to the Sugar Industry Assessment, URL: http://www.affa.gov.au/corporate_docs/publications/word/sugar_assessment/cgmackay.doc, accessed 20/10/06.
- MacKinnon, D. 2002. Rural governance and local involvement: assessing state-community relations in the Scottish Highlands. *Journal of Rural Studies* 18: 307-324.
- McAllister, K. 1999. *Understanding participation: monitoring and evaluating process, outputs and outcomes*. Ottawa: IDRC.
- McCarthy, J.J. Canziani, OF, Leary, N.A., Dokken, D.J. and White, K.S. (eds.) (2001) *Climate Change 2001: Impacts, Adaptation, Vulnerability*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- McCartney, F. and Ross, H. 2003 *Looking Beyond the Boundary Fence: Rural Women, Natural Resource Management and Sustainable Development*, Gatton: School of Natural and Rural Systems Management, The University of Queensland.
- McCartney, F., Ross, H., King, C. and Kelly, D. 2005 *Raising the Profile: Celebrating Darling Downs Women in Natural Resource Management*, Gatton: School of Natural and Rural Systems Management, The University of Queensland.
- McGowan Consulting, 2006 *CANEGROWER'S Strategy for Women and Teams*, Report prepared for CANEGROWERS, URL: http://www.canegrowers.com.au/docs/Women_Research_Sept06.pdf, accessed 18/10/06.
- Midgley, G. 2006. Systems thinking for evaluation. In: Williams, B and Imam, I. 2006. *Systems Concepts in Evaluation: An Expert Anthology*. Inverness, California: American Evaluation Society and EdgePress, pp. 11-34.
- Milbrath, L. W. 1989, *Sustainable Society: Learning Our Way Out*, New York: SUNY University Press.
- O'Riordan, T. 1998. Civic science and the sustainability transition: participation in the future. In: D. Warburton (ed.) *Community and sustainable development*. London: Earthscan, pp. 96-116.
- Ostrom, E., Burger, J., Field, C.B., Norgaard, R.B. and Policansky, D. 1999. Revisiting the Commons: Local lessons, Global Challenges. *Science* 284: 278-282.

- Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council, 2002. National Natural Resource Management Capacity Building Framework, Australian Government, Natural Resource Management. Available at: <http://www.nrm.gov.au/publications/capacity-building/index.html>
- O'Connor J. 1973 *The Fiscal Crisis of the State*. New York, St Martin's Press.
- OESR, 2003 *Sugar. The Way Forward: A Statement of the Queensland Government's Position on Regulatory Reform of the Sugar Industry*, Brisbane: Queensland Government.
- Pahl-Wostl, C. 2002 Participative and stakeholder-based policy design, evaluation and modelling processes. *Integrated Assessment* 3: 3-14.
- Pahl-Wostl, C. 2006 The importance of social learning in restoring the multi-functionality of rivers and floodplains. *Ecology and Society* 11(1): 10 [online] URL: <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol11/iss1/art10/>.
- Panelli, R. and Pini, B. 2005 "This beats a cake stall!": Farm women's shifting encounters with the Australian state', *Policy and Politics*: 33 (3): 489-503.
- Parkes, M., and Panelli, R., 2001. Integrating catchment ecosystems and community health: The value of participatory action research. *Ecosystem Health*: 7, 85-106.
- Paton, D. 2005. Community resilience: Integrating hazard management and community engagement. Paper presented at the International Symposium on Engaging Communities. An initiative of the United Nations and the Queensland Government. Held 14-17 August 2005, Brisbane Australia. <http://www.engagingcommunities2005.org/abstracts.html>
- Paton, D., Millar, M. and Johnston, D. 2001. Community resilience to volcanic hazard consequences. *Natural Hazards* 24: 157-169.
- Pawar, M. 2006 "Social" "capital"?", *The Social Science Journal*, 43, 211-226.
- Petheram, J., Stephen, P. and Maidment, F. 2003. From engaging the public – to supporting citizens in collaborative partnerships. Insights for extension from community forestry. In *Extending extension: Beyond traditional boundaries, methods and ways of thinking*. Proceedings of the 2003 APEN national Forum, 26-28 November 2003, Hobart. www.regional.org.au/au/apen
- Petts, J. 2001. Evaluating the effectiveness of deliberative processes: Waste management case studies. *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management* 44(2): 207-226.
- Pini, B. 1999 *Women's Participation in the Sugar Industry: Survey Report*, unpublished document.
- Pini, B. 2001 *From the paddock to the boardroom: The gendered path to agricultural leadership in the Australian sugar industry*, Thesis (Ph.D.), Brisbane: Queensland University of Technology.
- Pini, B., Brown, K., and Simpson, L. 2003 'Evaluating 'Australian Women in Agriculture': 1992-2002', *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 62 (1): 24-31.
- Portes, A. 1998. 'Social Capital: Its origins and Applications in Modern Sociology.' *Annual Review of Sociology*, 24 (1): 1-24.
- Pittock, B. 2005 *Climate Change. Turning up the Heat*. CSIRO Publishing, Collingwood.
- Pretty, J. 1995. Participatory learning for sustainable agriculture. *World Development* 23(8): 1247-63.
- Pretty, J. 1998. Supportive policies and practice for scaling up sustainable agriculture. In: N.G. Roling and M.A.E. Wagemakers (eds), *Facilitating*

- Sustainable Agriculture. Participatory learning and adaptive management in times of environmental uncertainty.* Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Probst, K. and Hagmann, J. 2003. *Understanding participatory research in the context of natural resource management: Paradigms, approaches and typologies.* ODI Agricultural Research and Extension Network Paper No. 130. London: Overseas Development Institute.
- Productivity Commission 2003. *Industries, Land Use and Water Quality in the Great Barrier Reef Catchment. Research report.* Canberra. February 2003.
- Putnam, R. 2000 *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community,* New York: Simon Schuster.
- Putnam, R., Leonardi, R. and Nanetti, R. 1993. *Making democracy work: Civic traditions in modern Italy.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Renn, O., Webler, T. & Wiedmann, P. 1995. *Fairness and Competence in Citizen Participation. Evaluating Models for Environmental Discourse.* The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Resilience Alliance 2005. Key concepts: Resilience.
<http://www.resalliance.org/index.php?id=1> Accessed 31/01/06.
- Rickson, S. 1997 'Outstanding in their field: Women in agriculture', *Current Sociology*, 45 (2): 91-133.
- Rolfe, R.E. 2006. *Social cohesion and community resilience: A multi-disciplinary review of literature for rural health research.* Social Cohesion and Community Resiliency Working Group of the Atlantic Canada based Rural Centre, pp.26.
- Rockloff, S.F. 2003. *Organising for Sustainable Natural Resource Management: Representation, leadership and partnerships for four spatial scales.* Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Murdoch University, December 2003
- Sachs, C. 1983 *The Invisible Farmers: Women in Agricultural Production,* Totowa, New Jersey, USA: Rowman and Allenheld.
- Sapountazki, K. and Chalkias, C.. 2005. Coping with chronic and extreme risks in contemporary Athens: Confrontation or resilience? *Sustainable Development* 13: 115-128.
- Sayer, J.A. and Campbell, B.M. 2003. Research to integrate productivity enhancement, environmental protection and human development. In: Campbell, B.M. and J.A. Sayer (eds), *Integrated Natural Resource Management: Linking productivity, the environment and development.* UK: CABI Publishing, pp. 1-14.
- Schuller, T., Baron, S. and Field, J. 2000 'Social capital: a review and critique' in Baron,S., Field, J. and Schuller,T. Eds. *Social Capital. Critical Perspectives,* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Senge, P. 1990 *The fifth discipline,* New York: Doubleday.
- Silverman, H. 1935 *The Substance of Economics: Eight Edition.* Melbourne, Australia: Ptiman and Sons Ltd.
- Slater, M.D., Edwards, R.W., Plested, B.A., Thurman, P.J., Kelly, K.J., Comello, M.L.G. and Keefe, T.J. 2005. Using community readiness key informant assessments in a randomised group prevention trial: Impact of a participatory community-media intervention. *Journal of Community Health* 30(1): 39-53.
- Smith, T.F. and Lazarow, N.S. 2004. 'Social Learning and the Adaptive Management Framework', *Journal of Coastal Research*, Special Issue 39.

- Sonn, C.C. and Fisher, A.T. 1998. Sense of community: Community resilient responses to oppression and change. *Journal of Community Psychology* 26 (5): 457-472.
- Standing Committee on Agriculture and Resource Management, 1998 *A Vision for Change: National Plan for Women in Agriculture and Resource Management*, Canberra: Standing Committee on Agriculture and Resource Management.
- Sugar Industry Oversight Group, 2006 *Strategic Vision for a Commercially Vibrant Sustainable and Self-Reliant Industry in Australia*. Report to the Hon. Peter McGauran MP, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.
- Sugar Industry Review Working Party, 1996 *Sugar – Winning Globally. Main Report*, Brisbane: Queensland and Commonwealth Governments.
- Svendsen, G. 2006 'Studying social capital in situ: A qualitative approach', *Theory and Society*, 35 (1): 39-70.
- Syme, G., McCreddin, J. and Nancarrow, B. 1997. Partnerships in decision-making processes. Paper presented to RAPI Partnerships in Planning Conference, Woarooloo.
- Teather, E. 1996 'Farm women in Canada, New Zealand and Australia redefine their rurality', *Journal of Rural Studies*, 12 (1): 1-14.
- Thomsen, D. C. 2003. *Community-based Research: an Opportunity for Collaboration and Social Change*. PhD Thesis, Brisbane, Australia: Griffith University.
- Thomson, D., and Pepperdine, S. 2003 *Assessing Community Capacity for Riparian Restoration*, Canberra: Land and Water Australia.
- Tobin, G.A. 1999. Sustainability and community resilience: the holy grail of hazards planning? *Environmental Hazards* 1: 13-25.
- United Nations 1992. *Agenda 21: the United Nations Programme of Action from Rio*. United Nations: New York.
- van de Wetering, 2004 *Women in Sugar comes to Isis*, URL: <http://www.abc.net.au/widebay/stories/s1147235.htm>, accessed 20/10/06
- van Oorschot, W., Arts, W. and Gelissen, J. 2006 'Social capital in Europe: Measurement and social and regional distribution of a multi-faceted concept', *Acta Sociologica*, 49 (2): 149-167.
- Vayda, A.P. and McCay, B.J. 1975. New directions in ecology and ecological anthropology. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 4: 293-306.
- Vernooy, R. and McDougall, C. 2003. Principles for good practice in participatory research: Reflecting on lessons from the field. In: B. Pound, S. Snapp, C. McDougall & A. Braun (Eds.), *Managing natural resources for sustainable livelihoods: Uniting science and participation*. London: Earthscan Publications and International Development Research Centre, pp. 113-141.
- Walker, B.H., Carpenter, S.R., Anderies, N., Abel, N., Cumming, G.S., Janssen, M.A., Lebel, L., Norberg, J., Peterson, G.D. and Pritchard, R. 2002. Resilience management in social-ecological systems: a working hypothesis for a participatory approach. *Conservation Ecology* 6(1): 14. [on-line] URL: <http://www.consecol.org/vol6/iss1/art14/>.
- Walters, C and Holling, C. 1990. Large scale management experiments and learning by doing *Ecology* 71: 2060-2068.
- Webler, T., Kastenholz, H. and Renn, O. 1995. Public participation in impact assessment: A social learning perspective. *Environmental Impact Assessment Review* 15(5): 443-463.
- Welch, E. and Marc-Aurele, F. 2001 'Determinants of farmer behavior: Adoption of and compliance with best management practices for nonpoint source pollution

- in the Skaneateles Lake Watershed', *Journal of Lake and Reservoir Management*, 17(3): 233-245.
- Wenger, E. 1998. *Communities of practice: learning, meaning and identity*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Whatmore, S. 1991 *Farming Women: Gender, Work and Family Enterprise*, Basingstoke, Hants: Macmillian.
- White, L. 2002. Connection matters: Exploring the implications of social capital and social networks for social policy. *Systems Research and Behavioural Science* 19: 255-269.
- White, S.C. 1996. Depoliticising development: the uses and abuses of participation. *Development in Practice* 6(1): 6-15.
- Williams, B. and Imam, I. 2006. *Systems Concepts in Evaluation: An Expert Anthology*. Inverness, California: American Evaluation Society and EdgePress.
- Williams, J. 1992 *The Invisible Farmer: A Report on Australian Farm Women*, Canberra: Commonwealth Department of Primary Industries and Energy.
- Wilson, L. 2006 'Developing a model for the measurement of social inclusion and social capital in regional Australia', *Social Indicators Research*, 75 (3): 335-360.
- Windle, J. and Rolfe, J. 2005 'Growers' Perspectives on the Viability of Sugarcane Farming Systems in Central Queensland', *Australasian Agribusiness Review*, Vol. 13, Paper 8: 1-19.
- Wondolleck, J.M. and Yaffee, S.L. 2000. *Making Collaboration Work: Lessons from Innovation in Natural Resource Management*. Washington, D.C: Island Press.
- Woodhouse, A. 2006 'Social capital and economic development in regional Australia: A case study', *Journal of Rural Studies*, 22 (1): 83-94.

SRDC Research Project

CSE016 Final Report

Appendix 2: Interview Findings Report

**CSE016:
Sugar communities and resilience to change:
Opportunities for enhancing women's participation in
sustainability initiatives**

**Report on:
In-depth interview findings –
Learning from the regions**

July 2007

Emma Jakku, Jenny Bellamy and Iris Bohnet

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	4
2. WOMEN'S ROLES AND LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION	6
2.1 Overview of women's roles	6
2.2 Satisfaction with women's participation	14
2.3 Changing role and status of women in the industry	26
3. FACTORS INFLUENCING WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION	30
3.1 Challenges	30
3.2 Opportunities	39
4. WOMEN'S PREFERENCES FOR PARTICIPATION	46
5. SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES	56
5.1 Key Sustainability Initiatives for Women	56
5.2 Profiles of Women's Experience with Selected Sustainability Initiatives	58
6. WOMEN IN SUGAR GROUPS	84
6.1 Women's groups or networks in the Australian sugar industry	84
6.2 Women in Sugar Groups in the Northern and Southern Case Regions	84
6.3 Key roles and functions of Women in Sugar groups	90
6.4 Factors influencing women's participation in Women in Sugar groups	96
8. THE WAY FORWARD: EMERGING STRATEGIES	105
REFERENCES	108
APPENDIX A – INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	109

1. Introduction

This report documents the findings from extensive in-depth interviews, which were carried out with women and men across two case regions, to explore in detail:

- Women's roles within the sugar industry;
- Levels of satisfaction with women's participation across industry sectors;
- Attitudes towards the changing role and status of women in the sugar industry;
- Factors influencing women's participation within the sugar industry;
- Women's levels of interest in and motivations and preferences for participation in the sugar industry; and
- Perspectives on women's participation in Women in Sugar groups and sustainability initiatives.

These interviews identify the major influences on women's participation in decision-making within the sugar industry and their preferences for involvement.

1.1 Research objectives and key research questions

The CSE016 project is funded by the Sugar Research and Development Corporation (SRDC) and involves a research collaboration between CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems (CSE), the University of Queensland (UQ) and a number of key stakeholders in two contrasting sugar regions in north and south coastal Queensland.

The key focus of the project is to build industry and community capacity for change by targeting the participation of women in sustainability initiatives as a key opportunity to strengthen industry decision-making and the resilience and adaptive capacity of sugar communities in the face of change.

The project's overall research objectives are to work with women in the sugar industry, in active collaboration with other sugar industry, government, community, research and extension stakeholders, to:

1. Develop a shared understanding amongst collaborators and researchers of:
 - a. The major social, economic and institutional influences on women's participation in initiatives relevant to sustainability and the sugar industry; and
 - b. The value of and opportunities for enhancing women's participation in such initiatives.
2. Identify, implement and evaluate strategies that improve women's participation in initiatives relevant to environmental, economic and social sustainability in the sugar industry, using participatory action research.
3. Facilitate wide, ongoing communication and uptake of findings on strategies for strengthening the participation of women in sustainability initiatives to enhance sugar communities' capacity to deal with change within and beyond the case study regions.

The key research questions that the in-depth interviews help to address are:

1. What roles, level of influence and satisfaction do women have in decision-making on sustainability in sugar communities?
2. What are the major social, economic and institutional factors that influence women's participation in sustainability initiatives?
3. How are women (as individuals and collectively) going to be able to influence community capacity to adapt and shape change?

1.2 Methodology

The case study research involves two contrasting sugar regions (in terms of environment, economy and social and institutional arrangements):

1. Northern region, from the Tully to Babinda mill areas.
2. Southern region, focussing on the Bundaberg and Isis mill areas.

The interview sample was constructed to capture a full range of perspectives on women's participation within decision-making in the sugar industry, within these two case regions.

Potential interviewees were nominated by key collaborators in both case regions. Interviewees were purposively selected to ensure diversity across the following categories:

- Gender;
- Age;
- Region;
- Involvement across the value chain;
- On-farm diversification;
- Grower with off-farm work involvement;
- Involvement in industry organisations; and
- Involvement in Women in Sugar groups.

In February to April 2007, we interviewed a total of 63 interviewees: 44 females (22 both the north and south) and 19 males (10 in the north and 9 in the south).

Table 1 shows the participants by industry sector, while Table 2 shows the participants by age bracket.

Table 1: Participants by gender, region and industry sector

Industry sector	Female		Male	
	North	South	North	South
Sugar only	7	6	2	2
Sugar plus other agricultural enterprise	10	12	3	1
Milling	2	0	2	1
Industry support or service organisation	3	4	3	5
Totals	22	22	10	9

Table 2: Participants by gender, region and age bracket

Age bracket	Female		Male	
	North	South	North	South
Less than 40 years	6	6	2	0
40-59 years	14	12	7	8
60 years and over	2	4	1	1

The interview questions (see Appendix A) were developed by the researchers through several iterations. Three pilot interviews were conducted with people familiar with the sugar industry but outside of the interview sample, to refine the interview questions.

All of the interviews were digitally recorded and professionally transcribed. Analysis of the transcripts was conducted using QSR NVivo software, which facilitated coding of the interviews, based on the interview question.

To protect the confidentiality of interviewees, citations are reported by gender and region, although occasionally a group affiliation is included where this is particularly relevant.

2. Women's roles and levels of participation

2.1 Overview of women's roles

It is well documented that women in agriculture in Australia and elsewhere make significant and valuable contributions to their enterprises, families and communities, through their diverse roles, including on-farm work, off-farm employment and voluntary community work (Sachs, 1983; Whatmore, 1991; Leckie, 1993; Alston, 1995; Gooday, 1995; McCartney and Ross, 2003). Our interviews with women in the sugar industry supported this general observation.

2.1.1 Women's roles on-farm and in farm business

The women we interviewed from the growing sector generally separated their roles within the farm business into physical, 'hands-on' farm work and administrative or managerial roles. The level that women were involved in these different parts of the enterprise varied.

Some women (six in the north and three in the south) described their key role as being responsible for the administrative, managerial part of the enterprise.

I do all the administration side of it. Decision making, like why we're buying this next piece of equipment. ...do all the accounts, wages, BAS and any other things that have to be sorted out as far as licensing and things like that. (Northern interviewee)

My husband basically looks after the running of the farm, the physical side of it. I do the books side of it. ...So it's administration, organisation, I suppose. (Northern interviewee)

I'm only doing administration. ...All the compliance that we need to do, just basically for management, taxation, and workplace health and safety to a certain extent. (Southern interviewee)

Two of the women we interviewed in the north were the main decision-makers.

I would do the bulk of the decision making. My son and my daughter are also in the farm. ...The bulk of the stuff we'll sit down and have a round table discussion about it, but the final decision is what I decide to do. (Northern interviewee)

Just progressed now that...all the business decisions are my bloody decisions. (Northern interviewee)

A minority of women (one in the north and two in the south) said that they did not have a large role in their enterprise.

Silent partner. ...There's three brothers in it, in the farm. (Northern interviewee)

I am wife and do odd jobs – help out when an extra set of hands are needed. I help [husband] organise the bookwork, but he does it. (Southern interviewee)

Well Grandma does the books and I don't take that off her. I will do work on the farm; not so much lately because we get contract harvesters and contract planters but before I was always planting...and all that sort of stuff. Now, not a lot. (Southern interviewee)

The majority of women (10 in the north and 11 in the south) described their role as being responsible for the administrative, managerial side of the enterprise and helping with the physical, 'hands-on' farm work as required, both for sugar and for any other enterprises on the property.

...planting and I do all of the bookwork for the farm... Go to town and buy the parts...and the ordering over the phone for fertiliser and things like that, paying the bills. ...I do the packing as well for all of the passionfruit... (Northern interviewee)

Any spraying that needs to be done, fertilising of the cane, getting the fallow paddocks ready for planting, the maintenance to drains and headlands because we're in a wet area, maintenance to the buildings. Sometimes maintenance to tractors, but I'm not very good at that and the books, I do them as well. (Northern interviewee)

My main role is the book keeping, I do all the administration and office work for the business and I also help out on the farm. My husband is the main stay on the farm but I help out with everything. All the S-H-I-T jobs. ...Hold this, do this and I'm finding I'm doing more. (Southern interviewee)

I'm the bookkeeper, the accounts person, I do on-farm work, such as driving tractors and all of that physical stuff... (Southern interviewee)

I basically look after all the accounting, bookkeeping. I do all the meeting with the bankers, solicitors, accountants, all that type of thing. ...That is usually a full-time job on its own. I probably put in about at least 40 hours a week in the office. ...I often go turn the irrigation pumps on and off. I don't get into the real physical part, like, of driving the tractors and ploughing the fields or anything like that because there's enough of the men in the family, I have never had to do that. But any of the smaller jobs and that I have to hop on the four-wheeler bike and go up and do things. (Southern interviewee)

A few women used the term 'gofer' or 'Girl Friday' to describe their contribution to the physical, 'hands-on' running of the farm.

And parts, because my husband used to ride the harvester and when there was a breakdown there was no mobile phone, so I had to run into town and find parts. Girl Friday, whatever you want to call it. ...Yeah, go for this and go for that. (Northern interviewee)

I'm the gofer. Go here and go there if they need. ...So any time they break down and they need parts, I have to go grab them, take them to them. ...So in the crushing period, it's practically a full-time job just keeping parts up to the harvesting crews because we have three separate crews. (Southern interviewee)

I'm at [my husband's] beck and call. ...In the sugar industry, we call that the gofer. We go for this, we go for that. (Southern interviewee)

Several women included household matters when describing their on-farm roles.

Well I'm mostly just the housewife, the cook, the cleaner and do the bookwork and that. ... As far as field work out in the paddock, I don't do anything like that anymore. They [husband and sons] tell me I've done enough of that. I can stop home and do the house chores which are never ending and especially now with the GST, there is a lot of bookwork involved. (Northern interviewee)

So my role has actually been just the bookkeeping and make sure there's a meal on the table or...phoning somebody for whatever. (Northern interviewee)

[My husband] is the main muscle behind the farm and I put in and work where I need to, where he needs me, where he needs an extra hand, and there are days when he doesn't need me at all, so I'm in the house catching up on accounts and housework. (Southern interviewee)

I normally try and have everything up to date in the house – housekeeping – and be back in the office by at least 8.00, 8.30. It's in my home, but I usually try to move out there by then. (Southern interviewee)

One woman listed information gathering as a key part of her on-farm role.

...all the information that we need to run our industry or our business, I have to go to a lot of meetings in canegrowers, wherever, the SES, whatever, that are giving us information. I'm the one that usually has to go and gather the information and take it back to my husband sons to utilise what they can to help us improve our farming. (Southern interviewee)

Some women highlighted their role as a sounding board.

And of course I am also a company director because if he needs to talk things over I am sort of the sounding board. (Southern interviewee)

I'm also, like, [my husband's] sounding board, so we discuss a lot of things now which I didn't understand before. You know, he'll bounce things off me...and he talks to me about using pre-emergence and he talks to me about what he is going to do with this block, and so I guess I'm involved in every sense of the word. (Southern interviewee)

Several women emphasised that they worked on the farm in partnership with their husband and saw themselves as equal partners in on-farm decision-making.

It's a partnership. It's not just a monetary title for us. I'm in the decision making and all that kind of stuff as well and I'll work it, if I have to. (Northern interviewee)

[My husband] and I work more as a partnership. We do things together. (Northern interviewee)

...in most cases, a joint decision about what happens. As far as this farm here, it's joint decisions about what happens as far as finances or whatever goes on. ...we sit and talk about it between the four of us, because his parents are in it too. (Southern interviewee)

All the decision-making process, down to what varieties of cane we plant, what blocks we take out, what blocks we follow, what alternative crops we grow in those blocks, are made jointly and have been ever since we purchased the farm 15 years ago. (Southern interviewee)

In contrast, other women made the gendered division of on-farm work very clear.

Well, the only thing [I do] is actually the bookkeeping part. ...the growing of the crop or the planting and the growing of the crop is taken after – that's the male role... (Northern interviewee)

Relating to the farm, [my husband] is the farmer. I'm trying to put it into a business model. (Northern interviewee)

2.1.2 Women's roles off-farm

Many of the women we interviewed from the growing sector also worked off-farm (seven in the north and 14 in the south), often in the education sector, but also in the commercial and agricultural sectors. They emphasised the significance of their off-farm income and the challenges of juggling their on-farm and off-farm commitments.

We both work out of the farm, we need to work to bring in income, so we're both working other jobs. ...I do about 30 hours at a high school. I'm a teacher aide or librarian assistant. Then I have my own business in bookkeeping, so I do that after work and at night. So probably 40 hours a week almost. (Northern interviewee)

Up until Christmas, in all my other roles, I was spending around 50 or so hours off-farm working, as well as my own farm work. Now I spend, on average, 30-35. ...It's allowed the farm to stay operating. Otherwise, we wouldn't eat, it's as simple as that. If I had not been working off-farm – the farm pays for itself but it hasn't been able to, in recent years, pay us. (Southern interviewee)

2.1.3 Women's roles within industry groups / organisations

Many of the women we interviewed had a range of industry roles, in the growing and milling sectors, as well as industry support services. Some of the women held official positions within industry groups, including a CANEGROWERS, harvesting groups, local Productivity Services groups, the Babinda Farming for the Future group and Women in Sugar groups. Other women were employed through the industry, within BSES, CANEGROWERS, local Productivity Services groups and the Mills or as part of FutureCane. Some women were also involved in their Regional Advisory Groups. Within the southern region, several women played a vital role in the smut response teams.

In addition to these official positions, women also participated in the industry in other ways, including involvement in the Sugar Industry Infrastructure package, Generation Next and workshops or industry programs such as FEAT and COMPASS. Some women attended industry meetings held by their local Mill or CANEGROWERS. Two women in the south were involved in other industry (not sugar) groups. Two women in the north were involved in their local Water Boards.

2.1.4 Male perspectives on women's roles

We also asked the men that we interviewed to nominate the most important roles for women in the sugar industry to be involved in, from the farm through to policy levels.

Several men prefaced their comments about women's roles in the sugar industry with the observation that they could not be prescriptive about women's roles and women could be effective in any role, depending on their individual preferences or abilities.

I don't think it's prescriptive, I think it's again, depending on the person and depending on the need to get some female perspective on different aspects. (Northern interviewee)

It depends where your skill set is. There's no reason why there can't be a female financial controller, there's no reason why there can't be a female CEO. (Northern interviewee)

I think the whole spectrum. I couldn't be specific there, I think the whole spectrum. (Northern interviewee)

That's entirely up to the people concerned as to how involved they want to be. (Southern interviewee)

I think it depends on the woman. ...I know women here who drive tractors and haul outs, and I know other women that are on significant boards. It depends on where the person particularly wants to be. ...But to physically identify which role would be particularly good for women...I actually find that a bit insulting. (Southern interviewee)

Many of the men highlighted the variety of ways that women contributed to farm businesses, using the distinction between the physical, 'hands-on' farm work and administrative or managerial roles in a way that was similar to how the women described their roles. Most of these comments identified administrative or managerial roles as the key roles for women within farm businesses.

...I think at farm level strong support and involvement at the farm level in terms of knowing the business, being involved in decision making. (Northern interviewee)

A lot of women are very heavily involved in the financial side. ...Often when I go to talk to growers about how they can stay profitable or sustainable at the moment it's often the woman that I talk to because she's very much in touch with the books and the dollars and cents. (Southern interviewee)

Probably making sure they get all their accounting right, all those sorts of things. Records, make sure you keep records, especially spray records. If there are any trees around or anything like that, cropping trees, that they don't use chemicals that are going to affect them that could hurt the livelihood of them and then be sued, just the general running of the financial side of the farming. (Southern interviewee)

One of the men emphasised that women's managerial role went beyond book-keeping and included having an important role in decision-making within the farm business.

When I say management, I don't mean just doing the books, I mean the whole thing. ...It's very difficult to do the management role on your own. You need someone to talk to that understands what you're saying and put other options out there. To do it on your own, it makes it hard. ...Because to make successful business and so on, women need to have some ownership of it. (Northern interviewee)

Several men acknowledged that women were involved to varying degrees in the physical side of farm businesses, although this was generally described in terms of supporting 'the farmer'.

Probably in a management role. There has been some women do the farm work, so they would be the exception. Maybe you don't need to be as strong as you used to. Perhaps they can do more of that, but mostly it would be more in a management role and fit the time around whatever other duties they see that they have to do, family and whatever else. (Northern interviewee)

I know a fellow board member...he currently plants as a contract planter and his wife runs the farm. She does do all the machinery work, the fertilising, the whole lot. (Northern interviewee)

On farm, I do think that the ladies, the women, do have a role, an important role. And that role probably has been of a supporting nature of the farmer who actually goes out and does the physical work on the farm. Although in my time here...I have encountered a number of women who have also been in the physical side of farming. But I think it's a partnership between the husband and wife. (Southern interviewee)

One of the men identified providing morale support for their husbands as a key role for women in farm businesses.

...be there to support your husband when things are a bit bad, to give him morale support. (Southern interviewee)

Some men noted that women bring a different perspective to a range of industry sectors.

I guess maybe having the broader perspective that...they can focus on the operation as a business, rather than as a farm. It is part of your broader roles just than growing cane or whatever else you're doing. (Northern interviewee)

There's benefits, just to having a female in the group, besides just making the group nice, but you get a woman's touch and approach on things. ...I see they're an important part. They give a different look, a different aspect. (Northern interviewee)

Well, certainly extension, because I think, let's say there's a slightly different way of delivering extension...but again, that is the particular type of personality. (Southern interviewee)

One of the men also nominated information gathering and networking as important roles for women in the sugar industry.

...making sure that people are informed. Or going to the information meeting saying “Well let’s go to the information meeting, let’s make the time.” ...And I guess that’s another thing that women tend to be better at than men, is the networking and saying you know, “Let’s get together, let’s get a little group together for two hours and somebody talk to them about an issue.” (Northern interviewee)

Two men referred to the way in which women can and do help the mills fill labour shortages created by the mining boom.

One thing I haven’t touched on is more the manufacture type side of things, with the process plants, the mills, particularly with the mills having a little bit of trouble getting seasonal workers, because the mines have taken so many tradesmen and labourers out there, the mills are finding that ladies are filling voids very successfully and I think they’re quite happy with their performance and they’ve even lifted the bar in that they enjoy their jobs, the outdoor type duties. They’re a lot more motivated than previously some of the male employees that they had. (Northern interviewee)

Sugar mills are really struggling for employees now because as soon as anybody’s got too many brains they head off to the mines and want to work day and night in the mines and make a lot of money. There’s lots of roles in the sugar mill women can participate in. (Southern interviewee)

Two men described women as ‘under-used’ or ‘untapped’ within the sugar industry.

A group of people that’s been under-used in the past has been the female component. (Southern interviewee)

I think there’s a lot of roles for women in the industry but I think we often see women as untapped sources. ...From basic things like driving tractors, distributing fertilizers to the more technical things of writing SAPs (standard operating procedures), to workplace health and safety type stuff.

In the southern region, one of the men recognised the contribution that women have made to the smut response.

But I guess some of the experiences I’ve had is when smut broke out the people that stood up and were available immediately to go into the fields to inspect the fields for smut were women and they were very, very good at it; probably better than any men we had in the field. (Southern interviewee)

The same man also pointed to the contribution that women can make to implementing industry programs such as the Isis Target 100 initiative.

Target 100’s really been focusing growers on timely things and we’ve really been trying to involve the women in that because it’s often the women that can

get hubby to go and do the things at the right time. ...Because women do often have the controlling influence because they often control the money too. If they understand it better they might say well hang on, we've got to be buying some Round-Up or we've got to be buying some Gramoxone because if we don't do that those weeds are going to be using that water up that we're going to be paying for anyhow. (Southern interviewee)

In the northern region, one of the men highlighted the potential contribution that he hoped women could make to encouraging value-adding in the sugar industry.

I think ownership of some of these new things, you will find will be probably driven a lot by women. ...But these new industries, the ones I'm talking about are linking probably sugar, the cane industry with a heap of new things and because women were involved from its inception, I think you will find they will be the ones putting their hand up and saying, well I'll be on the board of that because I understand the process. (Northern interviewee)

Two men discussed the potential for women to have a greater role in industry bodies such as CANEGROWERS.

I think they can do more in the representative roles as well. (Northern interviewee)

Although there are a few women elected to various CANEGROWERS groups. That hasn't been achieved here at this point in time. I don't think that there's anything standing in the way for women to become elected, apart from getting out there, having exposure, participating in meetings and having their feelings made known to the fellow growers. (Southern interviewee)

2.2 Satisfaction with women's participation

Interviewees rated their satisfaction with the current levels of participation of women in on-farm and farm business decision-making, industry organisations and research and extension.

2.2.1 Satisfaction levels with women's participation on-farm and in farm-businesses

Overall, male and female interviewees from both the north and the south tended to be either very satisfied or satisfied or neutral regarding women's participation in on-farm and farm business decision-making (see Table 3).

Table 3: Satisfaction levels with women's participation in on-farm and in farm-businesses decision-making, by gender and region

Gender	Region ¹	Unsatisfied or Very unsatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied or very satisfied	Totals
Females	North	4	8	10	22
	South	3	6	12	21
	Sub-total	7	14	22	43
Males	North	5	4	1	10
	South	2	3	3	8

¹ There were two non-responses in the south for this question – one male and one female.

<i>Sub-total</i>	7	7	4	18
Totals	14	21	26	61

Most of the women who were either satisfied or very satisfied with women's participation in on-farm and farm business decision-making highlighted the way in which women tend to be actively involved in their farm businesses.

...it's not the man making all the decisions anymore. It's a partnership.
(Northern interviewee)

...in a normal family situation, the woman...has got a big part to play in it and they are getting actively involved because it is their future at stake...
(Northern interviewee)

I do believe that in any cane farming family, that the women actually do have a lot of input as far as decision making... (Northern interviewee)

I think there is quite a high level of women's participation in the decisions that are made on-farm in farming enterprises. (Southern interviewee)

...at on-farm level, women are very much involved in the decision-making.
(Southern interviewee)

A minority of the women who were satisfied with the level of women's participation in on-farm and farm business decision-making placed more emphasis on personal preferences or accepting what they saw as a culturally based low level of participation.

It's a personal preference. ...If you want to be involved, you can be.
(Northern interviewee)

On the farm it is quite low... I am not going to change a culture. (Northern interviewee)

Well you have probably got your two different groups of women I would say. You would have the ones that are very, very involved and then you have probably got your ones, maybe some of the older ones, the old ones that have been there since year dot. Maybe some of them aren't involved at all. You know a bit of that old culture. (Southern interviewee)

As with the women, the men who were either satisfied or very satisfied with women's participation in on-farm and farm business decision-making highlighted the way in which women make an important contribution to their farm businesses.

I believe women play an important role, they have an important role. I believe they're mostly the silent partner, but that's the way it's come up, but every now and again, you do hear of the farmer who says, 'oh, I was talking to my wife about doing such and such' and she was saying, 'oh, you should be careful', she is the one that he has a conversation with when they move to do something. (Northern interviewee)

I think it's a partnership between the husband and wife. And I think that I'm satisfied that women do play an important role on the farm. (Southern interviewee)

The women who were neutral regarding women's participation in on-farm and farm business decision-making tended to see this as being up to the individual. Some women also highlighted the lack of visibility of women's contributions to their farm businesses.

It's up to each individual woman. (Northern interviewee)

I don't see a lot of women who have an active role on-farm... It's more behind-the-scenes involvement. (Northern interviewee)

I think that's up to the individual. Some women do, some don't. (Southern interviewee)

The men who were neutral regarding women's participation in on-farm and farm business decision-making also tended to see this as being up to individual preferences or circumstances.

...it's really a personality issue, and an issue of how people operate their business. (Northern interviewee)

...because there are some women out there that are doing a real good job, but I feel that there's been a thing in the sugar industry, and it probably stems back for years that a woman's place isn't out on the farm, hands on or whatever. ...And probably too, there's probably quite a few women in the Isis cane growing area now that have actually got outside jobs, so they can't be involved. (Southern interviewee)

The women who were either unsatisfied or very unsatisfied regarding women's participation in on-farm and farm business decision-making pointed to what they see as a widespread lack of participation of women in this form of decision-making.

It's not necessarily in our case, but a lot of the farms around the place, women have very little to do with anything on the farm. ...I don't know whether they want to have anything to do with the farm, but that's something I see happening in this area a lot. ...You see the women do the woman thing and the men doing the farm thing. (Northern interviewee)

I don't think there's enough women. ...There should be more. More participation from the women in decision making. (Northern interviewee)

I think it's changing. I think more women are being more involved in the decision-making, but I would have to say that for 60% of growers out there over 60, that that decision-making is primarily undertaken by the male in the family. (Southern interviewee)

The men who were either unsatisfied or very unsatisfied regarding women's participation in on-farm and farm business decision-making also pointed to a tradition of limited participation by women in such decision-making.

I see that generally the age of farmers in this area, the average age of farmers is nearing 70 if it isn't 70. ...Probably culturally, those particular aged farmers, the ladies of the family never really did that much other than supply smoko and maybe to be called upon on an ad hoc basis to help with planting or something like that. There was very little decision making when it came to the farm, so financial investment or whatever the case may be, there was very little decision making done by the women and they weren't consulted. (Northern interviewee)

I think a lot of men from the older era believe the woman had her place in the house and she was a housewife and a farmer's wife and that's more or less all she did. Only a small percentage, I believe - which is changing rapidly, which is good - that have allowed women to have a bit more of a say. (Northern interviewee)

...we've probably got eight or ten women here that are very, very heavily involved but then we've probably got 200 that aren't. (Southern interviewee)

2.2.2 Satisfaction levels with women's participation in industry organisations

Male and female interviewees from both the north and the south tended to be either very unsatisfied or unsatisfied or neutral regarding women's participation in industry organisations (see Table 4).

Table 4: Satisfaction levels with women's participation in industry organisations, by gender and region

Gender	Region	Unsatisfied or Very unsatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied or very satisfied	Totals
Females	North	11	7	4	22
	South ²	11	6	2	19
	Sub-total	22	13	6	41
Males	North	6	2	2	10
	South	7	1	1	9
	Sub-total	13	3	3	19
Totals		35	16	9	60

The women who were either unsatisfied or very unsatisfied with women's participation in industry organisations highlighted the way in which women's involvement in male-dominated industry organisations such as CANEGROWERS is still not fully accepted.

Even though there may be some involvement in the background, it's more that perception that there doesn't seem to be women in the foreground... (Northern interviewee)

² There were three non-responses from females in the southern region for this question.

...it's starting to evolve, but it's never been expected of women to be there. ...Some will go, but they're not expected to be there or wanted there really. (Northern interviewee)

It is probably a bit difficult for women to get into positions like Canegrowers where it's a male dominated thing, but I think it's happening. (Northern interviewee)

I think a lot of men feel uncomfortable with women in higher positions or equal positions to them. They don't seem to take them as serious. (Northern interviewee)

...because there's hardly any women in anything, is there? They're starting though trying to get more women involved, I know. But it's been a very male dominated industry. (Southern interviewee)

Because the men themselves on these committees have had to wait so long to rise up the strata or whatever you want to call it, they really do not want to see the women muscling in unless they have these ideal women who are able to do farm work. And that is quite an important thing. Who can drive the tractor, do the plant, do all the practical farm skills. Bookkeeping does not come into that. A woman who doesn't challenge men, who they see is strong but not outspoken. Who they could mould into their own image I think. (Southern interviewee)

...mainly because you don't see a lot of women representing cane growers; it's always been that male dominated role. We have an election coming up where [a woman] is actually standing for a position on the directors and she is the first lady to do that in quite a while. There has only been one other lady that has done that but as part of the cane growers industry you don't see a lot of women in representative roles. (Southern interviewee)

Some women commented that women's participation in industry organisations such as CANEGROWERS is actively discouraged.

Just women aren't really accepted. Men don't have a high opinion of women in the sugar industry. I know a friend of mine tried to get into Canegrowers. It was set up that she couldn't get into it. (Northern interviewee)

It's just not on. ...I mean, there's not enough... I think men feel a bit threatened by women somehow, some men. And they like to keep it that way. (Northern interviewee)

I don't believe they're given a fair opportunity. It is a very male-dominated area. (Southern interviewee)

A couple of the women also highlighted the way that younger women might be able to have more of a role in industry organisations.

It's coming up but it's not enough and probably more women need to be encouraged. I just think I'm getting too old for that now. Younger women need to take on these roles because they'll be there for longer. (Northern interviewee)

I think there needs to be more voice from women. Particularly now with the younger ones. (Southern interviewee)

Some of the men who were either unsatisfied or very unsatisfied with women's participation in industry organisations made general comments about wanting to see more women involved in various industry organisations, while recognising that women's participation had increased in some areas.

I would like to see more mix and I think it just brings a balance back into the workplace. (Northern interviewee)

In my view, the number of women working in factories and in cane supply for Bundaberg Sugar has increased, but they haven't yet broken through the glass ceiling to the point where they're in the level of female senior engineers. (Northern interviewee)

I don't know if I would say that women are belittled, but I think women have been isolated. There's a lady in the Tablelands who has a lot of good ideas and I think she's doing a great job as a Canegrowers director and also she's on the QSL Board now, and I think she's doing a good job there. Now, just because they're a woman, doesn't mean they don't have good ideas. Just because we're a man, doesn't mean we've got anything better. That's the way I look at it, but I just wish they would be more involved. I don't know how you do that or what approach you take to do that. (Northern interviewee)

Other men specifically discussed the limited participation of women within Canegrowers, although there were different perspectives on how much this is a problem and on the reasons for this limited participation.

Probably the one that doesn't have many women is the Canegrowers, and that's a bit disappointing, but it's a democratic process. People are elected by democratic votes, so if they want to vote for men, then that's fine. (Northern interviewee)

One of the problems is a technical problem, is to get onto the representative committees and so forth, the person needs to be the primary contact for the business, so say it's a technical problem, unless the husband relinquishes that primary contact to the wife, provided the wife is in the farm business, which they're not always, then under the constitution, she can't actually represent. (Northern interviewee)

Well say the industry bodies, up to now there hasn't really been any ladies on the industry bodies at all. (Southern interviewee)

...the Canegrowers board here, I don't think there are any women on the board of directors. And that's probably the same in most of these boards. ...But I would say that there's a bit of an imbalance there, possibly. (Southern interviewee)

Well, there are hardly any women involved. There might be a couple up north. (Southern interviewee)

The women who were neutral regarding women's participation in industry organisations acknowledged that women's participation in such organisations was limited, but held a range of perspectives on whether this was a problem and what caused this limited participation.

I'm not really aware of much at this point. I don't think that women are excluded from it but I also don't think that they play a very big role. (Northern interviewee)

I don't think there are but they probably – they're probably not involved for the same reasons as I'm not involved, so something has to sort of free up to give them the time... (Northern interviewee)

I think women are as involved as what their own lives and capacity can deliver. I think that if it's in specific CANEGROWERS roles and things like that, I just don't know whether that will ever happen, given that women have other commitments besides – they've got family commitments, etc, so I've got mixed views on that. So I think that women are becoming a lot more involved in the industry from the sidelines, if you like, from Women in Sugar groups and things like that, that are supportive and that are challenging those bodies. (Southern interviewee)

I don't have a lot of evidence of women occupying decision making positions in industry organisations in great numbers. I think in the positions that they occupy I'm very satisfied with the capacity to make decisions. And to have those decisions recognised however I think that the numbers of people in those positions under-represents women. So there is no opportunity for any consideration of their decision making. But I think within the level of representation that there is, that it's fine. (Southern interviewee)

One woman emphasised that although she would like to see more women holding positions within industry organisations such as CANEGROWERS, they needed to earn these roles based on their competency, not 'because they're a woman'.

Well, there is a few women – not on our own [CANEGROWERS] committee. We haven't got any women on our own committee, but Mareeba district has...and down south, I've noticed a couple of women in the magazines, but here we haven't. I would probably like to see more, but I would like to know that they are competent people, not just put there because they're a woman. (Northern interviewee)

Other women who were neutral regarding women's participation in industry organisations commented that they were not interested in this aspect of the industry.

If they want to get into that job, well good luck to them. ... I'm not involved in any of that sort of thing. (Northern interviewee)

I just can't get involved in the sugar industry. ...I don't even read the stuff that they [CANEGROWERS] send out unless someone rings me and says can you do this and get a reply back to us, I don't even read it...it just doesn't interest me enough. (Northern interviewee)

The men who were neutral regarding women's participation in industry organisations had a range of explanations for their views. They sometimes pointed to the growing representation of women at this level, particularly in the north, or to the fact that they did not see that there was anything stopping women being more involved in industry organisations.

I can see that ladies around this area, they are involved with the grower groups. They manage local cane grower organisations. ...We have directors for our productivity services and there is female representation on that, as there are on the supplier committees to the mills. I do think there is a growing representation there. (Northern interviewee)

We just had our [CANEGROWERS] election process and I just see the results state wide, there are just a handful of women. There's nothing stopping them to nominate. It's either a mixture of haven't got the time; haven't got the desire or haven't got the knowledge. ...The door is open. They can participate as much as any other male. Traditionally, yes, it's the husband that has been the farm representative who then moved on to be the grower representative, that's tradition. This year we might even see the first female on the Canegrowers' board in Brisbane, so that's good. It is available. Even the organisation has a plan, again you lead them to water, but you can't make them drink. (Northern interviewee)

One of the men in the south compared the constraints that both women and young people faced in trying to get onto CANEGROWERS boards.

Now we have actually got some young people on the [CANEGROWERS] board now. But generally what happens is that young people have mortgages that black dogs couldn't jump over, so they really cannot afford the time to sit around inside a room discussing things that are not focused on them and their business. Similarly, in a lot of cases with women, that's part of the reason why they're not on the Board. There hasn't been a position contested on this Board like an election since I've been here. (Southern interviewee)

The women who were either satisfied or very satisfied with women's participation in industry organisations generally pointed to the way that the industry was changing and that they felt there were opportunities for women who wanted to be involved within industry organisations.

As I see, if women want to pursue these roles, and from what I see women are doing that, I don't want to see women being pressured into these roles just because they are women. They may not want to. But I certainly see there are opportunities for those who want to; it's only themselves holding themselves back, or they don't have the desire, as in my case. I don't have the desire. (Northern interviewee)

Well I don't think there are a lot of women involved but times are changing. It is mainly men but there are a few women. (Northern interviewee)

Within sugar industry bodies, not a lot of women, only have WIS group. Besides that there is not much – but it's an individual thing. (Southern interviewee)

I think it's great, really, that women...are being taken notice of. Not just oh you're a women. You wouldn't sort of know, sort of thing. (Southern interviewee)

The men who were either satisfied or very satisfied with women's participation in industry organisations generally commented that women who wanted to be involved within industry organisations could be, with one man pointing out that he would like to see more women involved, although it is slowly 'moving in the right direction'.

I guess overall...there's probably more of an issue with participation generally, rather than gender specific. And...there seems to be a hierarchical sort of arrangement. There's no doubt about that. But I don't see a lot that stops women from participating. (Northern interviewee)

There are women in agriculture. I've seen them operate. I'm happy about what they do. I would like to see more of them... It's moving in the right direction, but slow. (Northern interviewee)

In this area we don't have any [women in CANEGROWERS] so I really couldn't comment on how they operate. Some of the particular people I'm referring to I'd certainly have absolutely no problem if they were on any sort of representative body in the area as long as they don't want my job [in CANEGROWERS]. (Southern interviewee)

2.2.3 Satisfaction levels with women's participation in research and extension

Male and female interviewees from both the north and the south tended to be either very satisfied or satisfied or neutral regarding women's participation in research and extension (see Table 5).

Table 5: Satisfaction levels with women's participation in research and extension, by gender and region

Gender	Region	Unsatisfied or Very unsatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied or very satisfied	Totals
Females	North	2	11	9	22
	South ³	4	4	10	18
	<i>Sub-total</i>	6	15	19	40
Males	North	1	5	4	10
	South	4	0	5	9
	<i>Sub-total</i>	5	5	9	19
Totals		11	20	28	59

The women who were either satisfied or very satisfied with women's participation in research and extension noted that women's participation appeared more evident in both research and extension within the sugar industry.

...there are certainly women doing extension work and they seem to be well accepted by the farmers. (Northern interviewee)

There seems to be a lot of women in the extension services. More than anywhere else, I found. (Northern interviewee)

There seems to be quite a few women in the extension officers with the BSES, so I would say I would be satisfied with that level. There seem to be quite a few actually, that I've come across. (Northern interviewee)

I've seen quite a few women in the CSIRO, with our Mill and the chemist. When I think of those areas, I picture a lot of women in there. That's good. (Northern interviewee)

Well any of the women that I've been involved with in the BSES have been great to get along with. I think they may have in the past come across a few more barriers because they are women. They have probably been a little bit more at the forefront of getting women involved in more of the practical and the actual growing of the crop and monitoring. I think they've paved the path in a lot of ways. (Southern interviewee)

...I've done a bit of phone interviews with SRDC and it's always been ladies that I have been talking to for the research part of it. When we visited BSES last year we spoke to a lot of women that work in the BSES down there so I have been pretty satisfied with the women's role in this research sector. (Southern interviewee)

...when we went down to...a study trip to Brisbane BSES, and when we went down there, just about everyone we spoke to was a woman. There were a lot of women down there. So obviously there are quite a few women...into the research field in that side of it... (Southern interviewee)

³ There were four non-responses from females in the southern region for this question.

However, one woman who was satisfied with women's participation in the research and extension sector of the industry did have some reservations about the way that some women operate in extension.

In a research role, I don't think there's a problem having women there. If you're a woman interested in research, you're fairly technical, you're focused, there's usually not too much ditziness going on, and I find women in research I've come across have been as sensible as the men about getting the job done. I don't have a drama with that, but I found some of the extension people, because they're more of a people person, they bring along their weaknesses from their people personality as well and they can be dangerous. (Southern interviewee)

The men who were either satisfied or very satisfied with women's participation in research and extension pointed to the relatively high representative of women in both research and extension, compared to other industry sectors.

I see a lot of women involved in research. It's excellent. (Northern interviewee)

Obviously there's a lot. Research seems to be an area where females do tend to excel... (Northern interviewee)

There's a lot more representation of women in the BSES, involvement is pretty good really. In my actual extension area, there's only a few ladies who are involved. But in the research and that sort of thing, there's a lot more, there would be 30 per cent or something like that. There's quite a heavy representation really. ...There's more men than ladies, but a lot of ladies leave, too. They come and go a bit more frequently than the men. (Southern interviewee)

I think that's good. ...We've got women extension officers, women like that, they need more of those. I'm quite happy with the women that are coming through, like in that side of it, yes. (Southern interviewee)

...we have had some pretty dynamic young ladies come through the sugar industry as extension officers ...Yes, they're pretty switched on about their roles. (Southern interviewee)

Some women who were neutral regarding women's participation in research and extension commented that they did not have enough to do with this sector of the industry to make an assessment.

I'm not really involved in talking to any. (Northern interviewee)

...again, not interested, not aware. (Northern interviewee)

I don't know who's there, how many is there, or anything else. (Northern interviewee)

I don't exactly know how many women are in it at this stage but I think that it should be equal opportunity I suppose. (Southern interviewee)

A couple of other who were neutral regarding women's participation in research and extension noted that although women's participation in this sector was still limited, it was improving.

I think that's pretty man dominated too. When you flip through the BSES the SRDC and all that; there's a few women, but it's pretty much male dominated isn't it? (Northern interviewee)

...that's definitely in transition and is improving (Southern interviewee)

Similarly, the men who were neutral regarding women's participation in research and extension commented that although women's participation in this sector was improving, there is still scope for increased involvement of women.

There's a fair representation and in the relatively short time I've been in this job, two years, I've had dealings with female staff at BSES and Future Cane, Cane Growers, but I can see scope there in those organisations for there still to be a high female representation. I think the days, for example, BSES being the boys club, have gone but there's probably just a slight aftermath of that. (Northern interviewee)

There's certainly more women represented in the research and extension areas than there is on farm. Whether or not it's a fair number of women, I'm not sure about that. When I started on the farm, there were no women, but now it's not unusual for the women to be doing those roles. (Northern interviewee)

Most of the women who were either unsatisfied or very unsatisfied with women's participation in research and extension noted that women were still a minority within this sector.

It's just starting... (Northern interviewee)

I think I've only seen two or three women, like at the BSES and that. (Southern interviewee)

...yes, we have a few. ...Still in a minority. (Southern interviewee)

One woman who was unsatisfied with women's participation in research and extension pointed to the challenges that women face in this sector of the industry.

I know they have a difficult job. It's the same old adage you'd probably find it where you are, too. The women that go into a certain thing like the BSES and that, they've got to work twice as hard to get recognition as what the men do. (Southern interviewee)

The men who were either unsatisfied or very unsatisfied with women's participation in research and extension pointed to the way in which women were still a minority within this sector.

...it's probably something that women are less involved with than the general run of the mill stuff. (Northern interviewee)

...apart from the staff that we have involved in the sugar industry organisation then there's not a lot of involvement of women in R and D. ...We do have women extension officers. But they're in minority. But that's not to say that they don't do a good job because the women that we do have, do a great job. But there are just not enough of them. (Southern interviewee)

I'm not really certain how much involvement they have in the research. It's not many in the extension. I know that women can make very good scientists. Good technicians and scientists I think. Some women can. ...The extension, I don't think there's many in it. ...There's no-one actually at the top levels on the management side of it that I know of. (Southern interviewee)

One man who was unsatisfied with women's participation in research and extension commented on the challenges that women face in the extension sector of the industry.

There should be more. ...I think women are possibly, probably a bit intimidated, if you go out visiting growers, especially if they're cranky. ...I think it takes a particular sort of woman to... Well, it can be difficult for anyone walking onto a farm, if you're not certain of you're welcome... (Southern interviewee)

2.3 Changing role and status of women in the industry

Interviewees discussed their views on whether the role and status of women within the sugar industry had changed over the past five years. Overall, there was agreement that the roles and status of women were gradually changing, but different perspectives on whether any change had occurred over the last five years.

Most of the women felt that the role and status of women in the sugar industry was slowly, gradually changing, even over the last five years (11 in the north and 15 in the south). Many highlighted that women appeared to be more accepted on industry boards, at industry meetings or employed in different sectors within the industry and that there is greater recognition of the contribution that women make to the industry.

Yeah, I guess they have, if I look back. I guess a greater acceptance. I mean, like having women on these different boards and that. I can't remember if there were any five years ago; I don't know but I wasn't aware of it, whereas I am now. ... I guess it gives encouragement to other women, to say oh look, so and so's doing this and so and so's doing that, meaning that other women, if they want to, can pursue those roles. (Northern interviewee)

I think it is slowly changing. Slowly more women are being appointed to boards and that. (Northern interviewee)

Remembering from when I was a kid, I used to tag along with dad and...you didn't really see many women, whether it was wives at meetings or actual industry staff. And now it's not uncommon to turn up to a meeting and you see female presenters, researchers or growers there. So I think that's definitely changed. (Northern interviewee)

Well, we're getting more women onto things. Women are taking more active roles and they are taking more notice of women. ...I think they're more probably more likely to...be open to having women on things and listening to their opinion. Sometimes...you were just a token...but they do take notice now. (Northern interviewee)

There are more women involved in higher places than what there was. I know there's a couple of them up north, they were in quite high places in the sugar industry. I think they're being accepted more than they were. It used to be, you stay at home and look after the family and the bookwork but I think there's a lot now more actively involved in the decision making, themselves. And at the sort of industry policy level... (Southern interviewee)

I think a lot of times they've always been involved in the books and the financial side of the business, but I think women are speaking up a lot more now within the business... Speaking up and asking to be heard. (Southern interviewee)

More acceptance of us. Even from our chairman down, just an ability to actually listen to what the women have to say now. The fact that we've got women out there being employed by our productivity group, doing the inspections. Realisation that they can contribute. (Southern interviewee)

Some women noted that changes in the industry's operating environment have meant that women have to do more to keep their enterprises viable and/or compliant.

I think so, yes, because a lot of them have had to go out and work to make ends meet, actually. (Northern interviewee)

Wages are through the roof and the farmers can't afford to employ people so the wives get out and do it. (Northern interviewee)

I think there's certainly been more involvement and I think too, we're continually bombarded with additional compliance; it just goes on and on and on. I think physically they are needed. They are very much needed, to get out there to get that information, to bring it home to make sure we are complying with all these acts and regulations. (Southern interviewee)

I definitely think that combined with deregulation and combined with low prices and the need to become innovative and a lot more strategic in what they're doing, I think that has come together with women's profile...to really shift and reform the industry. (Southern interviewee)

I think women are making a lot more contribution to the non production areas of the farming enterprises. I think farming enterprises have become more sophisticated in their ownership and administration. And I think that's an area women have moved...or women's participation tends to be more in that side of it then in the actual production of sugar cane. (Southern interviewee)

Similarly, most of the men felt that the role and status of women in the sugar industry was slowly, gradually changing (five in the north and six in the south), as evidenced by a greater acceptance of women in traditionally male roles within the industry and a greater recognition of their contribution to the industry.

Definitely there's been a change. I don't think we're at the end of the road, the change will continue and there will be more, but there definitely has been a change. ...there's a lot more acceptance where previously there probably wasn't so much acceptance to having women on the shop floor [in the mills]. I don't think that that perception or acceptance is going to lessen, it's only going to get better. People get used to the fact, facilities have been changed, logistics have been adopted to allow women to be more comfortable in our environment. (Northern interviewee)

In a positive way. I think we spoke about this earlier, there are more women doing a broader range of roles in the industry, right the way through. I would say more so in the milling side of it and in the R&D side of it as well, certainly. I think they have changed. (Northern interviewee)

There's women in various roles now that were probably a little bit unheard of that might have raised a few eyebrows going back some years. ...not only being involved but they've proved to all and sundry, including all the local menfolk that they can do a damn fine job. (Southern interviewee)

Yes, definitely. There's no doubt about that. I don't think we ever would have seen a woman standing for the CaneGrowers' Executive five years ago. ...There is a change. I just think it's probably still a bit slow, but I suppose, steady, steady. There is a change in the last five years. (Southern interviewee)

Two men emphasised that the younger generation of women appear to have more confidence and are more involved in the farm partnership.

I think the better educated and the younger generation style has brought up the confidence and the spare energy to get involved with different things. Come along to meetings or go to workshops, but it has been hamstrung by the fact that they've got to work. (Northern interviewee)

I think that the industry itself has started to focus on women. But I do see any involvement in women coming from the younger generation not the older generation. And when I say the younger generation, I mean the thirty to forty year old group. I think that's the group where we will see a greater participation in the future. (Southern interviewee)

However, one of the men who felt that the role and status of women had changed conceded that women's participation within the industry still tends to be marginalised to 'things that men don't really want to do.'

...they've been involved in some of the things associated with some of the detail work. But usually that's just an extension of what they were doing before, you know, they get sort of marginalised into some of those sort of things. Like account keeping and paying the bills and keeping the records and now they've got into a few things on farmBut still the same sort of thing. Still the sort of things that men don't really want to do. (Southern interviewee)

Several women (six in the north and three in the south) felt that the role and status of women had not changed in the last five years, although there has been some change over the past 10 to 30 years.

Probably not the last five years. ...I'd say probably 10 to 20 years there's been a change. ...Because the sugar industry will just plod along, whether you're there or not. (Northern interviewee)

Nothing much has changed. ...There have always been some women who've got out there and played a role, but it was a very minor few. (Northern interviewee)

...Because I don't feel that enough women are on those higher boards and committees for it to have changed. ...women's views aren't well sought or known about, because we do think differently to men. (Northern interviewee)

Not over five years. Over 25 years, yes. Well I think we've been accepted. As my mother's comment "Women don't go to Cane Grower's meetings". And now I mean, every meeting there there's women at the meetings. And nobody thinks this is strange or anything like that. (Southern interviewee)

I don't think over the last five years. Maybe over the last 20, I would say yes. 20 or 30 years it's changed a lot but I wouldn't say over the last five years. (Southern interviewee)

Similarly, several of the men (four in the north and three in the south) felt that the role and status of women had not changed in the last five years, although there has been some change over the past 15 to 20 years.

I don't think so. Probably in twenty years it has but...I don't think it would have changed a lot. (Northern interviewee)

Over a five year time frame, I'd probably only have to say minimally. If you had of said 15 years, I would have said greatly. (Northern interviewee)

A little but it's got a long way to go. It's changed a little bit. (Southern interviewee)

One of the men who felt that the role and status of women had not changed in the last five years qualified this by noting that the visibility of women in the industry had changed.

Don't think the role has changed and don't think the status has changed. But I think the visibility has changed. I think it's a lot more visible and it's received a lot more emphasis, and rightly so. But I don't think the roles have changed whatsoever. (Southern interviewee)

Four of the women in the north were not sure whether the role and status of women had changed in the last five years. Mostly this was because they felt they had not been involved in the industry enough to make an assessment.

Over the last five years I haven't really been involved in it. (Northern interviewee)

I really hope so, but I really haven't been involved in it enough to find out. (Northern interviewee)

However, one of the women who was not sure whether the role and status of women had changed in the last five years based this assessment on scepticism about CANEGROWERS' commitment to women's involvement.

Now [CANEGROWERS] has got four [female representatives] but really the organisation says we want to get women elected but that's only the first step and I don't know if they've thought past that. Well, that's the first step. Well, now what do we do to ensure that – if that's the be all and end all just to get women elected, it's really, it's lip service too. (Northern interviewee)

3. Factors influencing women's participation

It is well documented that the male-dominated nature of agricultural industries and their associated organisations, which translates into low levels of representation of women on agricultural industry representative bodies, means that women's interests tend to be under-represented and marginalised in the agricultural sector and rural communities (Dimopoulous and Sheridan, 2000; Alston, 2003). Past studies of the factors that influence women's participation in the sugar industry have identified the marginalisation of women within the industry and the lack of recognition of their contributions to the industry (Pini, 1999, 2001).

Similarly, the women we interviewed identified a range of challenges and opportunities regarding women's participation in decision-making within the sugar industry.

3.1 Challenges

Claridge (1998) grouped the constraints and barriers which limit women's participation, especially in agricultural decision-making and leadership, into three categories: socialised, situational and structural constraints. Similarly, the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Resource Management's (1998) report on women in agriculture and resource management identifies three types of barriers to women's greater participation in leadership roles in agriculture: cultural and attitudinal barriers;

structural and organisational barriers and practical barriers and multiple roles. The women we interviewed identified a range of constraints to women's participation in decision-making and leadership within the sugar industry, which tended to fall under these three broad categories.

3.1.1 Socialised, cultural and attitudinal barriers and constraints

Male-dominated industry culture

The male-dominated culture of the sugar industry was a recurring theme among women's discussion of the challenges that influenced women's participation in the industry.

Probably the ingrained mentality of 'this is how it's always been done'.
(Northern interviewee)

...it's predominantly a man's business... Women have no business in cane; it's the old mentality. (Northern interviewee)

...I think it's historically and culturally, it has been the man's position to go to the meetings. (Northern interviewee)

Overcoming their fear of a male-dominated industry. (Southern interviewee)

Many women commented on the intimidating nature of the entrenched attitudes towards women's participation within the industry, based on gender stereotyping.

It's male dominated. ... Yeah, a lot of women are intimidated. (Northern interviewee)

...the gender imbalance: often the forums are very male-dominated, so it's quite intimidating for a woman in that situation. (Southern interviewee)

I think a lot of ladies probably tend to feel that they shouldn't be coming along to those meetings because that's what the men do and they look after the farm, whereas they take the role of doing the books or something like that. (Southern interviewee)

Women in each area have their own fears...and walking into a room full of men is very intimidating to a lot of women. Men have an ability to start talking varieties, to start talking pests, and that I'm fine with, but they have the ability to talk in a language that women don't necessarily understand. (Southern interviewee)

I think some challenges for some women are just going to the meetings. Just getting there. Some of them feel that...the husband's the cane farmer and they're the housewife. (Southern interviewee)

Three women discussed their experience with going to industry meetings in spite of the intimidating, male dominated industry culture.

I go to shed meetings. ...if they have a joke at me and try to make an idiot out of me well I've got to quip quick. I'll come back straight away. Whereas a lot of women will just sit there and they're intimidated. But I'm pretty quick on the draw. I've got a warped sense of humour so that gets me a long way. 'What are you bloody doing here?' 'I grow a few ton of cane down the road there, I brought my own chair too.' (Northern interviewee)

I was one of the first women that used to ever attend grower meetings when we were first married, and I used to sneak in after the meeting had started and sit down the back. I don't do that anymore. But, believe me, 28 years ago, you did not come. Especially when you weren't even known, your name wasn't even on the assignment to the mill or anything. It was not done, believe me, it was not done. The number of times that [my husband] was told by growers, who are still growing in this district, what's she doing here? Why have you brought her along? (Southern interviewee)

The challenge was breaking into a male dominated industry. That was very daunting, going to meetings initially was very daunting. You know, you get stared at...when you walk in, so that was a challenge, just getting over that, because I felt very self-conscious, and when you don't go to the meetings, you don't understand the meeting processes and you don't know when they say 'everyone in favour' whether you put your hand up or whether you don't, you know, because I didn't know. So that was challenging, but I think I'm over that now. (Southern interviewee)

Confidence

Many women discussed the way in which confidence, especially in relation to operating in the public sphere, was another challenge regarding women's participation in the industry.

... the women don't forge their way into things...they don't put themselves forward, because some of them, they may not even have the self esteem, they don't feel confident to be able, and they don't feel they have enough knowledge to do all of this, and this is what's holding them back. (Northern interviewee)

The ones who haven't ever participated before, it's probably hard for them, especially now if they've always been mums and their kids are starting to grow up and they're not so involved with the kids anymore. ...Some of it's the confidence; some don't like to change either. (Northern interviewee)

They lack the confidence to go to a meeting because they...feel too that they'll ask a silly question that everyone is going to say, well, you should've known that, you know, how can you not know that? There's usually a fair bit of testosterone at the meetings as well. So there are some aggressive people, so it is a confidence thing, I think. (Northern interviewee)

I wouldn't feel welcome at a shed meeting, I'd feel out of place. ...I wouldn't feel confident enough to go. (Northern interviewee)

I think feeling comfortable is the biggest barrier and quite a few of the wives have said that to me, they say, 'thank goodness you're here, otherwise I would have been the only woman' or 'thank goodness such and such is here, I would have been on my own'. They hate that, because the men look at them, 'what are you doing here', they feel self-conscious. (Southern interviewee)

Only that I'm not confident to do so. The big challenge would be to overcome that I guess. (Southern interviewee)

Upbringing or generation

One woman highlighted the way in which confidence to participate was partly linked to women's upbringing or generation.

Depending on their upbringing and age. I can see a few challenges as far as independence or confidence. (Northern interviewee)

Several other women commented more generally on the way that upbringing or generation influenced both male and female attitudes towards women's participation.

I'd say this generation, depending on the age group of the people you're talking about. The younger ones, they will come out and communicate openly and not worry about it, but you if you get someone in their 50s and 60s, unless they've really had to push themselves out there, they've come from more of an environment growing up in a situation where the wife is there to do the cooking, the washing, feed the kids and have food on the table. Sit back and don't say much more. (Northern interviewee)

I think now with the younger men in the sugar industry...they've got a different view and they will listen to their wives, they'll listen to the women. They think well, you have got an opinion whereas before the older generation didn't...think it was a woman's place to have an opinion, particularly around something like that. You could know, you know, what meat to buy or what...cake to cook but to have an opinion on what cane you should plant. I've been fortunate that [my husband] and I, we can talk about all of those things and my children are the same. (Northern interviewee)

Now my mother was a cane farmer, and I said I was going off to the Canegrowers meeting. And she said 'Oh dear, women don't go to that.' And I said 'Mum, now they do.' (Southern interviewee)

Just a week ago I said to Grandad 'you need to now be teaching me when to do what. You know I can drive the tractors, you know I can fix them because I'm doing it with our other' but he says 'its not women's work'. I said 'but you know when [my husband] starts on that farm if something happened to you tomorrow, you know I'll be the person there doing it'. He said 'I know but not while I'm here. It's too hard for you'. (Southern interviewee)

Industry knowledge and experience

Many women noted that women's level of industry knowledge or experience was another factor that influenced their participation in the sugar industry. Women's level

of knowledge or experience often appeared to be linked to confidence. Another related theme was the way in which women often have to ‘prove themselves’ more than men.

The sort of meetings, a lot of the time they’re held in sheds and it’s really an environment that’s not welcoming or it’s not a comfortable environment for a lot of women. In a lot of incidences, they really have limited knowledge of what you would consider to be a basic part of their business, I suppose. (Northern interviewee)

...most of the time the men that are up the front know more about it than I do. So you know, nothing worse than standing up there and being shown that you don’t know what the hell you’re talking about. (Northern interviewee)

... I don’t know if I’ve got enough knowledge to be on the board anyway. (Northern interviewee)

I think it’s being young and having less experience. And sometimes you get the impression that you can say something, but if it comes from someone else, they’ll listen to the other person before they listen to me. So that can be a bit of a problem because you get pretty frustrated. Like, I just said that to that person, they’ve stolen my idea and now you’re saying you believe him. (Northern interviewee)

I think women have to really prove themselves more than what a male does, because they’re women. (Northern interviewee)

My experience...because I always have to prove everything to [my husband] and it never happens. He never says: ‘gee, yes, dear, that’s a good idea.’ ...It takes a year or so to convince him of things. (Southern interviewee)

Furthermore, a couple of women noted that some women did not participate in industry meetings or forums because they were afraid of embarrassing their husband or interfering with ‘his domain’.

They don’t come to meetings because they’re not comfortable coming to grower meetings. I’ve said them, why don’t you come...and [they] say, my husband wouldn’t like us to come because we might ask a question, we might embarrass them because we sort of asked a question. (Northern interviewee)

I think some women would have a wealth of knowledge and could make a positive impact. I think there would be. For me, no. I can’t see myself, to me, I feel like I would be standing in front of [my husband]: that’s his domain. I wouldn’t feel comfortable with that. If it’s a position where it could be either he or I, I would prefer to see him there. (Northern interviewee)

Support

Several women mentioned that the level of support and encouragement or, conversely, resistance, at home influenced women’s participation within the industry.

Maybe if there's some resistance from their husband or their kids, it really depends. (Northern interviewee)

You've got to have that support at home. If you haven't got that, it's very hard. (Northern interviewee)

Possibly there would be some that don't have the support of their husbands or their partners. I would imagine that there would still be some people that preferred their wives didn't get too involved because they don't like to be told. There's a fair bit, in their mind I'm sure, for keeping them all in the dark. (Southern interviewee)

So there's a lot of obstacles, I think, and sometimes...the obstacles are their own partners, that they don't believe that potentially, in some situations, that that's their role, and there's not necessarily a broader acknowledgement of the industry to sort of support men to support their women to come. (Southern interviewee)

Unless there's anyone there that's got that good support at home to let them be able to do it. Like I know, we've got in Bundaberg here about five or six women on the councils, we've got a lady mayor. Their husbands must be so understanding and supportive of them... (Southern interviewee)

If your husband isn't going to invite you, why would you feel comfortable that the other blokes are going to want you there? And then what does happen sometimes, is they get there and he walks off and leaves her. She feels awful. It's like going to a party where you don't know anyone. He needs to stay by her side until she feels better. (Southern interviewee)

3.1.2 Structural and organisational barriers and constraints

In addition to the overall, male-dominated industry culture, several women highlighted the specific, gender-based institutional structures within the sugar industry that limit women's participation within industry organisations, especially the voting rights within CANEGROWERS.

Men giving them a voice. That's about it. I believe in Ingham, the [women in sugar] network that started up there, the men got very anti when the women started nominating people to get on Canegrowers Boards and things like that. Just through the conversations I've had with my father-in-law, I don't know if they were nervous about it, but it was more I just don't think they wanted females on their board. (Northern interviewee)

You can only have one authorised representative per farming enterprise. So there is one vote. So it really hasn't encouraged participation. (Northern interviewee)

...it's very difficult for women to be involved because it's only the authorised representative who can actually stand for an elected position. ... In a lot of cases, the women are daughter-in-laws if it's a family partnership and a lot of males won't, if it's one property, they're not going to give them the vote, you

know, the authorised position. So it's very difficult for women to be involved in the representation side of the industry. (Northern interviewee)

3.1.3 Situational and practical barriers and constraints

Most women highlighted a range of situational and practical barriers to women's participation in the sugar industry. A lack of time, due to the multiple roles women undertake, including on- and off-farm work commitments and family responsibilities was particularly important. Other factors included stage of life, financial constraints and individual priorities.

Time constraints

Several women nominated time as a key constraint on women's participation within the sugar industry.

Time is definitely a constraint for me. (Northern interviewee)

I started a course I wanted to do, an accounting course, and I ran out of time. I couldn't fit it in, so that's on the backburner now. Even just doing something for myself is difficult. Joining an organisation would be quite hard. If I can't commit to it, then it's no good to even start. (Northern interviewee)

Time is the essence I'm afraid. (Southern interviewee)

Multiple roles

Most women highlighted how busy women are with juggling multiple roles, particularly family commitments and off-farm work and noted that this restricted women's ability to participate within the industry.

I think just time factors, women are generally very busy with kids. I know even when the kids are getting bigger and I am saying that I will have more time but I'm in the car all the time taking them places. (Northern interviewee)

Time...particularly if they've got young families... (Northern interviewee)

...a lot of them have got their own careers and are busy anyway. (Northern interviewee)

...time...and their family circumstance because sometimes women have got to work outside. You know, they have to have another job as well. (Northern interviewee)

Some women juggle a family and have other work commitments, so that would be a challenge. (Northern interviewee)

Well my major challenge is balancing family, farm and still that meanie called time. So that everybody's happy, keeping everybody happy. (Southern interviewee)

One woman placed this within the broader context of the 'economics of sugar growing', which have meant that women have had to either spend more time working on the farm or have had to seek work off-farm.

You know the economics of sugar growing in the past twenty years have probably pushed families into a situation where the women are either fully occupied on the farm or fully occupied off farm. There aren't a lot of growing women, grower's wives, and partners etc that have got time to participate in part time, unpaid network type organisations. I think that's just an economic fact. (Southern interviewee)

Off-farm work

Many women specifically nominated off-farm work commitments as a major constraint on women's participation in the sugar industry. The economic pressure that is making this off-farm work necessary was an underlying theme in many of these comments.

A lot of women have had to go outside and find employment, so they would have time constraints. (Northern interviewee)

...because of the downturn...a lot of the women are going off and getting careers off farm. (Southern interviewee)

Because we've got a lot of women that are off-farm, because we've got so many small farms in this region that are unviable financially. A lot of them are partaking in off-farm income. ...So trying to actually involve women in this region is very difficult. (Southern interviewee)

...a lot of women are working off-farm, you know, they're nursing or doing office work or whatever, so they don't have the opportunity to take up the challenges in the industry that way. (Southern interviewee)

There's many women now that have got to go out to work to support the income and with the industry the way it is, the ups and downs it's had, that's another way you have to look at it as well. Hence, as far as women's groups go, you can't get along to a meeting on those circumstances. (Southern interviewee)

Timing of industry events

Several women noted that the timing of industry events often did not suit women, due to their family commitments and/or off-farm work.

A lot of women do work off-farm and a lot of the sugar industry meetings and activities are during business hours. (Northern interviewee)

...the timing of the meetings often...is not appropriate to women, particularly if they've got families. (Southern interviewee)

...most of them work off-farm, so a lot of the things are run during the day when they're at work. That is a really big factor, or if they're young enough, they've got children to look after. (Southern interviewee)

Age or stage of life

A couple of the older women we interview noted that their age or stage of life meant that they preferred to be less actively involved within the industry, compared to the younger women.

I'd come back to the fact that I kind of feel that perhaps my time now, age factor and sort of – it's something more, I think, for younger ones to, yes, take on board, more so than someone around my age bracket at the moment. (Northern interviewee)

Well personally, my age is one [69 years]. Not that my age worries me, but I think you've got to be realistic. I mean how long could I contribute? (Southern interviewee)

Financial constraints

Some women identified financial constraints as a factor that influenced their ability to participate in sugar industry events or activities.

More money so it would be a lot easier, not having to say, 'Yes, we need to do this but we can't afford it.' (Northern interviewee)

Financial would be another [constraint], the affordability of doing a lot of things, travelling. A lot of things entail travelling. Travelling costs money. I'm talking about a friend of mine. We've all had to go out and find jobs, because the cane farm just doesn't do it any more. It doesn't afford lifestyle any more. Basically, the return of a cane farm is not keeping up with the cost of living, especially this year with fertiliser prices and everything else going up. We're getting less than we got last year. We're going to get less. It's very gloomy. Very depressing actually. (Northern interviewee)

Individual priorities

Some women noted that participation within the sugar industry was not a high priority for them.

...I purposely haven't sought out these things and yet I have felt I could've done. I sort of felt, it was sort of hinted that I could take a role and I didn't have the desire. So I don't see, I haven't felt any barriers at all, had I wanted to pursue those interests. (Northern interviewee)

And being involved in anything like that, I don't consider it a priority. I should, I realise that, because that is the future of the industry I am involved in. But at the same time I just can't make the time available. It means too much of an upheaval, I suppose, to do that. (Northern interviewee)

...because we don't get all our money from cane, it has slipped to not the main priority. (Southern interviewee)

One woman felt that women's level of participation was more a consequence of individual choice than any particular barriers.

I don't think there is any [barriers]. It's up to the individual woman. (Northern interviewee)

Another woman noted that many women are not particularly interested in being involved in representative roles within the industry.

A lot of women don't want to be in a representative role and from the industry's perspective at the moment, the push is they want more women in representative roles but a lot of women have said to me, we really don't want to be in a representative role but we want to be able to take part. We want to be able to, I suppose, have a say in what's happening but...a lot of them don't want the representative role but that seems to be the push that, you know, we want women in this representative role. They just want to be included, I suppose, a lot of them. (Northern interviewee)

3.2 Opportunities

Both our female and male interviewees nominated a range of opportunities for women to participate within different sugar industry sectors, including training, courses or workshops, industry meetings, including shed meetings, employment opportunities, research projects, Productivity Services, industry boards, Women in Sugar groups and driving new industries, technologies or practices.

Training, courses or workshops

Many women nominated training, courses or workshops as a key opportunity for women for women to participate within the sugar industry.

There's lots of little ways. You can always be there. Going to workshops and learning new different things. (Northern interviewee)

Opportunities for other women are for them to improve some skills. Not that I think they're skill levels are low at times, but...if they identified something that they felt their skills level was low, like using a computer or something like that, there is so much opportunity for them to get a group together to improve those skills. (Northern interviewee)

They have equal opportunity as anybody else to do the workshops, to do any of that. (Northern interviewee)

We advertise them in our [CANEGROWERS] newsletter, computer courses and basic things. ...they could enrol for any training course that we advertise, they could go and do things like their chem cert, you know the chemical qualification. (Northern interviewee)

I think there are plenty of opportunities for women to get involved. ...[CANEGROWERS] hold a lot of workshops and shed meetings and those sort of things... (Southern interviewee)

I would love to see more women coming to our extension things, field days, bus trips, whatever...so they understand more of the technical side of what's happening, and also they can see the new ideas and new innovations and they can go in and say, 'why aren't we doing that'. (Southern interviewee)

Similarly, several men also referred to industry courses or seminars as one way that women can participate within the industry.

There are a few schemes out there at the moment. They could visit the local FutureCane website or office and they...would be able to tell them what seminars may be coming up specific to women in the industry. (Northern interviewee)

There have been different courses done recently where quite a few women have learnt how to monitor soya beans and things like that. (Southern interviewee)

We've seen that in recent years and we've had COMPASS courses, we've had water management plants that we had to do, [the male farmers] bought their wives along, and a lot of those FEAT programs, they bought their wives along, and they're slowly starting to bring their wives along to things like that. (Southern interviewee)

Shed meetings

Some women identified shed meetings as a potential opportunity for women to be involved in the production side of the industry.

I saw there was a new round of shed meetings going out, so that's probably about it at the moment. (Northern interviewee)

There's plenty of opportunity for cane farmer partners to go to shed meetings and be involved in that side of it. (Southern interviewee)

One man also highlighted shed meetings as an important way for women to find out what is going on in the industry.

Shed meetings are an important method of disseminating information to growers and that's equal opportunity for women and everybody just to roll up and hear what's going on and meeting your fellow growers in an informal atmosphere. (Southern interviewee)

Other industry meetings

In addition to shed meetings, some women pointed to general industry meetings as one way that women could participate in the industry.

I would like to see them starting at grass roots level and just getting to the different meetings. ...They could come to meetings, they are welcome. I would love them there because you get sick of just of all these men. I would love them there. (Northern interviewee)

You know, there's been a few meetings I've been to where women have had their say and put their point view across very strongly, I guess that will still keep happening. (Southern interviewee)

One man also highlighted grower meetings as an opportunity for women to participate in the industry.

Come along, number one. I mean the grower meetings... So that's the first step. There's nothing to stop them. Again it's the open door, there's no discouragement. (Northern interviewee)

Employment opportunities

A couple of women identified employment within the industry as another opportunity for women within the industry.

...maybe job opportunities within in the sugar industry, maybe something like that. (Northern interviewee)

Like the ladies that are going out doing the soya bean inspections for insects and pests. There would be positions probably at the mill in which they could do their part in the laboratories, maybe not in the general milling chain itself but office, even cane inspector jobs, that sort of thing. There is the peanut industry that is in rotation with sugar. I suppose that they would have different surveys and things that would have to be done, I'm not really sure. I am sure there are things that happen at the mill that women could be involved in. (Southern interviewee)

Several men also identified employment opportunities as another area where women could participate within the sugar industry.

The way they can get involved is basically get employed into a role that's in the industry. That's one way of getting involved. (Northern interviewee)

With the anti-discrimination laws, if they have the qualifications, they can apply for any job at any level within the industry and from service provision, we definitely have extension staff, managers and the likes that are female. (Northern interviewee)

They can encourage women to take up employment in sugar mills. Sugar mills are really struggling for employees now because as soon as anybody's got too many brains they head off to the mines and want to work day and night in the mines and make a lot of money. There's lots of roles in the sugar mill women can participate in. (Southern interviewee)

Research projects

A couple of women pointed to involvement in research projects as one opportunity for women within the industry.

I think there's a fair bit, with these SRDC grants, I think women could probably get involved in the project management side of things, just because they're more organised and they pay a lot more attention to detail. So you know milestone reports are going to be met and this is going to be organised on time. (Northern interviewee)

...there are any number of government funded projects that open their doors to women with particular skills. ...I think there are lots of opportunities for women to participate apart from on-farm stuff which has been happening for a hundred years or more. (Southern interviewee)

Productivity Services

One woman noted that that the Productivity Services were an area that could benefit from greater participation of women.

I would like to see more women in the extension prod service side of things. (Northern interviewee)

One man made a similar point regarding women's participation in Productivity Services, although he emphasised this as an opportunity for women to 'learn about cane.'

Even in volunteer roles on productivity boards and those sort of things where they actually learn about cane. There's always opportunities for women to be involved in those sort of things. At certain times of the year the productivity board's very, very busy; plant distribution, those sort of things. A real opportunity [for those] that want to know a bit about cane plants and righto, it's unpaid work; but that might lead to paid work at some later stage. (Southern interviewee)

Industry Boards

Several women identified participation within industry Boards, including CANEGROWERS, Productivity Boards and Mill Boards as an area where women could be more involved.

And then, obviously, the other big thing is getting into male-dominated boards, like prod boards and CANEGROWERS. (Northern interviewee)

And I really would like to see some women get on the Canegrowers boards, and anything else. But I think it's sort of...we're making inroads. (Southern interviewee)

There are opportunities for board level representation. For growers, and women involved in the industry. (Southern interviewee)

...the local [CANEGROWERS] elections coming up and we've got [a woman] standing for a director's position so there's a way women can get more involved, actually get on a board or in a committee... (Southern interviewee)

Going into the boardroom. Women here have tried it in the past...They've accepted us reasonably well. (Southern interviewee)

Similarly, some men noted that women could become more involved at the representative level within the industry, although there were different perspectives on the challenges that women face when they participate in this area.

Again, being a representative, nomination for elections are out there open and available. Whether there's still some feeling of intimidation and only the bold put their hand up, but that goes for a male too. (Northern interviewee)

When you come to [CANEGROWERS] elections for directors, any woman, any person can put their name down, as long as they're a farmer. Whether they get voted in or not is another issue. I think now there are six women in the sugar industry that are Board of Directors on Cane Growers, so they are starting. And it comes down to whether a lady wants to get involved and she's not intimidated by a man or things like that. There are a lot of ways that women can get involved. (Northern interviewee)

I think there is room for them to be involved in more at the political level. It's always been a man's world as far as the politics are concerned in the sugar industry. At least around here, absolutely, it's never been anything different. It still isn't. I'm sure they could bring a different perspective to things. (Southern interviewee)

I do not see any reason why women aren't in Canegrowers Organization, Mill boards. (Southern interviewee)

Women in Sugar groups

Several women nominated Women in Sugar groups as a key opportunity for women to participate within the sugar industry, although one woman acknowledged that many women in the sugar industry are not involved in these groups.

...Women in Sugar have given them that forum to voice their opinions and they're being taken notice of now... (Northern interviewee)

Well, some women are being involved in Women in Sugar, but there are a lot of women out there that aren't. (Southern interviewee)

...I've invited so many women [to local Women in Sugar group]; whenever I see women I ask them to come along and there's always opportunities there and it's very much a participative organisation, a supportive organisation whereas we support every one. (Southern interviewee)

A couple of men in the south discussed the strengths of the Women in Sugar group in their region.

I think Women in Sugar was designed, when things were really low, to try and get the morale of the family unit brought back up. I really think if you get the

right people to drive Women in Sugar, I think that they can be a real asset to the family farm. (Southern interviewee)

I think the Women in Sugar has been a great thing to get the women...in a side door into some of the decision making in the industry because up until a number of years ago there didn't seem to be an opportunity there or they always said it was a boy's club or that sort of thing which I sort of disagree with in one way, in the fact that you've got to get into something and actually put the hard yards in to actually, you know, probably work and understand. It's not an industry that you can just step into in one, two or three or five years and understand it I suppose. (Southern interviewee)

Driving new industries, technologies or practices

A few men identified opportunities for greater participation of women in driving new industries, technologies or practices within the sugar industry.

But these new industries, the ones I'm talking about are linking probably sugar, the cane industry with a heap of new things and because women were involved from its inception, I think you will find they will be the ones putting their hand up and saying, well I'll be on the board of that because I understand the process. (Northern interviewee)

I think as a new technology comes along, that's a good place for [women] to become involved. We've seen that with things like break crops, doing things like bug checking and things like that. (Southern interviewee)

I really think [women] should look at the environmental side of it, best practices. Canegrowers have got a best practice farming [guide] and so has BSES. Women should look at all those sorts of things. Anything to do with the farming, whatever is written about farming, I really think that they should be there to get an idea of what it's all about. ...Some men are hopeless keeping records, even spray records or fertiliser records, so all they've got to do, women could help on that side of it. I think they can play a really big part. (Southern interviewee)

Raising the profile of women

A couple of women from the north noted the flow on effect that greater participation of women in industry groups or activities could have in terms of raising the profile of women within the sugar industry.

The other thing is for some women, if they're out there in these groups, they just get more recognition possibly. It has to be managed well too, but they might actually be accepted more into some of the industry things, if that's what they desire. If people are looking for people to carry out activities, they say, 'okay, this person has been involved in managing this project or running these workshops' or things like they, then they've demonstrated to others that they have the 'get up and go', I guess. People have the opportunity to listen to them, so they get an impression of which direction they're heading. (Northern interviewee)

I think it would be good to get some more example women in particular areas and that would almost encourage people to do a bit more. Maryanne Salvetti, she breaks the ice a little bit and she lets other women know, 'I can represent industry at the agri-political level here', and in an arena that was previously very strongly blokey, so I think the opportunities are for women to perhaps break through the ice in a couple of key areas, like the agri-political area, in the management of some of the sugar milling area. CSR had a female CEO somewhere down the track, and that made people sit up and take notice. (Northern interviewee)

Opportunities are there for the taking

Some of the women we interviewed emphasised that it was up to women to grab whatever opportunities they could find, if they wanted to participate within the industry.

I guess it's just grabbing at those opportunities when they come up. (Northern interviewee)

Whatever they want to do. I feel that if they want to do it, it's there for them. You know, as long as they're genuine and so on. (Northern interviewee)

Well the opportunity's there. You've just got to put feelers out for yourself. We have our [Women in Sugar] meeting once a month and we contact people by email. We put it in the newsletter at the Canegrowers. The more we get in, the better it is for us. The more they're aware of what they can learn, where they can go and how it can be achieved. (Northern interviewee)

Women's involvement in board level, women's involvement within the services side, managers, administration management – whatever they want to do. (Southern interviewee)

Some of the men made similar comments regarding the ability for women to grab whatever opportunities they want to, although one man highlighted that it is easier to find out about these opportunities if you are already involved in an industry group.

There's opportunities here. Usually what happens in this area, when you become involved in a group of people, then you find the opportunities. It seems to be the first step you take, you've got to put yourself in a group and there aren't a lot of women in those groups, whereas if someone was looking to play an active role doing something, projects and that, it needs to be into a group. The group can be Canegrowers, it can be the mill, it can be whatever, DPI, BSES and then there are avenues. If you're not in touch, you don't know of these opportunities, that's the hard thing, and not always do people approach people outside to be part of, because some people don't want to be part of it. (Northern interviewee)

I mean, they can do anything. They can become the farmer, they can grow the cane, they can if they want to but to me, it's not what I think is important. It's how many of them want to do it, you know, because no one is stopping anybody from doing anything. (Northern interviewee)

There's opportunities for women to be involved from whatever level they want to be from the very basic through to however high they want to be. There is nothing to stop women nominating for any position. (Southern interviewee)

Lack of opportunities or lack of awareness or promotion of opportunities

Although many of our interviewees identified a range of ways that women could participate in the industry if they chose, some women felt that there were not many real opportunities for women.

Not very much, really. Not locally, anyway, unless you want to go and do MODIS training or something like that. That's about the only thing I've seen. (Northern interviewee)

There's no opportunities out there for it, I don't reckon. (Northern interviewee)

Some women commented that they did not feel that they were involved in the industry enough to be able to identify opportunities for women to participate in the industry.

I'm not that involved. I haven't really had the time to look into what is going on. (Northern interviewee)

I still don't understand the networks myself... I don't know what other opportunities there are for women. I don't know about other seminars that are being run or anything like that; even if it's just a get-together to meet other women in sugar and to discuss what's happening with the industry. (Northern interviewee)

Another woman pointed out that opportunities are often not well promoted.

But now that [my husband's] been more involved with extension offices, when they get feedback they pass it onto him as well. Whereas I don't think – if he hadn't got that – like a lot of things by email, we wouldn't get it. There's not a big advertising thing for it. (Northern interviewee)

4. Women's preferences for participation

We explored women's preferences for participation within the sugar industry by firstly asking the women we interviewed to rate how important participation within the industry was to them personally. We then asked them to explain what motivates them to participate within the industry and how they prefer to participate in the industry.

4.1 Importance of participation

The majority of women we interviewed rated participation within the sugar industry as of high or very high importance for them personally (13 in the north and 11 in the south). They offered a broad range of reasons why participation at various levels within the industry was important to them, ranging from the need to be involved in your family business and keep informed in order to support the family business,

through to the need for women to have a say in the industry because they can bring different perspectives to industry issues.

Because that's our family business and you can't run a business and not be involved. (Northern interviewee)

I do think it is very important to be kept informed and to go to these meetings and forums to see what the general trend is. (Northern interviewee)

It's very important because to me, this is the future I want to pass on to my children, and I want it to be a good future for them, so if I can do anything to help it, I will. (Northern interviewee)

Actually, it is important because we've all got points of view. I think it is very important that women have their say. (Northern interviewee)

If you don't include the women you've only got 50% of the population. I've never liked affirmative action. I will fight for my job on my own merit, not because I'm a woman. So I think it's absolutely necessary. (Southern interviewee)

Yeah, because I really feel that I need to support [my husband]. Like we're very much a team and so the more I can participate and the more I understand, obviously the more we can become a better team. (Southern interviewee)

If we aren't getting out there and getting that information, we can't make the right decision. (Southern interviewee)

The women who rated participation within the sugar industry as being of moderate importance to them personally (four in the north and five in the south) were more ambivalent about participation. One woman commented that she was only interested in her own farm enterprise; one noted that it depended on the situation; others commented that they were often reluctant to be involved in industry activities; one woman noted that she did not feel she was 'part of the business.'

If I didn't do what I do on the farm well it'd go backwards. ... I'm only interested in our farm. The rest of the industry, well, it fights for itself. (Northern interviewee)

...this is something depending on the situation. If it's just a normal run of the mill thing that goes all the time, you wouldn't find me anywhere around. But if I thought it was something that would have a significant impact on a situation you'd probably find that I would get involved in it. (Northern interviewee)

I find probably I've got to be pushed into it and I do enjoy it once you're there... (Northern interviewee)

I'm a person that doesn't normally put myself forward for these things. (Southern interviewee)

In our family, my husband does most of it – I am not part of the business.
(Southern interviewee)

The women who rated participation within the sugar industry as being of low or very low importance to them personally (five in the north and four in the south) gave various reasons why that this was not a high priority for them, including family responsibilities, stage of life and lack of confidence.

I don't think that's something I need to look into at this point. ... Having the small kids. There's enough to do with the bookkeeping and the rest of it.
(Northern interviewee)

I think in all the 20-something years I've been here, I've been to one training session. (Northern interviewee)

If it means to, I guess, towards the survival, I suppose, the growth of the industry...but then I don't know...it's something more, I think, for younger ones to, yes, take on board, more so than someone around my age bracket at the moment. (Northern interviewee)

For me personally, I would prefer for me to have a meal cooked for him and for him to go to a meeting and for me to be there with the kids, helping them do their homework. (Northern interviewee)

I haven't got a lot of self confidence so I don't sort of feel confident in all that sort of thing. I like to go along and listen but I don't participate too much, like speaking out in front of people. I just freeze. I couldn't do any of that.
(Southern interviewee)

I'm not good in that sort of situation. I leave that to other people who are good at that. (Southern interviewee)

4.2 Motivations for participation

Women identified a wide range of factors that motivated them to participate within the sugar industry.

Relevance or benefit

Many women noted that they participated in industry activities or events when they could see that there is a clear relevance and benefit to their business.

If I thought it was going to help our business... (Northern interviewee)

If I can see there's a use for it and it's beneficial... But on the whole, unless it's something of real significance, I can't see the relevance of wasting time.
(Northern interviewee)

I'm willing to go to some of it; I mean this is our living. Plus if there's easier ways of doing things, new technology and if it really works. (Northern interviewee)

Occasionally I'll go to a field day or a workshop. It has to be very relevant. Obviously time is pretty limited. I'm not one to go to any workshop, it has to be relevant to something I'm going to use. (Northern interviewee)

If I could see a real benefit, it would benefit the community, everyone. Not just me, because I would feel like that would be a waste of time, because I'm happy where I am. If it meant that this would benefit say the industry or the whole community, if it's something that you do as a group. ...If there was to be an organisation where they say, 'okay, we've got something planned, this is going to help the industry, we need a few people to join, to help', that would be something that would motivate me, but not just to join an organisation for the sake of it. It has to be productive for me. (Northern interviewee)

...if I thought it was going to help out with our business or if we – like a lot of this workplace health and safety rules and regulations that we need to know, I'd come along to things like that or you know, anything that's going to make us do the right thing by whoever is making us do it. (Southern interviewee)

Information seeking and networking

Gathering information and networking were two other common factors that motivated women to participate within the sugar industry. Many women highlighted the interconnections between information seeking and networking and emphasised the importance of keeping up to date with the latest information in order to improve their farming practices.

It's a place that you source a lot of information and get to know people that you wouldn't actually get to network with, in your own circle. ...The amount of people I've met, in the last couple of months, from going to these things, is just unbelievable. The doors that it's opened... (Northern interviewee)

Socialise. I want to learn more but it's got to fit in with my life too. (Northern interviewee)

And if you don't go out and glean everything you can get out there, or what's available, you're never going to know. ... You've got to do it yourself. (Northern interviewee)

I just like doing things and things that are interesting and new. I love learning new things. And people, I really love people and I sort of try and combine all of those. (Northern interviewee)

Because we all need knowledge of what's happening and knowledge empowers, but also to get different points of view. You can learn what other people are doing to improve what you're doing, just to find different ways of doing things and to find out – sometimes you might read an article and see something one way and someone else sees it in a different light, so you get different views on things. (Northern interviewee)

Just to get more information that will improve our farm... (Southern interviewee)

So that I can keep up with what's going on, with all the changes in the industry. This is my life so I have to keep up with what's going on in my life. (Southern interviewee)

Well, I like to meet other farming women. There's the social contact there. Information gathering again. There's always learning opportunities, so I am always getting cleverer and cleverer. (Southern interviewee)

Yeah, to gather information to make good business decisions with your farm. (Southern interviewee)

Making a contribution

Several women nominated making a contribution as one of the factors that motivated them to participate within the industry.

If it's something that you don't have full knowledge of, so you want to learn more – that's like attending meetings and things like that for information, but the other way that I've been involved is I guess I feel I can assist in getting some things happening. (Northern interviewee)

I would love to be involved in something new. We could take it to the next level. (Northern interviewee)

I think from the education side of it. I thought that was terribly important and I felt I'd had opportunities that other people hadn't had and I felt...that's what I could give to the industry. (Southern interviewee)

...doing my bit in the industry in different varieties, different controls for different grubs and weeds, things like that. (Southern interviewee)

I just feel I have a lot to offer and I want to see the industry thrive, to grow. (Southern interviewee)

Passion for or interest in the industry

Many women discussed their passion for or interest in the industry as one of the factors that motivated them to participate at different levels within the industry.

I guess I have a general passion for the industry, being born and bred on the cane farm, I guess it's instilled in you. And it's, I think it's a great industry to be involved in. Sugar's used for everything. ...But it's good being involved in something that has a strong history in the Australian ag sector. And I guess it helps carrying on a bit of family tradition, too. (Northern interviewee)

Just farming. I just love farming and the land. (Northern interviewee)

...it's been my career, I've always been interested in it. I really wanted to see women play a bigger role because they need to I think – they do need to. (Northern interviewee)

Because you enjoy the work, I enjoy dealing with farmers. (Northern interviewee)

Because I think sugar has been our life. It's been the livelihood that we've been wanting to look after and to maintain a lifestyle as well. (Southern interviewee)

Because I'm interested in my job and my job functions as part of the organisation. (Southern interviewee)

Just the interest really. Because everyday is not the same, you've got different things to do all the time and different things to see all the time. (Southern interviewee)

Fewer constraints

Many women noted that they would participate more if they had fewer constraints, especially constraints related to time and money.

If I had more time, that's what I would really like to do, because there's so much you can do with sugar. ...Being one of these that can show these people, make them listen to what actually can be done, because they seem to be ostriches with their head in the sand. They only see one thing, and nothing else, and there is so much out there. (Northern interviewee)

More money so it would be a lot easier not having to say, 'Yes, we need to do this but we can't afford it.' (Northern interviewee)

Something that would motivate me more is if we were getting a fair price for the product we're selling. At the moment, it is very depressing in our household, because we are just scraping through, if that. You put all that work into it and we're not getting a return. Actually, the question we ask ourselves, is why are we doing this? So I would say a monetary incentive to keep going. (Northern interviewee)

Well, time is the problem. It is very time consuming, that's the thing when you've got a business at home. (Southern interviewee)

No motivation to participate more

One woman highlighted her stage of life as a factor to explain why she was not motivated to participate within the industry. Two women discussed how they felt burnt out, which reduced their motivation to participate in the industry.

I'm coming to the end of my working life so there's no motivation there to get involved in them. There's younger ones coming up behind me. (Northern interviewee)

Look, I'm burnt out as it is. So no, I don't think there's anything else that could be done to make me participate more. I actually need to participate less. (Southern interviewee)

There would have to be some big changes in the industry before I would invest any more emotional energy in it. I invest too much now and I get too disappointed with things when people basically take the easy way. They let themselves down, but I feel that I've been let down as well. (Southern interviewee)

4.3 Preferences for participation

The women we interviewed nominated a range of ways that they preferred to participate within the sugar industry, including forums and workshops, learning something new and practical, hands-on activities. There were different preferences regarding participation in shed meetings, but Women in Sugar groups were popular with many of the women we interviewed. Nevertheless, some women noted that they preferred not to participate in the industry.

Forums and workshops

Many women noted that they preferred to participate in industry forums or workshops, since they liked the personal, small group, face-to-face contact, and the opportunity to network and exchange ideas.

I do like to go to forums and meetings where other women are involved just to get their ideas on what is going on or what they think. (Northern interviewee)

...a workshop...it's going to give more value. Rather than just passing on information, there should be some more learning that comes out of it and projects are probably of a higher level again. (Northern interviewee)

A forum would be better or workshops, something like that. ...Because you're learning information and learning how to present it, to get your point across. (Northern interviewee)

With a young family, I really don't have the time to devote to any - it would have to be a one off meeting perhaps. I couldn't tell you. I couldn't do something on a weekly or monthly basis, because I just don't have the time for that. (Northern interviewee)

Workshops would be great. You can learn a whole lot of things, even just talking to the people at the workshops. When you're in a paid role, there's an expectation that you have to perform yourself, and that's not a bad thing either, that brings out a lot of new ideas I guess and I suppose new ways of doing things, because there's an expectation. Probably either of those would be good. (Northern interviewee)

Learning something new

Several women commented that they liked to participate in any industry activity or event, as long as they felt they would learn something new.

To be quite honest, I tend to go to more farmers' forums where you're going in with the technology. If they're doing different field days or something like that or new advancements in cropping and things like that, I'll go to them. I'm

happy to go to them because you're learning something about what the industry is achieving. (Northern interviewee)

I just like doing things and things that are interesting and new. I love learning new things. And people, I really love people and I sort of try and combine all of those. (Northern interviewee)

I always enjoy learning new things, so workshops are great. I like hands on learning, but I also like to be involved in group discussions. I like pulling apart ideas and putting them up on the whiteboard. I actually really enjoy doing those sorts of things. Probably more strategic than operational is probably what I'm more interested in. (Southern interviewee)

Practical, hands-on activities or clear outcomes

Some women placed commented that they preferred to participate in practical, hands-on activities.

I want to learn on-farm practices. That's what I want out of Women In Sugar. I want them to run workshops that will show me how to run out an irrigator and all of that stuff.... (Southern interviewee)

Well the farm walks and the practical things like that, you know, I would rather be involved that way, rather than in a meeting forum type of thing where there's opinions being passed and all that sort of thing. I'm just not strong on that at all. So if it's more of a practical field walk that would be where I feel I would be a bit more comfortable. (Southern interviewee)

One woman emphasised that she preferred to participate in activities that had clear outcomes.

...as long as it's a clearly defined outcome at the end of it, so we know what we're going to be achieving. I absolutely loathe going to meetings that have no clue, for the sake of a meeting. When there's a clearly defined outcome, fine and good. (Southern interviewee)

Shed meetings

Women have different preferences regarding shed meetings. A couple of women included shed meetings as one of their preferred ways to participate in the industry.

I go to shed meetings. (Northern interviewee)

I really enjoy going to shed meetings. I do quite a few soybean workshops when they're going. (Southern interviewee)

However, several women noted that they preferred not to go to shed meetings.

Shed meetings I think is designed for the fellas, so they can look at each other's machinery. (Northern interviewee)

I wouldn't feel welcome at a shed meeting, I'd feel out of place. ...I wouldn't feel confident enough to go. (Northern interviewee)

Shed meetings, I haven't really ventured into that. Because [my husband] doesn't even like going to them. ...Because it's an older generation and they're not forward. They waffle on about nothing. (Northern interviewee)

I don't go to a lot of the shed meetings. (Southern interviewee)

Women in Sugar groups

Several women noted that they preferred to participate through their Women in Sugar groups, particularly in the south, where the Bundaberg Women in Sugar group has been established since 2000. The opportunity to network and interact with like-minded people was one of the major reasons why women preferred to participate through the Women in Sugar groups. Section 6 provides more detail on the Women in Sugar groups in both the north and south case regions.

The women participation, a women's group. That would be more attractive to me. Just to see what's out there... (Northern interviewee)

I think the Women in Sugar is a very good idea where they can network together and sort of feed ideas off one another, just general sort of drawing people of the same interests together... (Southern interviewee)

...the Women in Sugar meetings, you're mixing with other women for a start. You're getting out. ...We have guest speakers which are really good. I enjoy that part. (Southern interviewee)

I like the bus trips. We have a Women in Sugar bus trip every year around somewhere to look at another farming industry or something. That's always good. ...I like to be with farming women. I can identify, talk the language. (Southern interviewee)

Prefer not to participate

Nevertheless, several women noted that they preferred not to participate in the industry. The reasons for this ranged from preferring to be a spectator rather than an active participant, feeling 'too old for that', through to not having the time to do so.

I would really just like to be there as a spectator. I don't really like to be running them or making any decisions. (Northern interviewee)

...I've got no inclination to get involved in all that sort of thing; getting too old for that. (Northern interviewee)

I don't want to increase that side of my involvement in the industry. (Northern interviewee)

I don't know, because I don't have the time, that's the thing. With a young family, I really don't have the time to devote to any - it would have to be a one off meeting perhaps. (Northern interviewee)

If I had time, I would probably go to the Women in Sugar meetings, those sort of things, but I don't... (Southern interviewee)

5. Sustainability initiatives

5.1 *Key Sustainability Initiatives for Women*

The interviews also explored women's experiences with 'sustainability initiatives' which are defined as:

Formal activities, processes or tools focussed on making the industry economically, socially and/or environmentally sustainable.

There was a broad range of sustainability initiatives in which the women interviewees in both the north and south case regions were or are still involved.

As many of these initiatives are focussed on addressing more than one aspect of sustainability, environmental, social or economic, we have grouped them for this analysis in terms of who was the key driver of the initiative, although many do involve multiple parties, that is across industry, government and community interests.

The groupings are:

- Industry driven sustainability initiatives
- Government driven sustainability initiatives
- Grower driven sustainability initiatives
- Women driven sustainability initiatives
- Sustainability initiatives driven by other groups/organisations (e.g. NGOs)

Tables 6 and 7 identify the key sustainability initiatives that sugar women identified in interviews as initiatives they had experience and considered important for the northern and southern case studies respectively.

Table 6: Overview of sustainability initiatives identified by northern case study women interviewees.

Industry	Government	Growers	Women	Other
COMPASS program/course	FutureCane: • FEAT • Business Planning • Sugar Industry Liaison Officers • New farming systems	Babinda Farming for the Future	Wet Tropics Women in Sugar group	Landcare
Sugar Industry: • Reform Package • Innovation Fund Local industry restructuring – Bundy Sugar CCS Optimisation project	EnviroFund Regional Community Projects Water Quality Improvement Projects	Tropical City Group GPS and farm maps	Rural Women's Network	
SRDC: • grower group project • Program D – Capacity Building BSES ProGrow program Tully Productivity Group FarmBis training Generation Next				

Table 7: Overview of sustainability initiatives identified by southern case study women interviewees.

Industry	Government	Growers	Women
CANEGROWERS: • Bundaberg Grain and Cane • Isis Target 100 • Land and water management planning • Rural Water Use Efficiency	FutureCane: • FEAT • New farming systems • Soybean Coordination Service • Australian Oil Seeds Federation project • Bug Checking in break crops	Landcare	Women in Sugar: • Bundaberg WIS group • ISIS WIS Group • Sugar Journal • WIS Bus trips
Isis Productivity Limited • Smut and cane surveillance • SRDC Travel and Learning_Ord visit			
COMPASS program/course SRDC Travel and Learning_Ord visit			
SRDC Assessment Panel	Burnett Mary Regional NRM projects		

5.2 Profiles of Women's Experience with Selected Sustainability Initiatives

This section provides summary profiles of women's collective experiences with selected sustainability initiatives based on comments from interviewed women in the northern and southern case studies. It considers each initiative in terms of:

- Overall focus of initiative
- Women's satisfaction with the initiative
- Ways women participated
- Importance of women's participation in the initiative
- What women learnt from the experience?
- Key lessons from women's experience.

The initiatives profiled are:

Southern Case Study

- Bundaberg CANEGROWERS Grain in Cane
- Isis Target 100
- SRDC Travel and Learning – Women in Sugar Bus Trips
- SRDC Travel and Learning – Ord Smut Trip

Bundaberg Women in Sugar was a common sustainability initiative identified as of clear importance to women but it is examined elsewhere in this report (see Section 6).

FEAT was also an initiative commonly identified by women in the Southern Case Study who identified similar experiences to the FEAT initiative in the North (see Section 5.2.5).

Northern Case Study

- FEAT – Northern Case study experience
- Babinda Farming for the Future
- COMPASS program/course – Northern Case study experience
- Wet Tropics Women in Sugar Group.

5.2.1 Bundaberg CANEGROWERS Grain in Cane

Overall focus of initiative

This initiative is championed by CANEGROWERS Bundaberg District and it was initially funded in 2003/04 through a Natural Resource Innovation Grant and now through Bundaberg CANEGROWERS and the Sugar Industry Reform Program, (SIRP). Its activities are focussed on planting sugar crops in new arrangement in order to:

- Allow control traffic farming; and
- Plant break-crop (e.g. soybeans) following sugar production.

The initiatives' key activities include:

- Workshops for growers on soybeans and other break crops as part of the sugarcane farming system;
- The preparation of a booklet '*Soybeans in a Sugarcane Farming System. A Guide for the Bundaberg Region*' for growers;
- Provision of an agronomy service through the engagement of a full-time extension agronomist; and
- Formation of a 'Grain in Cane' Trading Cooperative.

The initiative also linked to a bug checking in break crops initiative which was promoted also by the Bundaberg WIS with the support of the SIRP team.

Comments from women who participated on the focus of this initiative include:

Improving the sustainability on your cane crop with your break crops, soy beans.

The advantage that we could see, it was a low input crop to grow - this was the soy beans. It didn't cost a lot.

I just think it's still ongoing and it's going to be very sustainable, it's going to be the way of the future, I think, in this region – coastal grain legumes, because of the drought out West and the continuing dry conditions and no water. So I think it's just going to grow from strength to strength.

Women's satisfaction with the initiative

Women were mostly highly satisfied with their experience with this initiative particularly in terms of the outcome for the farm business (e.g. low cost of inputs with potential for income and benefit to the soil) and the on-going support provided through CANEGROWERS and other industry bodies.

I think probably what a lot of farmers did find attractive was that it was not going to cost them a lot of money.

It's a crop, as I say, that doesn't cost a lot and if you don't for some reason harvest it, there is still a lot of benefit to the soils by just ploughing it back in. It's got the opportunity of a cash crop. Last year we did a little bit of experimenting. There was all this little bit of seed that still stays on the ground. We watered it and fertilised it and grew an excellent crop for hay and made silage for our cattle. .. It was like two crops for the price of one and we got two lots of fiscal return. There was the cash return from the bean and then from the fodder. It's not an expensive crop to grow and because there is equipment there to do the grain harvesting or planting and harvesting and handling, it takes a lot of the effort away from the grower. Very satisfied.

I'm really happy with the way it's going. It's been very good to get the support of industry bodies that have lobbied for funding to try and establish this. Even just to provide the agronomic services that we've been able to access. There's been a lot of support from a lot of different sectors. ...There's no way that we would have achieved what we have achieved without that support. That's been crucial.

Well, the course was good to do. I haven't had the opportunity to bring that information back to my farm at the moment, but I hope to in the future. With the comprehensive manual that was supplied with the course, well that's going to be a valuable resource, because if you do a course and you don't do something for say two years, you've got the course to refer to. It will be a constant reference.

Very satisfied. Because of what I learnt and my husband too he now has all the information at his fingertips.

Ways women participated

A number of women have participated in this initiative in a range of ways including:

- Participating in a workshop and related field trip run by the initiative - one of these workshops was promoted through the Bundaberg WIS group and involved over 20 women.;
- Contributing to the decision making on integrating a break crop into the farming business; and
- Supporting its implementation on farm and helping secure funding for the initiative.

Some of the comments from women from the Bundaberg region were:

Participated in a workshop with the WIS about 'Grain-in-Cane' and included a field trip - two days in the class room, a one day field trip, looking at different farms and varieties, and an information pack to take home including a 'Beat Sheet'.

They had a course here at the cane growers. It was theory and practical. We had in the field experience and then we had the theory as well.

No, [my husband has] done all of that, but I've typed notes. I've supported him from home. Early in the piece we used to have a lot of informal meetings from different growers bouncing ideas around. I've probably had more involvement in the beginning than what I do now. It's purely a support role.

So yes, I think basically funding where required, flexibility, some targeted support where needed and always an eye on the main strategic goal, which is basically full-on farming systems in rotation with sugar, to secure cane supply and for sustainable supply in the future.

I think the wives of all the foundation growers had equal participation as what I did. You are a sounding board for a lot of ideas I believe. ...Most of us, yeah, except for a couple of blokes that came along. There weren't too many men. Most of them were women. ...There was at least 20 of us, I think, 20 or 30 of us at least.

Importance of women's participation

For some women their participation in this initiative and the improved understanding they gained has improved their confidence in taking up new options, in contributing to decision-making on farm as well in taking up the smut response activities at the industry level, as two women commented:

It's very good to be proactive. Don't wait for people to make things better for you. We have to get in there and get on with it. If you've got something that you think's going to happen, well make it happen. I think that's probably the most important and be prepared to look at other options.

Yes, I think it definitely did in the IPM, in the bug checking component of it. I mean, the women did add a lot, and obviously from that, they got to present to the National Soybean Conference and to grow their skills in that regard and they also got to do a lot of their own practical bug checking on-farm. A lot of the women, a number of the women that were involved in that bug checking had a lot of confidence then to be involved in the smut team, the surveillance teams, because they were out there actually in the field doing it. So yes, I think it's made a big difference with women's involvement.

I think it helps the men to have a little bit more confidence to know that they have the support and they are willing to try something new; something that's not going to involve picking zucchinis for three months on end.

What women learnt from the experience?

Some women identified that their involvement with this initiative had greatly improved their understanding and knowledge of break crops and particularly in relation to pest management:

I learned a lot about soy beans; I knew nothing about soy beans whatsoever before I started. I learned a lot more about different vermin, different bugs, like your common ones like your caterpillars and lady beetles and things like that, but there were just so many different varieties that I never even knew existed, let alone what they did.

I have a better understanding of integrated pest management, about the bad bugs and the good bugs and your soft chemicals and hard chemicals.

There has been a flow on effect from this learning through some changes being made in management practices and cropping options within their farm businesses as well as changes in the contribute women can now make to decision-making at the farm level, for example:

The advantage that we could see, it was a low input crop to grow - this was the soy beans. It didn't cost a lot. There was an opportunity for us to set up a small contracting business. We were prepared to put the money into the infrastructure of machinery and have almost a little bit of a small grain handling facility at our property now.

Certainly more open to new ideas. It's certainly opened my husband's ideas to different options. It's given us the opportunity to network with producers in

other industries. He has built up a network base in the Darling Downs. ...If he's scrounging for machinery, he knows where to go and who to speak to and also different techniques. Obviously it's a different environment, but it's very good

I'm like the sounding board a lot of the time. We bounce ideas off. We certainly looked into the feasibility of purchasing the equipment. I think we have set that up with the idea that one day it will be a small business that we can sell. That's something that we would like to be able to do.

Yeah, we actually check our soy beans. We actually go through and check them now. Because when I did the course, my husband had only grown soy beans for 12 months, first time, and so he knew nothing about them. And then when the bug course came up I said, yeah I'll go and do that and now we check our beans and we're more involved with the bloke that actually contracts with planting and harvesting. He has more contact with...the grain and cane inspector, as well.

The initiative has had some important outcomes for the Bundaberg sugar region more generally, as one woman commented:

When it was first talked about growing soy beans along the coast, everyone said it couldn't be done. There was too much moisture, there was too this, there was too that, there were all sorts of reasons why we couldn't do it. Just recently we've hosted the annual soy bean conference here in Bundaberg. That was very, very good.

Key lessons from women's experience

- Importance of establishing the relevance of an initiative strategically to the farm business in attracting greater participation of women;
- Importance to women's participation in sustainability initiatives of opportunities to embrace and deal with change in the sugar industry; and
- Importance of specifically targeting women (e.g. through a WIS-driven workshop).

5.2.2 Isis Target 100

Overall focus of initiative

Isis Target 100 is a collaborative partnership between:

- Isis Central Sugar Mill;
- CANEGROWERS Isis Ltd;
- Isis Productivity Limited;
- Rural Water Use Efficiency; and
- BSES Ltd (CHILDERS)

It was initiated in November 2003 as a result of the Isis Sugar Industry Strategic Plan and involves a holistic productivity plan focussed on building on-farm sustainability, profitability and viability through the adoption of improved farming practices that will build the Isis Central Mill's average production to 100 tonnes of cane per hectare. It also collaborates with a range of other sustainability initiatives including (Pamphlet on *Isis Target 100: A holistic approach to the future of the Isis Sugar Industry*):

- FutureCane activities such as FEAT workshops, capacity building discussion groups on managing change and improving farming systems;
- SRDC funded activities delivered to Isis growers including capacity building workshops, study tours and research project;
- Sugar Resource Officer – activities include the delivery of workshops and extension activities to assist growers to be more sustainable, productive and profitable; and
- Australian Oilseeds Federation – activities include collaboration with Isis relevant demonstration sites for soybeans in cane system, production of grower-accessible equipment for soybeans in a cane system.

Comments on the focus of Isis Target 100 from women who have been involved in its activities relate largely to the focus on improving productivity and the flow on to financial benefits through changing farming practices, and include:

A hundred tonnes to the hectare of cane throughout the district. That was the aim. That's the Target 100. That was to get away from the monoculture of just growing cane, which we all know is a bad thing.

Productivity – increasing productivity and securing cane supply.

It's focused on boosting the productivity of our growers, aiming to get them to 100 tonnes per hectare and above, which will then have flow on financial sustainability benefits.

And with the downturn in the sugar industry, well, everyone knew that some improvements had to be made to sustain the industry and our livelihoods and everything. So I think a lot of growers have come on board with that and we're starting to see the benefits of that now. Because we got 145 tonnes to the hectare on a block of plant cane that we'd grown soys in. So that was way

over the 100 tonnes. So if we can do that over the next few years, as the rotation. It just doesn't all happen in a year, it takes years to get through it all and to build up your farm. That's our major plan really, to improve productivity and, hopefully, with a bit less cost.

Boost productivity through promotion of good farming practices or new farming practices - either/or and then weaving in that financial stuff, so that's why we've used Feat to get them to think about what their costs are, what they're making, their return on investment, whether they've over-capitalised, that sort of stuff and that weaves it altogether.

Two male interviewees from Isis also explained the importance of a productivity and related profitability focus through a locally-driven initiative, and one reflected on its relevance to sustainability:

As far as Isis Target 100, as you probably know, it evolved from an initiative to address what we saw as a need to increase the productivity of farmers so that by increasing their productivity their profitability increased and that's how it came about. It's a joint initiative between BSES, Canegrowers, Isis Mill and the Productivity Board and so it's a joint local initiative. That's what it is and that's why I'll put my hat on it any time because it's got runs on the board and it does a darn good job. It's something that growers in the Isis can identify with. There were a few sceptics initially but we can identify with it as being a very useful tool for Isis canegrowers.

...it focuses on basically good agronomy and in all good agronomy is sustainability issues. As it so happens, almost every time what is good agronomically is good sustainability wise. If it's not good sustainability wise, it's not good agronomy. So that's been a major thing. For instance, say 12 years ago, we had probably 90 per cent of the area was being ploughed and re-planted, whereas now it's reversed from about 10 per cent. So that's been a major change.

Women's satisfaction with the initiative

Women growers were mostly very satisfied with their involvement in this initiative despite the usual challenges associated with team work in a multi-party collaborative approach. Satisfaction was particularly associated with the relevance and impact of the initiative to their farm businesses and the importance of a partnership or team approach. Some comments are:

Pretty well five [i.e. very satisfied] I think, because as far as we're concerned on our farm it's worked and it's been a big bonus, a big benefit. ... I can relate to the Target 100 because a lot of that was growing soy beans, so that you don't have to use as much fertilizer on your plant cane and that has really, really been a major benefit for us because we haven't had to fertilise our plant cane at all after the soys. You save a heap and it's so much better for the soil and for the environment, obviously, and you don't have to support those damn fertilizer companies. So, I think the Target 100 has been a really good bonus for this district.

[Satisfied mostly]. The team work approach doesn't always work. There's always individual personalities, but we do have a team approach. We are all committed to that goal. We might have different ways of going about it, and we might have different focuses, but we're all committed to that goal.

Ways women participated

The number of women who have been involved in the wide diversity of activities associated with this initiative overall have been limited. Those that have been involved however have been very active and positive about the initiative overall.

As a percentage? It's [women's participation] pretty awful most of the time. We had a bus trip recently, we had 80 people, about 60 of them were growers. I think there was one woman. We've had field days in the past where we've had a better roll-up. We've had field days in the past where we've had say five out of maybe 50. So what's that - 10 per cent? ...I suppose we would have between zero and 10 per cent, depending on the event. Some things do appeal to them more for whatever reason. With the workshops, the one on change and on Feat, we've had nearly 50 per cent and most of those workshops, there would be at least 40 per cent women, and that's because I've strategically focused on that. The Women in Sugar IPM workshops, obviously there's a fair roll-up of women there

A lot of women are involved in the bug checking now. I don't know how many. ...Maybe 30 people at that thing, and well half at least probably were women...

Two women were involved in providing capacity building support services:

Mainly facilitate, flexible delivery again, just involving at unique times to help them refocus, maintain the strategic direction, help them operationalise their plans sometimes, supply targeted high level advice where required, also assist them with funding submissions to help drive some of their underpinning initiatives further.

Just shed meetings, grower workshops, bug checking with soybeans, coming along to the financial planning and targeted planning for profit workshops. Just myriad, really, just very different delivery mechanisms, so women have been able to get involved in a lot of different ways.

Women partners in family businesses have been dominantly involved at the operational level on-farm:

Participation has been more at that operational level. I don't think it's changed our strategic approach, except that we try and include women all the time, and that is a core part of our goals now. We might now say it out aloud, but we encourage the women to come, if they're there, we support them for being there and make them feel welcome, that sort of stuff.

We had a bug checking workshop last year. Bundy and Isis Woman in Sugar had that. But before that, the year before, I was just sort of thrown in the deep

end because [my husband] was too busy shifting irrigators and things. And he said, well I'm too busy, can you do it? And we were having an agronomist coming around at the time. [My husband] used to go with him. Well then I went with him and he showed me a few things and from then on it was my job to do the bug checking.

I don't think I went to too many of the shed meetings. [My husband] used to go to them.

One of the woman growers prepared a user-friendly version of a highly technical manual on bug-checking which has now been distributed widely to growers.

I did do a little presentation at one of the Target 100 soy field days. I guess I did participate in that. I talked about my bug book ...It was a revamp of a DPI publication. ...Just finding out that that publication that we'd been given from the DPI wasn't suiting me in the paddock. I had to keep flipping through the pages all the time and there were about 20 pages of it. Where's that bug, what page is it on? I eliminated a lot of the stuff that I didn't need in the paddock, all the written stuff, and just had the pictures. I just felt that that was much more suitable for the job.

Then we got Landcare funding to laminate it and put it into a paddock guide that you could take and identify the bugs. Well I hope it's been of benefit to other people because I use it all the time.

Importance of women's participation in the initiative

Despite the limited numbers of women participating, women's importance and influence on the success of this initiative is commonly recognised by women, for example:

Yes, I think having women's involvement has really lifted the level and also encouraged husband and wife teams to get involved, and to participate together.

Oh, probably, I think the men would be encouraged to see their wives or other women along and helping out because like I said they can't do it all and they do need the support and the help.

Yes, I think having women's involvement has really lifted the level and also encouraged husband and wife teams to get involved, and to participate together.

One of the women growers also reflected on the importance of the efforts of a female Isis 100 team member's contribution:

She's just a wonderful advocate for it; she's just 100% in there and 110% just encouraging people. Getting on to people to, you know, chasing them up and just getting them motivated I suppose. I think if we didn't have her it wouldn't be quite as successful, I don't know. That's only, I just think she's done a really, really top job, so we're lucky to have her, yeah.

Some of the male interviewees involved with delivering this initiative also noted the important role women had played in this initiative:

Part of that change is getting break crops in and I think the ladies have played a very good part there. They've accepted that principle much more readily than the male component. ...They've embraced that quite readily. They get involved in bug checking workshops and things like that.

Well I mentioned there before about things about the break cropping and bug checking, so they've been involved in things like that. Also some of the financial sides of it, actually trying, not just account keeping and things like that, but trying to make a bit of sense out of future profit and these sort of things. They've been intimately involved in those sorts of things. They've been trying to work out on a farm basis how profitable they are, where they are planning out for the future, what they've got to do and all those sort of things. So they've been sort of doing that, or at least involved in that, whereas before they weren't.

Definitely. [One woman grower] drove what we did with bug checking a fair bit. She helped us develop a bug checking book. That was a simplified version of something that already existed, that was much more user friendly.

Men involved in the delivery of the initiative valued women's participation but noted that perhaps their could have been more done to involve women:

Well I think it came from a background where there was no-one involved really, so once a few people get involved then it gives a bit of confidence to the other ladies to get involved. I suppose it demystifies it a bit too. Often what's happened on a farm, as far as the ladies are concerned, has been like the contents of a black box. They've got no idea, but when they get into it it's not that conceptually difficult.

Certainly some of the participants at the workshops asked questions that men would be too embarrassed to ask...women were game to ask the questions and women are very honest I find. At these meetings they'll get up and say we're only making \$18 a tonne, how come he's making 25? What are we doing different?

Amongst the females in the farming community, as it so happens, you do tend to focus mainly on the male component. That's the way it's always been, I suppose. But not exclusively, we have done a lot more things that involve the ladies, and as I say, a lot of things where we have involved the ladies, they do tend to do things a lot better in terms of the detail, get the detail right. ...So probably they haven't been championed all that much by the established political groups when it's all said and done.

Maybe we should have had tailored more at women or we should have had specific workshops for beginners. We tend to assume that people who come to all these things know everything. Nine times out of ten they don't and even

with men they don't but they will never ask; at least a women will ask. The other thing that we didn't do initially but we did later on is we had workshops late in the afternoon because women were tied up with getting the kids off to school or they had to go and to tuckshop or those sorts of things. ...So we had a couple of them later in the day which were very successful.

What women learnt from the experience?

Women growers identified that the significant factor for them from the experience with the initiative was their newly acquired skills and recognition that they could contribute in a practical way 'out in the paddock':

Well that I could contribute in quite an important way to the wellbeing of the crop I suppose, the success of the crop. Because if you look after the crop while it's growing and keep the bugs out, you'll get a better outcome with your quality. I learnt that I could be useful and really contribute in a practical way. And help Jeff at the same time because he's only one man and you can't be everywhere. So, I suppose it made me feel as if I was contributing to the business a bit more.

Well, yeah, growing the crops and actually seeing the benefit of it. We've learnt that it does work in growing the other crops and getting better results with the cane as a result. It's a worthwhile venture.

Certainly learnt that you can achieve more as a team than individual, if the team is working well. I've actually been impressed by the ability of long term sugar industry people to accept ways of doing things differently. At first, it was all a bit of a challenge and they've sort of tried really hard to be adaptable.

I suppose it has reinforced that it is frustrating when what you want to do relies on other people as well, so when you hit that conservative nature, it's really frustrating, but most of the time, we're able to work around it somehow. ... If you look at the reasons for being conservative, it's all about change and how people cope with change.

Well, I learnt that group dynamics doesn't shift in any single type of work that you do either! I mean, we always knew that. But yes, just basically the challenge of maintaining a long term productivity initiative with sometimes short term funded staff, so revolving staff to maintain consistency in a delivery mechanism. So tricky.

I've also learnt that as I'm getting older, age is working to my advantage, because people take me more seriously more quickly and I think that's a shame that we do that as human beings. But I do it too.

Key lessons from women's experience

- Finding the right 'niche' for women that is attractive to them and enables them to acquire new skills to facilitate change in practices that benefit the future sustainability of their family business;

- Targeting women and tailoring initiatives to meet their needs.

5.2.3 SRDC Travel and Learning –Women in Sugar Bus Trips

Overall focus of initiative

The Women in Sugar groups in both Bundaberg and Isis have placed a priority focus on enabling a supportive environment for women in the sugar industry to learn and to have social interaction. A key strategy in achieving this has been for the two groups to organise bus trips for women and their partners to visit:

- Women in other sugar regions (e.g. Northern NSW and Mackay);
- Industry organisations outside their own region;
- Other rural industries (e.g. cotton industry in Narrabri).

Some examples identified by three Bundaberg women:

The one that I have been involved with was the travel and learning project to Brisbane last year, where we went to the BSES Research Station and we also went to BSES pathology farm out at Woodford, looking at different varieties of cane. The main focus of that travel and learning project was with the outbreak of smut in the area we wanted to get more knowledge of what they are doing to fast track. I think they had a smart set program, it was called Genetically Modified Cane and the ladies were wanting to find out a bit more about what BSES is actually doing.

The bus trips. Yes, they're great to actually go away and catch up with people. ...when we go away and we see what other farmers are doing and how they do it and that.

Like I say, we have people from Bundaberg, Isis, Maryborough getting to know them as well because you don't always come together because they're different areas. Bundy has their meetings and Maryborough has theirs so it was just good to meet the other growers and find out what they're doing in their areas.

...we offer almost free bus trips around the district. We normally go from Bundaberg to Isis, Bundaberg to 1770, Bundaberg to Brisbane last year and with that, by having lunch in those areas, we're taking our group across to see other communities and how they work, whether it's in the sugar industry or not, there are other industries involved. We visit different farming practices. ...We also initiated a trip to the Northern Rivers, we had the Mackay network involved in that, trying to met other women from the southern areas.

Women's satisfaction with the initiative

Each trip involves around 25 participants, at least 85% of whom are women. Women in the interviews all spoke very highly of the bus trips and their value in terms of what the learning experience they provide:

Five [Very satisfied], I think it was really good. It wasn't just ladies that went on this bus trip, we did have a few men come along as well and they really got a lot out of it too, they were able to ask a few questions to the people at BSES and find out answers that they were needing to know for about their future in the sugar industry, so I think it was really, really good.

Yes, getting to meet new people and not everybody knew each other; we had people from Bundaberg as well as Isis and Maryborough so you got to find out what growers are doing on their farms.

It was a big day, going down and back, down to Brisbane and back in one day. I think if we had have had it over two days, we might have been able to see a bit more and do a few different things. So we probably would have done it a bit differently if we had more funding to be able to do it and had the time.

Ways women participated

Women were the drivers of this initiative getting funding, organising the logistics and the program for the trip and reporting back to funders and others involved in WIS. But men's participation is welcomed and considered important:

We have a Women in Sugar bus trip every year around somewhere to look at another farming industry or something. That's always good. It's not just women. Men go as well but the Women in Sugar pay for it, host it and subsidise it, whatever.

We have applied for travel and learning funding from SRDC and been successful, and that was part of our Narrabri and Northern Rivers trip. ...I find that extremely vital. It's a very important part of our process.

Yes, I organised the bus trip and organised to meet with the researchers down at BSES and that sort of thing. I didn't have a lot to do with the final reporting...our chairperson for Women In Sugar, she did most of the final reporting to SRCD and taking the notes on the bus trip as we were going along but I had that role of facilitating and organising the trip down there.

We have regular men that will attend our bus trips, every year, without fail and won't miss them.

Importance of women's participation in the initiative

The learning experiences from the bus trips are commonly highlighted by women as of key importance to their understanding of their industry and the business opportunities that exist as well as ideas on ways of improving women's involvement:

Yes, bus trips, learning opportunities, we've been everywhere. One thing that I really enjoyed was actually visiting the SRDC in Brisbane and visiting the BSES and the Cane Growers... I thought it was really interesting. It really put a face to a name, sort of thing, in a broad sense.

WIS has also had a trip to the cotton industry in Narrabri, and that's where the bug checking [idea] came out of, and the ideas that followed on from that.

What women learnt from the experience?

That's always very educational and sometimes you can bring something home from that too. Like when we went down to Narrabri and saw how the women were involved down there. We all came back charged up, you know. I think we needed debriefing, like you're coming back to the sugar industry in Bundaberg. It's not going to be allowed but we came back so energised and thinking we'd be able to participate and give and do so much more, but no.

It was really good. Like I say, we have people from Bundaberg, Isis, Maryborough getting to know them as well because you don't always come together because they're different areas. Bundy has their meetings and Maryborough has theirs so it was just good to meet the other growers and find out what they're doing in their areas.

Key lessons from women's experience

- Flow on opportunities in relation to shaping change in the industry that arise from exposing women to different experiences in other sugar regions and in other rural industries.
- Importance of a comfortable environment for women for learning about the industry and options for the farm business.

5.2.4 SRDC Travel and Learning – Ord Trip

Overall focus of initiative

Sugarcane smut is seen as an enormous threat to the Australian sugar industry and it was detected for the very first time in eastern Australia in cane farms of the Isis district in June 2006 and later also in some Bundaberg cane farms. One of the key responses by the local industry to this outbreak was to focus on helping growers to make an effective transition to smut resistant varieties. As part of this approach, a trip was organised by staff of SIRP, Isis Productivity Ltd and Isis CANEGROWERS using an SRDC Travel and Learning grant for 30 growers from Isis and Bundaberg region to learn from the canefarmers in the Ord about their experience with smut.

One of the women participants of this initiative noted:

Go over there to the Ord and look at the smut and how they have managed the smut and hopefully bring some information back home and some strategies to manage the smut. That was what it was about looking at the smut. ...It was funded by SRDC, FutureCane, and other sponsors such as SunCorp and I know the Isis CANEGROWERS administered it for the region.

Oh, there were quite a few women, roughly there might have been 5. ...Some were involved in the smut walking, and some growers, and one was even a banker.

Two male interviewees involved in organising the trip also reflected on the focus:

We've got 30 people in the Ord River in Western Australia participating on a sugar cane smut discovery tour of the Ord. ...30 people from Bundaberg, Isis and Maryborough of which 10 were growers (4 Bundy, 4 Isis and 2 Maryborough).

The main focus was to take the growers over there to see how the growers in the Ord cope with any smut, economically wise and agriculturally wise and to talk to them and their experiences and what they've done. The main thing that come out of there was the plant resistant variety, that was there biggest thing. To plant resistant varieties. That was the main focus, to get the growers from here and Bundaberg and Maryborough to go over and talk to some of those growers.

Women's satisfaction with the initiative

One of the women grower participants identified the importance of the hands-on learning experience with her husband that the trip provided and the constraint on time:

I was really happy that we went and I am pleased that we went as a couple, seeing we are both partners in a business I am pleased that we both went together. I think that was very valuable to do it together and then come back and discuss it that way. It's different to be there, see it, and feel, touch - there is nothing really in comparison.

I would say satisfied. I would personally wish that my husband and I would have had enough funding and time to stay on another couple of days and have a look around. Two days is great to have done all that in a limited amount of time but it would have been great to have been able to stay on and get our own way home and have a look around and take full advantage of looking around the area.

...time was limited that was the problem but it had to be limited like if we had to stay another couple of days how many of us would have been able to have the time to stay away so long. I have kids that I had to arrange to be looked after. But maybe there could have been more social interaction with some of the growers.

A male Isis interviewee noted that an issue was that participant numbers were limited due to funding constraints:

We were limited to the amount of people we had. We could have taken more women. It would have been good for some of the other farmers that were on to take their wives, but I suppose numbers were limited. We were only able to take 30. I think it all came back down to costs really.

Ways women participated

Women from the sugar industry were involved as grower and industry support participants on the tour and the female Sugar Resource Officer was the driving organiser of the trip. They have also played a part in communicating the experience and learnings from the visit within the region:

[Participated] on the tour ...Since I got back I have presented the women in sugar my report and I also presented to SRDC this week - done a presentation at the SRDC workshop and told them all about the trip in a PowerPoint presentation

There were also women from the Ord that helped organise and present the Ord experience, as one male participant from Isis commented:

Yes, the women over there, Gabby Bolt, she actually talked to the whole group, and they market their own sugar over there, and Gabby is one of the main drivers of marketing their own sugar. She does the sugar markets and all that, so she had a good talk on what they go through and all that. That was very interesting. Over there, there's only about 13 growers, but the women seem to be involved in the farming practices of what happens.

Importance of women's participation in the initiative

One of the female grower participants identified having other women involved in the trip and in the Ord as well as being of importance to them and the value of the trip:

Yes, it made me feel comfortable, I do not think I would have liked to be the only woman there. I think women ask different questions.

A male industry support interviewee from Isis also recognised the importance of involving both partners of a family business in the activity and the important contribution of women to the discussion during the trip including the way they looked at things:

I think it was terrific and everybody that participated - we used to sit around every morning after a breakfast, and we would have half an hour of what they got out of each day, and I can tell you, the women spoke more about what they got out of it more than some of the fellows did, so that was one good thing. Some of their comments - it was all jotted down afterwards - some of their comments were really good. I don't think it could have been done any better, and like I said, the only other way would be if some of the other farmers had their wives, it would have been better for them to have their wives with them, but unfortunately that wasn't able to happen.

I just think the women joined in with the discussion with all the men that were on it. I thought it was quite good. I think it made the trip a lot better. The women asked a lot of questions about everything, what this is for, about the smut, the irrigation and the water wheels and irrigation, so the questions they asked, weren't asked by men. I think different angles that women look at things.

What women learnt from the experience?

For one woman grower from Bundaberg it was a significant learning experience for her about smut and milling issues in the sugar industry particularly the difference of issues for other regions:

Well both my husband and I were quite shocked about the smut some of the characteristics of it and how it can just collapse over night. So we came back realising it was a very serious matter and its right down to management and how we manage from the farm as well. Also I think what was really important was an awareness of other issues as well that go on in the industry as well. So I was not aware of the milling issues they have over there and I had never really looked at another mill, and just seeing the mill and how small it was and how different it was. I suppose I had never thought about it and how different mills are from the awareness of that and the problems and challenges they have also over there, such as Stage II not opening up, the milling issues and the freight and extra expenses they have, and on the other side looking at some of the things they have got that we do not have - for example they have lots of water that we do not have, when we have the exact opposite problem. So I think it opens an awareness of the different issues and also the different milling payments - the way the growers are paid. Yes, it's just different. And it certainly opened my eyes up anyway.

Key lessons from women's experience

- Importance of having a number of women participating in various ways to give women greater confidence to be actively involved.
- Importance or added value of having both partners of the family farm business participating together.

5.2.5 FEAT – Northern Case study experience

Overall focus of initiative

The Farm Economic Analysis Tool (FEAT) is a computer-based decision support tool designed to enable the user to compare the economic performance of different cane farming systems. FEAT aims to improve the overall profitability of sugarcane businesses. It is delivered free to growers as part of the BSES/QDPIF FutureCane activities as a means of helping growers to test the many options for change without risking the farm. Interviewees identified a number of functions of FEAT:

To improve (financial) decision making on farm:

The main focus was giving you a useable tool that you could analyse your different applications for decision making, financial decision making. Not even financial, but environmental decision making.

That was to do with recording statistics, farm statistics and all that sort of thing.

To provide a new (decision-support) tool for farm businesses

... that FEAT workshop, that was one way, by bringing new skills into their working business. They can go out and seek these new tools that are available and bring that into their business there.

To achieve greater profitability

The FEAT one is another one that has lots of things that I think are going to be very good but that – we won't see the benefit of that. Over a couple of years it will take to see our records holding, you know, and to see like what we're planting now and things that we're going to do, if that's going to follow through and give us an increase in our profitability or not.

Women's satisfaction with the initiative

Women growers participating were generally satisfied with the initiative:

It was informative. ...Oh, well very satisfied, yeah. ...Well it was because I learnt something.

One of the women involved in industry support services emphasised the value of targeting women specifically through its financial focus:

I guess, getting the women interested first and then doing the workshop with all the business partners, because when you start talking dollars per ton or dollars per hectare to grow something, it gets them interested straight away.

Ways women participated

Women growers participated in training workshops provided through the FutureCane initiative often in their role as data enterers of farm statistics and accompanied by their partner. They generally found it interesting exercise but mostly had not actively used the software since the training course:

It was a workshop to learn how to use it. ... I think it was [run by] DPI. Some bank sponsored it, helped pay for morning tea or something. .. It was one day. ... It was in Innisfail, and there were probably about a dozen [participants]

I did go to a FEAT workshop a couple of weeks ago. That was interesting. . That's all about your farming data and all that sort of stuff. .. That was interesting. Yes, actually our son...has already done that. He's got that on the computer. He's already done that so I just went as a follow-up.

That one I did in Babinda, that's what that was on, FEAT. ...That was to do with recording statistics, farm statistics and all that sort of thing. ...It was the beginning of last season or the year before, I'm not real sure. ...It was half a day, yeah. ...Yeah, it was a workshop.

That one, there was about 12 of us. ...Well we more or less all just went along to learn.

There was a mixture, a pretty even mixture. You probably feel more comfortable going to that sort of thing, because you know that other women will be there. There's usually a few of us at the same ones. ...The men haven't been doing the books for years, especially since the computers and the BAS and all that. The men just don't want to know about it, so she can go.

Women were also involved in its delivery to growers and identified that women were not directly targeted in the promotion of the training workshops:

Women weren't specifically encouraged or targeted, however, the financial manager, who in many cases are women, was encouraged to attend.

I don't like targeting women, but somehow you would have to hint to the men sort of thing. If this isn't your expertise, and you're not happy with it, then how about sending along your partner. I think how it was put, was the person who does the financial management of your business could come along, so that could be anyone. That's how it was put.

I guess, the two women who were involved, they really look at the financial side of their business so they already had a natural interest in that side of things. And yeah, we trained both of them equally; we didn't pay more attention to one or the other.

Importance of women's participation in the initiative

One women interviewee emphasised the importance to the training workshop experience of having other women involved:

Well yes, because I feel more comfortable going when there's other women there.

While female support officers emphasised the importance of having both partners involved in the training together:

Needs all (husband and wife) business partners to be involved, which was achieved because of the nature of the subject, i.e. \$/ton or \$/ha.

It's something where you need to have the wife and the husband. You can't just have the husband there. You could probably just have the wife there but then she might have a bit of trouble taking it home and explaining to her husband why you should use it. So it has to be, or I guess, all business partners have to be involved.

What women learnt from the experience?

Women growers did find they gained important understanding of the sugar industry and how they can improve their on-farm decision making and make savings:

Well it was basically for women. ... Well it was, as I say, it's for the women to learn more about the sugar industry and how it works. It was focused on women. ... Well it was just that I learnt something but my husband was already doing it anyway. ... But I learnt it. That was the main objective of it; it was for the women to learn more about the sugar industry. To get more involved in it.

I've learnt that a lot of savings can be made. Better decision making can be made, if we look at the variants beforehand.

We're still implementing it, but yes... It can include what preparation I do in a paddock, what treatment you apply, that sort of thing. Before, you would just look at how much it was going to cost and whether we do it or not. ...It's a little bit more informed, because before we would make the same decisions, but on guess work. Well, maybe we'll get a bit of extra tonnage or maybe this will happen. You never wrote it down. But by putting it down and putting it on the computer, you're putting in figures. There's always an element of guess work.

Key lessons from women's experience

- Importance of other women being present to women's confidence in participating in learning experiences provided by FEAT workshops.
- Importance and added value of having both partners of the family farm business participating together, so it need to be promoted as a business partners workshop.

- Attractiveness to women of its financial focus given their common roles as data enterers or business managers within the farm business enterprise.

5.2.6 Babinda Farming for the Future

Overall focus of initiative

The Babinda Farming for the Future group is a grower initiated and driven initiative which focuses on:

- Value adding to the sugar industry through diversification (from cottage industries to big industries, e.g. ethanol technologies, cane juice); and
- Establishing an ethanol plant in the far north region.

The initiative was promoted initially by four men who drew others in including women:

To value add to sugar cane, as well as try to diversify the crops that are growing here as well. It's difficult to find other crops that will grow and give an economic return and sugar cane is getting that way where you can't get an economic return, that's why we think our best option is to value add to the crop. It seemed to us there was no real will or desire within the industry to do any of that real work.

Ethanol is the big one. We're getting there. We actually raised \$5 million to get that. Not on our own, of course. It's very hard. ...Well, the aim of the project in Babinda is to get an ethanol plant somewhere within the far north region, from Tully to [Mulgrave] to use the gas to turn into ethanol. Who owns it and whatever else, that's a bit further down the track yet.

Farming for the Future to me was an opportunity for just normal cane farmers to make this thing happen, because if it wasn't for these four blokes...none of this would have happened, because they just had this dream that this could happen, this could be done, and they just kept hammering. To me, to be a part of that, was just fantastic.

Farming for the Future. That's a group that I'm actively involved in and we've made some huge gains in three years. ...we were instrumental in bringing about ethanol technologies. It all came together in the last month. That's been a two year project.

Women's satisfaction with the initiative

The women participants interviewed were all very excited and enthusiastic about their experience with the initiative, for example:

Definitely successful, yes. It was very frustrating in the beginning, because as you well understand, you have to get people to listen to you. You have to sell what you've got. You can't go to just anybody and say, 'hey, look at what I've got, this is what it can do, let's go ahead'. You've got to actually sell it. And even though you've sold it to a little group, you have to get a whole big

cluster together to all be in it together. We were very fortunate. We got under the umbrella of CREDC up in Cairns. They helped us to focus in what areas to find information, who could help us and so on and so forth, which has resulted in what has happened now.

Of course, the dividends, yes, but the main thing is you have achieved something that will keep the sugar industry going and in return, will help the environment because it's cleaner, making it a much cleaner atmosphere for the future generation.

Ways women participated

Three or four women participated in the initiative in a number of active roles including as secretary of the group, as an active member promoting the group and its ideas and selling shares and as an alternative director of company that was set up by group. Several other women were involved 'in the background' doing research into funding opportunities and helping to fill out applications. These latter women were mainly the wives of the men that are involved.

Important aspects of women's participation in the initiative identified were:

- Enabled women to get involved in something that was new:

They weren't coming into an industry that was regimented. This is a whole new ball game. I think ownership of some of these new things, you will find will be probably driven a lot by women.

- Actively encouraged women to participate through:
 - Members of the group directly approaching women; and
 - Initiating specific projects that would be of interest to women (e.g. cane juice project and other cottage industry projects).

Importance of women's participation in the initiative

Women's involvement in the initiative from the start is seen as being critical to women to gaining ownership of the different initiatives by setting them up and understanding the processes in comparison to the traditional process of growing cane and sending it to the mill.

...these new industries, the ones I'm talking about are linking probably sugar - the cane industry with a heap of new things and because women were involved from its inception, I think you will find they will be the ones putting their hand up and saying, well I'll be on the board of that because I understand the process.

One woman also emphasised the importance to her confidence in participating of knowing other women were interested in the initiative:

Yes, it does make a big difference. ...Well to know that there are other people out there that are interested; you're not the only silly one. It does make a difference.

What women learnt from the experience?

One women's personal experience of being involved has helped her to recognise the importance of having a go and has given her confidence to make things happen:

I used to be very a very worried person all the time before. I used to worry about lots of things. Now I've learnt that you've got to get out there and make things happen. They don't just happen. You have to make it happen. You can't sit back and say, 'poor me', you have to make it, you have to go and do it yourself. Don't expect people to do things for you. If you aren't willing get out there and do it yourself, it's not going to happen. I could have stayed home and not gone out to work and just stayed home and whinged and complained, 'oh, there's no money, look at the debts we've got', and instead, I chose to go out and help my family and then I said, 'I'll go out and do what I can and if it works, it works and if not, I've tried'. You have to give it a go.

Key lessons from women's experience

- Importance of actively encouraging women to participate.
- Importance of knowing other women's interest in an initiative in attracting women to participate.
- Women need to develop the confidence to get out there and make things happen themselves.

5.2.7 COMPASS program– Northern Case study experience

Overall focus of initiative

COMPASS stands for COMbining Profitability And Sustainability in Sugar. It is a joint industry effort involving BSES and CANEGROWERS with support from the Sugar Research and Development Corporation and the Queensland Environmental Protection Agency. The aim of the program is to help individual participants improve their farm business, financially and environmentally.

The COMPASS course is an initiative that involves participants in:

- *Undertaking a personal farm assessment:*

Well, the Compass course was really – you just assessed what you were doing and that was good because it gave you views from other people who were there at the workshop and you could pick up ideas from them.

- *Benchmarking own farm against others:*

[The focus of COMPASS was] to be able to benchmark my farm against others. ...Well I went to the course myself with probably 18 men, yes.

- *Achieving improvements in farming enterprises*

Women's satisfaction with the initiative

Women found the course interesting but essentially did not find out anything particularly new from the experience, for example:

The Compass course was good in that we ticked it all off and we thought, well, we're doing the right thing.

...but it needed to be more focused on our separate area for anyone to really get something out of it, because everybody who was there with me, we're already doing all of those things.

So I felt with the Compass course, they should've just sent the book out to every farmer and let him then read through the book and tick it all or look at it, just peruse the book. Some wouldn't have even looked at it but at least it would've gone to more people. I don't know whether 10 or 15 went in here to Innisfail – we've got 200 growers. Well, you know, you're preaching the converted. You're not talking to the ones who need to know. So the information has got to be disseminated somehow better.

Ways women participated

Women's participation was generally relatively low in the courses but those that did participated actively in completing a work book.

Well I went to the course myself with probably 18 men, yes ... Not a one [other woman at the course] ...you just assessed what you were doing and that was good because it gave you views from other people who were there at the workshop and you could pick up ideas from them.

I think there were about four or five [women] and they're ones that I see, those same faces cropping up at all these others. ... It's the same people and they're the people who are doing it already.

Importance of women's participation in the initiative

...they go and tell other women and they say, I didn't see you at so and so, didn't you know it was on? I think it gets out because they listen to other women, whereas they mightn't listen to a man.

What women learnt from the experience?

Experiences with the initiative were generally mixed. One interviewee changed their spraying regime on farm as a result of participating in the course and is now in general 'more environmentally aware'. However others identified that the course really confirmed that they were doing the right thing already.

Yes, minor. Environmental, it was in spraying ...Different spraying regime and it is also probably the way community has got us thinking.

I learned that my farming practices aren't too bad at all but there are areas that we needed to improve. It was probably not my farming practices but our farming practices.

But it wasn't going to give us anything extra, particularly when they tell you you've got to get better and they can't say to you, this is – they're saying, well, this is how you can do it to get better. Well, we've already been doing that for 20 years. Our men put all the trash into the ground when they're cultivating. We don't burn anything and we're already doing that. So I couldn't see how that was going to help us get better.

Well, that was really telling us how we can improve our farming enterprise. But a lot of the things we'd already done.

Key lessons from women's experience

Because of the low number of women participating one of the interviewees one of the interviewees made the following suggestions:

- Because some of women are too timid or lacked the confidence to come, they might come if somebody asks them to come;
- Ensure that the timing of events are more suitable for women;
- Include something or somebody (e.g. a guest speaker) that they can listen to;
- Recognise the value of including a social component to events.

5.2.8 Wet Tropics Women in Sugar Group*Overall focus of initiative*

This new initiative (see Section 6.2.3 of this report) hopes to establish network of women who want to be informed about sugar industry and who wish to learn through activities such as workshops and mill tours.

I would see that the Women in Sugar group was intended as a sustainability initiative, that was the aim of some people in it.

...[women] expressed that they would be interested – not so much meetings, but in interacting and workshops and wanted to be informed.

Women's satisfaction with the initiative

This is an initiative in its infancy and as with many new ventures it has initially struggled to get going after the impact of the cyclone and to get sufficient interest from women:

After the cyclone, we had a few meetings, but it got really hectic and it died. Our group kind of dwindled away. ...It's very hard. It's more it was in the planning stages. This next meeting is more – we're calling on the old, the ones that came to it before, to come back. Hopefully, there's going to be an interest. Like we've shortened the meetings so they don't go all day. We've gone through and...we've put our objectives. ...we've got something out of it. So hopefully we've laid the correct groundwork and, if we get the people back, then it will be all good.

Yeah, I'd put 4 [satisfied] there because we've got the interest now and we've got something started. I'm hoping it can...I think they'll still need a lot of assistance from organisations, but I think there are other Women in Sugar groups in other areas that have established themselves quite well. If they learn from them and can get interaction with them it should be alright; I hope.

Ways women participated

Women are participating in the initiative in a number of ways including:

- Participating in meetings, sending emails, invitations, etc;
- Helping to facilitate meetings; and
- Acting as Interim group facilitator and running workshops for the group.

The initial planning phase has involved workshopping activities supported by Industry Liaison officers:

We used workshops to get them together because we didn't think...well I wasn't in the meetings. I didn't think sitting around just having a meeting, meeting, meeting would work; so we workshopped. From the business plans, we worked out that we needed computer skills and accountancy skills and things like that probably. So we ran workshops and we got good interest in those. From those workshops we asked what other workshops they'd like and we had a variety in one and a few of those types of workshops from there.

Originally there was probably 12 around Babinda, Innisfail with Tully is probably around 20; I think there was about 24 in the Gordonvale area that expressed that they would be interested – not so much meetings, but in interacting and workshops and wanted to be informed.

Importance of women's participation in the initiative

This is an initiative specifically focussed on improving the contribution of women to the sugar industry through improve their general skills and their understanding of the sugar industry.

What women learnt from the experience?

Although it is very early days for this initiative, women identified that delegation and distance are challenges that need to be addressed in establishing a WIS group in the region:

That things have to be delegated. But also not to rely too heavily on the people that you delegate to. Because sometimes it doesn't.

It's hard to make things happen. You can't just make things happen. Just have patience and keep going and keep thinking what would keep them interested. Getting the distance between all the women that are interested – there's such a big distance – and I'm sure it could work better if there wasn't such a distance.

Maybe they're just going to have to all get computer literate and contact each other through email more; probably that's the only way. Everyone put their ideas on there, because meetings aren't going to do it, I don't think. Having a meeting all the time isn't going to do it because no-one can get there when they need to get there. If they could all interact over the computer I think that might work; it might not too, but that's my thought. If they all had their thoughts on the computer to each other it might help.

Key lessons from women's experience

- To use different engagement methods as women are not generally interested in participating in meetings only.
- Need to establish an effective communication network in establishing a women's group over such a large area.

6. Women In Sugar groups

6.1. Women's groups or networks in the Australian sugar industry

It is well recognised that social networks can influence trust, access to information and power relations in rural communities. Social networks reflect on the level of connectivity in a community (or reachability) and therefore the ability of a community to solve problems that require selective action and to build up social capital (e.g. Janssen et al. 2006). Within the Australian sugar industry, a number of 'Women in Sugar' or WIS groups have emerged in sugar growing regions. McGowan Consulting (2006) found that the Women in Sugar groups have created networks and communication mechanisms focused on addressing the issues and needs of women in the sugar industry.

In this section of the report we first review a brief history and documented objectives of the WIS groups in within the two case regions of this study and then examine perspectives on WIS in practice based on women's experiences with WIS identified in interviews conducted by this current study.

6.2. Women in Sugar Groups in the Northern and Southern Case Regions

In the two case regions of this study three WIS groups have been established with quite different histories; two in the southern case region (Bundaberg WIS formed in

2000 and Isis WIS formed in 2004) and one in the northern case region Wet Tropics Women in Sugar Group formed in 2006.

6.2.1 Bundaberg Women in Sugar

The Bundaberg Women in Sugar (BWIS) Group was established in February 2000 with the intent to (a) unite, support and represent women in the Bundaberg District sugar industry, and (b) provide technical information to improve on-farm decision-making through guest speakers, training and field tours. Its ultimate vision is to have women actively involved and engaged in all parts of the sugar industry. For instance, the Bundaberg Women in Sugar group's Corporate Plan states that:

Our mission is to unite, support and represent women in Bundaberg district sugar industry through information and training and by being active participants within the industry.

The BWIS group is a volunteer group of women and young women who are involved in the local sugar industry. Currently it has approximately 20 active members and an additional 35 members who support BWIS events. It operates as a team with all members assisting in the workload. It meets regularly once a month with additional planning/organisational sessions held as required. In addition, the WIS members continue to support positive interaction with male sugar industry participants, e.g. post harvest breakfasts, CANEGROWER Executive meetings, training courses, etc.

BWIS group operates under the auspices of the Bundaberg CANEGROWERS with whom the group works in close partnership. Bundaberg CANEGROWERS manage and administer the finances of the BWIS group in addition to providing insurance cover. This has implications for its membership and role as identified below in a comment from a both male and female interviewees:

...The WIS group have gone from strength to strength. They're auspiced under us. We have only one request: that the women in the WIS group be members of CaneGrowers. They can be members of CaneGrowers in Mackay, they can be members of CaneGrowers Isis, Boulia, and if we had an organisation in Boulia they could be there. But that is principally because we cover their public liability, their professional indemnity, we provide them with meeting spaces, and we need to discriminate against non-members. (Bundaberg male interviewee)

In its current format where it's basically auspiced under Bundaberg CaneGrowers and uses Bundaberg CaneGrower's ABN. The role I think should mirror a number of the CaneGrower's initiatives, as in providing representation, leadership, services and the promotion of unity. If for example, they wanted to get political and start another organisation I think that's something they may need to look at and incorporate and do their own thing. (Bundaberg male interviewee)

...anyone that's not a canegrower and doesn't pay levies are not allowed to go on the trips because of insurance and stuff like that. ...So they had to pay \$300 or something to become an affiliated member or officiated member or something. But that's a problem; you're supposed to be a member and

actually paying levies to be on Women in Sugar. ...but we can have visitors and speakers that aren't members. (BWIS member)

The BWIS have developed a *Women in Sugar Bundaberg Region Queensland Corporate Plan* – a plan for the future contribution to the Bundaberg and broader sugar industry. Key elements of the BWIS Corporate Plan are outlined in the Box below.

Box 6.1. Key elements of the BWIS Corporate Plan

Mission:

Our mission is to unite, support and represent women in Bundaberg district sugar industry through information, interaction and training and by being active participants within the industry.

Industry Objectives:

Educational:

- To provide information and training in all aspects of the sugar industry
- To promote teamwork, group dynamics and skills development within the industry
- To further promote and encourage the uptake of research
- To continue to participate and evaluate various industry projects
- To encourage and support research teams

Social:

- To provide formal representation through unity and support
- To encourage more women to be involved in the industry
- To provide and promote more social interaction within the industry
- To develop and manage open mindedness and confidence for women in the industry
- To embrace challenges of change in the industry
- To continue Capacity Building
- To network and be reciprocal of support in the wider community

Long Term Goals:

- To continue to unite, support and represent women
- To encourage more women to become involved in the sugar industry at all levels
- To continue to work towards industry sustainability.

Short term Action Plan:

- Produce a sugar Journal to contribute to the preservation of the history and culture of the local sugar industry (received a small regional arts grant 2005 to hold a series of workshops to build the journal through learning – creative writing, graphic design, photography and publishing/editing)
- Further develop Integrated Pest Management – eg local monitoring system, hotline with disease outbreaks
- Promote and foster the ongoing representation of women
- Continue to grow our networks within and external to the local industry
- Encourage other WIS groups across the Industry. Continue to support emerging groups such as Isis, Maryborough and NSW
- Continue our social interaction and local support network
- To learn, participate in and foster best management practices within the industry
- Foster child friendly meetings to encourage more young women's involvement in the group
- To ensure open/ transparent communication and aid efficient administration of our group
- To continue to grow and build upon the learning and activities outlined below in our history

Source: Bundaberg Women in Sugar Corporate Plan (n.d.)

Importantly, recognising that it is a women's group operating in a male dominated industry, the Bundaberg WIS underlying premise is:

We believe that women in the sugar industry have unique potential and ability to contribute towards the achievement of a profitable and sustainable sugar industry. In this period of rapid change within the industry, gaps are emerging that women have the capacity, willingness and commitment to fill. The Bundaberg WIS group has a plan for the future.

A predecessor to the BWIS existed in the early 1980s in Bundaberg called 'Sugar Women's Action Group' but folded after 2 or 3 years as identified by a current BWIS member:

Actually before the [Bundaberg] WIS there was one called SWAG - a 'Sugar Women's Action Group', and I was on that. ...So it was in the early 1980s, when sugar went down which was about 1982 or something like that, and...we realised before the men, that it wasn't a cycle; that there were problems, and that sugar was never going to come back easily to what it had been in the 1960s. ...In early 1980s, we did come up against men. We tried to get ethanol. In the early 1980s, we wrote to the government and tried to get them to do something about ethanol. We were told by this fellow, that "sugar was for eating, and women were for staying home". So that was the one there. And that one folded up mainly because we ran out of puff because we got stuck by the brick walls. (BWIS member)

The BWIS operates as a Committee and they have tried to be flexible with the use of substitutes or proxies to deal with the problem of the workload falling on only a couple of people but found problems with this approach with CANEGROWERS:

We have a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and we did try to do it on a team basis where people were in charge of different things and we rotated it and different people would chair meetings. (BWIS member)

...a couple of years ago, instead of having just your chairman, your secretary, treasurer...[we] kind of put it into a category of five so that it was spread across groups. ...Like, okay, you've got your head chairman and stuff, but we have someone that looks after guest speakers, someone that does emailing, someone... You know, you have a couple of people you can call on...so that you're not loading everyone up. ...But this was a couple of years ago. But then last year that got out of hand and it's still did mean that there was some doing most of the work and not the others. ...and we had a problem. (BWIS member)

So how it's structured I think is fine at the moment because when we went to a more lase fair way, it wasn't as effective. It was for a while but then...the [CANEGROWERS] CEO in Bundy, he needed people to be able to sign cheques and he needed to know - who was in a position and so yes. ...but it worked good enough for us women but I think for the powers that be, it didn't work good enough for them. (BWIS member)

We did try one year of having coordinators for each area, not having a chairperson, but you do need a spokesperson. That spokesperson is normally your chairperson. You do need a secretary. Formal notes must be taken at each meeting and when you're fundraising, you do need a treasurer.

The current BWIS group is now 7 years old and can be considered a mature group. In a recent grant application to the SRDC, the BWIS Group identified it has undertaken a broad range of activities which reflect its commitment to building their member's as

well as their family's capacity for change, learning and innovation to benefit the sugar industry. Specific examples the Group identify include:

- Change – WIS promote and undertake capacity building courses to keep abreast of change and to pass onto our partners and other family members. WIS members have raised the benchmarks and regularly push the comfort zone in their farming enterprises
- Learning – travel and learning trips to Narrabri (cotton industry) and northern NSW (sugar) in addition to regular guest speakers which have enabled us them keep open to new opportunities and developments. Members attend ASSCT and many attended the recent IPM short course (bug check, incorporating rotational crops into farming system).
- Innovation – explored diversification opportunities through self funded bus trips to investigate: rotational cropping opportunities, potential new industries, farming systems, controlled traffic (one member is active in promoting and actioning GPS and controlled traffic systems on-farm) and maintain/preserve sugar industry culture and identity in the local area through progressing our Sugar Journal.

In 2006, their efforts were recognised by the industry when they received an SRDC “*Regional Award for Excellence for Grower Groups in the Sugar Industry*”.

6.2.2 Isis Women in Sugar

The Isis Women in Sugar (WIS) group is a relatively new group established in July 2004. Its draft mission statement is:

Mission:

To strive towards:

- Providing women with equal learning opportunities relating to relevant current and future issues pertinent to the sugar industry
- To foster open communication to all industry members
- To encourage women to gain a higher profile within industry bodies.

It is supported by Isis CANEGROWERS who provide administrative support (including insurance cover), act as a point of contact for the group and provide them with their own page in the Isis CANEGROWERS two monthly newsletter. The Isis Central Sugar Mill, through the Productivity Manager, also provides considerable support. The group has close linkages with the Bundaberg WIS group.

In the case of Isis WIS, the CANEGROWERS were always very helpful in helping us in meetings, networks, that sort of thing. The mill itself was always quite willing to help in any way they could. The sugar industry as a whole has always encouraged it. (Isis WIS member)

Despite this support, the group has struggled in establishing itself as a sustainable group:

It's been disappointing from my point of view that for about ten years now, we've tried to form a Women in Sugar group. For one reason or another, there just hasn't been the support until two years ago. We actually formed a WIS for

the Isis, and that's come on the back of encouragement from the Bundaberg WIS group. But I would have to say, that they do not meet very frequently. (Male Isis interviewee)

That's an issue too, see. I mean, the Bundaberg group has an executive, they have a chairperson, they each have specific roles and we talked about that and we did start that way where we did have a chairperson and a secretary and whatever. You know, I don't know whether that worked. Then we talked and we threw ideas around for months and decided maybe we don't have it, but you've got to have someone that's driving and coordinating it and organising, so I don't know. We didn't want to be worrying about money and things like that, whereas the Bundy ladies do. They have an account and they fundraise and do bits and pieces because that funds their next initiative, you know, if they're going to have a bus trip or whatever, well, that money will fund. Whereas we were never like that. (Isis WIS member)

At its the initial Isis WIS meeting in July 2004, approximately half of the 36 attendees said they were there because their husbands encouraged them to come along.

...originally the first meeting, I only came because my husband said you've got to go. But I was pleased I went. I think it's just you getting other ideas from other women's – ideas on the farming and how they can improve their lot in the farming lifestyle. (Isis WIS member)

However, more recently attendance has decreased and interest and support has been waning with only 4 or 5 women regularly attending and it really now has only 3 core active members.

Eventually it did get off the ground and we're still there in name only, basically. Rather stagnant but there's a few of us interested. ...The problem in this area seems to be that the majority of the women who have an interest in being involved in the sugar industry either work or have young children or something else. And that really is detrimental to forming a group. And, whilst the women want to be involved and want to be a group, none of them appear to want a tea and coffee, scones sort of group. They want to have a group that's actually doing something and trying to find a time that suits everybody is near impossible. (Isis WIS member)

6.2.3 Wet Tropics Women in Sugar Group

The Wet Tropics Women in Sugar Group is the newest WIS group and it is in its infancy. It was established in July 2006, initially with the support of CentaCare Cairns (funded by the federal Department of Family and Community Services) and FutureCane Industry Liaison Officers. An early meeting developed a mission statement for the Group to provide “a point of reference that will undoubtedly evolve in the future”:

Wet Tropics Women in Sugar encourages and supports the participation of women in the sugar industry. Wet Tropics Women in Sugar will be a forum for:

- Industry information and training
- The development of skills
- Networking
- Representation in the industry, and community in general
- The encouragement of social well being.

As with the Isis WIS group, the Wet Tropics WIS Group (WT WIS) it is struggling with how it will be organised and what its role and relevance to women is to be.

...the last meeting we had up there, we had bugger all there. So that's when, in September, we decided to go through the mill, and we got a good rollup for that. But not necessarily – they were members of, or wanted to be in the Women in Sugar. I mean, they want to be informed but they don't want to go to meetings. We put out feelers for north of, up to Mulgrave, that area up there. And we had the meeting in Innisfail and they wanted newsletters but they didn't want to come to the meeting. So it sort of left it on a few people. (WT WIS member)

I haven't been for a while to one of those meetings. When I was going, they were looking - I'm trying to remember what they were looking at. I obviously didn't think it was relevant to anything I needed at that point. (Female interviewee, North)

6.3. Key roles and functions of Women in Sugar groups

6.3.1 Impetus for Establishing Women in Sugar Groups

Women identified that the impetus for establishing the different WIS groups has been largely twofold:

- Times of economic difficulty in the sugar industry; and
- The isolation of women within the sugar industry due to limited networking opportunities particularly in a conducive environment existing

This is highlighted in the following comments from women interviewed in the Bundaberg region:

This industry rep told me that years ago with the previous downturn in the industry, his wife was involved in a similar organisation. So it's something that's been born from hard times and I'm not quite sure of the direction it's headed in recent times, but from where I sit it seems a very good means of a flow of information and no doubt support, because women talk, men don't talk. Women benefit, I believe, from talking about issues or problems or concerns. Men should talk more, but they don't. (Bundaberg interviewee)

Women in Sugar, seven years [ago] - it was started mainly by the more mature women around Bundaberg in the sugar industry. ...it was because some of the men were...we had some suicides and things like that. You know what I mean? And the women were thinking about whether it was going to be a social group ...but most of us wanted it to have more than that, and be more involved. (BWIS member)

...the isolation of people and the fact that there is very little, especially in our area, very little community getting together of women. Women in Sugar has really done quite a good job of trying to broach that. People cannot even recognise loneliness. I think initially we started Women in Sugar off with an educational bent but I think the social side of it is equally important. (BWIS member)

Basically to bring back information from the industry to their farms. ...But it's the old adage of face-to-face communication. ...it kind of penetrates a lot more if you can sit around and talk to these women and they've all got some similar problems as us, but some of them have different problems. ...We've been through some of the most difficult times in the industry with the downturn and things were very, very difficult there. (BWIS member)

6.3.2 The role of Women in Sugar Groups

Both geographically and functionally, there is considerable diversity in women's views on the role and focus of WIS. Importantly, a WIS group needs to be flexible enough to be able to cater for a broad range of needs, for example:

So I think that it [WIS] will be a unique solution in each region, and it should be, and it should be a grass roots solution and then, as capacity and capability increases, then their willingness and ability to take on more challenges will improve. (BWIS member)

...for me the aim of it was to give women an opportunity to keep up with industry issues in a more comfortable setting for them. ...but having said that, there are ladies who want to be involved who want to just have social things, you know. Like the Bundy ladies often have very social things. I think you need to address all of that. (Isis WIS member)

I think every group in every area is trying to achieve different things ...Here, locally, it's providing information to the women that they can use in management decision making. (Isis WIS member)

I do not think you can expect everyone will want to be involved in every particular level of it. Because if you try and force people into a particular aspect they are not interested in, you will force them away. I think that is very important myself. Everyone has their own strengths and interest themselves and so have them all being involved at their own level that they want to be involved at. (BWIS member)

Yeah, it's more than 'tea and scones' and that's what I think a lot of people think a woman's meeting group is - and they haven't come to find out themselves. ...You know, they think it's just a ladies group and we all get there and talk. Talk about this one and that one and everyone else. Not actually learn things like, you know, all the different programmes that Women in Sugar are trying to bring in as far as computerised programmes and helping with the finances and those sorts of things. ...It is a support group for the actual growers. (Isis WIS member)

Providing a supportive role through education and learning about the industry, enabling connectivity or linkages with others in the industry and the development of skills within a 'friendly' environment for women are seen as being high priority for WIS as identified in comments from women from the Bundaberg and Wet Tropics areas:

Its focus is bringing like-minded women together with the same interest in the cane industry and to promote learning and knowledge within the industry itself, to gain friendship with other women, locally and out of the area and that's been quite successful. (BWIS member)

Definitely to support women so that we can learn in a supportive environment and not a dictatorial environment. Like a feminine environment is far more supportive and caring and with the masculine one is – yes, I don't feel comfortable in the masculine environment. (BWIS member)

It was a group of ladies – or it still is – that get together and catch up on issues that are important at the time...and organise educational things to try and help the women improve their skills. And it's all to do with improving your skills and knowledge about the industry. Plus socialising and listening to the other women's woes and good things and you feel like you're not on your own. (BWIS member)

Initiative hopes to establish a network of women who want to be informed about sugar industry and who wish to learn through workshops, mill tours, etc (WT WIS member)

What's it about? Okay. Well, it's women supporting women. It's basically learning. It's supporting women in the industry socially for learning. We're learning through workshops and informing. There's a heap of opportunities through the Women in Sugar. It links with other areas. (BWIS member)

Support role. ...Trying to find out what's happening with the industry. You get the reports that come through, but I've only been in it for a few months, so those reports that come out don't mean much. If you ask the men you're treated like a fool. So I imagine by attending a Women in Sugar meeting they'll actually run through it, what it means, what the cane industry is actually doing, what technology is doing, the pricing of sugar, what's happening with our mills. (WT WIS member)

We're trying to educate women in the [industry] – a lot of them, it's a mystery, the process of the sugar industry. Most of us are well aware of how we plant it and everything like that, the field side of it. But the technological side of it, where it goes and everything. And also networking and getting people together with common interest in the sugar industry. And hoping to get representation on various boards of our industry, or various committees – not necessarily boards – like maybe there's productivity or diversification or something like that. (WT WIS member)

I think it's a learning role for women, then it's an advisory role for women and then I think it's a business role for women. So you've got to look first then you've got to learn but you can pass on what you've learnt, then you can query why it's not why you think it should've been. I think there's quite a few of the women, the younger women, that are very interested in finding out how these things actually work because particularly it all goes back to the price. When times are good, people don't really mind what they're getting but when times are bad and you're looking at every cent that you're going to get in, it's very important that you know how you can improve that and why they're taking this from you and what this levy means and how they've come at the party and you know, what the sugar value is. (WT WIS member)

Closely aligned to the educational role is building women's confidence to learn and have an input in decision-making at all levels in the industry as identified in the following comments from women in all three WIS groups:

That's where I think the women's network would have a really big impact. No so much going in there and trying to change the world, but give the women something to feel confident in, where they feel they have the confidence to go out there and achieve something. Then by doing that, they would be able to take something else on and suggest different things. They might even go to some of the more usual men's meetings and make a statement where before they wouldn't. After all a lot of them have half shares in the farm. (WT WIS member)

Getting ladies together, how to solve the problems that are arising, I suppose, throwing ideas around. I guess as a group, you have contact with different organisations. Problem solving, I suppose, and creating a supportive network for people that are worse off. (WT WIS member)

Encouraging the women to get involved, and have a voice, if they want to. Just to learn a bit more so they can understand what their husbands are talking about a lot of the time because really we don't understand a lot of what the men get up to. So, to help the men in their decision-making I suppose. You know, if you're informed you can have more of an idea of what's happening and be able to make better decisions I suppose. (Isis interviewee)

...originally the first meeting, I only came because my husband said you've got to go. But I was pleased I went. I think it's just you getting other ideas from other women's – ideas on the farming and how they can improve their lot in the farming lifestyle. Getting – well I haven't been on any – I haven't met any of the Mackay ladies or anything like that, but just picking up ideas how other women get involved in the sugar industry. (Isis interviewee)

Empowering women to have a voice in the industry in decision-making at all levels (i.e. from farm business to industry policy making) is another priority for some women:

I don't see them as supporting. I see them as more as a partnership with the men. ...The men in CaneGrowers yes. Yes because I hope the 'little woman syndrome' has gone out you know. (BWIS member)

...the industry is changing all the time...that's what I see the great benefit of the WIS group is that it...allows industry developments to be communicated to the farming enterprises by the women. So the WIS group here tends to have a guest speaker or a topical speaker on something that is informative re: change and development in the industry so that...I think that's the great benefit of it. Women are better informed and CaneGrowers as an organisation can use the WIS group to better inform farming enterprises because men don't always do that terribly well. (BWIS member)

I just think women need a voice in the industry. If the Women in Sugar groups is recognised formally as part of the industry, I think it will be a good thing for the industry as a whole. (WT WIS member)

...a group of women felt they wanted to form a structure with whatever it was they were going to do, whether it would be learn things or lobby things or whatever, that was at least empowering them (WT WIS member)

In sum, the focus of the Women in Sugar groups are broadly aimed at a diversity of needs and range from educational objectives (such as providing information and training in all aspects of the sugar industry and promoting team work, group dynamics and skills development within the industry) through to social objectives (such as encouraging more women to be involved in the industry, providing and promoting more social interaction within the industry and embracing challenges of change in the industry).

6.3.3 What WIS is trying to achieve?

So what are the WIS groups trying to achieve? Some of the clear priorities here are a higher profile for women and a say in the industry as identified in the following comments from women involved in WIS:

Probably a higher profile for women; a supportive environment for women to learn and to have social interaction. (BWIS member)

Relating to us [Bundaberg WIS], it's really being a support to the cane industry. We're not in there to fight the decisions of the men, we're in there to support the decisions and build on those where we can. We're also there to give women encouragement if they wish to apply for board positions, to encourage them and support them in that decision. We're there to help their confidence if they wish to go that way. Generally, we're there as a group for other women. Men have always been invited, if they wish to attend - not that they do - but they do attend our social days and we're strongly supported by those that do attend. (BWIS member)

I think from the very beginning what they were trying to achieve was to get a bit more knowledge of on-farm practices so they can get out there and help in the paddock opposed to just doing the books for the farm. So...what they

wanted to get out of it was meeting other women in Women in Sugar in the industry, and talking to guest speakers and finding out how they can get more involved and coming along to the meetings and the workshops and those sorts of things. (Isis WIS member)

Men interviewed varied in their perspectives on Women in Sugar groups and what they were trying to achieve. Some were very optimistic and supportive of WIS:

You've got to start at the bottom. You've got to get experience. And if you build on that experience, there's no reason why you can't become elected and a leader of the sugar industry. ... So I honestly see it [WIS] as a stepping stone to them becoming higher up in the sugar industry. An industry that they own. It's their future. Their livelihoods. And I think that we're not going to see that in the older generation, but we could in the younger generation. (Isis interviewee)

I think WIS is a fairly strong organisation. They attend our board meetings. They report to our board. If there's any...and we run a very transparent office. If there are ever any questions from any member, they are dealt with. And if they're serious questions they are dealt with at a board level. (Bundaberg interviewee)

The WIS group have gone from strength to strength. (Bundaberg interviewee)

Other male interviewees expressed reservations about WIS groups and what they were trying to achieve:

I mean, [my wife] plays a role in our business and does it well but she just didn't see the need to get involved in a specific women's organisation in sugar and I really think that you'd find that probably the higher proportion of women on farms would adopt that view. Then again there are others who want to get in there and do something and try something, well, I say good luck to them but it's not for everybody. It's a case of if you want to be in it, go for it. If not, well, you can still play your role. (Isis interviewee)

Well there is the Women in Sugar group and I tend to think that even having a Women in Sugar group tends to marginalise them a bit. Men sort of think oh well there are the ladies over there doing their thing, so we'll stay over here, the Canegrowers Executive, Isis Mill and IBL, so it tends to get marginalised. (Isis interviewee)

This is going to sound funny but I don't believe a Women in Sugar group should be specifically for women ...If you don't have some of the males involved that's probably going to take a lot longer to go through the process, but a lot of women won't agree with that one. ...It really is about getting a group together that works for the same goal but I just don't know how you make it happen in a male-dominated...and it's not...it's very male-dominated top-heavy with almost chauvinistic men unfortunately. (Isis interviewee)

6.4 Factors influencing women's participation in Women in Sugar groups

6.4.1 Motivation for Participation in WIS Groups

The key motivating factors identified by women for getting involved in WIS relate to:

- Providing a friendly environment for discussion and social networking with like-minded women or other farming bodies who talk the same language.
- Enabling a learning environment that is “more than tea and scones” and creating opportunities to gather information relevant to their farm businesses and to find out more about the industry and options or opportunities for change.
- Capacity to provide social support in hard times including:
 - Identifying options and opportunities
 - Finding out what other's were doing and also others in same situation
 - Gaining confidence to learn.

These factors are highlighted in comments from women interviewed across the three WIS group areas.

Providing a friendly environment for discussion and social networking

If I had to be more involved in the presenting things or speaking out in front of people or anything like that, I wouldn't do any of that. But if I could just go along and help get a bit of information for other people and do things quietly, I'd be all right but if I had to present or speak out, I couldn't do that. I probably could eventually but not yet. (BWIS member)

I like to keep up with what's going on on other people's farms so I can sort of compare it to ours even though ours mightn't be as big as theirs. They can say, we've had so much rain and I can say, well we've had none, and compare the difference in things like that. And I like the social activity of it all. (BWIS member)

You're mixing with other women for a start. You're getting out. You're sort of getting more involved in the sugar industry. Hard to explain, I suppose. The women's perspective of the sugar industry. ...We have guest speakers which are really good. I enjoy that part. (Isis WIS member)

I think its friendship. I certainly think that the support when the sugar prices were down, I think that was very important. I think the educational side of it is important and I think understanding the politics especially in a sugar town like Bundaberg. (BWIS member)

I guess, you know, you should always be challenging yourself and getting out of your comfort zone but I just – I like to be with farming women. I can identify, talk the language. I'm comfortable. Also when there's guest speakers like at World Women's Rural Day, you usually take at least one point home or learn something. I like to learn different things too. (BWIS member)

I think the Women in Sugar is a very good idea where they can network together and sort of feed ideas off one another, just general sort of drawing people of the same interests together. (Isis WIS member)

I like the bus trips. We have a Women in Sugar bus trip every year around somewhere to look at another farming industry or something. That's always good. It's not just women. Men go as well but the Women in Sugar pay for it, host it and subsidise it, whatever. (BWIS member)

...we need to really think about what each lady wants out of it. You know, there are people like me that want to be out there on the tractors and there are women who don't. They just want to have a bit of social contact, perhaps and, you know, have a chat. ...There are also ladies who do want the knowledge of the industry but don't actually want to be involved. So they want to know what's going on, but they don't want to be out driving tractors. We need to address all of those things. (Isis WIS member)

Supporting a learning environment

The importance to me was for women to get out there and realise that they weren't the only one who had an interest in a group. ...I wanted women to have somewhere that they could, in a non-threatening way, feel that they could find out information. (Isis WIS member)

One of my absolute passions when Women in Sugar started was that I wanted to learn all the on-farm practices. I wanted to learn to change irrigators and I wanted to learn how to calibrate spray rigs and I wanted to learn all that stuff because if you're not born into a farming family, which I wasn't...you don't learn those things as a child, you don't grow up with them. ...Because the farm became my life and I needed to know more. I wanted to know more. (Isis WIS member)

Well, to start with, it was to gather information because the men can't get to meetings and stuff where it was mainly just to gather information. (BWIS member)

I like the bus trips. We have a Women in Sugar bus trip every year around somewhere to look at another farming industry or something. That's always good. It's not just women. Men go as well but the Women in Sugar pay for it, host it and subsidise it, whatever. (BWIS member)

Yes, bus trips, learning opportunities, we've been everywhere. One thing that I really enjoyed was actually visiting the SRDC in Brisbane and visiting the BSES and the Cane Growers... I thought it was really interesting. It really put a face to a name, sort of thing, in a broad sense. (BWIS member)

6.4.2 Challenges to Participation in WIS groups

Notwithstanding women identified that there are many challenges for improving women's participation in WIS:

'Mis-understanding' or a 'lack of understanding' of what WIS is about and does

I think a lot of the wives think that it's more of an executive group or something, like they're going to have to participate in it by, you know, doing things in a boardroom field or something. I think most farming women are a bit like me, sort of haven't got a lot of experience in that big office type area. ...but I never ever found it like that once I came, but I think it's just that getting the people to come to see that it's not like that. (BWIS member)

At the present moment I haven't got the time to be involved, but I'm not quite sure what I could contribute or what I would receive because I'm not sure on their focus. (BWIS member)

I do think there is [a place for it] but I don't know what my place is in it. (Isis interviewee)

In a way, I'm a little bit hesitant...to become involved with the Women in Sugar group if it's purely a social get together. Unless it has some agronomy or production focus, I don't want to get too linked into it. (Northern interviewee)

Time and logistics

I suppose time is your biggest hindrance and factor because sometimes you don't always have the time to be able to go to the meetings or do things with the meeting. (BWIS member)

I had to step back because [my husband] said to me: you're putting all this time and energy into the industry, what exactly are you doing for us? (BWIS member)

Women these days Childers-wise, there's too many other things happening. Either they're working or that's my feeling and trying to get anybody at the same time, it didn't suit this lot, it didn't suit that lot so it sort of collapsed. (BWIS member)

Then there's the financial side of things. There's many women now that have got to go out to work to support the income and with the industry the way it is, the ups and downs it's had, that's another way you have to look at it as well. Hence, as far as women's groups go, you can't get along to a meeting on those circumstances. (BWIS member)

Well I would probably be more interested if I wasn't sort of working the time spans that I am. You know, and like I said, it is hard when a lot of the meetings are held in the daytime. (BWIS member)

I've got to really look at my involvement in all of my things. It's just taking up – I would like to still stay active. But I believe that other people could take a more active role. (Northern interviewee)

Because I haven't had time to get involved in anything like that. Time is the biggest thing, biggest factor. You can only stretch yourself so far, otherwise when you come home, you're falling asleep, and that's my biggest bug bear. (Northern interviewee)

The time constraint thing - I did try to do that, I tried to go to a women's business networking group, but because of the night time meetings, I couldn't do it. My husband was never home, I've still got kids, I can't leave home. (Northern interviewee)

It all comes to time and other commitments and I guess the level of interest. (Northern interviewee)

It's such a big area, if you do hold a meeting, somebody's always got to drive such a big distance. (Northern interviewee)

All of these women who are interested in these sort of things, are the ones who are busy with so many things. They've got so much on their plate already. (Northern interviewee)

Needs to be more than 'tea and scones'

Just a social group that just got together and chatted about nothing in particular would not encourage me to participate. (BWIS member)

The last couple of years have been very busy...and that's what's putting people off is that usually if you come along, you'll get a job. So we're trying to pull back on that and try and not put as much pressure on the few, and that's what's kind of happened to me and a couple of the others. ...It's kind of been too much and we've got to bring it back to a manageable level. (BWIS member)

If it means just getting together for a chat and coffee, no. If it's something that's going to be productive for the sugar industry, maybe yes. I know that it's important to have contact with other people in the same situation, as a supportive network. (Northern interviewee)

What would hinder my interest would be if they had meetings and it was just a cup of tea, just there for a chat, a social outing. It would be great occasionally, but not at every meeting where you just have a chat and a cup of tea, and that's it. (Northern interviewee)

The male-dominated culture within the industry

So field days, well, that's the thing that usually the men do, and you'll find very few women get involved. They're not encouraged. I mean, canegrowers have been forced to let us do certain things, but they would not encourage any of us to actually go on their boards. (BWIS member)

I'd like to see the industry formally accept and acknowledge and put in place Women in Sugar groups as a part of the industry. I'm not a believer in a women's group for the sake of a women's group but I do believe that women in the sugar industry in particular are not given the opportunity to express themselves and be part, for various reasons, of decision making. (Isis WIS member)

I think men see this Women in Sugar as a crazy thing that's going to take over and revolutionise the sugar industry. Into the equal rights and stuff like that. And I think they just think – because it's such a male-dominated industry and there's a lot of focus there to get women involved – that people are going to try and get women in there whatever way they can, and they won't have to work as hard to get into those positions. I think it's just a mindset a lot of them are in. They always think women have got it easier than them. (WT WIS member)

Reluctant 'participators' and group dynamics

I'm not a meeting person and I'd rather be out in the paddock doing things rather than sitting in a meeting because I'm not one for discussions and things like that ...I suppose if there was something I was really interested in, I would go along, I would make the effort to go. (Isis WIS member)

There hasn't been any meetings because everyone's been really busy with other things ...And I think for the fact that we only always had the same people coming along to the meetings all the time, we never got new ladies coming in. So it kind of stalled a bit I suppose you could say. (Isis WIS member)

...but there doesn't seem to be anyone around that wants to take it on ...but I just don't know how to get people motivated and I don't know who does. (Isis WIS member)

Probably the bitchiness as far as women are concerned because you can get a lot of us women together sometimes and it can get terribly bitchy, but it's just a characteristic I think. (Isis WIS member)

...they're were some involved in the Women in Sugar group initially who were just there to gossip and bitch and get dressed up and they didn't help the cause at all. That is the biggest danger of a Women in Sugar group, you get all women together and they're all likely to start bitching and moaning about something than to actually be focused on something constructive. (Isis interviewee)

I think bitching and in-fighting with women's groups and basically not valuing the support they'd get. (BWIS member)

And again, it's whether you hear about it too, because some of these networks can be very cliquey. (Northern interviewee)

I was approached recently and I was sort of, look, I really am not that interested. I wouldn't mind going along occasionally socially but I understand that may not be acceptable that somebody just go along, like I understand that, so that's fine by me. (Northern interviewee)

I mean, they want to be informed but they don't want to go to meetings. (WT WIS member)

Well, I guess that just depends on personal dynamics of the group. Sometimes you don't feel quite as welcome as other groups. (Northern interviewee)

Lack of participation by other people. ...If you do your bit and it doesn't work, well it doesn't work. It's not something through what you've done. Women aren't interested in it. (WT WIS member)

6.5 Value of Women in Sugar Groups

6.5.1 Importance and influence of WIS

The WIS groups are considered by many women to be important and there is clear evidence that they undoubtedly are having an impact. For example, Bundaberg WIS membership is growing and their influence extending. They are now invited to contribute to CANEGROWERS executive meetings and they are developing strong partnerships internally in the region with local sugar industry participants such as: BSES, SRDC, Bundaberg Sugar, federal and state government sugar officers. They have also developed a strong and extensive network across and outside the region. Some examples include:

- Networking with women in the Burdekin, Ingham, Mackay, Childers, Maryborough, Condong, Ballina and Harwood regions;
- Assisting in the organisation of International Rural Women's Day which has ensured strong networks with other rural women in other agricultural industries across the region;
- Strong networks with government agencies especially DPI, DNRM, local government (Bundaberg City and Burnett councils); and
- Networking with Relationships Australia and Centacare.

In 2006, their efforts were recognised by the industry when they received an SRDC "*Regional Award for Excellence for Grower Groups in the Sugar Industry*".

General comments from women on their importance include:

I think the other thing that I feel is, as an alternative to something like CANEGROWERS, I was quite surprised with one of the husbands saying to [my husband], 'You know we'd never have got through this thing [smut response] if it hadn't been for Women in Sugar because that was the only way we got any information'. (BWIS member)

It's a good thing, I think, for people who want to be in it, it's a good way to lobby, I suppose, or to have an input into things that are happening in the industry. I think as time goes by they'll become more of a force to be listened to. (Isis WIS member)

Many women interviewed identified a range of factors demonstrating WIS's importance and influence within the sugar industry:

Enabling a learning environment

I think it's made me more business like and that comes about by talking to the other women and picking up ideas on how they're running their business compared to yourself. (BWIS member)

Environmental issues is something that we talk about a lot. I think there's a gross misunderstanding of a lot of farming practices in the community, of course you will always have the cowboys out there that won't take any notice of doing things differently to what they do, but I think the Women in Sugar

group has been quite focused on that. The knowledge goes around the table all the time, it's just one person talks about an issue they're having and everybody sits and listens and thinks, 'well, gee, we could face ourselves', so it's an area to look at to make sure you don't. (BWIS member)

Well, the cotton industry [bus trip] was fantastic. ...It showed us a different industry with a lot of younger farmers participating. Where, in the sugar industry, they're all a lot older farmers and it's very difficult for the younger members of the families to stay in the industry. (BWIS member)

I just wanted to go somewhere where I could get information that it would improve our business and just find out more about the industry and whether there was things there that we could do that would improve everything or help with making things a bit easier. (BWIS member)

Well, I feel more familiar with the industry, I suppose than what I did. Because being a woman on the farm, I feel it's a very man orientated industry. The men would usually congregate and talk. You were missing out on a lot of all that information gathering, whereas I find for me, Women in Sugar fills that gap for me. (BWIS member)

Social support to women

For my own personal self, not having children and moving into a farming district, I couldn't meet people, because everyone was involved in school committees or other areas, so coming into the WIS group allowed me to meet a lot of really lovely women that I would never have had the chance to meet and form nice, firm friendships with them, which I see the role of the WIS group foremost being a friendship group to encourage other women that are sitting at home alone, maybe in the same situation that I was in. (BWIS member)

Before this group was involved, I just knew the women in my own area, where now, I know women all across the district. So it's been good to gauge and get to know women in the other areas, even in this area. Now I know people from Childers, Gin Gin, Rosedale, the whole area. (BWIS member)

I've learnt an even balance of people's natures and encouragement for the shy person and allowing the other person, who is possibly having a bad day, to be able to just come in and say what they like, and they feel quite free and comfortable within the group to sit there and talk, and if their talk goes on for five minutes, everyone is willing to listen to them. (BWIS member)

I'm more gamer to take some roles on. ...I wouldn't have taken on chairman without the support of the women in the group. (BWIS member)

Building women's confidence and developing skills

I think in the past there's been - I wouldn't say an apathy; apathy's not a good way of putting it because it's not that women didn't care, I think they didn't

know how to become involved and I think Women in Sugar has given them an opportunity to take a greater involvement. (Bundaberg interviewee)

I think since I've been involved in Women in Sugars, it's increased my confidence as being part of the sugar industry, whereas before that I always said it was my husband's farm and I just helped and supported and now I feel more of an equal partner, I think. (BWIS member)

Yes so that's [Sugar journal] been really good - and I sort of have made some personally decisions of my own - and now I am going to poetry classes which I never thought I would do. Getting a bit of culture - because we have done an 'Expressive writing' sort of course. (BWIS member)

...whereas before they used to think maybe we shouldn't ask a question because we are a bit silly, it might sound silly but I think now with having the Women In Sugar group some of those ladies that are coming along to those meetings are getting the confidence to go along to what is usually a male dominated area and maybe stand up and ask a few questions that they wouldn't usually do. (BWIS member)

Then we went to northern New South Wales to the sugar industry there, and it was through those trips that I got some ideas of how we could put in and get some projects up ourselves. ... It's given us – most of the women, myself included – a lot of confidence in doing those projects. (BWIS member)

I think that is a good way of learning. You watch what other people do. They get up and make a speech and you think: yes, yes. So I get to the stage now, I just make a couple of notes as I'm watching and listening and that and then you can get up and speak. So that's all, I believe, is the result of Women in Sugar. (BWIS member)

I think it's been educational in applying for grants, things you don't do in your own farming venture. (BWIS member)

Supporting better business practices

I know we probably keep better records now than we used to of all our things that happen. (BWIS member)

I think it's made me more business like and that comes about by talking to the other women and picking up ideas on how they're running their business compared to yourself. I think as far as workplace health and safety on the farm goes, I've always been very much aware of it, but it becomes very much a part of our focus. (BWIS member)

6.5.2 Are WIS Groups Needed?

Notwithstanding, a number of women in both case regions questioned the need for WIS groups and their focus. Personally some women do not see the need for involvement in a specific women's organisation and consider it as not the way forward for dealing with change and the challenges in the industry:

Only if it had men involved, I will. ...I don't see any point in having women separate. It just continues the sugar industry to traditionally leave the women out of things. It just continues it. It's been the best way for the men to make token gestures that they want the women to be involved, but they've kept them separate, where they want them. (Isis interviewee)

I think it should be focused on farm type information or activities. It should not be a group where they have cups of tea and talk about others... I think they should be run so they're interactive with male activities. They should be focused on farm type information. Not making scones, not having a guest speaker on Avon or whatever. ...because all it does is reduce its credibility with the men. (Isis interviewee)

There's plenty of opportunities to be involved rather than have this little group of Women in Sugar. (Isis interviewee)

I don't think there should be a Women In Sugar group. I think it should be sugar industry representatives and...there's no men in sugar group. I think this is a lot of the downfall, they should stand up and be counted on a level playing field and learn and be accepted. I think they would probably get a lot further actually. There is no reason why they have to come from Women in Sugar group. Where is the men in sugar group? (Northern interviewee)

There is no men's group. I mean they may think that CaneGrowers is a boys club, well it's not. Do you know what I mean. They can go to it [CANEGROWERS meetings], there is nothing to say women can't go. They are welcome I would love to have them there. (Northern interviewee)

I'm not so convinced that they should be separate. Like I went and did that – whatever it is – leading industries and it was a mixed group and I think it worked better, to be quite honest. There was probably 50/50 women and men. I think it works a lot better than [all] women, because at the end of the day, if you're going to go and do something after it, you'd be only doing it in front of women. You're not going to be much good anyway. (Northern interviewee)

No, I don't know. ...But if people have that social need, that's great. Yeah. But there's enough things happening for me, socially, if I want to, in sugar. (Northern interviewee)

8. The way forward: Emerging strategies

In a comprehensive Australian review of the issues facing women in agriculture, Elix and Lambert (1998: 114) identified three common issues that strategies for improving women's participation in agriculture must address:

- The culture within the agricultural sector, which is seen as male-oriented and unwelcoming, or exclusive of women as leaders and managers;
- The competing demands of women's on- and off-farm work and family responsibilities; and

- The extent to which women's self-perceptions or lack of confidence inhibits their progress to positions as leaders and managers within the sector.

These issues resonate with what this study has found, based on women's experiences of participation in sustainability initiatives within the sugar industry, as revealed in the analysis of interviews (see in particular Sections 5 and 6 of this report).

The strategies that emerged through the interviews with both men and women in the case regions can be grouped into four broad, inter-related categories, namely strategies addressing:

- The impacts of a traditionally male-oriented industry culture, by specifically encouraging women's participation;
- The competing demands of women's responsibilities;
- The need to build women's confidence to participate; and
- The opportunity to build on women's capacity to recognise and deal with change.

Addressing the impacts of a traditionally male-oriented industry culture, through strategies that specifically encourage women's participation

In light of the male-oriented culture within the sugar industry (see Section 3.1 of this report), the analysis of the interviews identified the need to specifically encourage women's active participation in sugar industry sustainability initiatives. Strategies emerging were:

- Establishing the relevance of an initiative strategically to the farm business (e.g. where there is a financial focus that may be particularly attractive to women);
- Specifically targeting women through women's networks (e.g. through a WIS-driven workshop);
- Recognising the need to have both partners of the family farm business participating together in initiatives, including specifically targeting men to invite their partners to industry activities (e.g. industry workshops, meetings and field days); and
- Recognising the value of including a social component to initiatives to encourage women's participation (e.g. including guest speakers that are of interest to women).

Planning initiatives to account for the competing demands of women's responsibilities

The analysis highlighted the way that the planning of initiatives and events needs to account for the competing demands of women's on- and off-farm work and family responsibilities, through:

- Examining the timing of events to ensure that they are more suitable for women (e.g. making them as 'family friendly' as possible); and
- Examining meeting processes, since women are not always interested in general meetings.

Building women's confidence to participate

The analysis identified the need to build women's confidence to participate as another strategy for improving women's participation in sustainability initiatives. Strategies emerging included:

- Recognising the importance of having a number of women participating in various ways to give women greater confidence to be actively involved;
- Specifically inviting those women who might lack the confidence to participate; and
- Providing women with opportunities to develop the confidence to be more actively involved (i.e. 'get out there and make things happen themselves').

Building on women's capacity to recognise and deal with change

Two underlying themes related to women and change emerged in the analysis of the interviews. Firstly, women are often particularly interested in acquiring new skills to facilitate change in practices that benefit the future sustainability of their family business. Secondly, there was a common recognition by men and women of women's greater capacity to recognise the need for change and their commonly expressed desire to deal with change.

In recognition of these two underlying themes, strategies emerging from the analysis to deal with these are issue include:

- Working with the industry to actively support Women in Sugar initiatives and to recognise their value in a non-patronising way;
- Establishing a more effective communication network among women within the sugar industry;
- The industry supporting and building women's skills to be more actively involved in Executive positions within industry organisations;
- Developing women's skills to support improved strategic decision-making within their farm businesses, to assist them in managing change.

References

- Alston, M. 1995 *Women on the Land: Hidden Heart of Rural Australia*, Sydney: University of New South Wales Press.
- Alston, M. 2003 'Women's representation in an Australian rural context', *Sociologia Ruralis*, 43(4): 474-487.
- Claridge, C. 1998 'Rural women, decision making and leadership within environmental and Landcare groups', *Rural Society*, 8(3): 183-195.
- Dimopoulous, M. and Sheridan, M. 2000 *Missed Opportunities. Unlocking the future of women in Australian agriculture. Stage 2 Report*. RIRDC Publication No. 00/44. Canberra: RIRDC.
- Elix, J. and Lambert, J. 1998 *Missed Opportunities. Harnessing the potential of women in Australian agriculture. Volume 1: Social Survey and Analysis*. Canberra: RIRDC and Department of Primary Industries and Energy.
- Gooday, J. 1995 *Women on farms. A survey of women on Australian broadacre and dairy farms, 1993-1994*. ABARE Research Report 95.10, Canberra: ABARE.
- Janssen, M.O., Bodin, O., Anderies, J.M., Elmquist, T., Ernston, H., McAllister, R.R.J., Olsson, P. and Ryan, P. 2006. Towards a network perspective of the study of resilience on social-ecological systems. *Ecology and Society*, 11 (1): 15.
- Leckie, G. 1993 'Female farmers in Canada and the gender relations of a restructuring agricultural system', *The Canadian Geographer*, 37: 212-230.
- McCartney, F. and Ross, H. 2003 *Looking Beyond the Boundary Fence: Rural Women, Natural Resource Management and Sustainable Development*, Gatton: School of Natural and Rural Systems Management, The University of Queensland.
- McGowan Consulting, 2006 *CANEGROWER'S Strategy for Women and Teams*, Report prepared for CANEGROWERS, URL: http://www.canegrowers.com.au/docs/Women_Research_Sept06.pdf, accessed 18/10/06.
- Pini, B. 1999 *Women's Participation in the Sugar Industry: Survey Report*, unpublished document.
- Pini, B. 2001 *From the paddock to the boardroom: The gendered path to agricultural leadership in the Australian sugar industry*, Thesis (Ph.D.), Brisbane: Queensland University of Technology.
- Sachs, C. 1983 *The Invisible Farmers: Women in Agricultural Production*, Totowa, New Jersey, USA: Rowman and Allenheld.
- Standing Committee on Agriculture and Resource Management, 1998 *A Vision for Change: National Plan for Women in Agriculture and Resource Management*, Canberra: Standing Committee on Agriculture and Resource Management.
- Whatmore, S. 1991 *Farming Women: Gender, Work and Family Enterprise*, Basingstoke, Hants: Macmillian.

Appendix A – Interview questions

This Appendix contains the interview schedules used for these in-depth interviews, which were targeted to three groups of interviewees:

1. Female growers;
2. Other female interviewees; and
3. Male interviewees.

SRDC Project:

Sugar communities and resilience to change:

Opportunities for enhancing women's participation in sustainability initiatives

Learning from the regions / perspective interviews

Female grower perspectives interviews

February 2007

NAME:

AFFILIATION:

DATE:

PLACE:

INTERVIEWER:

RECORD:

Interview Preamble

[Make sure that they have a copy of our project fact sheet, which has our contact details]

This interview is part of the SRDC/CSIRO/UQ Women in Sugar Communities project, which is focusing on women's participation in the sugar industry. We're speaking with people from different parts of the industry, both men and women, in the [Tully, Innisfail and Babinda OR Bundaberg and Isis] regions. All up we aim to talk with about 40 people. We are particularly interested in the way that women can contribute to helping their industry and community adapt to change. The information from these interviews will help us understand the range of perspectives on the role of women in the sugar industry and their preferences concerning participation in sugar industry decision-making.

Your responses will be treated as confidential and we will ensure that you are not personally identified in the results of the study. If you would like, we can provide you with a summary of the major findings of the research.

With your permission, this interview will be taped and your statements summarised. Is that alright with you?

Our discussion will include:

- Some background on your role in the sugar industry and your community;
- Your motivations and preferences for participation in the sugar industry;
- Your experiences with sustainability initiatives;
- Your thoughts on Women in Sugar groups; and
- Your thoughts on how women can contribute to helping their industry and community adapt to change.

[Maybe note that some of the questions will be more relevant than others.]

Do you have any questions before we begin?

Female grower interviews

SECTION 1: CONTEXT

“Tell me a bit about your property...”

1. What are the main enterprise(s) on your farm?
Prompt for whether there are any other farm- or non-farm based enterprises on their property other than sugar cane.

“Tell me a bit about yourself...”

2. How long have you been involved with the sugar industry?

We’d like some information about your “role” in the sense of your formal occupation or ‘work responsibilities’ (e.g. farm book-keeper, OHS monitoring and record keeping, LG Councilor, WIS committee member; role in family).

3. Firstly, what roles do you play within the farm enterprise? (*e.g. in on-farm activities*);
4. Do you work off-farm or do you run another business from the farm (non-plant production)? If so, what? **Prompt for:** What is important to you about this role?

4.1. Can you estimate how much time on average per week you ‘work’ in this role (*% full or part-time or casual, or hours/week*)

5. Do you have a formal role within the sugar industry or other industry in any organisations / groups / committee, etc? If yes, please specify.

Prompt for: What is important to you about this role?

5.1. Can you estimate how much time on average per week you ‘work’ in this role? (*% full or part-time or casual, or hours/week*)

6. Do you have any other roles in any community organisations / groups or committee?

Prompt for: What is important to you about this/these roles?

7. What roles do you play within your family?

8. We have talked about your formal ‘work’ role or occupation above, so are there any *other ways* you are **‘involved’ in the sugar industry**? *Please identify? For example, participating in sugar industry networks/groups and/or sugar industry activities such as field days, workshops, grower meetings, productivity groups, industry issue-related forums, WIS group, etc*

SECTION 2: MOTIVATIONS AND PREFERENCES

“Turning now to motivations for participation...”

We are interested in your thoughts and experiences regarding women’s participation in the sugar industry, including what works and what doesn’t work and what could be done better. We’d like to start by asking you to rate your **overall** satisfaction with the level of participation of women in decision-making within different sectors of the sugar industry.

9. **Overall**, how satisfied are you with the *current level of participation* of women in *on-farm and farm business decision making* within the sugar industry, using 5 point scale, from 1 very unsatisfied to 5 very satisfied, with 3 neither satisfied or unsatisfied?

1 2 3 4 5
 Very unsatisfied Unsatisfied Neither satisfied or unsatisfied Satisfied Very satisfied

9.1. Can you please comment on your rating?

10. How satisfied are you with the *current level of participation* of women in decision making within *industry organisations and representative bodies* in the sugar industry, using 5 point scale, from 1 very unsatisfied to 5 very satisfied, with 3 neither satisfied or unsatisfied?

1 2 3 4 5
 Very unsatisfied Unsatisfied Neither satisfied or unsatisfied Satisfied Very satisfied

10.1. Can you please comment on your rating?

11. How satisfied are you with the *current level of participation* of women within the sugar industry’s *research and extension sector*, using 5 point scale, from 1 very unsatisfied to 5 very satisfied, with 3 neither satisfied or unsatisfied?

1 2 3 4 5
 Very unsatisfied Unsatisfied Neither satisfied or unsatisfied Satisfied Very satisfied

11.1. Can you please comment on your rating?

“Thinking about your preferences in relation to participation in the sugar industry...”

We’d now like to discuss how would you personally *prefer to participate in sugar industry forums, activities and networks, etc?*

12. Firstly, how *important is it for you to participate* in the sugar industry forums, activities or networks, using a 5 point scale of 1 (very low importance) to 5 (very high importance) with 3 moderately important?

1	2	3	4	5
Very low importance	Low importance	Moderately important	High importance	Very high importance

- 12.1. Can you please comment on your rating?

13. What motivates you to participate in sugar industry forums, activities or networks? *Or why do you participate?*

14. Would you prefer to participate more or less, or maintain about the same level of participation in sugar industry forums, activities or networks? **Why?**

- 14.1. Is there anything that would motivate you to participate more in sugar industry forums, activities or networks? *If there is, what would that be? If not, why not?*

- 14.2. How would you prefer to participate in sugar industry forums, activities or networks? *(E.g. participation in workshops or forums, shed meetings, collaborative projects, committees or boards or a formal, paid role?).*

Maybe prompt for: Why they prefer these areas of participation?

15. Are there any **challenges for you personally** with participating in sugar industry forums, activities and networks? If yes, please describe these challenges?

16. What are some of the **opportunities for other women** to participate in sugar industry forums, activities and networks? **Prompt for: How** (e.g. *participation in workshops or forums, shed meetings, projects, committees or boards or a formal, paid role?*) **and maybe why?**

17. What are some of the **challenges for other women** with participating in sugar industry forums, activities and networks? *(personal, social, economic & institutional / political)*

SECTION 3: SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES

We'd now like to focus specifically on *your own personal experiences with participation in 'sustainability initiatives'* within the sugar industry (*versus just awareness of initiatives*).

Our definition of sustainability initiatives is: *Specific industry focused or community-based activities, processes or tools that are focused on making the sugar industry economically, socially and environmentally sustainable.* [Give some examples:

- Activities under FutureCane program, like the FEAT program or their work on new farming systems.
- Women in Sugar groups and their activities, such as Travel and Learning projects.
- Landcare is another example of a sustainability initiative.
[If they need clarification of social sustainability, explain that this refers to impacts on families or communities]

Please try and think of projects or activities in your region that you've been involved with, which try and address some aspect of sustainability within the sugar industry.

[MAKE SURE THAT YOU GIVE THEM ENOUGH TIME TO THINK ABOUT THIS!]

[If they need some further e.g., you could mention Sugar Reform Package or COMPASS, or the following region specific examples:

Northern case region: Babinda Future Farmers, Progrow, FNQNRM Ltd, the Reef Plan extension program and Water Quality Improvement projects;

Southern case region: Isis Target 100, Prosper, BSES's Farm Productivity Assessment, BMRG, CANEGROWERS' Grain in Cane project]

18. Have you had enough time to think about this? Can you list any of these kinds of sustainability initiatives that you have personal experience with (both currently and in the recent past)?

(If more than one, ask them to select two to discuss) For the *(first) most important to you* of the initiatives / activities identified above:

19. What is/was the initiative about – what is/was its focus?

20. How would you *rate your satisfaction* with your experience with the initiative (i.e. for you personally), on 5 point scale, from 1 very unsatisfied to 5 very satisfied, with 3 neither satisfied or unsatisfied)?

1	2	3	4	5
Very unsatisfied	Unsatisfied	Neither satisfied or unsatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied

- 20.1. Can you please comment on your rating?

21. How or in what way did you participate in this initiative or activity?

22. What do you think you learnt from your experience in this initiative? *How did the experience with this initiative influence you and what did you learn?*

23. Have you made any changes to the way that you do things, as a result of your experience with this initiative?
- 23.1. **If yes**, could you briefly describe these changes?
- 23.2. **If no**, Could you please comment on why you haven't made any changes?
24. Are there any ways that your experience could have been improved? **If yes**, how?
25. Can you estimate how many women participated in this initiative?
- 25.1. In what way did these women participate in this initiative?
- 25.2. Did the presence of women make any difference to the initiative? **If yes, how? If no, why not?**
- 25.3. Are there any ways that the participation of women in the initiative could have been improved? **If yes, how? If no, why not?**
- 25.4. Do you have any other comments you'd like to make about this initiative?

Second sustainability initiative example (if more than one and if have time)

For *one other* the initiative / activity that is *important to you*:

26. What is/was the initiative about – what is/was its focus?
27. How would you *rate your satisfaction* of your experience with the initiative (i.e. for you personally), on 5 point scale, from 1 very unsatisfied to 5 very satisfied, with 3 neither satisfied or unsatisfied)?
- | | | | | |
|------------------|-------------|----------------------------------|-----------|----------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Very unsatisfied | Unsatisfied | Neither satisfied or unsatisfied | Satisfied | Very satisfied |
- 27.1. Can you please comment on your rating?
28. How or in what way did you participate in this initiative or activity?
29. What do you think you learnt from your experience in this initiative? *How did the experience with this initiative influence you and what did you learn?*
30. Have you made any changes to the way that you do things, as a result of your experience with this initiative?
- 30.1. **If yes**, could you briefly describe these changes?
- 30.2. **If no**, Could you please comment on why you haven't made any changes?
31. Are there any ways that your experience could have been improved? **If yes**, how?
32. Can you estimate how many women participated in this initiative?
- 32.1. In what way did these women participate in this initiative?

- 32.2. Did the presence of women make any difference to the initiative? **If yes, how?** **If no, why not?**
- 32.3. Are there any ways that the participation of women in the initiative could have been improved? **If yes, how?** **If no, why not?**
- 32.4. Do you have any other comments you'd like to make about this initiative?

SECTION 4: WOMEN IN SUGAR GROUP

[If not already identified, establish if involved in WIS group.]

[If they are involved with a WIS group, go to Q. 34; if not, go to Q 36.]

33. **If involved with WIS**, how are you involved with the WIS group?
34. **If involved with WIS**, why are you involved with the WIS group, i.e. what is it that makes this involvement important?
- 34.1. **If yes**, what do you think WIS group(s) is (are) trying to achieve?
[GO TO Q. 37]
35. **If not involved with WIS**, are you interested in participating in a WIS group?
Why / why not?
36. What do you think the role of a WIS group should be?
37. Are there any particular areas that would make you interested in becoming (more) involved in a WIS group – e.g. any particular social, production, financial or environmental topics?
38. Who do you think should organise a WIS group?
39. How do you think a WIS group should be structured?
40. Are there any particular factors that would foster or hinder your involvement in a WIS group?

SECTION 5: WOMEN AND CHANGE

Just reflecting back to what was said at the beginning of this interview. This project is focusing on women's participation in the sugar industry, from the farm level, through to the broader industry and community levels. One of the issues we are interested in is the way that women can contribute to helping their industry and community adapt to change.

41. From your experience, what are the challenges in this region for improving women's participation in decision-making within the sugar industry?
42. From your experience, what are the opportunities in this region for improving women's participation in decision-making within the sugar industry? (*E.g. participation in workshops or forums, shed meetings, collaborative projects, committees or boards or a formal, paid role?*).
43. Do you think the roles and status of women in the sugar industry have changed over the last 5 years? **Maybe prompt for: If so, how; if not, why not?**
- 43.1. Have these changes (or lack of changes) in the roles and status of women impacted on the industry (*at the economic, social and environmental and political/institutional levels*)? **Why / how?**

44. What needs to happen for women to be better able to shape change in the sugar industry? (*Think of people, processes and arrangements/structures*)
- 44.1. What skills are needed and what arrangements or support mechanisms need to be in place to enable women to be better able to shape change in the sugar industry?
- 44.2. What factors might inhibit opportunities for women to be better able to shape change in the sugar industry?

IN CLOSING

45. Do you have anything else you'd like to add that we haven't covered today? Any final comments?

Some personal details about yourself

Gender

- Male
 Female

What is your age?

- Less than 40 years
 40-59 years
 60 years and over

If you are involved in farming:

What is the approximate (combined) size of your sugarcane farm/farms?

Size: _____ hectares

OR

_____ acres

Which category best describes the ownership / management structure of your farm or sugar related business?

- A family farm or farm business (owned and/or managed by you and your partner/spouse and/or children)
 Shared ownership with others
 Leasing
 Corporate ownership
 Other structure

Please specify _____

Do you employ other workers in your business (other than yourself and spouse/partner)?

- Yes, regularly
 Yes, occasionally
 No
 Not applicable

**If you would like a summary of the research results:**Please write the address that you would like us to send these results to in the space below (*either your postal or email address*):

Thank you!

SRDC Project:

Sugar communities and resilience to change:

Opportunities for enhancing women's participation in sustainability initiatives

Learning from the regions / perspective interviews

Female perspectives interviews (non-grower)

February 2007

NAME:

AFFILIATION:

DATE:

PLACE:

INTERVIEWER:

RECORD:

Interview Preamble

[Make sure that they have a copy of our project fact sheet, which has our contact details]

This interview is part of the SRDC/CSIRO/UQ Women in Sugar Communities project, which is focusing on women's participation in the sugar industry. We're speaking with people from different parts of the industry, both men and women, in the [Tully, Innisfail and Babinda OR Bundaberg and Isis] regions. All up we aim to talk with about 40 people. We are particularly interested in the way that women can contribute to helping their industry and community adapt to change. The information from these interviews will help us understand the range of perspectives on the role of women in the sugar industry and their preferences concerning participation in sugar industry decision-making.

Your responses will be treated as confidential and we will ensure that you are not personally identified in the results of the study. If you would like, we can provide you with a summary of the major findings of the research.

With your permission, this interview will be taped and your statements summarised. Is that alright with you?

Our discussion will include:

- Some background on your role in the sugar industry and your community;
- Your motivations and preferences for participation in the sugar industry;
- Your experiences with sustainability initiatives;
- Your thoughts on Women in Sugar groups; and
- Your thoughts on how women can contribute to helping their industry and community adapt to change.

[Maybe note that some of the questions will be more relevant than others.]

Do you have any questions before we begin?

Other female industry members / stakeholders interviews

SECTION 1: CONTEXT

“Tell me a bit about yourself...”

1. How long have you been involved with the sugar industry?

We'd like some information about your “role” in the sense of your formal occupation or ‘work responsibilities’.

2. Firstly, what roles do you play within your work organisation / business?
3. What other roles do you play within the sugar industry or other industry? For instance, do you have a formal “role” in any industry organisations / groups / committee, etc? **Prompt for:** What is important to you about this role?
 - 3.1. Can you estimate how much time on average per week you ‘work’ in this role? (% full or part-time or casual, or hours/week)
4. What roles do you play within the broader community? **Prompt for:** What is important to you about this role?
 - 4.1. Can you estimate how much time on average per week you ‘work’ in this role (% full or part-time or casual, or hours/week)

SECTION 2: MOTIVATIONS AND PREFERENCES

“Turning now to motivations for participation...”

We are interested in your thoughts and experiences regarding women’s participation in the sugar industry, including what works and what doesn’t work and what could be done better. We’d like to start by asking you to rate your **overall satisfaction** with the level of participation of women in decision-making within different sectors of the sugar industry.

5. **Overall**, how satisfied are you with the *current level of participation* of women in *on-farm and farm business decision making* within the sugar industry, using 5 point scale, from 1 very unsatisfied to 5 very satisfied, with 3 neither satisfied or unsatisfied?

1	2	3	4	5
Very unsatisfied	Unsatisfied	Neither satisfied or unsatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied

- 5.1. Can you please comment on your rating?
6. How satisfied are you with the *current level of participation* of women in decision making within *industry organisations and representative bodies* in the sugar industry, using 5 point scale, from 1 very unsatisfied to 5 very satisfied, with 3 neither satisfied or unsatisfied?

11. What are some of the **opportunities for other women** to participate in sugar industry forums, activities and networks? **Prompt for: How** (e.g. *participation in workshops or forums, shed meetings, projects, committees or boards or a formal, paid role?*) **and Why?**
12. What are some of the **challenges for other women** participating in sugar industry forums, activities and networks? (*personal, social, economic & institutional / political*)

SECTION 3: SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES

We'd now like to focus specifically on **your own personal experiences with participation in 'sustainability initiatives'** within the sugar industry (*versus just awareness of initiatives*).

Our definition of sustainability initiatives is: **Specific industry focused or community-based activities, processes or tools that are focused on making the sugar industry economically, socially and environmentally sustainable.** [Give some examples:

- Activities under FutureCane program, like the FEAT program or their work on new farming systems.
- Women in Sugar groups and their activities, such as Travel and Learning projects.
- Landcare is another example of a sustainability initiative.
[If they need clarification of social sustainability, explain that this refers to impacts on families or communities]

Please try and think of projects or activities in your region that you've been involved with, which try and address some aspect of sustainability within the sugar industry.

[MAKE SURE THAT YOU GIVE THEM ENOUGH TIME TO THINK ABOUT THIS!]

If they need some further e.g., you could mention Sugar Reform Package or COMPASS, or the following region specific examples:

Northern case region: Babinda Future Farmers, Progrow, FNQNRM Ltd, the Reef Plan extension program and Water Quality Improvement projects;

Southern case region: Isis Target 100, Prosper, BSES's Farm Productivity Assessment, BMRG, CANEGROWERS' Grain in Cane project]

13. Have you had enough time to think about this? Can you list any of these kinds of sustainability initiatives that you have personal experience with (both currently and in the recent past)?

(If more than one, ask them to select two to discuss) For the **first most important to you** of the initiatives / activities identified above:

14. What is/was the initiative about – what is/was its focus?

15. How would you **rate your satisfaction** with your experience with the initiative (i.e. for you personally), on 5 point scale, from 1 very unsatisfied to 5 very satisfied, with 3 neither satisfied or unsatisfied)?

1 2 3 4 5
 Very unsatisfied Unsatisfied Neither satisfied or unsatisfied Satisfied Very satisfied

- 15.1. Can you please comment on your rating?
16. How or in what way did you participate in this initiative or activity?
17. What do you think you learnt from your experience in this initiative? *How did the experience with this initiative influence you and what did you learn?*
18. Have you made any changes to the way that you do things, as a result of your experience with this initiative?
- 18.1. **If yes**, could you briefly describe these changes?
- 18.2. **If no**, Could you please comment on why you haven't made any changes?
19. Are there any ways that your experience could have been improved? **If yes**, how?
20. Can you estimate how many women participated in this initiative?
- 20.1. In what way did these women participate in this initiative?
- 20.2. Did the presence of women make any difference to the initiative? **If yes, how? If no, why not?**
- 20.3. Are there any ways that the participation of women in the initiative could have been improved? **If yes, how? If no, why not?**
- 20.4. Do you have any other comments you'd like to make about this initiative?

Second sustainability initiative example (if more than one and if have time)

For *one other* the initiative / activity that is *important to you*:

21. What is/was the initiative about – what is/was its focus?
22. How would you *rate your satisfaction* of your experience with the initiative (i.e. for you personally), on 5 point scale, from 1 very unsatisfied to 5 very satisfied, with 3 neither satisfied or unsatisfied)?

1 2 3 4 5
 Very unsatisfied Unsatisfied Neither satisfied or unsatisfied Satisfied Very satisfied

- 22.1. Can you please comment on your rating?
23. How or in what way did you participate in this initiative or activity?
24. What do you think you learnt from your experience in this initiative? *How did the experience with this initiative influence you and what did you learn?*

25. Have you made any changes to the way that you do things, as a result of your experience with this initiative?
- 25.1. **If yes**, could you briefly describe these changes?
- 25.2. **If no**, Could you please comment on why you haven't made any changes?
26. Are there any ways that your experience could have been improved? **If yes**, how?
27. Can you estimate how many women participated in this initiative?
- 27.1. In what way did these women participate in this initiative?
- 27.2. Did the presence of women make any difference to the initiative? **If yes, how? If no, why not?**
- 27.3. Are there any ways that the participation of women in the initiative could have been improved? **If yes, how? If no, why not?**
- 27.4. Do you have any other comments you'd like to make about this initiative?

SECTION 4: WOMEN IN SUGAR GROUP

[If not already identified, establish if involved in WIS group.]

If they are involved with a WIS group, go to Q. 28; if not, go to Q 30.

28. **If involved with WIS**, how are you involved with the WIS group?
29. **If involved with WIS**, why are you involved with the WIS group, i.e. what is it that makes this involvement important?
- 29.1. **If involved with WIS**, what do you think with WIS group(s) is (are) trying to achieve?

[GO TO Q. 31]

30. **If not involved with WIS**, are you interested in participating in a WIS group?
Why / why not?
31. What do you think the role of a WIS group should be?
32. Are there any particular areas that would make you interested in becoming (more) involved in a WIS group – e.g. any particular social, production, financial or environmental topics?
33. Who do you think should organise a WIS group?
34. How do you think a WIS group should be structured?
35. Are there any particular factors that would foster or hinder your involvement in a WIS group?

SECTION 5: WOMEN AND CHANGE

Just reflecting back to what was said at the beginning of this interview. This project is focusing on women's participation in the sugar industry, from the farm level, through to the broader industry and community levels. One of the issues we are interested in is the way that women can contribute to helping their industry and community adapt to change.

36. From your experience, what are the challenges in this region for improving women's participation in decision-making within the sugar industry?
37. From your experience, what are the opportunities in this region for improving women's participation in decision-making within the sugar industry? (*E.g. participation in workshops or forums, shed meetings, collaborative projects, committees or boards or a formal, paid role?*).
38. Do you think the roles and status of women in the sugar industry have changed over the last 5 years? **Maybe prompt for: If so, how; if not, why not?**
- 38.1. Have these changes (or lack of changes) in the roles and status of women impacted on the industry (*at the economic, social and environmental and political/institutional levels*)? **Maybe prompt for: Why / how?**

39. What needs to happen for women to be better able to shape change in the sugar industry? (*Think of people, processes and arrangements/structures*)
- 39.1. What skills are needed and what arrangements or support mechanisms need to be in place to enable women to be better able to shape change in the sugar industry?
- 39.2. What factors might inhibit opportunities for women to be better able to shape change in the sugar industry?

IN CLOSING

40. Do you have anything else you'd like to add that we haven't covered today? Any final comments?

Some personal details about yourself

Gender

- Male
 Female

What is your age?

- Less than 40 years
 40-59 years
 60 years and over

If you are involved in farming:

What is the approximate (combined) size of your sugarcane farm/farms?

Size: _____ hectares

OR

_____ acres

Which category best describes the ownership / management structure of your farm or sugar related business?

- A family farm or farm business (owned and/or managed by you and your partner/spouse and/or children)
 Shared ownership with others
 Leasing
 Corporate ownership
 Other structure

Please specify _____

Do you employ other workers in your business (other than yourself and spouse/partner)?

- Yes, regularly
 Yes, occasionally
 No
 Not applicable

**If you would like a summary of the research results:**Please write the address that you would like us to send these results to in the space below (*either your postal or email address*):

Thank you!

SRDC Project:

Sugar communities and resilience to change:

Opportunities for enhancing women's participation in sustainability initiatives

Learning from the regions / perspective interviews

Male perspectives interviews

March 2007

NAME:

AFFILIATION:

DATE:

PLACE:

INTERVIEWER:

RECORD:

Interview Preamble

[Make sure that they have a copy of our project fact sheet, which has our contact details]

This interview is part of the SRDC/CSIRO/UQ Women in Sugar Communities project, which is focusing on women's participation in the sugar industry. We're speaking with people from different parts of the industry, both men and women, in the [Tully, Innisfail and Babinda OR Bundaberg and Isis] regions. All up we aim to talk with about 40 people. We are particularly interested in the way that women can contribute to helping their industry and community adapt to change. The information from these interviews will help us understand the range of perspectives on the role of women in the sugar industry and their preferences concerning participation in sugar industry decision-making.

Your responses will be treated as confidential and we will ensure that you are not personally identified in the results of the study. If you would like, we can provide you with a summary of the major findings of the research.

With your permission, this interview will be taped and your statements summarised. Is that alright with you?

Our discussion will include:

- Some background on your role in the sugar industry and your community;
- Your perspectives on women's participation in the sugar industry;
- Your experiences with sustainability initiatives;
- Your thoughts on Women in Sugar groups; and
- Your thoughts on how women can contribute to helping their industry and community adapt to change.

[Maybe note that some of the questions will be more relevant than others.]

Do you have any questions before we begin?

Male perspectives interviews

SECTION 1: CONTEXT

IF A GROWER, START WITH Q. 1

IF NON-GROWER, START WITH Q. 2

“Tell me a bit about your property...”

1. What are the main enterprise(s) on your farm?
Prompt for whether there are any other farm- or non-farm based enterprises on their property other than sugar cane.

“Tell me a bit about yourself...”

2. How long have you been involved with the sugar industry?

We’d like some information about your “role” in the sense of your formal occupation or ‘work responsibilities’?

3. Firstly, what roles do you play within your work organisation / business?
4. Do you have any other roles within the sugar industry or other industry? E.g. do you have a formal “role” in any industry organisations / groups / committee? If so, what?

Prompt for: What is important to you about this role?

5. Could you briefly tell me about any roles you have within the broader community? (E.g. do you have a formal “role” in any community organisations/groups or committee?)

Prompt for: What is important to you about this role?

SECTION 2: PERSPECTIVES ON WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION

“Turning now to your perspectives on women’s participation...”

We are interested in your thoughts and experiences regarding women’s participation in the sugar industry, including what works and what doesn’t work and what could be done better. We’d like to start by asking you to rate your **overall** satisfaction with the level of participation of women in decision-making within different sectors of the sugar industry.

6. **Overall**, how satisfied are you with the *current level of participation* of women in *on-farm and farm business decision making* within the sugar industry, using 5 point scale, from 1 very unsatisfied to 5 very satisfied, with 3 neither satisfied or unsatisfied?

1	2	3	4	5
Very unsatisfied	Unsatisfied	Neither satisfied or unsatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied

6.1. Can you please comment on your rating?

7. How satisfied are you with the *current level of participation* of women in decision making within *industry organisations and representative bodies* in the sugar industry, using 5 point scale, from 1 very unsatisfied to 5 very satisfied, with 3 neither satisfied or unsatisfied?

1 2 3 4 5
 Very unsatisfied Unsatisfied Neither satisfied or unsatisfied Satisfied Very satisfied

7.1. Can you please comment on your rating?

8. How satisfied are you with the **current level of participation** of women within the sugar industry's **research and extension sector**, using 5 point scale, from 1 very unsatisfied to 5 very satisfied, with 3 neither satisfied or unsatisfied?

1 2 3 4 5
 Very unsatisfied Unsatisfied Neither satisfied or unsatisfied Satisfied Very satisfied

8.1. Can you please comment on your rating?

9. What do you think are the most important roles for women in the sugar industry to be involved in (from the farm through to policy levels)? **How / why?**
10. What are some of the **opportunities for women** to participate in sugar industry forums, activities and networks? **Prompt for: How** (e.g. *participation in workshops or forums, shed meetings, projects, committees or boards or a formal, paid role?*) **and maybe why?**

SECTION 3: SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES

We'd now like to focus specifically on **your own personal experiences with participation in 'sustainability initiatives'** within the sugar industry (*versus just awareness of initiatives*).

Our definition of sustainability initiatives is: ***Specific industry focused or community-based activities, processes or tools that are focused on making the sugar industry economically, socially and environmentally sustainable.*** [Give some examples:

- Activities under FutureCane program, like the FEAT program or their work on new farming systems.
- Women in Sugar groups and their activities, such as Travel and Learning projects.
- Landcare is another example of a sustainability initiative.
 [If they need clarification of social sustainability, explain that this refers to impacts on families or communities]

Please try and think of projects or activities in your region that you've been involved with, which try and address some aspect of sustainability within the sugar industry. *If they need some further e.g., you could mention Sugar Reform Package or COMPASS, or the following region specific examples:*

Northern case region: *Babinda Future Farmers, Progrow, FNQNRM Ltd, the Reef Plan extension program and Water Quality Improvement projects;*

Southern case region: *Isis Target 100, Prosper, BSES's Farm Productivity Assessment, BMRG, CANEGROWERS' Grain in Cane project]*

11. Have you had enough time to think about this? Can you list any of these kinds of sustainability initiatives that you have personal experience with (both currently and in the recent past)?

We'd like you to pick the initiative or activity that is *most important to you*. We have a series of questions that we'd like to ask you about this initiative. For this initiative:

12. What is/was the initiative about – what is/was its focus?

13. How would you *rate your satisfaction* with your experience with the initiative (i.e. for you personally), on 5 point scale, from 1 very unsatisfied to 5 very satisfied, with 3 neither satisfied or unsatisfied?

1	2	3	4	5
Very unsatisfied	Unsatisfied	Neither satisfied or unsatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied

- 13.1. Can you please comment on your rating?

14. How or in what way did you participate in this initiative or activity?

15. Can you estimate how many women participated in this initiative?

- 15.1. In what way did these women participate in this initiative?

- 15.2. Did the presence of women make any difference to the initiative? **If so, how?**

- 15.3. Are there any ways that the participation of women in the initiative could have been improved? **If yes, how?**

16. Do you have any other comments you'd like to make about this initiative?

SECTION 4: WOMEN IN SUGAR GROUP

We're interested in your experience with WIS groups, given that WIS groups are one of the ways that women can get involved in the sugar industry.

17. Have you had any involvement with WIS groups? **If no, go to Q. 18.**
 - 17.1. **If yes**, how have you been involved with WIS groups?
 - 17.2. **If yes**, why were you involved with WIS groups, i.e. what is it that makes this involvement important?
 - 17.3. **If yes**, what do you think WIS group(s) is (are) trying to achieve?
18. What do you think the role of a WIS group should be?
19. Are there any particular areas that you think a WIS group should focus on – e.g. any particular social, production, financial or environmental topics?
20. Who do you think should organise a WIS group?
21. How do you think a WIS group should be structured?
22. Are there any particular factors or considerations that you think might foster or hinder women's involvement in a WIS group?

SECTION 5: WOMEN AND CHANGE

Just reflecting back to what was said at the beginning of this interview. This project is focusing on women's participation in the sugar industry, from the farm level, through to the broader industry and community levels. One of the issues we are interested in is the way that women can contribute to helping their industry and community adapt to change.

23. From your experience, what are the challenges in this region for improving women's participation in decision-making within the sugar industry?
24. From your experience, what are the opportunities in this region for improving women's participation in decision-making within the sugar industry? (*E.g. participation in workshops or forums, shed meetings, collaborative projects, committees or boards or a formal, paid role?*).
25. Do you think the roles and status of women in the sugar industry have changed over the last 5 years? **Maybe prompt for: If so, how; if not, why not?**
 - 25.1. Have these changes (or lack of changes) in the roles and status of women impacted on the industry (*at the economic, social and environmental and political/institutional levels*)? **Why / how?**

26. What needs to happen for women to be better able to shape change in the sugar industry? (*Think of people, processes and arrangements/structures*)
- 26.1. What skills are needed and what arrangements or support mechanisms need to be in place to enable women to be better able to shape change in the sugar industry?
- 26.2. What factors might inhibit opportunities for women to be better able to shape change in the sugar industry?

IN CLOSING

27. Do you have anything else you'd like to add that we haven't covered today? Any final comments?

Some personal details about yourself

Gender

- Male
 Female

What is your age?

- Less than 40 years
 40-59 years
 60 years and over

If you are involved in farming:

What is the approximate (combined) size of your sugarcane farm/farms?

Size: _____ hectares

OR

_____ acres

Which category best describes the ownership / management structure of your farm or sugar related business?

- A family farm or farm business (owned and/or managed by you and your partner/spouse and/or children)
 Shared ownership with others
 Leasing
 Corporate ownership
 Other structure

Please specify _____

Do you employ other workers in your business (other than yourself and spouse/partner)?

- Yes, regularly
 Yes, occasionally
 No
 Not applicable

**If you would like a summary of the research results:**Please write the address that you would like us to send these results to in the space below (*either your postal or email address*):

Thank you!

SRDC Research Project

CSE016 Final Report

**Appendix 3: What Works for Women Workshop
Report**

APPENDIX 3: WHAT WORKS FOR WOMEN WORKSHOP REPORT

This post-workshop report was prepared by Tracy Cooper and Maria Nolan from SeeChange Consulting, the facilitators of the 'What works for women' workshops.



‘What Works for Women’

Planting the seeds and growing the opportunities to enhance the participation of women in the sugar industry

Bundaberg and Mission Beach Workshops

Post Workshop Report

Prepared by SeeChange Consulting
Workshop Facilitators

2 July 2007



Contents

Purpose and Outcomes of Workshops.....	5
Bundaberg Workshop Notes.....	6
Bundaberg Opportunities for Strategies.....	8
Mission Beach Workshop.....	9
Mission Beach Opportunities for Strategies.....	12
Evaluation Dartboards.....	14
Facilitators Reflections and Observations.....	15
Appendix	
• Bundaberg Evaluation form summaries	
• Mission Beach Evaluation Form Summaries	

Purpose of this report

The purpose of this report is to collate the information and opportunities generated at the workshop and to present the Evaluation by the participants.

As the workshop facilitators we have added our thoughts in relation to Key Issues and ideas for future action.

The following format will be the structure of the report:

- Purpose of this report
- Purpose & Outcomes of the Workshops
- Context of each workshop
- Workshop Notes and Opportunities from each workshop
- Workshop Evaluation
- Key Issues & Ideas for future action (as observed by the Workshop Facilitators)

Purpose of the Workshops

The purpose of the workshop/s is to improve the role of women in the sugar industry and for the participants to provide feedback on the key themes that have emerged from the interviews as part of the project.

Outcomes of the Workshops

The desired outcomes from the workshops are as follows:

- Relationship building and networking
- Sharing of ideas across industries
- Identification of key women to be involved in future action research project work
- Identification of opportunities for strategies for improving women's role in the sugar industry (based on learnings from other agricultural industries)
- Feedback from the participants on the key themes that have emerged from the interviews

Presentation of the research findings to date – Jenny Bellamy and Emma Jakku

Jenny and Emma presented the research findings to date at both workshops. Before the presentation was given the women were asked to comment on the research questions and what they thought the responses to the questions would be.

After the presentation the women were asked if there were any surprises in the findings – compared to what they thought the responses would be. Generally, these were the responses from the three small groups:

- There were no surprises however the women felt that generally the men were somewhat evasive about their answers

- There was also a comment that women need to speak up more at meetings about what they want

The Action Learning Cycle

The participants were exposed to the Action Learning Cycle by the facilitators. The purpose of this was to assist the participants to understand that the day was about reflecting on the research findings, learning from other industries and making plans for how these ideas could be applied to the sugar industry.

Bundaberg Workshop

The Bundaberg workshop was held on the 13th of June at the Rose Garden and Function Centre at the Botanical Gardens. Eleven participants attended.

Guest speakers were Kate Schwager speaking about her role in the Cotton Industry and community development projects and Joy Deguara speaking on her role in the beef industry and associated agricultural boards.

Guest Speaker - Kate Schwager

After Kate's presentation the women worked in small groups and developed the following response from the presentation.

The following are the notes collected from what the participants generated at the workshop.

Key points from Kate's presentation

- Paid membership – didn't work for WINCOTT
- The importance of employing a Public Relations role to get the group going and keeping things active
- WINCOTT is united WIS more segregated.
- We could all relate to losing our confidence after raising a family
- Ideas to share with W.I.S.
- Geographical distance is hard for the cotton women but they still have good communication
- Newsletter is a great way to communicate

How did you feel about some of the ideas that were offered?

- Positive 😊
- Overwhelmed 😞
- Encouraged
- Challenged

What did the presentation made you realise about women's role in agriculture?

- Women play a diversified role
- Women lack confidence
- Women have the ability to join families together and support each other. Share information.
- Persistence is the key

Guest Speaker – Joy Deguara

After Joy's presentation the women worked in small groups and developed the following response from the presentation.

Key points from Joy's presentation

- Putting things/learnings into practice
- Left school early, no formal education. Worked through education through life. Adult learner. Practical.
- Keeps motivated, driver, kept improving herself.
- Women – other contributions besides on boards
- Balance? How do you do it? Any tips? Manage the passion
- Busy! Busy! Busy! (Personal Energy Powerhouse!).
- Family support is essential
- Need to be passionate

How did you feel about some of the ideas that were offered?

- Joy is so busy. She blew us away! (daunting)
- Admiration
- Enthusiasm/passion
- Reinvigorated – 'keep going even if going gets tough'
- Inspirational – Follow your passion.
- Women's involvement – Australia compared to PNG.

What did the presentation made you realise about women's role in agriculture?

- A lot of roles – not necessarily "formal" roles
- We have an important role
 - All unique

- Even small roles in a business family
- Adds to family business
- We need women on boards as they have a broad knowledge base.

Opportunities for strategy development

As a result of the guest speaker presentations, the participants were asked to generate opportunities they have for themselves in the sugar industry. The following ideas were their responses.

Group 1

- Self Esteem/Confidence building
- Women embrace other women – how do we work together well?
- Explore other roles for women in the sugar industry.
- Communication network/exchange across Women (sugar) groups.
- Seed projects (women) in each sugar region.
- Increase participation
- Keep up to date.
- Website/email network, use this to plan ahead, calendar
- Lobbying: government agencies, councils
- Newsletter
- Funding/Projects
- Education opportunities
- Simple things – turn up to activities
- Involved/network with other communities groups (out in the community – make ourselves known).

Group 2

- Confidence/capacity building
- Develop a WIS website
- Attend meetings
- Fill gaps – labour
- Accessing funding/sponsorship
- Educational tours
- Catering for **ALL** ideas
- Networking: inside and outside
- Getting the word out

Mission Beach Workshop

The Mission Beach workshop was held on the 18th of June at the Mission Beach Resort. Twenty participants attended.

Guest speakers were Robyn Boundy speaking about her role in the Pig Industry and Cathy McGowan speaking on her role in the sheep industry and associated agricultural projects and consultancies with the diary and horticultural industries.

Guest Speaker – Robyn Boundy

After Robyn's presentation the women worked in small groups and developed the following response from the presentation.

Key Points from Robyn's Presentation

- Pork Industry changes
- How was Robyn's change - over achieved?
- 'Share your knowledge' not easy, we (Aussies) are not good at it.
- Long term (not overnight)
- Unpaid/voluntary, even at Robyn's level (this is a shock)
- Inspired by the never too late attitude by starting university at 42.
- Willingness to be involved in community and business
- Acquired knowledge to utilize in and improve her business (being on boards, committees etc)
- Motivated and brave enough to achieve in her industry
- To have the knowledge and credibility
- Communication/networking
- Be yourself – Let your light shine
- Women can do it
- Believe in yourself
- Long term goals are important

How did you feel about some of the ideas that were offered?

- Learning the leadership skills and not going in green (email)
- Motivating and innovative
- Daunted and wondered how to fit it all in
- Had positive ideas
- Going for herself by working for her industry
- Empowering and inspiring
- 'unlearning' is difficult – need to

- Lots of options/strategies can do
- Stepping outside comfort zone is difficult but a real challenge

What did the presentation make you realise about women's roles in agriculture?

- I need to PowerPoint my own journey – for the purpose of reflection and performance indicators
- Feel identifiable similarities between industries
- If you are passionate about your industry you can have the top job if you want it
- No limitations
- What you put in you will reap the reward (knowledge and save money)
- How do you manage family and executive roles 'time management'
- Unity – not competitive 'putting your hand out to others'
- It's possible
- Always learn – business easier
- Earning the Guernsey about credibility

Guest Speaker – Cathy McGowan

After Cathy's presentation the women worked in small groups and developed the following response from the presentation.

Key Points from Cathy's Presentation

- 'Bloom where you are planted'
- Family involvement – roles you play
- Communicating with your family and friends – find a way to do this
- Never too old to learn
- Pull others with you
- We've come today to learn together / receptive
- Open to new ideas
- Hard to come back to your roots
- Leadership and public speaking can be learned
- Being true to yourself (and happy with who you are)
- Enthusiastic for learning
- Learn to be a leader – face your fears, get skills
- Bloom where you are planted
- Anything is possible
- Necessity can be a catalyst to change
- Determination

- Get involved

How did you feel about some of the ideas that were offered?

- Pulling other women along with you
- Don't compete in the role – understand that others can also help
- Remember friends and family
- That we all have the capability of being a leader – able to learn the skills
- Inspired and motivated
- Felt daunted about the amount of involvement
- A lot of commitment
- Inspired

What did the presentation make you realise about women's roles in agriculture?

- We've got to do something
- Not enough women
- Sugar less open than other industries
- There are several roles for women to play
- We have some simple solutions at our fingertips
- Be there and let your light shine
- Make your vote count
- Sharing and supporting through email
- Not enough women representation
- Need to step up and work together to support all women – networks
- That you CAN take a leadership role
- You need to be courageous and believe in yourself.

Opportunities for Strategy Development

As a result of the guest speaker presentations, the participants were asked to generate opportunities they have for themselves in the sugar industry. The following ideas were their responses.

Group 1

WHAT	HOW
Change the voting system (100 votes/share)	Need votes on the board
Create networks	Email groups Putting your hand-out to other women
Make women's presence felt	Attend workshops and meetings
Learning opportunities for succession planning	Run workshops information
Create more opportunities	Education and grants, discovering where problems exist
Meet other women's groups	SRDC – grants

Group 2

WHAT	HOW
Email	List from Mill or Canegrowers
Participate in courses related to industry eg. Leadership courses	Find out what courses are available
Change voting system	Attend meetings to lobby change
Grab the hand that is stretched out to you	Link with other networks eg. QRWN, access funding to support meetings.

Evaluation of the workshops

At both workshops the participants were asked at the beginning of the workshop to respond to the following four questions:

1. How much do you know about the research project, '*Sugar communities and resilience to change*'
2. How much do you know about women's involvement in other industries
3. How much do you know about ways women can be involved in the sugar industry
4. How keen are you to be further involved in the sugar industry (a lot, little or none, or somewhere in between)

The facilitators used a Dartboard approach to capture the responses in a visual way. Participants were asked to place their 'dots' on the Dartboard scales:

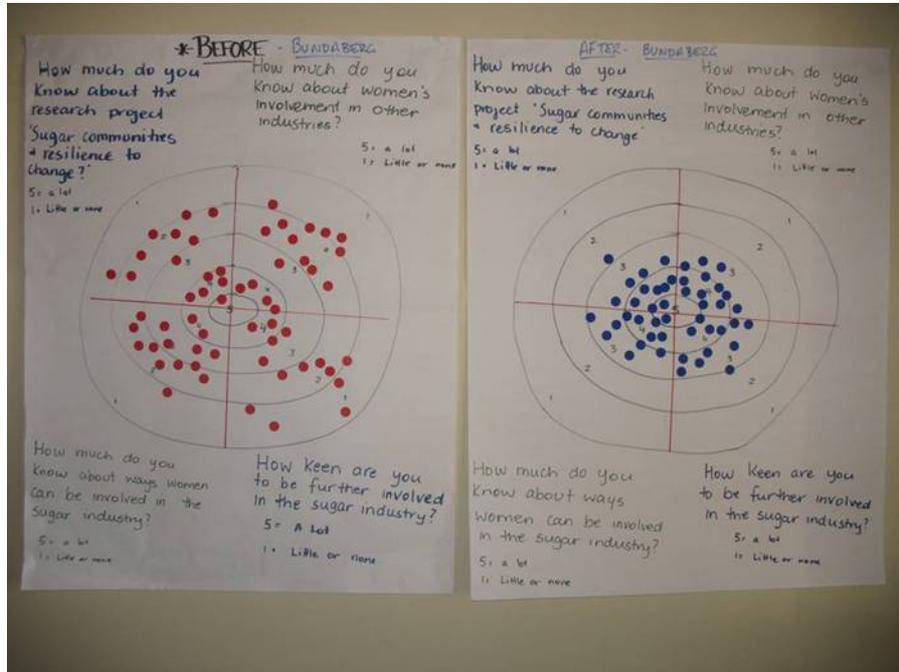
- 5 - a response of a lot
- 3 – a response of mid range
- 1 - a response of 'little or none.'

The questions were then asked at the end of the workshop to measure any change in the responses due to the participants attending the workshop.

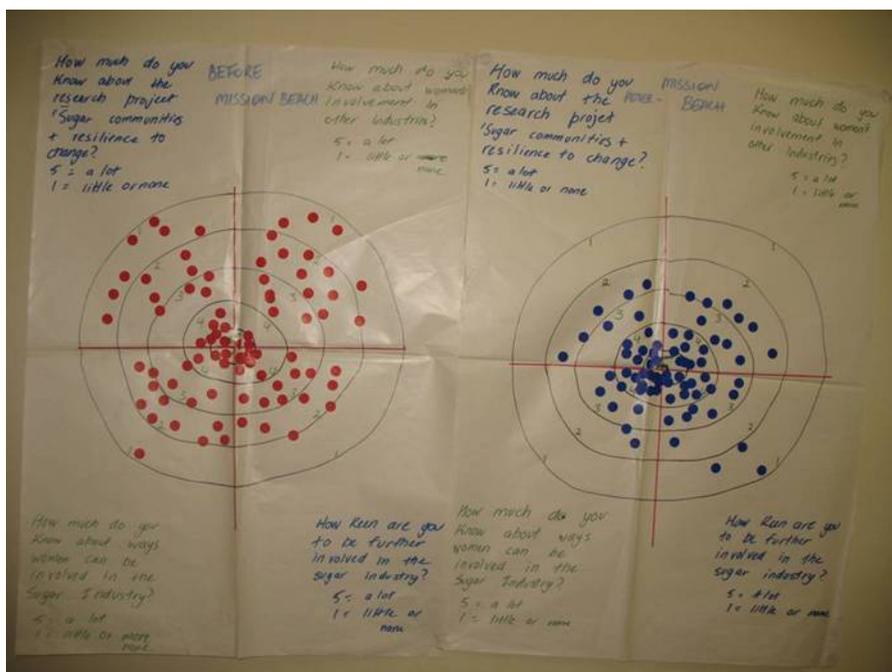
The responses are displayed on the following page.

Bundaberg Workshop Dartboard Evaluation

The dartboard on the left is at the beginning of the workshop and the dartboard on the right is at the end of the workshop. I.e. Before and After



Mission Beach Dartboard Evaluation



Facilitators Reflections and Observations

Reflections

- The workshops were well supported by some key local women and it was appropriate that they were acknowledged and they appreciated the small 'thank you' gift
- Women are interested and keen to be involved
- The presentations of the research findings were well presented and engaged the women
- The guest speakers were well chosen and presented a good overview of women's role in other industries
- The guest speakers gave ideas to 'kick start' action such as the email group
- The women were enthusiastic and enjoyed the developmental activities through out the day
- It was important to get some 'call to action' from the workshops
- The evaluation demonstrated that the day had impact on the participants
- The venue at Bundaberg was unsuitable
- The Mission Beach venue was excellent and suited the needs of the workshop

Our Learnings and suggested plans

Learnings

It is vital to identify the key people who will drive any project and have the enthusiasm to play this role

Processes such as 'action learning' and 'Six thinking hats' are tools that the participants related to and increased their skills and involvement
Connecting women via email is a good start to gaining interest and encouraging women to be involved in activities

Developing a committee (Mission Beach) helps get some action and spreads the work load

The email group will need support to maintain energy and direction

Developing the confidence of women is important and it will work best if it's in the wider context of a project rather than a 'course'

Paid positions (such as the publicity officer) works well in the Cotton Industry

It is important to build the skills of local women as they can pass this onto other women

The WINCOTT concept relies on a industry wide group connecting many women from different areas that all provide support for each other

Suggested Plans

Identify the key women from these workshops from both case study regions and connect them with each other

Develop programs that contain these type of learning activities that will contribute to building the confidence generally of women in the sugar industry
Commence the email group in a structured way between the two case study regions

Support this committee to commence and get some 'runs on the board'

Identify what the role the project can play in supporting the 'email group' concept

Look at determining the skills the women require to build their confidence around the email group project and source ways to do deliver that skills development
WIS groups with the help of the project could source funding grants or sponsorship to fund the position of publicity officer (one of the local women)

Identify key women who can develop their skills in a 'training' environment and then these women can drive the local groups and 'train' their local women in the skills

Look at developing an industry wide WIS network as well as local groups. This can give more impact when accessing funds as it's an industry wide approach and women can gain support and gain learnings from outside their own area



EVALUATION FORM
“What Works for Women” Workshop - Bundaberg



13th June 2007

8 Sheets were filled out

1. Overall, how valuable was this workshop for you?

7.7

2. How would you rate the facilitator’s attitude & general manner to participants?

9.1

3. How would you rate the guest speaker presentations?

8.9

4. How would you rate the overall organisation and your general experience of this

8.6

5. What are your views on when the workshop was held:

- Time of day- 8 responses yes to this time of day
- Day of the week - 7 responses to this day of the week
- Would you attend a workshop that went over two days/ and or overnight?
One response yes, 4 responses no

Comments

- Two days OK but not overnight
- maybe but depending on family commitments
- No due to family commitments

6. What would you tell someone who wasn’t here about this workshop?

- Inspiring Women inspiring Women!
- Missed out on an informative day, should have come
- They missed a very interesting day. It was great to recharge my passion.
- Worth attending
- Go if it is on again
- Learning for other industries, opportunities and how can we capitalise or ideas raised.
- Felt it opened your mind to new strategies
- Interesting to hear common issues across other industries

7. Would you consider being involved in the future in this project?

- Yes ✓ ✓ ✓
- No ✓
- Unsure ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓

8. As a result of attending this workshop has your view changed about:-

- ***The project?***
 - Same view
 - Yes, I understand more about it
 - I think this is a very important issue
 - No, because I'm open to it
 - I missed this session
 - I understand it a little more
- ***Women's role in other industries?***
 - More informed
 - Their roles can be small or large but it all counts
 - Good to hear that most industries have similar problems for women
 - Yes
 - Raised my awareness of what is happening in other industries
 - Some
 - Not changed, just broadened
- ***Your role in the sugar industry?***
 - Motivated but concerned about the time commitment to instigate these changes
 - Good to hear that most industries have similar problems for women
 - No – mine is the same
 - Future opportunities
 - No
 - Not changed, just broadened

9. Do you intend to do anything as a result of attending this workshop?

- Take matters raised to the next WIS meeting.
- Learn more about sugar related groups
- Try to become more passionate
- Stay involved
- Explore ideas/assist WIS members deliver on their agreed opportunities
- No
- Make leaps and bounds

10. How could the workshop be improved?

- Noisy venue
- It was great
- Maybe try to involve more women outside the WIS group
- Less noisy venue, microphones
- Take opportunities to one more level – the WIS members need assistance in planning and the “how”. It was assumed (time constraints maybe?) that they are skilled at the “how”/planning. This is a common assumption in the sugar industry.
- No

11. Additional Comments?

- Thanks for the day, facilitators good job!
- It was a well structure day with plenty of involvement, different activities and not time to sleep! Thank you very much!
- Well done everyone.



EVALUATION FORM
“What Works for Women” Workshop
– Mission Beach



18th June 2007

20 Sheets were filled out

1. **Overall, how valuable was this workshop for you?**
8.1
2. **How would you rate the facilitator’s attitude & general manner to participants?**
9.5
3. **How would you rate the guest speaker presentations?**
9.4
4. **How would you rate the overall organisation and your general experience of this?**
9.2
5. **What are your views on when the workshop was held:**

Time of day?

 - 17 responded they were happy with the time of day
 - 3 with no response

Day of the week?

 - 14 responded they were happy with the actual day selected
 - 3 with no response
 - 1 participant preferred the end of the week
 - 1 participant suggested Friday
 - 1 participant would prefer weekends.

Would you attend a workshop that went over two days/and or overnight?

 - 10 responded they would attend a workshop over two days and/or overnight
 - 5 responded saying they wouldn’t attend a 2 day or overnight workshop
 - There were 5 other responses including
 - not at this time, maybe, probably not, prefer not, I doubt it
6. **What would you tell someone who wasn’t here about this workshop?**
 - Pass on all information and handouts, it was a positive experience.
 - That they had an opportunity to add their name to the email list and still be part of it.
 - Very interesting and fun

- They missed an opportunity to network and learn!
- About the excellent, inspiring guest speaker.
- Informative and interesting
- Yes
- Should attend as the more people get involved in helping, the better.
- Make time to attend any in the future.
- Much information to be processed.
- Generating focus for women in the sugar industry to communicate, actively participate within the industry and with each other.
- They missed out on a good workshop
- It would be a good idea to be involved in this
- Very informative and need for women to get involved and stand up and be supportive.
- How educational it was
- Missed a great meeting, very inspirational.
- Positive. Great to hear others perspective and what other women are doing.
- Missed out on a great day of learning.
- Informative, great networking opportunities.
- Excellent atmosphere, warm and snug, good venue, rained all day, good calls to action, feels like something is happening. Women from several areas, difficult age groups, especially younger ones, women want to be heard, don't want to be discussed without being present. (Don't talk about me, without me)

7. Would you consider being involved in the future in this project?

- Yes 14 responses
- No 3 responses
- Unsure 3 responses

8. As a result of attending this workshop has your view changed about:-

The Project

- Yes 4 responses
- No 2 responses
- 6 no response at all

Comments:

- Asset to the sugar industry
- Good to know it exists, wasn't aware before
- I now know about it
- Great, worthwhile
- Yes, a little. See it more hands on than just research, as I did before.

Women's role in other industries?

- Yes 6 responses
- No 3 responses
- 4 no response at all

Comments

- No, women are capable
- Yes, as a result of guest speaker,
- Can be done,
- Motivating – good examples
- Other industries are more involved than the women in sugar industries
- No, I've always thought women in other rural industries were 'ahead' of the sugar industry. Yes, in that I now increasingly think that we need to cross-pollinate with women in other agri- businesses. (cotton, pork, grains, dairy, beef)

Your role in the sugar industry?

- Yes 5 responses
- No 2 responses
- 4 no response at all

Comments:

- Could be more involved
- Be more active (louder and positive)
- Need to be more vocal and involved
- Probably not
- Yes, more information regarding the industry
- No, I love what I do
- It is important to be involved.
- Yes, a little. I feel I can confidently offer more now. Felt at a bottleneck/standstill earlier.

One overall comment for all three questions

- More positive towards the future of women playing a role

9. Do you intend to do anything as a result of attending this workshop?

- Actively participate more
- To keep on keeping on and gain more recognition for women in the sugar industry. More women on board.
- Yes, more support.
- Yes, intend to find out more.
- More leadership skills.
- Yes, network and learn.
- Getting more involved.
- Lobby for a change in voting.
- Yes, be more proactive.
- Support initiatives
- Attend more workshops
- Yes
- Tell friends
- Use the Action Learning Tool

- Yes, offer AICD Scholarship to 2-4 women and investigate BR leaders option(s) in Ingham.

10. How could the workshop be improved?

- Seemed to be well organised.
- I haven't been to enough workshops yet, each one has positive outcomes.
- Can't be improved.
- N/A
- Offer real ideas and vocally discuss as a group.
- Ask people to write a little larger on butcher's paper. Ask people to speak more clearly and perhaps a little louder (perhaps come closer to the audience.)

11. Additional Comments?

- Thank you all for a wonderful and very informative day. Brilliant guest speakers.
- Be supportive to people trying to improve roles.
- Well done, Thank you.
- It is good to be accepted about not knowing much but still being included in discussions.
- The workshop was very informative and motivational.
- Great day!
- Great day
- I feel it was not really relevant to me.
- Enjoyed the day very much.

OTHER COMMENTS

- I would like to be involved further – Jean Rosendahl.

Photos from workshops

Bundaberg 'What works for women' workshop in action



Bundaberg workshop participants



Back row, from left: Sandra Webb, Emma Jakku, Joy Deguara, Angela Williams, Robyn Rapely, Jenny Bellamy, Marilyn Rasmussen and Desley Ford.

Front row, from left: Maria Nolan, Anne Slattery, Jenny Rule, Margaret Dougerty, Kate Schwager and Tracy Cooper

Mission Beach 'What works for women' workshop in action



Mission Beach workshop participants



Back row, from left: Jenny Boyge, Jenny Bellamy, Emma Jakku, Wendy Finlayson, Kathy StJohn, Carmel Raldini, Karyn Bleisner, Jean Rosendahl, Robyn Boundy, Tammy Pelizzari, Anne Stephenson, Kathy Henry

Middle row, from left: Judy Rehbein, Narelle Rossi, Lyn Hughes, Gladys Cecchi, Veronica Lizzio

Front row, from left: Maria Nolan, Sherry Kaurila, Cathy McGowan, Wendy Taifalos, Sandra Andrijevic, Franca Raccanello, Shirley Casey, Tracy Cooper

SRDC Research Project

CSE016 Final Report

Appendix 4: Connections Matter Workshop Report

APPENDIX 4: CONNECTIONS MATTER WORKSHOP REPORT

This appendix contains the summary report of the 'Connections Matter' workshops that held were held in Mission Beach and Bundaberg in August 2008.

Project CSE016:
Sugar communities and resilience to change: Opportunities for enhancing
women's participation in sustainability initiatives

Connections Matter:

Enhancing women's involvement in a changing sugar industry

**Report on Workshops held at
Mission Beach and Bundaberg in August 2008**

**Jennifer Bellamy¹, Iris Bohnet², Wendy Finlayson³, Sandra
Webb⁴ and Christine Painter⁵**

1. NRSM, University of Queensland, St. Lucia.
2. CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems, Cairns.
3. Wet Tropics Women in Sugar, Tully
4. Isis Women in Sugar, Childers
5. CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems, St. Lucia.

September 2008

Contents

1. Background
 - 1.1 Purpose of Workshops
 - 1.2 Desired Outcomes
 - 1.3 Venues and Participants
 - 1.4 Workshop Process
2. Using Connections to Enhance Businesses and Lives: Some Women's Experiences:
 - 2.1 Setting the Scene
 - 2.2 Guest Speaker Session: Mission Beach Workshop
 - 2.3 Guest Speaker Session: Bundaberg Workshop
3. Women and Networks in the Sugar Industry:
 - 3.1 Learning from the CSE016 Project: Why Connections Matter?
 - 3.1.1 Living in a context of change
 - 3.1.2 Changing roles for women in the sugar industry
 - 3.1.3 Networks as strategies for enhancing women's participation
 - 3.2 What Connections Do Women Have in the Sugar Industry?
4. The Women in Sugar e-Network
 - 4.1 What is the WIS e-Network?
 - 4.2 The Challenges
 - 4.3 The Future:
 - 4.3.1 What is the role of the network?
 - 4.3.2 Are we on the right track with the e-network?
 - 4.3.3 How can people help with the e-network?
 - 4.3.4 Ideas for the future of the e-network?
 - 4.3.5 Webpage functions/options preferences?
 - 4.3.6 The Outcome
5. Workshop Outcomes:
 - 5.1 Participant Evaluation of the Workshops
 - 5.2 Overall Outcomes

Appendices:

- A. Invitations
- B. Agendas
- C. Network maps
- D. Participant Evaluation of Workshops

1. Background to the Workshops

1.1 Purpose of Workshops

The SRDC CSE016 Project (*'Sugar communities and resilience to change: Opportunities for enhancing women's participation in sustainability initiatives'*) is a three year collaborative project between SRDC, CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems, The University of Queensland and industry collaborators in two contrasting case study regions: one in the far north (Tully to Babinda mill areas) and one in the south (Bundaberg and Isis mill areas).

The project's research team is working with women in the sugar industry, in collaboration with other sugar industry, government, community, research and extension stakeholders, to:

- Develop a shared understanding of:
 - the factors that influence women's participation in initiatives relevant to sustainability in the sugar industry; and
 - the value of and opportunities for enhancing women's participation in such initiatives.
- Identify, implement and evaluate strategies that improve women's participation in initiatives relevant to environmental, economic and social sustainability in the sugar industry.
- Facilitate wide, ongoing communication and uptake of findings to enhance sugar communities' capacity to deal with change within and beyond the case study regions.

Connections and networks have emerged through the project's research as key strategies for enhancing women's involvement in decision making in the sugar industry. As part of the final phase of this project, a number of women from all sectors of the sugar cane industry came together for two one-day workshops, entitled *'Connections Matter: Enhancing women's involvement in a changing sugar industry'*; one workshop being conducted in each of the project's case study regions.

The 'Connections Matter' workshops aimed to explore the potential of 'connections' and 'networks' for women involved in the sugar industry and, in particular to provide participants with an opportunity to:

- Explore how women can use their networks to improve their business and lifestyle;
- Find out about the Women in Sugar e-network; and
- Network with other women in the sugar industry and to foster relationships.

1.2 Desired Outcomes

Prior to the workshops, some desired outcomes for the workshop were identified by the project's research team as:

1. Raised awareness of the project and its progress with women in the sugar industry.
2. Relationships built and networking opportunities provided to all participants.

3. A better understanding developed of how some women in the industry utilise connections and networks to enhance their business's sustainability and to address issues they face in the industry.
4. Improved insights on 'connections' and 'networks' in general as strategies for enhancing women's participation in initiatives relevant to sustainability in the sugar industry.
5. Raised awareness of the Women in Sugar (WIS) e-Network and feedback obtained from participants on its role/function, form, value and its future directions.
6. The workshop and its outcomes evaluated by participants to provide feedback to the project leaders.

1.3 Venues and Participants

1. *Wednesday August 13, 2008, Mission Beach Resort, Wongaling Rd, Mission Beach:*

At the first workshop, 12 women participated from a range of sectors involved with the sugar industry including growing, milling, harvesting, local WIS groups, local government and regional natural resource management in the Wet Tropics region.

2. *Friday August 15, 2008, 'Chaverim' Outdoor and Environment Centre, Shalom College, South Bingera, Bundaberg.*

At the second workshop, 9 women participated from a range of sectors involved with the local sugar industry including growing, milling, extension, local WIS groups, local government and regionally-based agencies concerned with agricultural industries or natural resource management in the Bundaberg-Isis region.

Invitations to the workshops are included in Appendix A to this report.

1.4 Workshop Process

Tracy Cooper from SeeChange Consulting was engaged by the project team to help plan and facilitate each of the workshops with the project research team. Project research team members (Jenny Bellamy, Iris Bohnet and Christine Painter) recorded proceedings and participant responses throughout the day. The Agendas for the two workshops are included in Appendix B to this report.

Each workshop involved a guest speaker, presentations, discussion and small group work which were conducted in six sessions:

Session 1: To provide an overview of the project and background to why connections and networks matter.

This session involved a presentation by two of the project's researcher team: **Iris Bohnet** (CSIRO) introduced the project's objectives and key research questions; and **Jenny Bellamy** (University of Queensland) identified what the project had found to-date regarding some of the issues facing a changing sugar industry as well as some important network initiatives that were affecting women's roles and participation in decision making in the industry.

These are discussed further in Section 3.1 of this report.

Session 2: To gain an understanding of how people in the industry (guest speakers) have utilised their connections/networks to enhance their businesses and lives.

This session involved a guest speaker presentation at each of the workshops:

1. Mission Beach workshop: **Sherry Kaurila** (Hinchinbrook Shire Councillor and active member of the sugar industry) presented on ‘The Importance of Networks and Connections’.
2. Bundaberg workshop: **Lorraine Pyefinch** (Mayor of Bundaberg Regional Council (BRC) and local business woman in the health sector) presented on ‘The Importance of Networks and Connections and the Future of the Region’.

Through small group work, participants of each workshop were asked to identify some key points they gained in relation to networks and connections from the guest speaker’s presentation.

The presentations and participant feedback are discussed in Section 2 of this report.

Sessions 3 & 5: To identify the connections/networks that women have and why these networks are valuable for addressing the sustainability of the sugar industry.

These sessions were facilitated by Tracy Cooper and focused on how networks can assist with issues that people are concerned with either personally or with regard to the sugar industry’s future at all levels of decision making (such as individual enterprise, community and region). Networks were presented as opportunities for people to develop skills and knowledge, expand spheres of influence and increase sources of information.

It allowed the participants to examine their personal networks and connections through small group work, sharing ideas on networks, and exploring their perceived value. The participants in small groups also developed visual representations of the connections or networks they have.

The outcomes of these sessions are discussed in Section 3.2 of this report and copies of the network maps developed by participants are included in Appendix C.

Session 4: To raise awareness of the WIS e-Network and explore issues and women’s preferences for its future.

The e-Network is a strategy that is being implemented and evaluated in the action research phase of the project. This session involved a presentation on the current Women in Sugar e-Network by the coordinators of the network and it provided an opportunity to then explore with participants their preferences on its role, structure and future management.

The presentations on ‘*What is the Women in Sugar e-network?*’ were made by:

- Mission Beach workshop: **Wendy Finlayson** (Tully grower, Wet Tropics WIS member, e-Network Northern Coordinator).
- Bundaberg workshop: **Sandra Webb** (Childers grower, Isis WIS member, BSES RWUE project member, e-Network Southern Coordinator).

At the end of their presentations the presenters raised some implementation issues and presented four questions for the workshop participants to consider through small group work:

- What is the role of the network?
- Are we on the right track with the e-network?
- How can people help us?
- What ideas do you have for the future and how might we go about it?

The outcomes of these sessions are presented in Section 4 of this report.

Session 6: For participants to evaluate the workshop and its outcomes.

To provide feedback to the project team, participants were given an Evaluation form at the beginning of the day and then time was provided during the final session of the day for these to be completed.

The outcomes of the evaluation are discussed in Section 5 and the details of the Participant evaluation of the workshop on the day are included in Appendix D of this report.

2. Using Connections to Enhance Businesses and Lives: Some Women's Experiences

2.1 Setting the Scene

To set the scene for the workshops, a guest speaker was invited to each workshop to talk with the women participants about their experiences with networks and connections to enhance their businesses and lives. These discussions generated a myriad of ideas on how networking could influence positive outcomes for individuals, the industry and their communities.

Some key messages that participants took from the guest speaker sessions are summarised below.

2.2. Guest Speaker Session: Mission Beach Workshop

At the Mission Beach workshop, **Sherry Kaurila** energised the group with her talk on *“The Importance of Networks and Connections”*. Emphasising that “You can’t do it on your own” and that “Connections do really matter”, Sherry identified networking as being important for many reasons including information seeking, advice, support, help, friendships, etc. Drawing on her broad personal experiences in the sugar community over many years, she gave the participants some valuable insights into how to develop, maintain and enhance their networking/connecting skills.

Some of the key messages from Sherry’s presentation and the following discussions were:

- When you have a need, problem or issue to address first ask yourself a few questions, such as:
 - Who can help you with this? Who can tell you about this? Who can I ask about this?
 - Remember it may take several people/attempts before you get what you want.
- When you need help it is too often too late to build a network rather you need to:
 - Recognising that making links is an on-going process.
 - Recognise that you are already connected.
- Use your networks and maintain them and you should “never let a chance go by”, for example:
 - When you attend a meeting, never stand in the crowd at the door, move over to the far side of the room, under a light and turn and face the crowd – and people will be attracted to you.
 - At conferences, make the best of the time during morning tea and lunch etc. breaks to network, e.g.:
 - Introduce yourself to someone who said something in the meeting that catches your attention and say “I liked what you said about...”.
 - Join a group of people you don’t know and start a conversation (e.g. “It’s been very interesting ...”).

- Remember “Everyone has a story to tell”.
 - Keep a diary of the people you meet and a list of their contact information:
 - Record names, addresses and phone numbers.
 - Follow up your new contacts within a short timeframe (e.g. have cards and envelopes with stamps so that you can write a quick note to contacts wherever you are and just put it in a letterbox) – simple feedback can be very powerful.
 - Remember lost connections – track down and restore old networks/links/friendships.
 - Remember to include family connections - they are most important.
- Managing the links:
 - Take time to reflect on yourself and your network regularly.
 - Show gratitude to those people who assist you, e.g.:
 - Always follow up and let people know how they helped you and be specific (such as let them know why you valued their information or how you used the information).
 - Remember to celebrate what you have.
 - Think about the end goals.
 - You may need to ‘weed your garden’ every now and then.

2.3 Guest Speaker Session: Bundaberg Workshop

At the Bundaberg workshop: **Lorraine Pyefinch** gave an interesting and informative talk on *‘The Importance of Networks and Connections and the Future of the Region’*. Drawing on her life-long ties to the Bundaberg-Isis region, she described her experiences initially growing up in the region where the family business had a strong customer-service focus, and subsequently working in the health and local government sectors while bringing up a family and engaging in distance education to enhance her skills. Lorraine urged the women to get involved in some way and to embrace change and lifelong learning. She also highlighted network groups as a nurturing ground for potential new business avenues for cane farmers, such as the opportunities to add value to agricultural products.

Some of the key messages from Lorraine’s presentation and the subsequent discussions were:

- Change is inevitable, and how you face that change is critical:
 - Do not be afraid to face and embrace change or to innovate.
 - Having a voice is difficult but not unachievable.
 - You may need to be selective in assessing changes:
 - At the end of the day changes need to be profitable.
- Connections through networks really matter:
 - Exploit your connections – e.g. networks can provide the opportunity to nurture start up businesses.
 - Community and family connections are important.
 - Expanding your networks is always important.
 - Get out and meet people from all walks of life, e.g.:
 - Get on Committees – and meet people you are not normally connected to.

- Continual, lifelong learning is vital, e.g.:
 - You need to get the skills otherwise you will not do as well as you could.
 - Distance education is a great way to learn – you can learn so much from others on-line and it helps you to get to know a lot of people outside your area.
 - Working for the community (e.g. in local government) is such an education in itself.

- Pursue your ideas and passions:
 - Start small.
 - Learn the basics.
 - Get all the information you can.

- Look after your health – you need to avoid burn out, e.g.
 - ‘People often do not realise I still have a normal family to care for’.
 - Women tend to have many more jobs than men.
 - But its not necessarily about women being more powerful.
 - Politics are all about compromise – you will not get exactly what you want.

- The Bundaberg Region has enormous potential but some challenges also exist:
 - We are the salad bowl of Queensland yet we do not have a vibrant restaurant or gourmet foods industry.
 - A high proportion of the region’s population is on low income and/or social security or retirement income and they are not contributing to the regional economy/economic growth.
 - Need to attract young people to stay in the region:
 - Many children leave the region for further education and do not come back.
 - We can win on lifestyle basis but unless we can provide good jobs, etc we won’t in the long term.
 - Opportunities exist for value adding to existing agricultural industries – e.g. a food park.
 - Opportunities there for sugar industry to be involved in training certification.
 - Farming has a low value in the community - farms are often not seen as ‘a business’:
 - Need to address issue of media perception that agriculture is a dying industry.
 - Sugar is a male-dominated industry that is ‘hard to break into’ and so women have been forced to try and do things differently, e.g.:
 - The local WIS group was established to help women.
 - But WIS group can also be seen by some as too confrontational.
 - Some women have had to negotiate the transfer of the family sugar assignments into their own name so they could have a say in the industry – often a difficult and challenging thing within a family situation to do.

3. Women and Networks in the Sugar Industry

3.1 Learnings from the CSE016 Project: Why Connections Matters?

To further set the scene for the workshops' focus on connection matters, an overview of some relevant research findings of the CSE016 Project concerning women and participation in sustainability initiatives or industry decision-making were presented by Jenny Bellamy from the research team. Some of the key findings discussed are summarised below.

3.1.1 Living in a context of change

The sugar industry in Australia has experienced major changes in the last two decades, for example, with volatility in world sugar prices, industry deregulation, and increased international competitiveness. In the last five years in particular, low world sugar prices at various times, drought, cyclones, sugar cane smut outbreaks, urban encroachment, increased use of rotation crops (mainly soybeans and peanuts) and higher returns from alternative land uses, particularly forestry, have all contributed to a decline in the harvested area of sugar cane in Australia (Foster and Sheales 2008). These challenges raise significant questions and concerns for the long-term sustainability of the industry in Australia.

Although small privately-owned family farms and harvesting enterprises continue to dominate the sugar industry in Australia (Hooper 2008), interviewees from both of the case study regions have identified that there are major adaptations occurring in the character of family farming within the Australian sugar industry as a consequence of these major changes. These adaptations include:

- Greater diversity of farm structures (e.g. size, management arrangements);
- Alteration of farming goals (including make-up of farm activities and/or diversification either within sugar or into other industries);
- Changes in household labour arrangements;
- Increasing reliance on sources of income outside traditional sugar production (both on-farm and off-farm); and
- A shift in local cultural norms (e.g. towards a mindset more sensitive to variable circumstances and the need for change in farm practices or 'ways of doing things').

Some of the major implications for women living in this context of a changing sugar industry that are of relevance to connection matters and have emerged from the CSE016 project's research were briefly discussed at the workshop as summarised below.

3.1.2 Changing roles of women in the sugar industry

In this context of a changing sugar industry, women have identified that they are not a uniform group but a diverse range of people whose roles are multiple, diverse and changing. Importantly, gender differences exist in the opportunities, powers and capacity for women to participate in sugar industry decision-making at all levels due,

for example, to the pressures of women's diverse workloads, and to values and attitudes characteristic to the traditional sugar industry culture on decision-making processes at all levels, as well as power over assets. Some relevant issues emerging from the research on this situation include:

- *Gender differences do exist and women's motivations and preferences for industry participation are diverse and change over time:* for example, women's identities and consequently needs vary over time and in relation to others with changes in women's work situations (on- and off-farm), as well as their relationships, personal history and stage of life.
- *Knowledge and education is empowering for many women:* in the context of change, increasingly women want to learn more about a wide variety of agricultural / farm business and industry-related topics;
- *Non-participation in industry initiatives and broader decision-making does not always necessarily mean the 'exclusion' of women;* rather in many instances it may be women's choice. In particular, male-dominated and traditional forms of information exchange that are common within the industry are frequently viewed as more hostile or unfriendly rather than helpful or preferred environments for women.
- *The marginalisation, and exclusion in some instances, of women from participation in industry initiatives and decision-making processes remains a significant gender difference.* There is a long held common conception in Australia and worldwide of rural women as being in support roles (e.g. as 'farmwives' or 'the book keepers' or 'administrative assistants') rather than being 'farmers' or contributing to farm or broader level industry decision-making. Moreover, there is the documented exclusion of women from male-dominated rural networks in the sugar industry (e.g. Pini 2002, 2006) and in other rural contexts in Australia and internationally (e.g. Grant and Rainnie 2005; Trauger et al. 2008). Women in this study have identified that these gender differences in the Australian sugar industry are contributing to:
 - The continued marginalisation of sugar women from knowledge exchange and decision-making roles within the industry at all levels (from farm to whole-of-industry);
 - Many industry-based extension/educational initiatives and advice networks failing to meet sugar women's needs and/or appeal to them;
 - The frequent dominant focus of industry initiatives on conventional production marginalising many sugar women because their needs for information may be more focussed on, for example, alternative approaches, diversification, etc.; and
 - The continuing practice both in industry and the community that women's participation is largely expected to be provided on a voluntary basis and/or limited to implementation.

Although this marginalization is not necessarily confined to only women in the sugar industry, bringing a gender perspective on the practice of participation may help identify a broader range of strategies for all those marginalised in decision-making and participation at all levels of the sugar industry. Importantly, a clear need emerges for new approaches to enhance the participation and engagement of women in industry decision-making and training/educational initiatives and to help them embrace change.

3.1.3 Networks as strategies for enhancing women's participation

Effective networks are recognised as being critical to enhancing community resilience and improving an individual's capacity to adapt to change and, therefore, 'connections' and more specifically 'networks' have important implications for longer term sustainable management in the Australian sugar industry.

Connections are potentially important strategies for acquiring and interpreting information, learning and advice seeking. '*Connections*' in this context are defined as the web of networks or social relationships and links, both formal and informal, that individuals, groups or organisations have and use to enhance their decision-making. A distinction exists between:

- "*bonding*" connections or links - strong dense ties or close relationships within communities, families or other social groups in which members are directly tied to many other members in the network; and
- "*bridging*" connections or links – loosely linked, weak ties that extend across social groups and communities that give access to a diverse set of resources that exist in one network to members of another network.

An important initiative for women in the sugar industry with both 'bonding' and 'bridging' functions are the Women in Sugar (WIS) groups. These groups are self-organising or informal networks that have developed in a number of Australian sugar regions over time with various degrees of longevity and impact amongst women who share a common interest.

Women from the project's case study regions commonly identify that WIS groups are generally not highly valued or taken seriously within the industry, and are not without controversy amongst some women in the industry. However, those women who have been involved in WIS groups identify that their benefits are much more than 'tea and scones' and may include, for example:

- Social support in response to hard times / stressed families; for example, finding out what others were doing (e.g. on their farms) and that others were in the same situation;
- Gaining information to improve farm businesses and finding out about the industry, including options for embracing change;
- Gaining confidence to learn;
- Learning in a comfortable non-hostile environment, with "like-minded women";
- Meeting people/other women in their own sugar area; and
- Providing opportunities for networking with women in other sugar regions and other industries in Australia.

However, these groups are local entities, and sugar women have identified a need for better cross-regional connections for women across all sugar regions that will build on and complement existing local WIS group networks.

3.2 What Connections Do Women Have in the Sugar Industry?

This facilitated session emphasised networks as providing women with opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge, expand their sources of information and increase their sphere of influence. It interactively explored with the participants the webs of networks that women in the sugar industry have and utilise. In small groups,

women drew maps of their networks and the 5 network maps they created are included in Appendix C of this report:

The scope of connections that were recognised in these network maps reflects a number of characteristics of sugar communities, including:

- *The Australian sugar industry value chain is complex* (e.g. Higgins *et al.* 2007) comprising:
 - Multiple sectors (i.e. growing, harvesting, cane transport, mill processing, sugar transport and storage / shipping / marketing); and
 - Multiple scales of decision-making between the paddock, farm, harvester and mill levels for sugar farming businesses.
- *Sugar farming businesses (growing, harvesting) are typically run from 'home'* such that women's personal and business networks are closely intermeshed or overlap.

As such, the web of networks or links women in the sugar industry identified can be described as:

- *Multi-purpose* – reflecting both the 'social' and 'economic' aspects of women's lives;
- *Complex* – variously encompassing the multiple scales of industry and community decision-making (e.g. paddock, farm, mill area, and region) and within each of those the multiple entities involved (including government, industry, community and private).
- *Involving a mix of 'bonding' and 'bridging' links, i.e.:*
 - Strong social ties or 'bonding' networks (such as to family; local businesses and service providers; local sugar industry groups/organisations; and community groups); and
 - Loose 'bridging' links or networks that potentially provide access to dispersed resources and sources of information. They may span multiple scales of decision-making or involve direct linkages to 'brokers', 'gate keepers', etc. (i.e. individuals, local groups and other organisations) who bridge to other individuals, groups or organisational levels (both horizontally and vertically).

4. The Women in Sugar e-Network

4.1 What is the WIS e-Network?

An ongoing legacy of the CSE016 project will be the Women in Sugar (WIS) e-Network. Initiated in June 2007 by the project through an Organising Committee which initially involved 11 women from sugar regions in Queensland working together with key members of the research team. The Committee developed some guidelines for implementing the e-network including initial objectives and its rules of operation.

The implementation of these guidelines for the WIS e-Network has been driven primarily by the efforts of two e-Network Coordinators engaged by the project, Sandra Webb from Childers and Wendy Finlayson from Tully. They described progress to-date to the workshop participants including:

- A growing membership, if slowly.
- Development of an interactive Google page website.
- Production of an email newsletter (also available on the website) with 2 newsletters produced to-date (February and April) and a third underway.
- Promotion of the network through various methods including:
 - In the media (newspapers, magazine articles, ABC radio);
 - email distribution of a promotional flyer;
 - Links on websites (e.g. SRDC, CANEGROWERS); and
 - Presentations at functions (e.g. SugarShaker events, the annual WISA conference, and at local WIS group meetings).
- A small amount of sponsorship financial support has been sourced to help the network continue beyond the life of the research project, which will end in November 2008. This will be used as seed funding to further develop the website to a more user-friendly platform as well as to leverage further sponsorship funds. For a small fee, the Terrain NRM regional group is administering this funding for the e-network.
- Current plans for the future are:
 - Take the “Google Page” format to a more user-friendly Web Site format.
 - Seek sponsorship \$s to support the continued management of the e-Network beyond the life of the research project.
 - Evolve the current Organising committee into a Management committee for the e-Network.

4.2 The Challenges

Women with an interest in the sugar industry now have a cross-regional e-Network to keep them in touch and exchange information. Notwithstanding these achievements, the e-Network Coordinators identified that a number of challenges have been, and continue to be, faced in the process and there are some lessons to be learnt including:

- The e-Network development has taken a lot of time to get going – much more than initially anticipated.

- Membership is currently dominated by people from industry organisations (e.g. BSES, Canegrowers) with few of the original Organising Committee members currently actively committed to the e-Network.
- The network relies on voluntary contributions of material from e-Network members which is not readily forthcoming.
- Regarding the Newsletter: there have been on-going difficulties in getting original articles, with the majority of the information being recycled from Canegrowers and BSES sources.
- Regarding the Website some challenges have been:
 - Technical difficulties with the “Google Site” such that some members have not been able to join up completely to the site;
 - People find the Google site hard to locate on the internet;
 - Not much information from WIS groups is being forwarded on to be put on the site.
 - Privacy Issues have to be managed.
- The current Coordinators are in danger of burning out and need some help.

4.3 The Future

To address these challenges identified above in the previous section, the two coordinators posed five key questions on the future of the e-Network which were explored with the participants of each workshop. The combined outcomes of these discussions for each of these questions are summarised below.

4.3.1 What is the role of the Network?

Participants identified the role of the e-Network as being:

1. *Providing an information source for women participating in the sugar industry:*
 - To help women in sugar access information.
 - Collect up to-date (current) information.
 - Provide positive and progressive information which is valued.
2. *Improving networking for women participating in the sugar industry:*
 - To help keep people from the different sugar areas across the State connected.
 - Sharing of ideas.
3. *Improving business for women involved in the sugar industry:*
 - Provide information, ideas, support.
 - Keep people focused and progressing.
4. *Developing a shared understanding of women participating in the sugar industry.*

4.3.2 Are we on the right track with the-Network?

Overwhelmingly the response of participants to this question was ‘Yes’ - the e-Network is on the right track, e.g.:

- The way of the future – also the way of the present. Its what it is now.
- It is linking people.
- An advantage is that women can access information (internet/newsletter) whenever it suits them.

Some comments/suggestions were:

- Need to make it more user friendly.
- Re: sponsorship \$s – get a little bit from everyone.
- Include personal/individual life experiences, so we can use the different situations to compare.
- Communication tool – include a chat board.
- Need to include original information / ideas not just re-cycled information.

4.3.3 How can people help with the e-Network?

Participants in small groups identified a number of ways people can help with the WIS e-Network, including:

- *Provide information and ideas, e.g.:*
 - Provide articles of interest for newsletters.
 - Provide feedback on issues.
 - Provide feedback on what we would like to see in the future.
 - Mix of recycled information, new ideas and information from member groups.
- *Support-the e-Network convenors/managers by:*
 - Being proactive in sending material.
 - Providing them with more information.
 - Providing feedback.
 - Passing on information on local community events – e.g. dates and times.
- *Help with finance / sponsorship.*
- *Getting directly involved in the e-network and increase networking with different individuals across all sectors from industry groups to primary producers.*

4.3.4 Ideas for the future of the e-Network?

Participant ideas for the future of the e-network include:

- Developing a program for seeking support/sponsorship:
 - A little bit of help from everyone (e.g. banks, insurance, advertising packages, the Canegrowers, tyre and oil company’s people, etc).
 - Approach suppliers of goods and services to farmers.

- Approach companies who aim products at women.
- Potential for member donations at morning teas.
- Fund raising events.
- Member donations.
- Better supporting the e-network coordinators by:
 - Identifying/involving one person from each region (e.g. Mossman, Tablelands, Tully, Burdekin, Herbert/Ingham, Mackay, Bundaberg, Isis, Maryborough, etc.) to be the coordinator/reporter for that region and to provide and collate original information for the newsletter/website to Sandra and Wendy - from past and present however small.
 - Coordinating catering at meetings to spread the load.
 - Contributing through being a committed member of the organising or management committee for the e-network.
 - Helping with seeking finance / sponsorship for the network.
- Increase membership by:
 - Getting help with a membership drive? -- e.g. WIRI Newsletter
 - By advertising.
 - Exhibition booth/stand at “Show” and festivals.
 - Involve all women in sugar community (e.g. school fetes).
 - Spread the word through your own connections.
 - Promote at social gatherings, family gatherings.
 - Get other industries involved as well as ‘city people’.
- Addressing content/focus issues:
 - Areas should be kept separate on the webpage (e.g. section for each WIS group that is accessible to all).
 - Originality is important - women want to read original contributions from other women about their life experiences, tales, success stories, etc.
 - Need personal stories/real live content stuff relating to us / the industry.
 - Include in the newsletter some jokes, stories – past and present, recipes, remedies and new courses.
 - Add section on ‘Social Gatherings’ on website.
 - There are already many women’s networks out there - need to be clear about why this one is unique.
 - A need for providing information to people who are not involved in the sugar industry or other rural industries (e.g. town people).
 - Need to help to change the perception of a farmer.
- Offering to deliver the Newsletter in multiple formats, that is by:
 - Email.
 - Fax.
 - Snail mail.

4.3.5 Webpage functions/options preferences?

Participants were also asked to vote on their preferences for a number of optional functions for the e-Network web-page to assist its further development. The participant votes on website options from the two workshops are presented in the table below.

Website options :	Participant votes - North	Participant votes - South	Participant votes - Total
Newsletter system	5	5	10
“Latest News” and news archive	4	4	8
Members ‘forum’ (e.g. similar to discussion page on Google site)	1	3	4
Photo gallery	4	3	7
Guest book-message board	0	1	1
“Sealed” members section - members only	0	1	1
Calendar of events	5	5	10
Page for each regional group/WIS	2	5	7
Personal pages for members (e.g. profiles of members)	2	3	5
Other website links	2	3	5

4.3.6 Outcome

Women with an interest in the sugar industry now have a cross-regional e-Network to keep them in touch and exchange information, empowering women to make a difference in the way the sugar industry responds to challenges in their local areas.

5. Evaluation of the Workshops

5.1 Participant Evaluation of Workshops

At the commencement of each of the workshops, participants were provided with an evaluation form to feedback to the project research team at the end of the day. Eleven women from the Mission Beach workshop and seven from the Bundaberg workshop completed the evaluation forms and of these:

- 6 participants had no prior involvement with the project; and
- 12 participants had prior involvement with the project through one or more project activities:
 - 6 through an interview
 - 7 through involvement in the Project’s Reference Panels
 - 8 through participation in a previous project workshop (‘What works for women?’)
 - 4 through other project activities.

The evaluation questions the women were asked related to the value of the workshop, participant’s likely responses and actions following the workshop, and the effectiveness of the workshop organisation and included:

Value of Workshop:

- Overall, how valuable was this workshop for you?
- How valuable was the guest speaker session and its related discussion for you personally?
- Would you say workshops such as this contribute towards improving women’s involvement in the sugar industry?
- How would you rate this workshop in assisting you to network and build relationships with other women in the industry?

Likely responses and actions:

- What would you tell someone who wasn’t here about this workshop? e.g. How would you describe your experience?
- Do you intend to participate in the e-Network in the future?
- What do you intend to do as a result of attending this workshop?

Workshop organisation:

- How would you rate the overall organisation of this workshop?
- How could the workshop be improved?

The collective responses of the women attending the two workshops to these questions are detailed in Appendix D of this report. Overall, participant feedback was very positive and can be summarised as:

1. *The workshops overall were of moderate to exceptionally high value to the women personally* (with an average ranking of 8.4 out of a possible 10) as were the guest speaker presentations (with an average ranking of 8.9 out of a possible 10) and the workshops were also considered of moderate to exceptionally high value in assisting

women to network and build relationship with other women in the industry (with an average ranking of 8.6 out of a possible 10). Some specific comments included:

- “Inspirational”;
- “Informative, educational, friendly and fun”;
- “Definitely not ‘tea and scones’”;
- “Informative and a very good perception of what it is like to be a farmer’s wife!”;
- “About a new way of connecting people with similar interests to improve way of life and income”;
- “Contact and support for women across the sugar industry. Gaining confidence to learn with and meeting like-minded women”;
- “It is a resource and an opportunity to deliver some great things in time and, a valuable experience”.
- “Gave me inspiration and positive feelings”;
- “Picked up some real pointers”;
- “Relaxing and interesting and gaining knowledge”.

2. *Unanimously respondents identified that they considered that the workshops would contribute towards improving women’s participation in the sugar industry, for example:*

- “Powerful because they are fairly small, good information, questions asked, interactive, and moving around well”;
- “Being able to connect with women from the whole area”;
- “Networks were built”;
- “The networking allows improvements in business through information sharing and open friendly positive communication”;
- “Helped to revitalise our energy levels to get us motivated”;
- “Identified existing and potential linkages. Helped with ideas and some motivation”.

3. *All respondents (except one who was ‘unsure’) intended to participate in the WIS e-network in the future for a variety of reasons including:*

- “It’s the way to go”;
- “Networking absolutely matters”;
- “Cheap, easy quick”;
- “To learn more about the industry and understand problems being faced”;
- “I want to keep up to-date with what is going on in all areas of our industry”;
- “Would like to continue to grow relationships with a broader group of people”;
- “Because my interest in it has been rekindled, and set me thinking how I can assist/contribute”.

4. *The overall organisation of the workshops was rated by respondents as moderate to exceptionally high (with an average ranking of 8.6 out of a possible 10) and some comments made on how it could be improved included:*

- “No need for improvement. A+”;
- “Venue is good, good lunch, plenty of room”;
- “More people attending”;

- “Possibly with more participants”;
- “Get the different groups together North and South”.

5.2 Overall Outcomes

As previously noted, prior to the workshops, some desired outcomes for the workshop were identified, namely:

1. Raised awareness of the project and its progress with women in the sugar industry.
2. Relationships built and networking opportunities provided to all participants.
3. A better understanding developed of how some women in the industry utilise connections and networks to enhance their business’s sustainability and to address issues they face in the industry.
4. Improved insights on ‘connections’ and ‘networks’ in general as strategies for enhancing women’s participation in initiatives relevant to sustainability in the sugar industry.
5. Raised awareness of the WIS e-Network and feedback obtained from participants on its role/function, form, value and its future directions.
6. The workshop and its outcomes evaluated by participants to provide feedback to the project leaders.

Notwithstanding the low numbers of participants, the feedback through the Participants Evaluation forms as summarised in the sections above as well as other direct feedback to the research project team members clearly support the achievement of these workshop outcomes. Moreover, the group discussions at both workshops ended with unanimous support for the project and its outcomes and agreed that the Women in Sugar e-network was the “way of the future” to facilitate women’s participation in initiatives to build environmental, economic and social sustainability in the sugar industry.

In sum, as part of the action research phase of the CSE016 project, the workshops provided a valuable opportunity for all involved to learn from the experiences of women from different sectors of the sugar industry. The workshops also allowed for relationship building and networking among participants and successfully identified several opportunities for improving women’s participation in the sugar industry. In addition, the workshops provided the research team with the opportunity to gain valuable feedback from the participants on the WIS e-Network. Specifically, excellent feedback was provided to the e-network coordinators on its future objectives, perceived value and desired functionality as well as some ideas on, and some commitments to, better ways of supporting its further development.

Finally, the workshops have provided substantive evidence that further supports and also identifies some new ideas, or refinements to, the strategies the project has identified to-date for improving women’s participation in initiatives relevant to environmental, economic and social sustainability in the sugar industry.

6. References

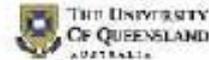
- Foster, M. and Sheales, T. 2008. Sugar: Outlook to 2012-13. *Australian Commodities* 15 (1; March Quarter 2008): 49-55.
- Grant, J. and Rainnie, A., 2005. The Hidden role of gender exclusion in regional development agencies. In: Eversole, R., Martin, J. (Eds.), *Participation and Governance in Regional Development*. Ashgate, Aldershot.
- Higgins, A., Thorburn, P., Archer, A. and Jakku, E. 2007. Opportunities for value chain research in sugar industries. *Agricultural Systems* 94: 611-621.
- Pini, B. 2002. Focus groups, feminist research and farm women: opportunities for empowerment in rural social research. *Journal of Rural Studies* 18, 339-351.
- Pini, B. 2006. The critique of 'new' rural local governance: The case of gender in a rural Australian setting. *Journal of Rural Studies* 22: 217-231.
- Trauger, A., Sachs, C., Barbercheck, M., Kiernan, N.E., Brasier, K. and Findeis, J. 2008. Agricultural education: gender identity and knowledge exchange. *Journal of Rural Studies* 24: 432-439.

APPENDICES

- A. Workshop Invitations
- B. Agendas
- C. Network Mapping
- D: Workshop Evaluation

APPENDIX A. Workshop Invitations

- A1. Mission Beach
- A2. Bundaberg



You are invited to a workshop entitled

Connections Matter'

Enhancing women's involvement in a changing sugar industry

Purpose of workshop

To explore the connections and networks of women in the sugar industry and why they matter

Objectives

1. To explore how women can use their networks to improve their business
2. To find out about the Women in Sugar e-network
3. To network with other women in the sugar industry and to foster relationships

The one day program of presentations, discussion and small group work will be facilitated by Tracy Cooper from SeeChange Consulting

Agenda

- Welcome and setting the scene for the day – Iris Bohnet and Jenny Bellamy
- Key note presentation by **Sherry Kaurila**, Hinchinbrook Shire Councillor and active member of the sugar industry – The Importance of Networks and Connections
- Exploring our links and connections with the sugar industry – Tracy Cooper
- Presentation by **Wendy Finlayson** – What is the Women in Sugar e-network?

Workshop Details

When: Wednesday August 13, 2008

Time: 9.30am Registration – 3.00pm

Venue: Mission Beach Resort, Wongaling Rd, Mission Beach

Morning Tea, Lunch will be provided

Please advise of any special dietary needs when you RSVP

To find out more about the day please contact **Wendy Finlayson** Ph: 4066 5594 or email wfinlayson@bigpond.com or **Iris Bohnet** Ph: 4091 8826 or email Iris.Bohnet@csiro.au



Please RSVP by Friday 5pm 6th August 2008 to either Wendy or Iris.

This workshop follows on from the "What works for women" workshops held in June 2007 as part of a research project being conducted by CSIRO and The University of Qld. The research is supported by Sugar Research and Development Corporation. Please see below for more about the project.



You are invited to a workshop entitled

Connections Matter'

Enhancing women's involvement in a changing sugar industry

Purpose of workshop

To explore the connections and networks of women in the sugar industry and why they matter

Objectives

1. To explore how women can use their networks to improve their business
2. To find out about the Women in Sugar e-network
3. To network with other women in the sugar industry and to foster relationships

The one day program of presentations, discussion and small group work will be facilitated by Tracy Cooper from SeeChange Consulting

Agenda

- Welcome and setting the scene for the day – Iris Bohnet and Jenny Bellamy
- Key note presentation by **Lorraine Pycfinch, Mayor of Bundaberg Regional Council** – 'The Importance of Networks and Connections and the Future of the Region'
- Exploring our links and connections with the sugar industry – Tracy Cooper
- Presentation by **Sandra Webb** – What is the Women in Sugar e-network?

Workshop Details

When: Friday August 15, 2008

Time: 9.30am Registration – 3.00pm

Venue: 'Chaverim', Outdoor and Environment Centre, Shalom College,
76 South Bingers Road, South Bingers, Bundaberg.

Morning Tea, Lunch will be provided

Please advise of any special dietary needs when you RSVP

To find out more about the day please contact **Sandra Webb** Ph: 41266469 or email gswrbb1@bionand.com or **Jenny Bellamy** Ph: 3365 2163 or email jenny.bellamy@uq.edu.au

Please RSVP by Friday 5pm 8th August 2008 to either Sandra or Jenny.

This workshop follows on from the "What works for women" workshops held in June 2007 as part of a research project being conducted by CSIRO and The University of Qld. The research is supported by Sugar Research and Development Corporation. Please see below for more about the project.



APPENDIX B. Workshop Agendas

- B1. Mission Beach
- B2. Bundaberg

'Connections Matter' Workshop

Mission Beach Resort

13 August 2008

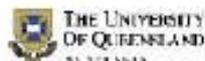
AGENDA

- 9.30am** Registration and Morning Tea.
- 10.00am** Welcome and General Introduction – **Tracy Cooper**
- 10.10am** **Session 1** Setting the Scene for the day
Iris Bohnet & Jenny Bellamy
- 10.30am** **Session 2** **Guest speaker - Sherry Kaurila**, Hindinbrook Shire
Councillor and active member of the sugar industry.
‘The Importance of Networks and Connections’
- 10.50am** Question time and small group session
- 11.30am** **Session 3** Networking Session - **Tracy Cooper**

12.00 pm Lunch 45 mins

- 12.50pm** **Session 4** Women In Sugar eNetwork Presentation
Wendy Finlayson
- 1.50pm** **Session 5** Networking Activity Continued.
- 2.30pm** **Session 6** Evaluation of workshop

Workshop Close 3.00pm



'Connections Matter' Workshop

Chaverin

15 August 2008

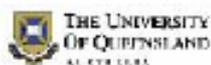
AGENDA

- 9.30am** Registration and Morning Tea.
- 10.00am** Welcome and General Introduction – **Tracy Cooper**
- 10.10am** **Session 1** Setting the Scene for the day
Iris Bohnet & Jenny Bellamy
- 10.30am** **Session 2** **Guest Speaker - Lorraine Pyefinch, Mayor of Bundaberg Regional Council**
'The Importance of Networks and Connections and the Future of the Region'
- 10.50am** Question time and small group session
- 11.30am** **Session 3** Networking Session - **Tracy Cooper**

12.00 pm Lunch 45 mins

- 12.50pm** **Session 4** Women In Sugar eNetwork Presentation - **Sandra Webb**
- 1.50pm** **Session 5** Networking Activity Continued.
- 2.30pm** **Session 6** Evaluation of workshop

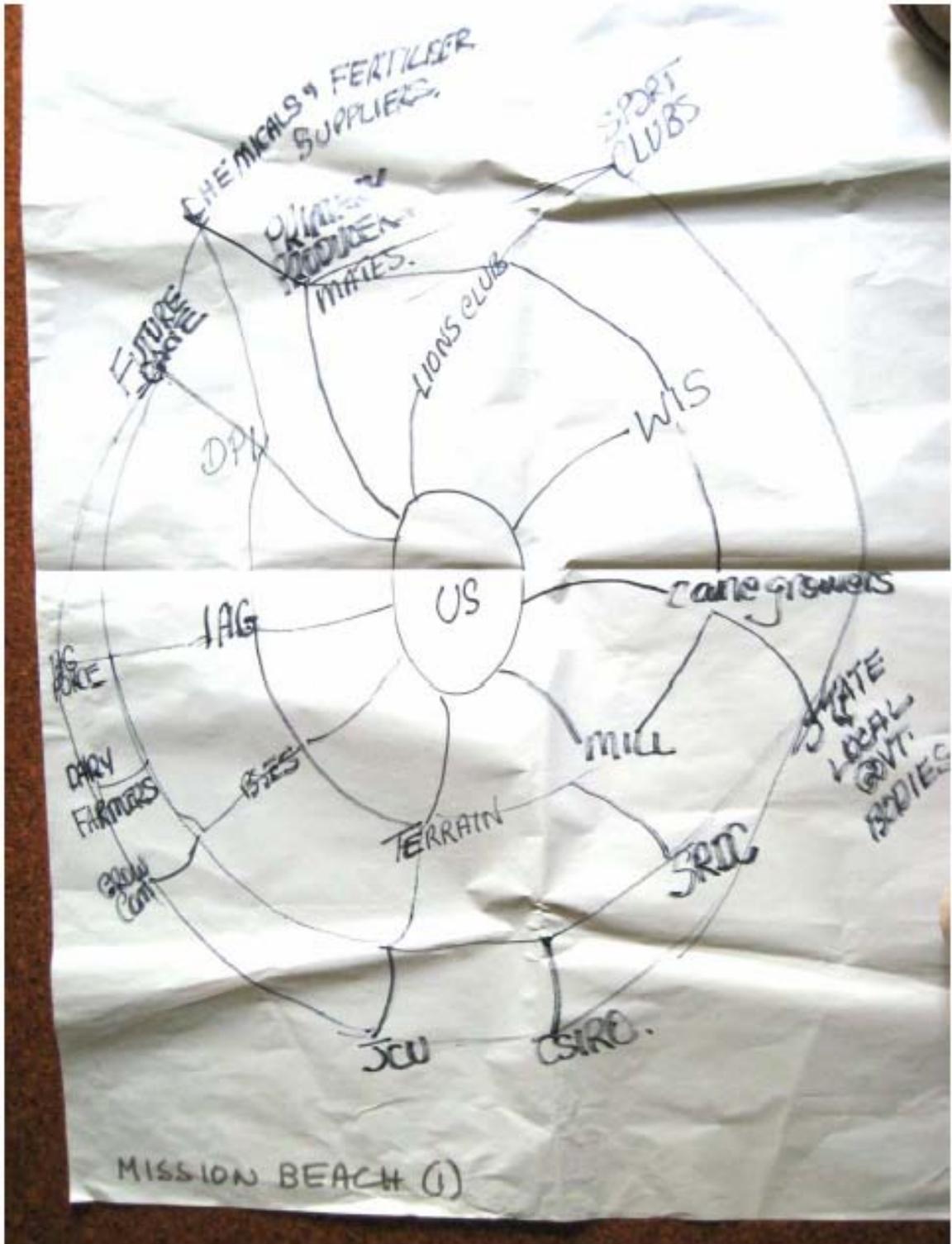
Workshop Close 3.00pm



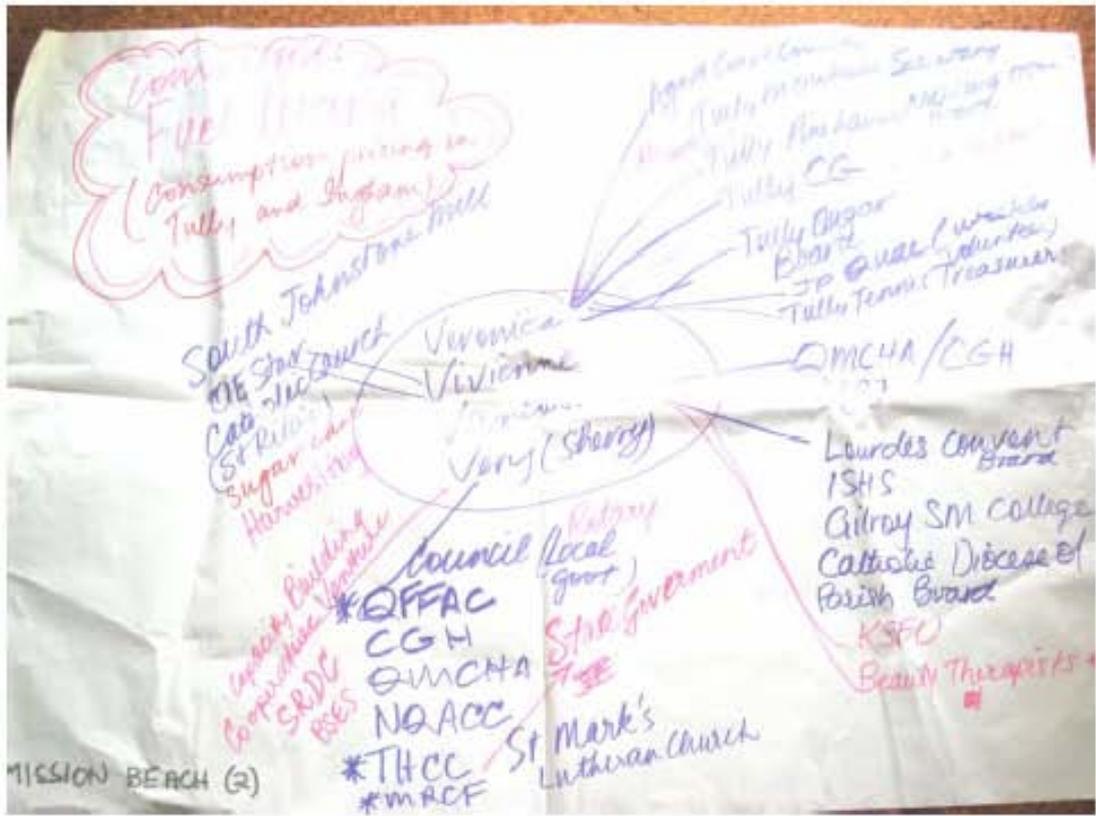
APPENDIX C. Network Mapping

- C1. Mission Beach
- C2. Bundaberg

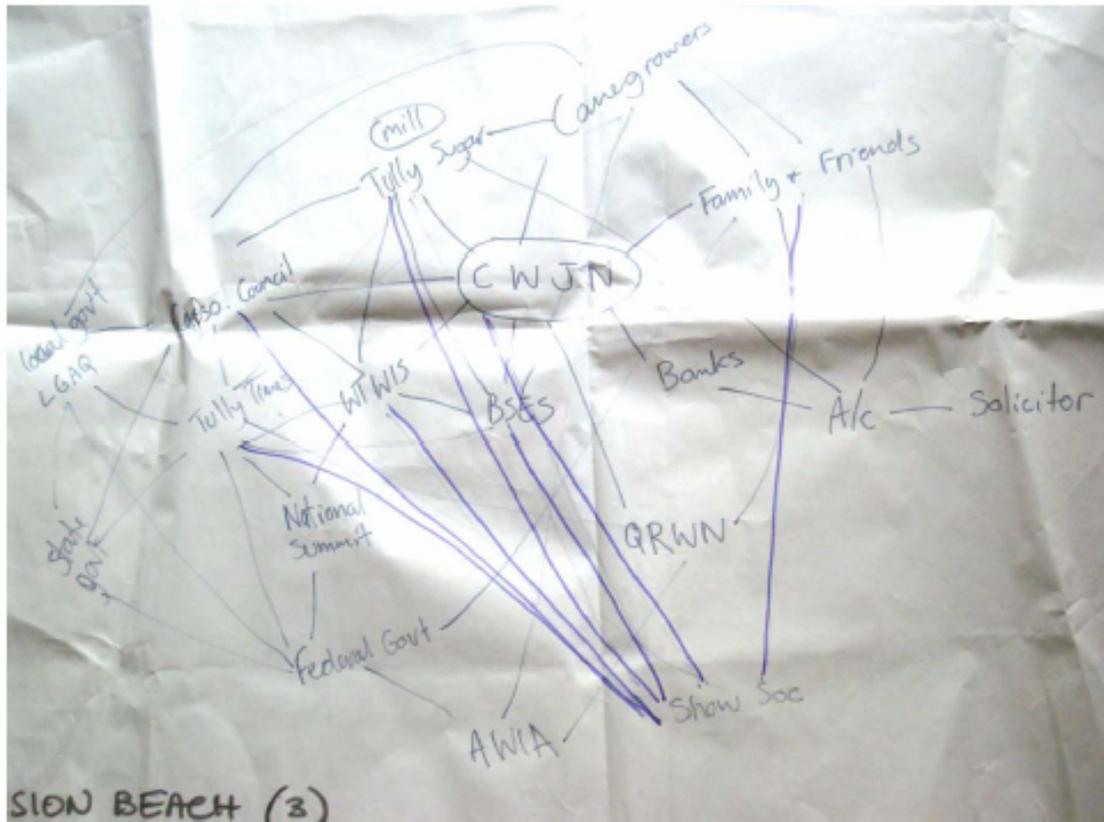
C1.1: Mission Beach 1



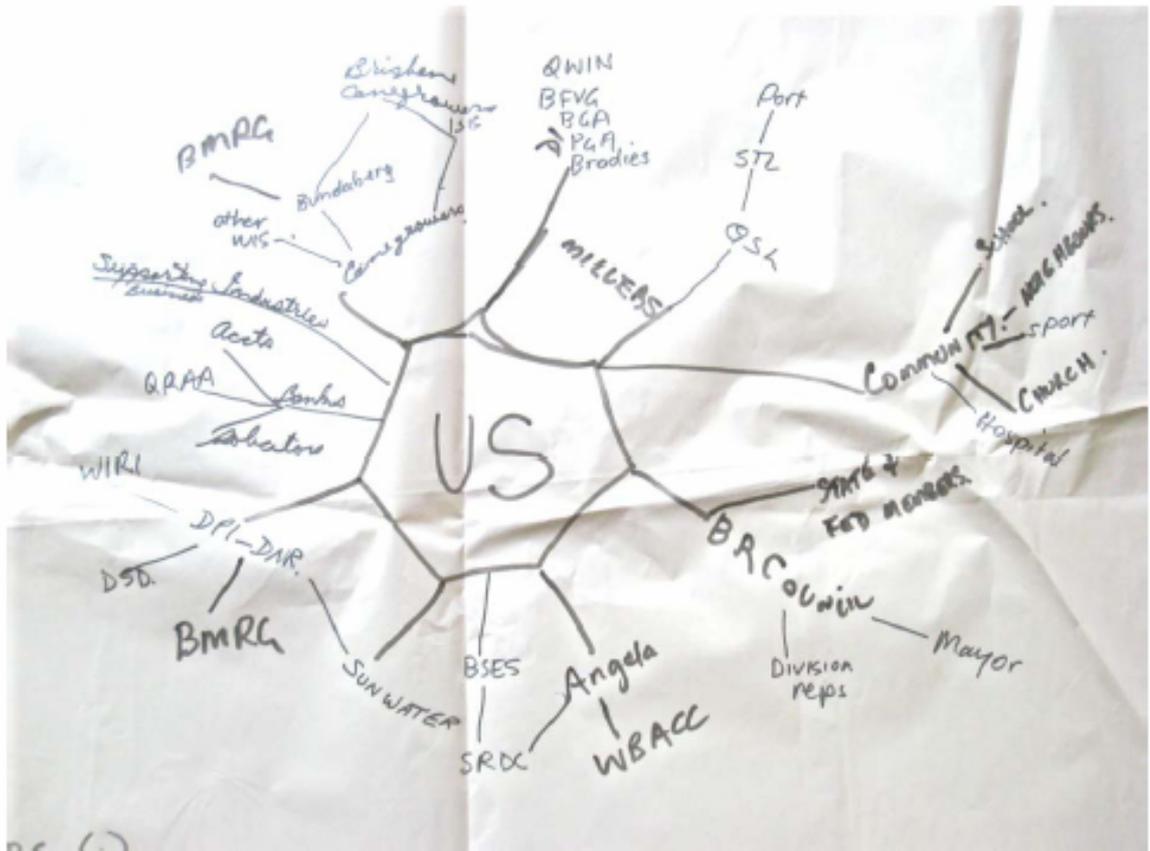
C1.2: Mission Beach 2



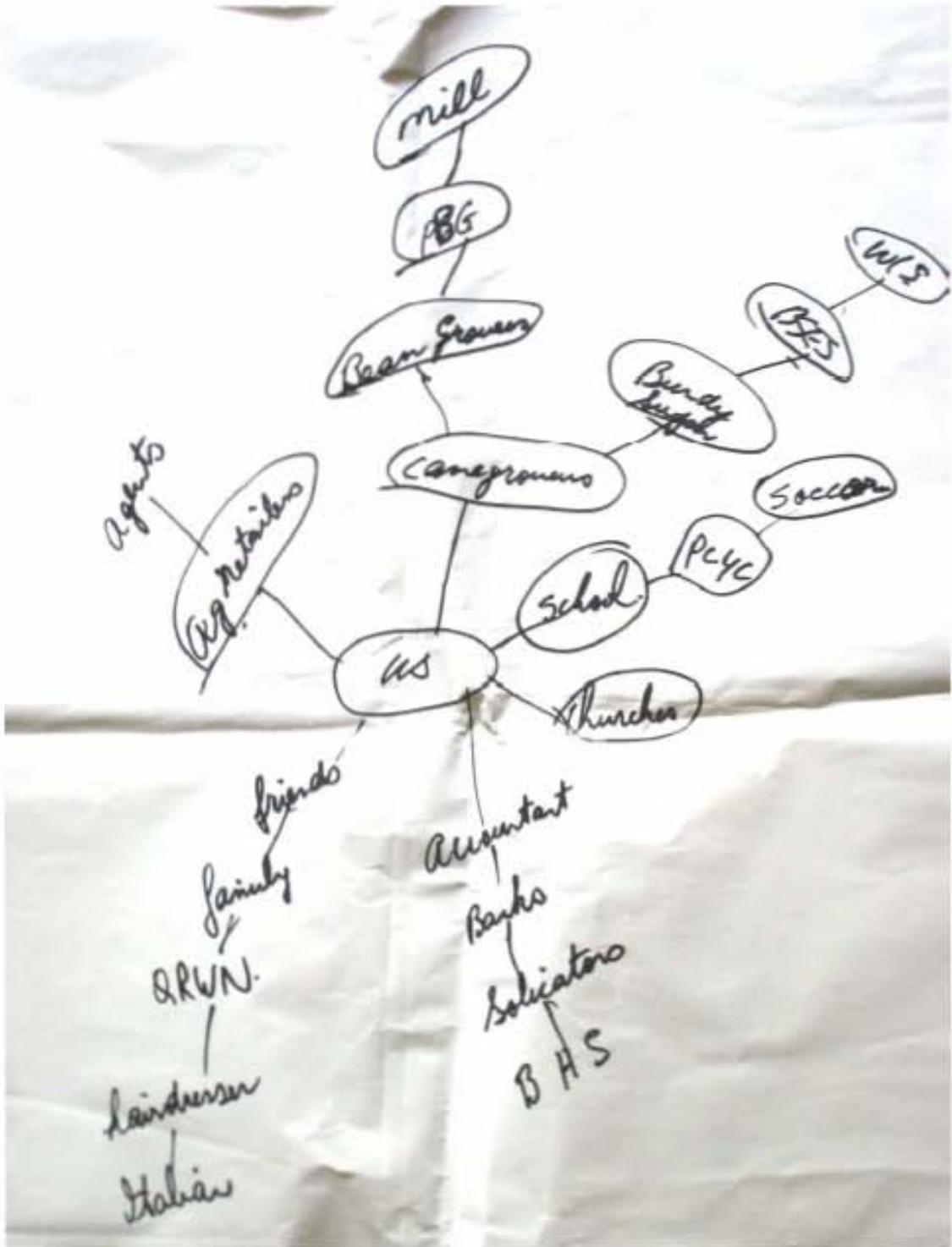
C1.3: Mission Beach 3



C2.1: Bundaberg 1



C2.2: Bundaberg 2



APPENDIX D. Workshop Evaluation

APPENDIX D: Participant Evaluation of the Workshops

At the commencement of each of the workshops, participants were provided with an evaluation form to feedback to the project research team at the end of the day. Eleven women from the Mission Beach workshop and seven from the Bundaberg workshop completed the forms and of these:

- 6 participants had no prior involvement with the project; and
- 12 participants had prior involvement with the project through one or more project activities:
 - 6 through an interview
 - 7 through involvement in the Project's Reference Panels
 - 8 through participation in a previous project workshop (i.e. 'What works for women?')
 - 4 through other project activities.

The collective responses to the questions asked are summarised below. Note not all participants completing the evaluation form responded to every question.

1. Overall, how valuable was this workshop for you?

17 responses (Mission Beach 10; Bundaberg 7).

On a 10 point scale from 1 (poor) through 6 (average) to 10 (exceptional) the responses:

- Ranged from 6 to 10
- With an average ranking of 8.4.

2. How valuable was the guest speaker session and its related discussion for you personally?

17 responses (Mission Beach 10; Bundaberg 7).

On a 10 point scale from 1 (poor) through 6 (average) to 10 (exceptional) the responses:

- Ranged from 7 to 10.
- With an average ranking of 8.9.

North

- Gave me inspiration and positive feelings
- Picked up some real pointers from Sherry
- Woke me up from the "dead" in community life.
- I love inspirational women.
- Great speaker – felt at ease to comment and ask questions. She had interesting and informative ideas and suggestions.
- She was excellent and hearing about the progress was valuable.
- Sherry is inspirational. Wendy is very informative.

South:

- Good personal history. Interesting. Not much information on networking. Connections though.

- First time I have heard her and I'm impressed!
- We were able to relate her info back to our individual goals.
- She kept us in touch with what is happening around us.
- Some good triggers, information (statistics and plans for the region); provided a link to BRC.
- Lorraine was very down to earth. Great to know her background.

3. Would you say workshops such as this contribute towards improving women's involvement in the sugar industry?

16 responses (Mission Beach 10; Bundaberg 6).

Yes – 16

No – 0

- Powerful because they are fairly small, good information, questions asked, interactive, moving around well
- Being able to connect with women from the whole area
- Triggers engagement into the group. Initiates contact.
- What others have to say reminds me of what I can do to improve life.
- Make new friends.
- Meeting different people. Ideas. Friendships develop.
- The networking allows improvement in business through information sharing and open friendly positive communication.
- Its such a great way to meet new people and to network.
- Learning about a different group.
- Networks were built.
- There was a variety of women involved in today's workshop
- Anything that involves bringing people together and discussing issues should have a positive outcome.
- By renewing our focus to keep trying to improve our situation and keep open to new ideas and to stay motivative!
- It helps to get you thinking.
- Helped to revitalise our energy levels to get us motivated.
- Keep people connected and updated.
- Identifies existing and potential linkages. Helps with ideas and some motivation.
- Network connections. Meeting new people from different agencies

4. How would you rate this workshop in assisting you to network and build relationships with other women in the industry?

18 responses (Mission Beach 11; Bundaberg 7).

On a 10 point scale from 1 (poor) through 6 (average) to 10 (exceptional) the responses:

- Ranged from 7 to 10
- With an average ranking of 8.6.

**5. What would you tell someone who wasn't here about this workshop?
e.g. How would you describe your experience?**

17 responses (Mission Beach 10; Bundaberg 7).

North:

- That it was excellent and well run friendly easy – good notice – plenty of time to organise my diary.
- Definitely not tea and scones. Professional women on a mission to make the organisation successful.
- Helps enhance your experience in the industry.
- About a new way of connecting people with similar interests to improve way of life and income.
- Contact and support for women across the sugar industry. Gaining confidence to learn with and meeting like minded women.
- Relaxing and interesting and gaining knowledge.
- It is a resource and an opportunity to deliver some great things in time and, a valuable experience.
- Inspirational.
- Informative, educational, friendly and fun.
- Guest speaker was very articulate – inspirational.

South

- Yes. Will promote the e-network i.e. website (if I can find it!)
- Informative and a very good perception of what it is like to be a farmer's wife!
- You missed a great day, you must go next time.
- Workshops give you an opportunity to focus on issues.
- Very informative.
- Informative, good chance to catch up and compare notes
- Great food, good company

6. Do you intend to participate in the e-Network in the future?

15 responses received. (Mission Beach 10; Bundaberg 5)

Yes – 14

No – 0

Unsure - 1

- Because my interest in it has been rekindled, and set me thinking how I can assist/contribute – Wendy and Sandra have done a great job.
- Interested
- It's the way to go
- More know how.
- To provide support.
- Networking absolutely matters.
- Cheap, easy quick
- To learn more about the industry and understand problems being faced.
- I want to keep up to-date with what is going on in all areas of our industry.
- Would like to continue to grow relationships with a broader group of people.
- Should have been anyway – just a reminder.

7. What do you intend to do as a result of attending this workshop?

16 responses (Mission Beach 10; Bundaberg 6).

North:

- Make a "date" every month to make a small/contribution / thoughts / news items.
- Pass on newsletters to interested women who are not on the net. Give positive feedback to any interested.
- Keep on plugging along with the e-network.
- Get involved again.
- Participate in the local WIS organisation.
- Ongoing support.
- Network, network, network.
- Take additional participation in community events.
- Put into practice networking hints. Try and get more women interested in WIS.
- Log onto Google page.

South:

- Find the website and have a look.
- Continue to attend WIS meetings and will send Sandra news items.
- Work with WIS to communicate better with other groups.
- Try to go to more meetings in the industry and keep interested.
- Send info to Bundy WIS group. Check out some potential courses. Join e-network.
- Nag more people to help.

8. How would you rate the overall organisation of this workshop?

18 responses (Mission Beach 11; Bundaberg 7).

On a 10 point scale from 1 (poor) through 6 (average) to 10 (exceptional) the responses:

- Ranged from 7 to 10
- With an average ranking of 8.6.

9. How could the workshop be improved?

8 responses (Mission Beach 5; Bundaberg 3).

North:

- Venue is good, good lunch, plenty of room
- Get the word out to have more women involved
- I don't know enough to say
- No need for improvement. A+
- Regular contact if possible.

South:

- More people attending.
- Get the different groups together North and South.
- Possibly with more participants.

10. Any additional comments?

8 responses (Mission Beach 6; Bundaberg 2).

- SeeChange always delivers – well above the expected.
- Thank you.
- Can't wait for next workshop. Enjoyed my day. Thankyou Tracy, Jenny, Iris, Sherry, Wendy and Chrissie.
- Thank-you for a great day.
- Thanks for having me.
- Thanks to Tracy our coordinator. Many thanks to Jenny, Iris, and Emma and best wishes for their future projects. Lovely day. Thank-you
- Hope we can continue to use the information.
- Enjoyed it.

SRDC Research Project

CSE016 Final Report

Appendix 5: Project Reference Panels

APPENDIX 5: PROJECT REFERENCE PANELS

Two regionally-based Project Reference Panels comprising representatives of key regional stakeholders of the research were established in each of the project's case study regions at the commencement of the project. The Reference Panels involved key stakeholders of the research from industry, government, extension and community bodies drawn from each case study region.

The agreed roles and functions of the Project's Reference Panels were to:

- Provide input, feedback and advice on project direction;
- Link the project into relevant sustainability initiatives in each case study region;
- Provide input into project progress and deliverables;
- Ensure that the project delivers practical outcomes;
- Provide the conduit for reporting into and communication with relevant institutions;
- Contribute once or twice a year to face to face meetings, supplemented with phone and email interaction throughout the year; and
- Progressive review of project's direction and progress against its objectives.

Bi-annual meetings were held over the life of the project with each panel in order to progressively review project progress, gain member input to the identification of issues and strategies relevant to women's participation in the sugar industry, and to identify opportunities for women's participation in the sugar industry in their region

Membership varied over the life of the project. Tables A5.1 and A5.2 identify the different members of the Southern and Northern Panels respectively.

Table A5.1: Southern Reference Panel members

Organisation/Group	Members
Women in Sugar Group, Bundaberg	Lynne Thomas (WIS Chair and grower) 2006 Jenny Rule (WIS Chair and grower) 2007 Margaret Dougherty (WIS Chair and grower) 2008
Women in Sugar Group, Isis	Sandra Webb (Chair, grower, Project Southern Regional Coordinator) 2006 – 2008
BSES Ltd, Bundaberg	Barry Callow (Extension Officer) in 2006 James Ogden-Brown (Extension Officer) 2007 and 2008
Isis Central Sugar Mill Co. Ltd	Paul Nicol (Productivity Officer) 2006 – 2008
Bundaberg Sugar, Bundaberg	Nancy Rincon (Agronomist) 2006 – 2007 Leone Aslett (Bundaberg Operations) August – November 2008
RAG, Wide Bay Burnett Area Consultative Committee Bundaberg	Angela Williams (Sugar Executive Officer) 2006 - 2007
Queensland Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries, Bundaberg	Trish Cameron (Future Cane, Bundaberg) 2006 Leath Stewart (Team Leader, Bundaberg) 2006 - 2008
Burnett Mary Regional Group for NRM Inc, Bundaberg	Glenda George (Social and Economic Coordinator) in 2006 Clinton Muller (Landcare and Industry Coordinator) in 2006 Fiona McCartney (Regional Landcare Coordinator) 2007 – July 2008 Alana White/Cheryl List (Social and Economic Coordinator) August – November 2008
CentaCare, Bundaberg	Anne Slattery (Counsellor) 2006 – 2007

Table A5.2: Northern Reference Panel members

Organisation/Group	Members
Wet Tropics WIS	Kristen Brooks (Silkwood grower) 2006 - 2008 Veronica Lizzio (Tully grower) 2006 – 2008 Judy Rehbein (Grower, FutureCane Sugar Industry Liaison Officer) 2006 – 2008 Wendy Finlayson (Tully grower; CSE016 Project Northern Coordinator) 2008
Hinchinbrook Shire Council	Sherry Kaurila (Councillor; Ingham harvester) 2006 - 2008
BSES Ltd	David Calcino (Principal Extension Officer, Meringa, Gordonvale) 2006 – 2008 Danielle Skocaj (Extension Officer, Tully) 2006 - 2008
RAG, FNQ Area Consultative Committee, Cairns	Fred Marchant (Sugar Executive Officer) 2006 - 2008
Queensland Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries, Cairns	Terry Reid (Business Development Officer, FutureCane) 2006 Greg Mason (Business Development Officer, Regional Delivery North) 2008
Queensland Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries, Townsville	Terry Reid (Project Officer, FutureCane, Townsville) 2006 Avril Robinson (Project Officer, FutureCane, Townsville) 2007 -2008
Queensland Department of Natural Resources and Mines	Lynda Pollock (Rockhampton) 2006
Queensland Department of State Development, Trade & Innovation	Greg Kelly (Sugar Resource Officer, Herbert/Tully) in 2006 Robyn Sullivan (Sugar Resource Officer, Burdekin) in 2006
FNQ NRM Ltd / Terrain NRM, Innisfail	Rachael Wicks (Manager Community Engagement/ Program Leader Community and Climate) and Rebecca Clear (Manager Programmes & Partnerships) 2006 - 2008 Bianca Woolley (Land Management Facilitator) August – November 2008

SRDC Research Project

CSE016 Final Report

Appendix 6: Project Evaluation Strategy

Sugar Research and Development Corporation (SRDC)

Project CSE016:

Sugar communities and resilience to change: Opportunities for enhancing women's participation in sustainability initiatives

PROJECT EVALUATION STRATEGY

Bellamy, J.¹, Jakku, E.² and Bohnet, I.³

1. School of Natural and Rural Systems Management, University of Queensland, St. Lucia. Qld.
2. CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems, St. Lucia. Qld.
3. CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems, Atherton, Qld.

April 2006

1. THE CSE016 PROJECT

1.1 Background

Previous research has shown that gender relations are a significant factor influencing farm, industry and community decision-making and that women are an under-utilised resource in the agricultural sector (e.g. SCARM 1998; Bellamy *et al.* 2002; Alston 2005). Significantly, it is recognised that women have the potential to provide an untapped opportunity for fostering innovation and facilitating change in the sugar industry (Pini 2002, 2003; Bellamy *et al.* 2003). In addition, increasing involvement in sustainability activities has potential ‘flow on’ effects in generating greater awareness and adoption of more sustainable practices in rural communities (e.g. Grasby 2005). Notwithstanding, gender relations are often overlooked when considering the capacity and willingness of land users to adopt more sustainable management practices (e.g. Productivity Commission 2003).

To address this gap, a new three year research project, “*Sugar communities and resilience to change: Opportunities for enhancing women’s participation in sustainability initiatives*” (CSE016) commenced in November 2005. The CSE016 project is funded by the Sugar Research and Development Corporation (SRDC) and involves a research collaboration between CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems (CSE), the University of Queensland (UQ) and a number of key stakeholders in two contrasting sugar regions in north and south coastal Queensland. The key focus of the project is to build industry and community capacity for change by targeting the participation of women in a broad range of sustainability initiatives as a key opportunity to strengthen industry decision-making and the resilience/adaptive capacity of sugar communities in the face of change.

As such, the project directly addresses priorities identified in the SRDC R&D Plan 2003-2008 including:

- o Program D (Industry Capacity) by identifying opportunities and strategies to improve the participation of women in sustainability initiatives and build human capacity in the sugar industry and its communities for change, learning and innovation.
- o Outcome 5 (Enhancing human capacity and partnerships between industry, research and regional communities) by contributing to the development of frameworks for assessing community capacity to change and strategies to increase the participation of women in sustainability initiatives.

1.2 Project Objectives and Outcomes

Specifically the CSE016 project’s overall objective is to work with women in the sugar industry, in active collaboration with other sugar industry, government, community, research and extension stakeholders, to:

- o Develop strategies to improve the involvement of women in Best Management Practice (BMP), Farm Management Systems (FMS) and other community-based sustainability initiatives;
- o Implement and evaluate these strategies in terms of how they can improve future sugar industry capacity building activities;
- o Facilitate wide communication and uptake of findings.

The specific deliverables or outputs of the project as identified in the SRDC/CSIRO contractual agreement for the CSE016 project are:

- o Recommendations for improving the participation of women in sustainability initiatives, developed in collaboration with women in the sugar industry and other government and

community stakeholders in the case study regions based on the experience of implementation of strategies in these regions;

- o An interim report developed with women and other key stakeholders, capturing learnings and experiences of women who have been or are involved in sustainability initiatives;
- o A report developed with women and other key stakeholders, which provides a framework for evaluating community resilience to change and identifies strategies for fostering the involvement of women in sustainability initiatives. The framework and strategies will be based on collaborative reflection on the implementation of strategies in the case studies. The report will identify key lessons that are relevant to other regions; and
- o Ongoing communication activities (e.g. newsletter articles, conference papers, workshops) to ensure awareness of and involvement in the project by potential users of the research in industry, extension and research sectors.

In turn the planned outcomes for the CSE016 project are:

- o Increased understanding by industry, government, community, research and extension stakeholders of opportunities and strategies for enhancing women's participation in sustainability initiatives;
- o Increased participation of women in sustainability initiatives, through the collaborative development and implementation of locally driven action plans that foster women's involvement in these initiatives;
- o Improved capacity of sugar communities to deal with change; and
- o More effective capacity building strategies to encourage an increased uptake of sustainable farming practices.

1.3 Underpinning Principles of CSE016

An important component of the CSE016 project is the adoption of a participatory research approach between the research team (i.e. the chief investigators and co-investigators) and other key stakeholders in two contrasting sugar communities/case regions in Queensland. The following basic *operational principles* underpin this approach:

- o CSE016 will be based on participatory action research methodologies involving women in the sugar industry in active collaboration with other sugar industry, government, community, research and extension stakeholders. These methodologies will support an adaptive learning research process;
- o Evaluation will be a core component of the research approach designed to improve the project performance, assess impact and likely outcomes and capture learnings emerging;
- o The research will focus on working on small case studies in two contrasting sugar communities; one in the north (i.e. the Wet Tropics region) and the other in the south (i.e. the Lower Mary and coastal Burnett area);
- o Synergies will be developed with other research projects within the case region sugar communities as well as other rural industries and existing wider women's networks;
- o Within each of the project's case study regions, an emphasis will be placed on adding value to relevant sustainability initiatives and related activities;
- o The research will capture learnings from past experience of women's involvement in decision-making in the sugar industry as well learnings and experiences of women in other rural industries; and
- o Recommendations on strategies for improving women's involvement will be developed in partnership with the project's Reference Panel in each of the case regions. These

strategies will be designed to have broader relevance beyond the case regions and throughout the sugar industry value chain.

The projects research will involve a number of overlapping and concurrent phases relating to:

- o *Understanding*: improving understanding on women's role and influence in decision-making on sustainability in sugar communities;
- o *Implications*: identifying implications of improved participation of women in community and industry based sustainability initiatives for decision-making in the sugar industry and community resilience in the face of change; and
- o *Enabling*: enabling learning and capacity building on opportunities and strategies for improving women's involvement in sustainability initiatives within sugar communities.

For each of these phases, a number of key research questions have been identified as outlined in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1. Project CSE016 Key Research Questions

Research Phase	Key Research questions
Understanding	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the existing role and level of influence of women in decision-making on sustainability in sugar communities? 2. What is the current level of participation of women in sustainability initiatives in sugar communities? 3. What are the drivers and factors that foster and hinder women's participation in sustainability initiatives? 4. What have been the contributions of sustainability initiatives to community resilience?
Implications	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. What are the implications for community resilience of improving the participation / involvement of women in sustainability initiatives? 6. What are the implications of the different types of sustainability initiatives for improving women's involvement in such initiatives as well as community resilience / adaptive capacity?
Enabling	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. What opportunities and strategies might improve the involvement of women in sustainability initiatives in sugar communities? 8. What are the recommendations on these opportunities and strategies for other industry sectors or key stakeholders?

1.3 A Systems Approach to Evaluation

A systems approach to evaluation is needed for projects adopting systems thinking and adaptive learning in its research approach (SRDC n.d.). A systems approach has the potential to identify a wider variety (e.g. social, political, economic, environmental, institutional) of potential impacts and outcomes (Bellamy et al. 2001) and to develop a more robust understanding of the research process. Importantly, evaluation needs not only to be a means of *assessing impact* but also a critical *process tool* for improving project implementation, providing a basis for assessing accountability, fostering learning, improving the body of knowledge, and improving the uptake of research outcomes. A systems-based evaluation approach requires a formative evaluation approach over the life of the process and needs to be based on a framework that is flexible enough to incorporate on-going learning and to adapt to emergent properties (Bellamy et al. 2001; Innes and Booher 1999).

The Evaluation Strategy presented here for Project CSE016 draws on both the SRDC Evaluation Framework (n.d.) and a systems-based evaluation approach developed by Bellamy et al. (2001) for

evaluating natural resource management and successfully applied to research initiatives underpinned by systems thinking (see Figure 2.1). This framework provides the CSE016 project evaluation with:

- a basis for an integrated evaluation of the different perspectives (i.e. social, economic, environmental, institutional and technological) on the performance of the CSE016 research;
- a framework for guiding the evaluation; and
- a rigorous basis for synthesising findings.

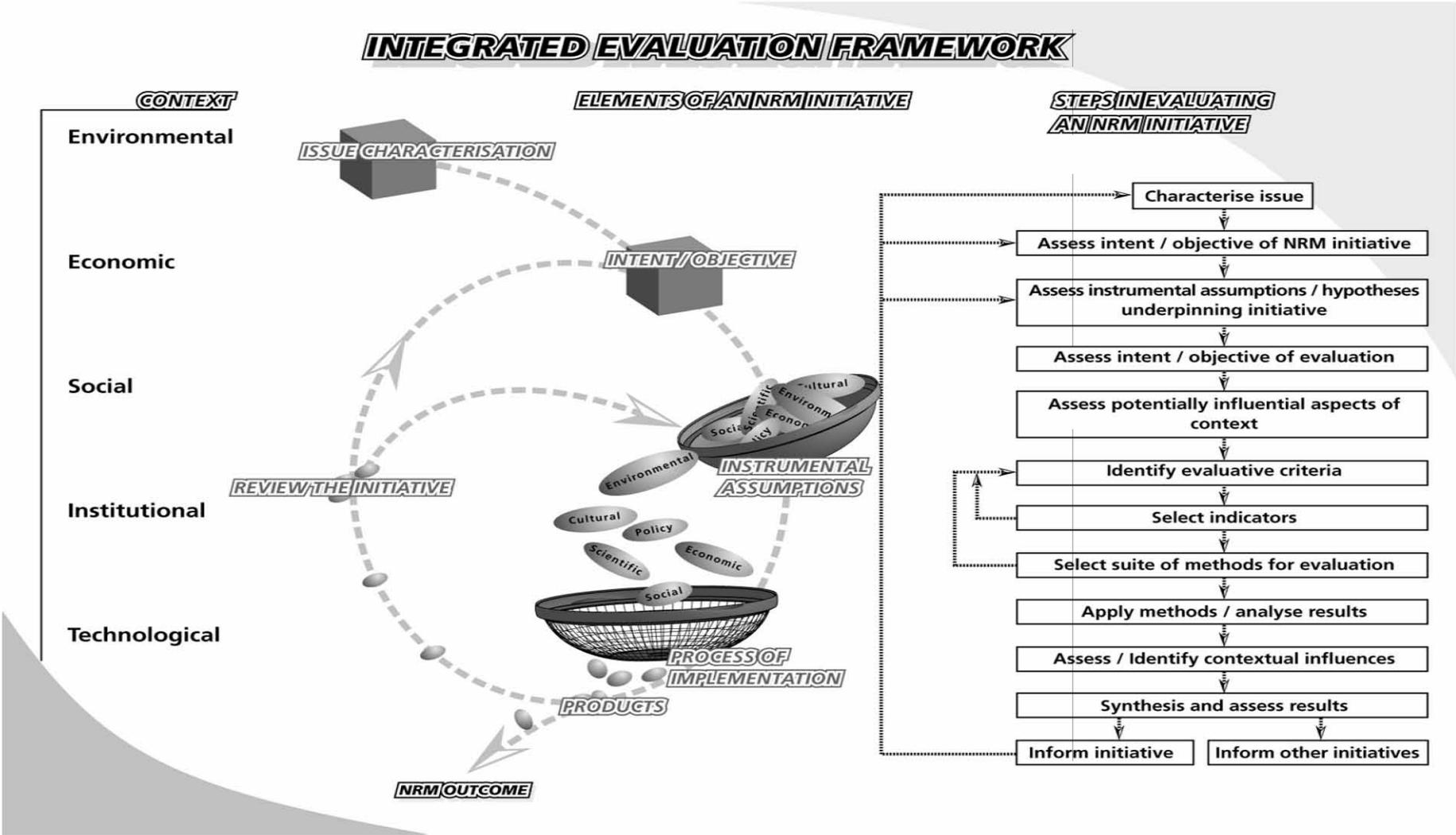
1.4 Scope of Report

The challenge to develop and implement the CSE016 Project as an effective participatory research project that contributes to improvements in opportunities for women's participation in sustainability initiatives in sugar communities in two case study regions in Queensland requires on-going evaluation as part of the change process. Evaluation is fundamental to (Bellamy *et al.* 2001):

- o identifying change;
- o supporting an adaptive approach that is flexible enough to meet the challenge of this change as well as a diversity of stakeholder expectations; and
- o enabling learning at individual, community, institutional and industry policy levels.

This report presents the Evaluation Strategy for the CSE016 project.

Figure 2.1. A systems-based framework for evaluation of R&D initiatives (Source: Bellamy *et al.* 2001)



2. EVALUATING THE CSE016 PROJECT

2.1 Project Evaluation Objectives

Evaluation is a core component of the CSE016 project approach. Evaluation is needed over the life of the project:

- o To test the theories and assumptions on which the project is based;
- o To improve the research implementation process;
- o To assess the project's achievements, impacts and likely outcomes; and
- o To support the capture of learnings emerging in the research process.

The specific objectives of the evaluation component, therefore, are:

- o To provide periodic and reflective feedback over the life of the project on its progress including the evolving expectations and perceptions of key stakeholders on the project to support the participatory research methodology and adaptive learning approach to project implementation and reporting.
- o To annually assess the impacts and evaluate the likely outcomes of the project in terms of:
 - relevance to improving women's involvement in sustainability initiatives and processes;
 - intended changes in practices of key project stakeholders;
 - the strengthening of community resilience/adaptive capacity; and
 - uptake of research findings, technical products and recommendations.
- o To support the project's accountability reporting requirements to key funders/clients in terms of how the project is meeting its objectives.

The learnings from the CSE016 Project will also have the potential to generate benefits to sugar communities in Australia other than the case study regions.

2.2 Evaluation Principles

An important aspect of developing the CSE016 project is the adoption of a participatory approach to the project evaluation between the research team and other key stakeholders. As such, the following basic principles will underpin the on-going evaluation process:

- (a) As part of the participatory research methodology, the key stakeholders of the CSE016 project will be mapped at the outset of the project through a participatory process with key collaborators including the project's Reference Panels.
- (b) The CSE016 project evaluation strategy will be agreed in partnership with the Chief Investigators of the project, the project Reference Panels and SRDC managers and will be reviewed annually. In response, it will be updated appropriately if required.
- (c) For practical purposes and efficiency, the implementation of the evaluation strategy will be built into "how" the project is conducted so that data collection and evaluation becomes a cost effective and integral part of planned on-going research activities rather than a separate set of activities, for example:
 - Face-to-face reference Panel meetings will include evaluation sessions in which progress against the baselines will be assessed. These evaluation sessions will include feedback on what participants have learnt and what they think are the most effective techniques or methods to enhance women's participation in sustainability initiatives.

- Data gathered through in-depth interviews, focus groups and social/institutional mapping will supplement the evaluation data gathered from stakeholder meetings and workshops and it will contribute to the progressive benchmarking of project performance.
- (d) The evaluation process will support the adaptive learning approach that underpins the CSE016 project (see Section 1.4 above) and it will influence its implementation in an ongoing way to maximise the likelihood of success in key indicator areas.
- (e) At the end of the project, a final evaluation workshop will be held with participants in the case study regions and a formal summary report on project impacts and outcomes produced.

3. FRAMEWORK FOR EVALUATING THE CSE016 PROJECT

3.1 Evaluation Criteria

Evaluative criteria need to reflect the achievement of key objectives, planned outcomes and underlying principles of the CSE016 Project and recognise the potential multi-dimensional impacts (e.g. social/cultural, economic, environmental, institutional and technological) of the CSE016 project. As such, *evaluation criteria* relate to four core project outcome areas:

1. *Improving the knowledge base:* Contribution of data and information for an improved understanding of women's current role and level of influence in decision-making on sustainability in sugar communities.
2. *Enabling opportunities and on-ground outcomes:* Improvement in the opportunities and strategies available for involving women in sustainability initiatives in two case study sugar communities.
3. *Supporting a participatory research approach:* Effectiveness of the participatory research approach as an informing and inclusive research process that adds value to the CSE016 project's research and improves the capacity of two case study sugar communities to involve women in sustainability initiatives.
4. *Capturing learnings:* Contribution of CSE016 to the theory and practice relating to women's participation in sustainability initiatives and its implications for improving community resilience/adaptive capacity.

Based on these four core outcome areas, an analytical framework for the evaluation is presented in Table 3.1. This framework may evolve over the life of the CSE016 project in response to periodic review and emerging needs.

3.2 Evaluation Methods

Systematic methods are required to observe change over time in the CSE016 process and impact. However, there is not likely to be one best, let alone an all encompassing, method for understanding and evaluating the CSE016 process. Multiple methods and triangulation of observation can contribute to methodological rigour in evaluation (Patton 1987; Chambers 1997). They can be flexibly adopted at different stages of the evaluation, and encompass both quantitative and qualitative techniques. The choice of evaluation methods will be guided by for example the Department of Finance's (1994) four fundamental criteria for the design of evaluations:

- o usefulness and relevance to the evaluation purpose;
- o feasibility and cost-effectiveness;
- o equity and social justice; and
- o technical validity.

The evaluation methods and stakeholder targets will primarily involve:

- o *Interactive evaluation sessions* (e.g. Reference Panel meetings; project focus groups and workshops including small case studies on sustainability initiatives)
- o *Key informant interviews* (eg. Reference Panel members; small case study participants);
- o *Document/content analysis* (eg. project milestone and research reports, stakeholder communications and related correspondence).

Table 3.1. A framework of performance criteria for evaluating the CSE016 Project.

Evaluation Criteria	Measures	Methods
1. Contribution to improved understanding of women's involvement in decision-making on sustainability in sugar communities and options for enhancing involvement.		
<p>1.1 Project outputs that contribute to an improved understanding of the role and influence of women's participation in decision-making on sustainability in sugar communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A report that reviews the literature and documents a framework for evaluating community resilience in the face of change by October 2006. ➤ Report on learnings and experiences of women who have been or are involved in sustainability initiatives in the sugar and other key rural industries by April 2007 ➤ A progress report that identifies and evaluates strategies for fostering the involvement of women in sustainability initiatives in two case study regions by October 2007. ➤ A report documenting broadly applicable strategies for fostering the involvement of women in sustainability initiatives by April 2008. ➤ Final Project report accepted by SRDC by November 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review of project milestone reports and related documentation. ➤ Key informant interviews
<p>1.2 Communication of project findings over the life of the project that improves the options available to key stakeholders for enhancing the engagement of women in sustainability initiatives in sugar communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Degree to which project informs industry, government, community, research and extension stakeholders in an on-going way of improved opportunities and strategies for enhancing the involvement of women in sustainability initiatives by October 2008: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Change in key stakeholder expectations on the opportunities for improving the level and influence of women in sugar industry decision-making on sustainability over the life of the project. ⇒ Improvement in the availability of strategies for involving women in sustainability initiatives in sugar communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Key informant interviews ➤ Interactive sessions with project Reference Panel ➤ Review of project milestone reports and related documentation.

Evaluation Criteria	Measures	Methods
2. Improvement in stakeholder capacity for involving women in sustainability initiatives in two case study sugar communities.		
<p>2.1 Relevance of project research to engagement processes for sustainability initiatives in the two case study communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Degree of enhancement of community capacity to develop opportunities and improve women's involvement in sustainability initiatives in the north and south case study regions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Degree of satisfaction of key stakeholders with field testing of strategies for enhancing women's involvement as documented in a progress report by October 2007. ⇒ Level of expectation of key stakeholders of the use of the strategies beyond the life of the project as documented in a Project evaluation report by October 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Key informant interviews ➤ Review of CSE016 project milestone reports and related documentation.
<p>2.2 Contribution to building skills of key sugar industry stakeholders for involving women in sustainability initiatives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Degree and effectiveness of sharing of key lessons both within and beyond case regions from the CSE016 research: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Degree of perceived value of the project's activities and related guidelines by key stakeholders involved in the project by October 2008. ⇒ Breadth of communication to key stakeholders beyond the case study regions on the project's products and guidelines by October 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Key informant interviews ➤ Review of participant evaluation sheets from CSE016 project communication activities ➤ Review of CSE016 project milestone reports and related documentation.

Evaluation Criteria	Measures	Methods
3. Effectiveness of the participatory research approach in adding value to the CSE016 project's research and improving the capacity of two case study sugar communities to involve women in sustainability initiatives		
3.1 Research reflects an effective participatory and adaptive learning approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A clear and coherent common agenda exists over the life of the project among key stakeholders (i.e. Project's Chief Investigators and Case Region Reference panels): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Research agenda is agreed collaboratively and periodically reviewed and refined with project Reference Panels; ⇒ Evidence that research outputs and outcomes meet expectations of key stakeholders and research funders. ➤ Evaluation Strategy supports the projects participatory research and adaptive learning approach and implemented on time: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Overarching Evaluation Strategy approved by SRDC by April 2006; ⇒ Evaluation Strategy and its implementation plan reviewed and refined with project Reference Panels in north and south case regions by October 2006 ⇒ Stakeholder expectations of the project and its outcomes documented by October 2006 and reviewed bi-annually; ⇒ Evaluation plan implemented, reviewed periodically and meets agreed evaluation milestones on time over the life of the project; ⇒ Summary report on project impacts and outcomes completed by October 2008. ➤ Project intent and progress clearly communicated through an iterative process of sharing of knowledge, learnings and findings between researchers and key stakeholders: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Stakeholder mapping with Reference Panels documented by April 2006. ⇒ Communication plan developed collaboratively with key stakeholders and documented by October 2006. ⇒ Communication plan reviewed annually and implemented to stakeholder and SRDC satisfaction over the life of the project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review of CSE016 project milestone reports and related documentation. ➤ Interactive session with project Reference Panels ➤ Review of participant evaluation sheets from CSE016 project communication activities ➤ Acceptance of milestone reports by SRDC

Evaluation Criteria	Measures	Methods
4. Contribution of CSE016 to research on women's involvement in decision-making on sustainability initiatives and the implications for improving community resilience/adaptive capacity.		
4.1 Contribution to improved understanding on women's involvement in sustainability initiatives and the implications for improving community resilience/adaptive capacity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Integrity of CSE016 project's research method and outcomes over the life of the project: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Evidence that the research builds on previous experience in the case study regions and the relevant theoretical base on sustainability, community resilience and the involvement of women in sugar industry decision-making by October 2008; ⇒ Number of peer-reviewed publications based on research findings by October 2008; ⇒ Acceptance by SRDC of CSE016 final project reporting and related project documents by November 2008. ➤ Recommendations for broadly applicable strategies for fostering the involvement women in sustainability initiatives developed and widely communicated by October 2008. ➤ Extent to which other sugar communities and researchers seek information and support from the CSE016 project by October 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Key informant interviews ➤ Interactive sessions with the project's Reference Panel ➤ On-going Project evaluation reporting through Project Milestone reports.
4.2 An accountable research process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Acceptance by SRDC and other key funders that the CSE016 project meets agreed its generic milestones and performance indicators on time and within budget periodically over the project life. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ On-going Project Milestone reports.

3.3 Evaluation Outcomes and Outputs

Table 3.2 provides a summary of the linkages between the CSE016 project's evaluation activity objectives, outcomes and outputs.

Table 3.2: Evaluation Objective/Outcome/Output Linkages

No.	<i>Specific Objectives</i>	<i>Outcomes</i>	<i>Outputs</i>
1.	To provide periodic and reflective feedback over the life of the project on its progress including the evolving expectations and perceptions of key stakeholders on the project to support the participatory research methodology and an adaptive learning approach to project implementation and reporting.	An adaptive learning approach to CSE016 project implementation that informs the project's research process.	Briefings to project Reference Panels and other key stakeholders and contributions to project Milestone reporting to SRDC.
2.	To annually assess the impacts and evaluate the likely outcomes of the project in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - relevance to improving women's involvement in sustainability initiatives and processes; - intended changes in practices of key project stakeholders; - the strengthening of community resilience/adaptive capacity; and - uptake of research findings, technical products and recommendations. 	Progressive synthesis of findings on process, outcomes and impacts of project to key stakeholders through the project's Reference Panels.	Formal documentation on the longitudinal evaluation of process and impacts of the CSE016 project.
3.	To support the project's accountability reporting requirements to key funders/clients in terms of how the project is meeting its objectives.	Rigorous accountability reporting to SRDC and other research investors on CSE016 progress and how the project is meeting its objectives.	Brief reports included in 6-monthly Milestone reporting to SRDC as contractually required

3.4 Evaluation Timelines

- o April 2006: Initial CSE016 Evaluation Strategy documented and approved by SRDC
- o October 2006: Benchmarking of stakeholder expectations of the project and its evaluation and documented in project's Milestone report. Draft Evaluation Strategy reviewed and refined with key collaborators.
- o April 2007: Brief report on the monitoring of project progress and impact against evaluation criteria prepared in collaboration with the project Reference Panels and documented in CSE016 Milestone report.

- o October 2007: Brief report on the monitoring of project progress and impact against evaluation criteria prepared in collaboration with the project Reference Panels and documented in CSE016 Milestone report.
- o April 2008: Brief report on the monitoring of project progress and impact against evaluation criteria prepared in collaboration with the project Reference Panels and documented in CSE016 Milestone report.
- o November 2008: Final summary report on the evaluation of stakeholder experiences and project process and impact submitted to SRDC.

References

- Alston, M., 2005. *Gender perspectives in Australian rural community life*. Sydney: University of New South Wales Press.
- Bellamy, J.A., Walker, D.H., McDonald, G.T. and Syme, G. J 2001a. A systems approach to the evaluation of natural resource management initiatives. *Journal of Environmental Management* 63(4), 407-423.
- Bellamy, J.A., Webb, V., Mayocchi, C. and Leitch, A. 2002. *Improving Resource Management through Rural Women's Use of New Technology: A pilot study on impediments and opportunities for learning activities. Final Report*. Prepared for AAA-FarmBis – Skilling Farmers for the Future Program. CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems: December 2002.
- Bellamy, J.A. and Webb, V., 2003. *Benchmarking the use of new technologies for natural resource management: A pilot study on innovation and change in the sugar industry*. Activity P1~6. Final Report. June 2003. CRC for Sustainable Sugar Production.
- Grasby, D., Zammit, C., Pretty, G. and Bramston, D. 2005. 'Ready, Set, Go!': Using the Community Readiness Method to engage social networks for sustainable natural resource management in the Queensland Murray Darling basin. Paper presented at the International Conference on Engaging Communities, held Brisbane 14-17 August, 2005.
- Innes, J.E. and Booher, D.E.1999. Consensus building and complex adaptive systems. A framework for evaluating collaborative planning. *Journal of the American Planning Association* 65 (4), 412-423.
- Pini, B. 2002. The exclusion of women from agricultural political leadership: A case study of the Australian Sugar Industry. *Sociologia Ruralis*, 42 (1): 65-76.
- Productivity Commission 2003. *Industries, Land Use and Water Quality in the Great Barrier Reef Catchment*. Research report. Canberra. February 2003.
- SRDC (n.d.) SRDC Evaluation Framework, available online at <http://www.srdc.gov.au/>
- Standing Committee on Agriculture and Resource Management (SCARM) 1998b. *Missed Opportunities: Harnessing the skills of women for economic, environmental and social development*. 2 Volumes. RIRDC: Canberra.

SRDC Research Project

CSE016 Final Report

Appendix 7: Final Project Evaluation Report

Sugar Research and Development Corporation (SRDC)

**Project CSE016:
Sugar communities and resilience to change: Opportunities for enhancing
women's participation in sustainability initiatives**

Final Project Evaluation Report

Jennifer Bellamy¹ and Emma Jakku²

1. School of Natural and Rural Systems Management, University of Queensland, St. Lucia. Qld.
2. CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems, St. Lucia. Qld.

October 2008

CONTENTS

1.	BACKGROUND	1
1.1	The CSE016 Project	1
1.2	Project Objectives	1
1.3	Project Research Approach	1
1.4	Project Evaluation Strategy	2
1.4.1	Evaluation Objectives, Outcomes and Outputs	2
1.4.2	Evaluation methods	3
1.5	Scope of this Report	4
2.	Project Performance Assessment	5
2.1	Project Evaluation Criteria	5
2.2	Performance Against Evaluation Criteria	6
2.3	Performance Against Planned Project Outputs and Outcomes	14
2.3.1	Project Outputs	14
2.3.2	Project Outcomes	16

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 The CSE016 Project

The SRDC CSE016 Project (*Sugar communities and resilience to change: Opportunities for enhancing women's participation in sustainability initiatives*) is a three year collaborative research project between the Sugar R&D Corporation, CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems, The University of Queensland and industry collaborators in two contrasting sugar regions.

The key focus of the project is to build industry and community capacity for change by targeting the participation of women in a broad range of sustainability initiatives as a key opportunity to strengthen industry decision-making and the resilience or adaptive capacity of sugar communities in the face of change.

1.2 Project Objectives

In two case study regions, work with women in the sugar industry, in collaboration with other sugar industry, government, community, research and extension stakeholders, to concurrently:

- Develop a shared understanding amongst collaborators and researchers of:
 - The major social, economic and institutional influences on women's participation in initiatives relevant to sustainability and the sugar industry; and
 - The value of and opportunities for enhancing women's participation in such initiatives.
- Identify, implement and evaluate strategies that improve women's participation in initiatives relevant to environmental, economic and social sustainability in the sugar industry, using participatory action research.
- Facilitate wide, ongoing communication and uptake of findings on strategies for strengthening the participation of women in sustainability initiatives to enhance sugar communities' capacity to deal with change within and beyond the case study regions.

1.3 Project Research Approach

To contribute to methodological rigor, the project took a multiple method approach involving a combination of: case study research, participatory research (includes participatory evaluation), action research, literature review, regional profiling, stakeholder analysis (including interviews, workshops/interactive forums, participant observation) and synthesis and reflection.

The study is based on two contrasting case study regions (in terms of environment, economy and social and institutional arrangements):

- *Northern region* covering parts of the wet tropics areas extending from the Tully mill area in the south to the Babinda mill area in the north.
- *Southern region* in the Lower Mary and coastal Burnett areas focusing on the Bundaberg and Isis mill areas.

The case study research methods involved:

- *Learning from current or past initiatives/activities in the case regions* –focused case studies documenting current or past experiences of women’s participation in general sustainability, sugar industry or other relevant initiatives in the two case regions across a range of decision-making levels (e.g. farm, industry, regional community);
- *Learning from other industries or sugar regions* - focused on experiences with women’s participation in other industries and other sugar regions based largely on literature review supplemented with a limited number of key informant interviews and/or involvement of invited women from other industries in project workshops;
- *Sugar women’s perspectives* – in-depth interviews and focus groups with ‘sugar’ women from within the two case regions to capture their personal experiences on participation in the sugar industry and other sustainability initiatives in the case regions and their perspectives on how to improve it; and
- *Collaborative case studies* – Action research to apply and evaluate strategies for improving women’s participation in sustainability initiatives relevant to the sugar industry across a range of levels of decision-making (farm, industry and regional community).

The participatory research approach involved a research team working collaboratively with:

- Key women involved in the sugar industry from the project’s two case study regions; and
- Two regionally-based Project Reference Panels comprising representatives of key regional stakeholders of the research in each case study region (from industry, Government, extension and research, and community bodies). The agreed roles and function of the Project’s Reference Panels established at the outset of the project were to:
 - Provide input, feedback and advice on project direction;
 - Link the project into relevant sustainability initiatives in each case study region;
 - Provide input into project progress and deliverables;
 - Ensure that the project delivers practical outcomes;
 - Provide the conduit for reporting into and communication with relevant institutions; and
 - Contribute once or twice a year to face to face meetings, supplemented with phone and email interaction throughout the year.

1.4 Project Evaluation Strategy

Evaluation was an integral part of the research approach for the CSE016 project and an Evaluation Strategy for the project was developed at the outset (see Milestone Report No. 2, April 2006) and periodically reviewed over the 3-year life of the project. The strategy was endorsed by the project’s Northern and Southern Reference Panels in April 2006.

The CSE016 Project’s Evaluation Strategy identified:

- Objectives, performance criteria and measures for evaluating the project; and
- Evaluation outputs, outcomes and methods.

It also provided a rigorous framework to:

- Test the theories and assumptions on which the project is based;
- Improve the research implementation process;
- Assess the project's achievements, impacts and likely outcomes; and
- Support the capture of learnings emerging in the research process.

1.4.1 Evaluation Objectives

The specific objectives of the project evaluation were:

- To provide periodic and reflective feedback over the life of the project on its progress including the evolving expectations and perceptions of key stakeholders on the project to support the participatory research methodology and adaptive learning approach to project implementation and reporting.
- To assess the impacts and evaluate the likely outcomes of the project in terms of:
 - relevance to improving women's involvement in sustainability initiatives and processes;
 - intended changes in practices of key project stakeholders;
 - the strengthening of community resilience/adaptive capacity; and
 - uptake of research findings, technical products and recommendations.
 - To support the project's accountability reporting requirements to key funders/clients in terms of how the project is meeting its objectives.

The linkages between the CSE016 project's planned evaluation objectives, outcomes and outputs as documented in the Project Evaluation Strategy (April 2006) are identified in Table 1.1.

1.4.2 Evaluation Methods

The evaluation methods primarily involved:

- *Interactive evaluation sessions with key regional stakeholders* (e.g. Reference Panel meetings; project workshops and other interactive forums);
- *Key informant interviews* (e.g. participant in-depth interviews);
- *Document/content analysis* (including project milestone and research reports, stakeholder communications and related correspondence).

The key timelines for the Project Evaluation as identified in the Project Evaluation Strategy (April 2006) were:

- April 2006: Initial CSE016 Evaluation Strategy documented and approved by SRDC
- October 2006: Benchmarking of stakeholder expectations of the project and its evaluation and documented in project's Milestone report. Draft Evaluation Strategy reviewed and refined with key collaborators.

- April 2007: Brief report on the monitoring of project progress and impact against evaluation criteria prepared in collaboration with the project Reference Panels and documented in CSE016 Milestone report.
- October 2007: Brief report on the monitoring of project progress and impact against evaluation criteria prepared in collaboration with the project Reference Panels and documented in CSE016 Milestone report.
- April 2008: Brief report on the monitoring of project progress and impact against evaluation criteria prepared in collaboration with the project Reference Panels and documented in CSE016 Milestone report.
- November 2008: Final summary report on the evaluation of stakeholder experiences and project process and impact submitted to SRDC.

Table 1.1: Evaluation Objective/Outcome/Output Linkages

<i>Specific Objectives</i>	<i>Outcomes</i>	<i>Outputs</i>
1. To provide periodic and reflective feedback over the life of the project on its progress including the evolving expectations and perceptions of key stakeholders on the project to support the participatory research methodology and an adaptive learning approach to project implementation and reporting.	An adaptive learning approach to CSE016 project implementation that informs the project's research process.	Briefings to project Reference Panels and other key stakeholders and contributions to project Milestone reporting to SRDC.
2. To annually assess the impacts and evaluate the likely outcomes of the project in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - relevance to improving women's involvement in sustainability initiatives and processes; - intended changes in practices of key project stakeholders; - the strengthening of community resilience/adaptive capacity; and - uptake of research findings, technical products and recommendations. 	Progressive synthesis of findings on process, outcomes and impacts of project to key stakeholders through the project's Reference Panels.	Formal documentation on the longitudinal evaluation of process and impacts of the CSE016 project.
3. To support the project's accountability reporting requirements to key funders/clients in terms of how the project is meeting its objectives.	Rigorous accountability reporting to SRDC and other research investors on CSE016 progress and how the project is meeting its objectives.	Brief reports included in 6-monthly Milestone reporting to SRDC as contractually required

1.5 Scope of This Report

The challenge to develop and implement the CSE016 Project as an effective participatory research project that contributes to improvements in opportunities for women's participation in sustainability initiatives in sugar communities in two case study regions

in Queensland required on-going evaluation as part of the research process to provide the basis for feedback and reflection on progress.

This report presents the Final report on the evaluation of stakeholder experiences, process and outcomes for the CSE016 project.

2. PROJECT PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

2.1 Project Evaluation Criteria

A set of evaluative criteria and related performance measures were identified in the Project Evaluation Strategy (April 2006) that:

- Provided a framework to measure the achievement of key objectives, planned outputs and outcomes of the CSE016 Project; and
- Recognised the likely multi-dimensionality of impacts and outcomes of the CSE016 project.

These evaluation criteria identified in the Project Evaluation Strategy (April 2006) relate to four core project outcome areas:

1. *Improving the knowledge base:* Contribution to an improved understanding of women's current roles and level of influence in decision-making on sustainability in sugar communities: Criteria are:
 - 1.1 Project outputs that contribute to an improved understanding of the role and influence of women's participation in decision-making on sustainability in sugar communities..
 - 1.2 Communication of project findings over the life of the project that improves the options available to key stakeholders for enhancing the engagement of women in sustainability initiatives in sugar communities.
2. *Enabling opportunities and on-ground outcomes:* Improvement in the opportunities and strategies available for involving women in sustainability initiatives in two case study sugar communities.
 - 2.1 Relevance of project research to engagement processes for sustainability initiatives in the two case study communities.
 - 2.2 Contribution to building skills of key sugar industry stakeholders for involving women in sustainability initiatives.
3. *Supporting a participatory research approach:* Effectiveness of the participatory research approach as an informing and inclusive research process that adds value to the CSE016 project's research and improves the capacity of two case study sugar communities to involve women in sustainability initiatives.
 - 3.1 Research reflects an effective participatory and adaptive learning approach.

4. *Capturing learnings*: Contribution of CSE016 to the theory and practice relating to women's participation in sustainability initiatives and its implications for improving community resilience/adaptive capacity.
 - 4.1 Contribution to improved understanding on women's involvement in sustainability initiatives and the implications for improving community resilience/adaptive capacity.
 - 4.2 An accountable research process.

2.2 Performance Against Evaluation Criteria

A summary of the project's performance against these evaluation criteria and their related performance measures is provided in Table 2.1 below. It involved a review and synthesis of:

- *Interactive evaluation sessions with key regional stakeholders* (e.g. Reference Panel meetings; and project workshops and other interactive forums);
- *Key informant interviews* (i.e. in-depth interview analysis);
- *Document/content analysis* (including project milestone and research reports, stakeholder communications and related correspondence).

The performance assessment clearly demonstrates that the project has been successful in making significant achievements against all evaluation criteria and measures.

Table 2.1. Performance Assessment of the CSE016 Project Against Evaluation Criteria and Measures.

Evaluation Criteria	Measures	Performance assessment
1. Contribution to improved understanding of women's involvement in decision-making on sustainability in sugar communities and options for enhancing involvement.		
1.1 Project outputs that contribute to an improved understanding of the role and influence of women's participation in decision-making on sustainability in sugar communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A report that reviews the literature and documents a framework for evaluating community resilience in the face of change by October 2006. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Achieved – Review submitted as part of Milestone Report No. 3 and accepted by SRDC.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Report on learnings and experiences of women who have been or are involved in sustainability initiatives in the sugar and other key rural industries by April 2007 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Achieved. Report submitted as Appendix 1 of Milestone Report No. 4, at approved revised date of 1 August 2007 and accepted by SRDC.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A progress report that identifies and evaluates strategies for fostering the involvement of women in sustainability initiatives in two case study regions by October 2007. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Achieved: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ The project's Milestone 4 report (deferred to August 2007) identified e-networks as an emerging strategy. ⇒ The project's Milestone Report No.5 (October 2007) documented four broad approaches to fostering the involvement of women in sustainability initiatives across industries and regions, and identified a range of specific strategies for each approach. This report also documented progress on the design, implementation and evaluation of a cross-regional e-Network for women in the sugar industry.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A report documenting broadly applicable strategies for fostering the involvement of women in sustainability initiatives by April 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Achieved (deferred to October 2008). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ A "Strategies" report (see Appendix 2 of Milestone No. 7 Report) documents a set of broadly applicable strategies based on the outcomes of the final testing and evaluation of strategies through the action research phase of the project with key industry stakeholders.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Final Project report accepted by SRDC by November 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Future Milestone – Report on track to be submitted to SRDC in November 2008.

Evaluation Criteria	Measures	Performance assessment
<p>1.2 Communication of project findings over the life of the project that improves the options available to key stakeholders for enhancing the engagement of women in sustainability initiatives in sugar communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Degree to which project informs industry, government, community, research and extension stakeholders in an on-going way of improved opportunities and strategies for enhancing the involvement of women in sustainability initiatives by October 2008: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Change in key stakeholder expectations on the opportunities for improving the level and influence of women in sugar industry decision-making on sustainability over the life of the project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Bi-annual interactive sessions were held with each of the project's two Reference Panels over the life of the project as reported in Project Milestone Reports 2 to 7. These two Panels involved key stakeholders of the research from industry, government, extension and community bodies in each case study region. These meetings were critical to the project's participatory research approach. The final two meetings of each Reference Panel held in March 2008 and September/October 2008 respectively (for summary notes, see Appendix 3, Milestone Report No. 6 and Appendix 2, Milestone Report No. 7) identified the Reference Panels' endorsement of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ The project's research progress and findings, including the strategies identified to foster women's involvement in the sugar industry. ⇒ The progress on the implementation and evaluation of the Women in Sugar e-Network as a key strategy to foster women's involvement in the sugar industry. ⇒ The opportunity provided through participating on the Reference Panel for members to interact with and learn about others involved in the sugar industry (Milestone Report 7). ➤ Active involvement of women from the sugar industry in the project through collaboration in project research activities including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ On-going collaborative links with the Women in Sugar groups in Bundaberg/Isis and Wet Tropics regions ⇒ Targeted interactive workshops for women (2 in each case study region).
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Improvement in the availability of strategies for involving women in sustainability initiatives in sugar communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Achieved (deferred to October 2008). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ See performance measure 1.1 assessment above. ⇒ Milestone Report No 7. includes a "Strategies" report in Appendix 2 that documents a set of broadly applicable strategies. These strategies were endorsed by the Northern and Southern Reference Panels at their final September/October 2008 meetings.

Evaluation Criteria	Measures	Performance assessment
2. Improvement in stakeholder capacity for involving women in sustainability initiatives in two case study sugar communities.		
<p>2.1 Relevance of project research to engagement processes for sustainability initiatives in the two case study communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Degree of enhancement of community capacity to develop opportunities and improve women's involvement in sustainability initiatives in the north and south case study regions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Degree of satisfaction of key stakeholders with field testing of strategies for enhancing women's involvement as documented in a progress report by October 2007. ⇒ Level of expectation of key stakeholders of the use of the strategies beyond the life of the project by October 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Diverse stakeholders of the project from both case study regions provided valuable feedback and advice on project progress and performance and also supported project's activities over its 3-year life. These stakeholders continually identified a high degree of satisfaction with the importance of the project direction and findings and also its action research activities with women in the sugar industry in the two case study regions, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ The project developed close collaborative linkages with the Bundaberg Women in Sugar group, including participating and presenting progress reports to its meetings and involving a WIS representative on its southern Reference Panel. It also has strong linkages with the Wet Tropics WIS Group and women from the Childers/Isis area with two women from each area directly involved as Project Co-ordinator's for the project in the projects research. In addition, women from all of these WIS groups as well as other sugar women participated in the projects two key interactive women's workshops undertaken in June 2007 and August 2008 which endorsed the project's findings and e-network strategy (see Appendices 2 of Milestone Report No. 4 and also Appendix 2 of this Milestone 7 Report). ⇒ As identified in Milestone Reports Nos. 4, 5, 6 and 7, members of the project's two Reference Panels in all their meetings from July 2007 through to October 2008 endorsed the establishment of an e-network as a key strategy for enhancing women's involvement in the sugar industry and they identified their commitment to continuing to support it in the future beyond the life of the project. Key members were also responsible for securing core funding from the RAG process to help seed fund the e-Network beyond the life of the project. ⇒ Reference Panel members in October 2008 and women participating in the 'Connections Matter' workshops in August 2008 endorsed the final set of strategies including the establishment of a cross regional women's e-Network as a key contribution to improving the industry's capacity to better involve women in the sugar industry.

Evaluation Criteria	Measures	Performance assessment
<p>2.2 Contribution to building skills of key sugar industry stakeholders for involving women in sustainability initiatives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Degree and effectiveness of sharing of key lessons both within and beyond case regions from the CSE016 research: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Degree of perceived value of the project's activities and related guidelines by key stakeholders involved in the project by October 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Key lessons were shared in an on-going way with members of the Reference Panel providing invaluable feedback on the project over the life of the project as documented in summary notes of both the Northern and Southern panel meetings held in July 2007 (see milestone Report No. 4, Appendix 6), March 2008 (see Milestone Report No. 6, Appendix 3) and September/October 2008 (see Milestone Report No. 7, Appendix 2). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Milestone Reports No. 5, No. 6 and No. 7 all clearly document stakeholder satisfaction with the project's activities through the active participation of sugar women and other industry stakeholders from the case study regions and beyond. ⇒ See also assessment of previous criteria 2.1.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Breadth of communication to key stakeholders beyond the case study regions on the project's products and guidelines by October 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The two interactive women's workshops held by the project in June 2007 ('What works for women') and in August 2008 ('Connections matter') at both Mission Beach and Bundaberg venues (as reported in Milestone Report Nos. 5 and 7) involved a diverse range of women from within and outside the case study regions and also from all sectors of the industry (growing, harvesting, milling, extension and government service delivery). ➤ Implementation and testing by the project of one of the key strategies identified to foster women's involvement in the sugar industry – i.e. the e-Network – actively involved sugar women from Bundaberg, Childers, Maryborough, Mackay/Proserpine, Burdekin, Herbert, Innisfail, Tully and Gordonvale through its Organising Committee. Women from the Tablelands and Mossman area have been informed about the development of the e-Network. ➤ The project's activities and products have also been communicated at conferences, Women in Sugar meetings, through the Reference Panel members, media releases, CANEGROWER's and SRDC newsletters, through the WIS e-Network webpage and local news papers and ABC radio (see Milestone Report No. 7 for a full summary). ➤ Two team members participated in the Women in Sugar Australia Annual Conference held in the Burdekin in March 2008 and presented on the project activities (see Milestone 6 Report).

Evaluation Criteria	Measures	Performance assessment
3. Effectiveness of the participatory research approach in adding value to the CSE016 project's research and improving the capacity of two case study sugar communities to involve women in sustainability initiatives		
3.1 Research reflects an effective participatory and adaptive learning approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A clear and coherent common agenda exists over the life of the project among key stakeholders (i.e. Project's Chief Investigators and Case Region Reference panels): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Research agenda is agreed collaboratively and periodically reviewed and refined with project Reference Panels ⇒ Evidence that research outputs and outcomes meet expectations of key stakeholders and research funders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Achieved - Over the life of the project, bi-annual face to face meetings were conducted with its two Reference Panels supported by further interaction via email correspondence to review and refine the project's research agenda and progress. ➤ The Reference Panels have continued to endorse the research direction and findings and its participatory action research approach and provided valuable insights and local advice as well as identifying opportunities for the project as documented in the summary notes of these meetings attached to Milestone Reports Nos. 2 to 7.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Evaluation Strategy supports the projects participatory research and adaptive learning approach and implemented on time: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Overarching Evaluation Strategy approved by SRDC by April 2006 ⇒ Evaluation Strategy and its implementation plan reviewed and refined with project Reference Panels in north and south case regions by October 2006 ⇒ Stakeholder expectations of the project and its outcomes documented by October 2006 and reviewed bi-annually 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Achieved – see Milestone Report No. 2. ➤ Achieved – see Milestone Report No. 3. ➤ Reviewed with Reference Panel in October 2006, July 2007, March 2008, September/October 2008 (see Milestone Reports No. 2, No. 3, No. 4, No. 5, No. 6 and No. 7).
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Evaluation strategy implemented, reviewed periodically and meets agreed evaluation milestones on time over the life of the project ⇒ Summary report on project impacts and outcomes completed by October 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Achieved – as identified above. ➤ Achieved (Milestone Report No. 7 Appendix 2).

Evaluation Criteria	Measures	Performance assessment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Project intent and progress clearly communicated through an iterative process of sharing of knowledge, learnings and findings between researchers and key stakeholders: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Stakeholder mapping with Reference Panels documented by April 2006. ⇒ Communication plan developed collaboratively with key stakeholders and documented by October 2006. ⇒ Communication plan reviewed annually and implemented to stakeholder and SRDC satisfaction over the life of the project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Achieved – see Milestone Report No. 2. ➤ Achieved – see Milestone Report No. 4, Appendix 8. <p>Achieved - On-going communication progress is documented in each of the project's Milestone Reports Nos 2 to 7 and also reported to bi-annual Reference Panel meetings.</p>
4. Contribution of CSE016 to research on women's involvement in decision-making on sustainability initiatives and the implications for improving community resilience/adaptive capacity.		
<p>4.1 Contribution to improved understanding on women's involvement in sustainability initiatives and the implications for improving community resilience/adaptive capacity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Integrity of CSE016 project's research method and outcomes over the life of the project: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Evidence that the research builds on previous experience in the case study regions and the relevant theoretical base on sustainability, community resilience and the involvement of women in sugar industry decision-making by October 2008 ⇒ Number of peer-reviewed publications based on research findings by October 2008 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Completion of a Research report, '<i>Strategies for Enhancing Women's Participation in Sustainability initiatives in the Sugar Industry</i>' (Appendix 2 of Milestone Report No. 7), involving an appraisal of a combination of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ theoretical principles relevant to the relationship of women, participation and sustainability; ⇒ Social research on women roles and participation experiences, preferences and motivations in the sugar industry in two contrasting sugar regions (including in-depth interviews, interactive women's workshops, participant observation of WIS groups) ⇒ Reflection and Synthesis on research direction and findings through key stakeholder participation in the research (e.g. Project Reference Panels, participatory action research activities). ➤ Three articles for publications in peer-reviewed journals are in an advanced stage of preparation based on the final research findings from the project.

Evaluation Criteria	Measures	Performance assessment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Acceptance by SRDC of CSE016 final project reporting and related project documents by November 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Final milestone report is on track to be submitted in November 2008
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recommendations for broadly applicable strategies for fostering the involvement women in sustainability initiatives developed and widely communicated by October 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A Final Report on these strategies has been produced and attached to Milestone Report No. 7 (Appendix 2) and distributed to-date to Reference Panel members. ➤ Broadly applicable strategies are documented also in two fact sheets “Supporting women’s participation in the sugar industry: more than tea and scones” and “Changing role of women in decision making for the sugar industry” which have been widely distributed at project activities (including workshops, conferences, Reference Panel meetings) and also posted on the WIS e-Network website.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Extent to which other sugar communities and researchers seek information and support from the CSE016 project by October 2008. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Project has maintained key linkages with two other SRDC projects researching different aspects of women in the sugar industry led by Cathy McGowan and Sherry Kaurila. ➤ The project’s Organising Committee to establish a sugar women’s e-network involves women from both the Mackay/Proserpine and Burdekin sugar regions in addition to women from the project’s two case study regions (see Milestone Report No. 5). Women from the Tablelands, Herbert and Mossman areas, not actively involved in the Committee requested to be updated on the progress of the e-network. ➤ Women from the Mackay/Proserpine and Burdekin regions actively sought participation in the “Communicating Electronically” courses (as documented in Milestone Reports 6 and 7).
4.2 An accountable research process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Acceptance by SRDC and other key funders that the CSE016 project meets agreed its generic milestones and performance indicators on time and within budget periodically over the project life. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Achieved – as documented in on-going Project Milestone reports over the life of the project and all accepted by SRDC.

2.3 Performance Against Expected Project Outputs and Outcomes

A set of expected project outputs and outcomes for the project was identified in the SRDC/CSIRO contractual agreement for the CSE016 project. This section of the evaluation provides an assessment of the project's performance against these outputs and outcomes based on a review and synthesis of:

- *Interactive evaluation sessions with key regional stakeholders* (e.g. Reference Panel meetings; and project workshops);
- *Project documents and communication material* (including project milestone and research reports, stakeholder communications).

This performance assessment clearly demonstrates that the project has been successful in making significant achievements against all expected outputs and outcomes as summarised below.

2.3.1 Project Outputs

A summary assessment of the projects achievements against specific expected project outputs as identified in the SRDC/CSIRO contractual agreement for the CSE016 project is provided in Table 2.2 below. This assessment clearly identifies that the project has successfully delivered all expected outputs and contributed some additional products as well.

Table 2.2: Achievements Against Planned Project Outputs

Planned Outputs	Achievements
<p>1. Recommendations for improving the participation of women in sustainability initiatives, developed in collaboration with women in the sugar industry and other government and community stakeholders in the case study regions based on the experience of implementation of strategies in these regions.</p>	<p>Achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on the experiences of women in the project's case study regions and with the e-Network action research activity, two Fact sheets were produced in February 2008 and distributed widely (see Appendix 2, Milestone 6) entitled: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 'Changing role of women in decision making in the sugar industry' ○ 'Supporting women's participation in the sugar industry: more than tea and scones'. • The Fact sheets summarize the issues underpinning women's participation in sustainability initiatives and decision-making processes and make recommendations for improving women's participation in the sugar industry. Recommendations were developed in collaboration with women in the sugar industry and other industry and community stakeholders from project's two case study regions. • A 'Strategies' Report (see Appendix 2 of Milestone Report No. 7) recommends a final set of strategies that were endorsed by the project's

Planned Outputs	Achievements
	Reference panels in Sept/Oct 2008.
<p>2. An interim report developed with women and other key stakeholders, capturing learnings and experiences of women who have been or are involved in sustainability initiatives.</p>	<p>Achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Interview Findings Report (see Appendix 1, Milestone Report No. 4).documented the findings from extensive in-depth interviews carried out with 44 women and 19 men across the north and south case regions, including growers, extension officers, mill staff and other local industry representatives. The report analysed findings on the major influences on women’s participation in decision-making within the sugar industry and their preferences for involvement. It also captured learnings and experiences from women who had been involved in sustainability initiatives.
<p>3. A report developed with women and other key stakeholders, which provides a framework for evaluating community resilience to change and identifies strategies for fostering the involvement of women in sustainability initiatives. The framework and strategies will be based on collaborative reflection on the implementation of strategies in the case studies. The report will identify key lessons that are relevant to other regions.</p>	<p>Achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Strategies Report (see Appendix 2 of Milestone Report No. 7) provides a framework of strategies for fostering the involvement of women in sustainability initiatives and decision-making processes in the sugar industry and links them to improving resilience or adaptive capacity in sugar communities in the face of continuing uncertainty and change. These strategies were developed and refined in collaboration with women from the project’s case study regions involved in the project and other industry and community stakeholders involved in the project’s two Reference Panels over the life of the project. The report documents key lessons from the project’s research that are relevant to other sugar regions and broadly applicable to other rural industries.
<p>4. Ongoing communication activities (e.g. newsletter articles, conference papers, workshops) to ensure awareness of and involvement in the project by potential users of the research in industry, extension and research sectors.</p>	<p>Achieved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing communication activities, which ensured awareness of and involvement in the project by potential users of the research in industry, extension and research sectors, including the newsletter and newspaper articles and other communication activities, progressively reported on in all project Milestone reports (i.e. Nos. 2 to 7). Three fact sheets (a Project Overview fact sheet and two fact sheets summarising project findings.) have been distributed to research collaborators and participants, including

Planned Outputs	Achievements
	participants of the Communicate Electronically course, the Women in Sugar Australia Conference and the Reference Panel meetings as well as posted on the e-network website (see Appendix 2, Milestone 6).

Additional outputs that were achieved through the project are:

- A Literature Review report, which identified the issues and concepts relevant to the research focus on opportunities for enhancing women's participation in sustainability initiatives in the context of sugar communities and their capacity to adapt to change (see Appendix 1 of Milestone Report No. 3).
- Two reports documenting the key learnings from the two successful interactive workshops with women held in each case study region 'What works for women' in June 2007 (see Appendix 2 of Milestone Report No. 4), and 'Connections Matter' in August 2008 (see Appendix 3 of Milestone Report No. 7).
- A report on 'Learning from Other Industries' (see Appendix 4, Milestone Report No. 4).
- A report documenting the project's Evaluation Strategy (see Milestone Report No. 2, April 2006) and another on the final assessment of the project's achievements against criteria identified in the strategy (Appendix 1 of Milestone Report No. 7).
- A Communication and Stakeholder Involvement Strategy (see Appendix 4 of Milestone Report No. 3).

2.3.2 Project Outcomes

A summary assessment of the projects achievements against expected project outcomes as identified in the SRDC/CSIRO contractual agreement for the CSE016 project is provided in Table 2.3 below.

This assessment clearly identifies that the project has made significant contributions to the achievement of all expected outcomes and it has also contributed to building the adaptive capacity of women in the two sugar communities it has worked with in undertaking this research over the last three years to deal with on-going change.

Table 2.3: Achievements Against Expected Project Outcomes***Achievements Against Expected Outcomes******Expected Outcome 1:***

Increased understanding by industry, government, community, research and extension stakeholders of opportunities and strategies for enhancing women's participation in sustainability initiatives.

Significant improvements achieved:

- At the outset of the project, two Project Reference Panels were established for the northern and southern case study regions that involved representatives of key industry, government, community and research and extension organisations. Bi-annual meetings were held over the life of the project with these panels to review project progress, gain their input on the identification of issues and strategies relevant to women's participation in the sugar industry, and identify opportunities for women's participation in the sugar industry in their region. As reported to SRDC in each project Milestone Report (Nos. 2 to 7 inclusive), summary notes from all these meetings and other project outputs were sent back to Panel members following each meeting who then could circulate them in their own organisations.
- At the final meetings of these two Reference Panels in Sept/Oct 2008, members reflected very favourably on their experience with the project (as detailed in Appendix 4 of Milestone Report No. 7). Some key relevant comments made in their evaluation included:
 - “The project has made the industry now more conscious of women in the industry and it has also made industry managers more aware of the roles women could play.”
 - “The project has brought together people who would not have been involved in this type of activity without their interest having been raised by the research project and the Reference Panel formed.”
 - “It has been an interesting experience being on the Reference Panel, and although there have been some changing faces in membership this had not had a negative effect; it has been a good rather than a bad thing.”
 - “The project's approach and not having too many meetings has been a very good experience for Panel members.”
- Women from the sugar industry in the two case study regions have been active collaborators of the project over its three year lifespan and a number have participated in all its action research activities. In addition, two women (one from each of the case study regions) were appointed as Regional Coordinators to the project's research team and they have championed the research and communicated the project's activities and findings at diverse forums and in local media and communication channels.

Expected Outcome 2:

Increased participation of women in sustainability initiatives, through the collaborative development and implementation of locally driven action plans that foster women's involvement in these initiatives.

Achievements Against Expected Outcomes

Significant improvements in women's options and opportunities achieved:

- At the final meetings of the project's Reference Panels in Sept/Oct 2008 (see Appendix 4, Milestone Report No. 7) relevant feedback provided by members in their evaluation of their experiences with the project included:

"The project has helped to make sure women got opportunities to participate in industry initiatives in this region. (e.g. bug-checking / IPM initiatives, smut and plant inspection process) ... This has helped to break down some attitudes to women."

"The project's important contributions have been to networking and confidence building for women in the sugar industry. It has provided women participating in the project over the last three years with opportunities to express their attitudes, pursue goals and to break down the isolation they experience in the industry through communication and networking. It has created the WIS e-Network and brought resources to support it in the longer term."

- Connections Matter workshops participant feedback in August 2008 on their experiences with the action research activities of the project and on their expectations for the future of the WIS e-Network clearly recognised the project's contribution to building women's confidence, enhancing leadership opportunities and leaving a legacy for improving women's participation in the industry across all regions (see details in Appendix 3, Milestone Report No. 7). For example, comments women made include:

"Contact and support for women across the sugar industry. Gaining confidence to learn with and meeting like-minded women"

"About a new way of connecting people with similar interests to improve way of life and income"

"It is a resource and an opportunity to deliver some great things in time and, a valuable experience".

"It's the way to go"; "The way of the future – also the way of the present. "

"Being able to connect with women from the whole area"

"Identified existing and potential linkages. Helped with ideas and some motivation".

Expected Outcome 3:

Improved capacity of sugar communities to deal with change.

Significant contributions achieved:

- There is clear evidence that the project has contributed to enhancing women's leadership roles in the case study regions, building women's confidence to participate in industry decision-making and improving women's networking options and opportunities through, for example, raising the issues and backing them with substantive evidence from the research activities regarding gender differences relating to sugar women's needs, preferences and capacity for participation, as well as providing support for the local WIS groups and establishing an on-going cross-regional e-Network capability for all women in the industry.
- At the final meetings of the project's Reference Panels in Sept/Oct 2008, (see Appendix 4, Milestone Report No. 7), relevant comments made by members in their evaluation included:
 - “The project has provided opportunities for some women to take a leadership role in the industry.”
 - “The Women in Sugar groups and the new WIS e-Network are emerging as proactive initiatives for innovation and agents of change in the sugar industry.”
- Participant feedback on women's experiences with the project from the 'What Works for Women' workshops held in June 2007 and 'Connections Matter' workshops in August 2008 relevant to improving sugar community capacity to deal with change include:
 - “Felt it opened your mind to new strategies”
 - “Generating focus for women in the sugar industry to communicate, actively participate within the industry and with each other.”
 - “Networks were built”
 - “The networking allows improvement in business through information sharing and open friendly positive communication”
 - “Being able to connect with women from the whole area”;
 - “To learn more about the industry and understand problems being faced”
 - “Great to hear others perspective and what other women are doing”
 - “An advantage is that women can access information (internet/newsletter) whenever it suits them.”

Expected Outcome 4:

More effective capacity building strategies to encourage an increased uptake of sustainable farming practices

Significant improvements achieved:

- Through working collaboratively with women and other key sugar industry stakeholders in two sugar regions, a framework of principles, strategies and tactics for 'good practice' for fostering women's participation in sustainability initiatives and decision-making processes in the sugar industry has been established and tested (see "Strategies" report in Appendix 2 to this report and Section 2.3.1 of this Final Project Evaluation report, Appendix 1). The framework is linked closely to improving resilience or adaptive capacity in sugar communities to deal with uncertainty and change. The effectiveness of these strategies is demonstrated by the success of the WIS e-network and its impact as identified above in Outcomes 1 and 3.

SRDC Research Project

CSE016 Final Report

Appendix 8: Strategies Report

STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES IN THE SUGAR INDUSTRY

**Jennifer Bellamy¹, Emma Jakku², Iris Bohnet³, Wendy
Finlayson⁴ and Sandra Webb⁵**

1. University of Queensland, St. Lucia.
2. CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems, St. Lucia.
3. CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems, Cairns
4. Wet Tropics Women in Sugar, Innisfail
5. Isis Women in Sugar, Childers

October 2008

CONTENTS

1.	Background	1
1.1	The CSE016 Project	1
1.2	Project Objective	1
1.3	Research Approach	1
1.4	Developing Strategies for Enhancing Women' Participation	4
2.	Sugar Communities: Adapting to and Shaping Change	5
2.1	An Industry in Transition	5
2.2	Communities, Resilience and Adaptive Capacity	6
2.3	Innovation, Knowledge and Learning: Challenge for the Sugar Industry	9
2.3.1	Innovation	9
2.3.2	Knowledge	10
2.3.2	Social learning	10
3.	Women and the Australian Sugar Industry	13
3.1	Family Farming: Living in a Context of Change	13
3.2	Women's Role: Multiple, Diverse and Changing	14
3.3	Challenges to Women's Participation in the Sugar Industry	15
3.4	Women and Participation: Motivation and Preferences	17
3.4.1	Participation and empowerment	17
3.4.2	Motivation for participation	18
3.4.3	Preferences for participation: Lessons from women's experiences in the sugar industry	19
3.5	Women and Networks for Sustainability	21
3.5.1	Networks for sustainability	21
3.5.2	Women's networks in the Australian sugar industry	23
3.5.3	Women in Sugar groups	24
3.6	Women and e-Networks	26
3.6.1	e-Networks: Opportunities and challenges	26
3.6.2	Learning from the WIS e-Network	28

4.	Enhancing Women’s Participation in the Sugar Industry	32
4.1	Emerging Issues	32
4.2	Strategies for Enhancing Women’s Participation in the Sugar Industry	34
4.2.1	Approach	34
4.2.2	Preferred types of participation opportunities for women	34
4.2.3	Principles and tactics for guiding participation practices	34
4.2.4	Assessing implementation performance	37
5.	References	42

1. Background

1.1 The CSE016 Project

The SRDC CSE016 Project (*'Sugar communities and resilience to change: Opportunities for enhancing women's participation in sustainability initiatives'*) is a three year collaborative research project between SRDC, CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems, The University of Queensland and industry collaborators in two contrasting sugar regions.

The key focus of the project is to build industry and community capacity for change by targeting the participation of women in a broad range of sustainability initiatives as a key opportunity to strengthen industry decision-making and the resilience or adaptive capacity of sugar communities in the face of change.

1.2 Project Objectives

In two case study regions, work with women in the sugar industry, in collaboration with other sugar industry, government, community, research and extension stakeholders, to concurrently:

- Develop a shared understanding amongst collaborators and researchers of:
 - The major social, economic and institutional influences on women's participation in initiatives relevant to sustainability and the sugar industry; and
 - The value of and opportunities for enhancing women's participation in such initiatives.
- Identify, implement and evaluate strategies that improve women's participation in initiatives relevant to environmental, economic and social sustainability in the sugar industry, using participatory action research.
- Facilitate wide, ongoing communication and uptake of findings on strategies for strengthening the participation of women in sustainability initiatives to enhance sugar communities' capacity to deal with change within and beyond the case study regions.

1.3 Research Approach

To contribute to methodological rigor, the project took a multiple method approach involving a combination of: case study research, participatory research (includes participatory evaluation), action research, literature review, regional profiling, stakeholder analysis (including interviews, workshops/interactive forums, participant observation) and synthesis and reflection.

The study is based on two contrasting case study regions (in terms of environment, economy and social and institutional arrangements):

1. *Northern region covering parts of the wet tropics areas* extending from the Tully mill area in the south to the Babinda mill area in the north.
2. *Southern region in the Lower Mary and coastal Burnett areas* focussing on the Bundaberg and Isis mill areas.

The case study research methods involved:

- *Learning from current or past initiatives/activities in the case regions* –focused or ‘mini’ case studies documenting current or past experiences of women’s participation in general sustainability, sugar industry or other relevant initiatives in the two case regions across a range of decision-making levels (e.g. farm, industry, regional community);
- *Learning from other industries or sugar regions* - focused on experiences with women’s participation in other industries and other sugar regions based largely on literature review supplemented with a limited number of key informant interviews and/or involvement of invited women from other industries in project workshops;
- *Sugar women’s perspectives* – in-depth interviews and focus groups with ‘sugar’ women from within the two case regions to capture their personal experiences on participation in the sugar industry and other sustainability initiatives in the case regions and their perspectives on how to improve it; and
- *Collaborative case studies* – Action research to apply and evaluate strategies for improving women’s participation in sustainability initiatives relevant to the sugar industry across a range of levels of decision-making (farm, industry and regional community).

The participatory research approach involved a research team working collaboratively with:

- Key women in the project’s two case study regions; and
- Two regionally-based Project Reference Panels comprising representatives of key regional stakeholders of the research in each case study region.

The agreed roles and function of the Project’s Reference Panels were to:

- Provide input, feedback and advice on project direction;
- Link the project into relevant sustainability initiatives in each case study region;
- Provide input into project progress and deliverables;
- Ensure that the project delivers practical outcomes;
- Provide the conduit for reporting into and communication with relevant institutions; and
- Contribute once or twice a year to face to face meetings, supplemented with phone and email interaction throughout the year.

The participatory research approach also involved:

- Participatory action research with women in the sugar industry in active collaboration with other sugar industry, government, community, research and extension stakeholders;
- Evaluation as an integral part of the research methodology to improve the project performance, assess impact and likely outcomes and capture learnings emerging;
- Developing linkages and synergies with other research projects within the case study regions as well as other rural industries and existing women’s networks;
- Capturing learnings from the past experience of women’s involvement in decision-making in the sugar industry as well learnings and experiences of women in other rural industries; and
- Developing recommendations on strategies for improving women’s involvement in partnership with the project’s Reference Panel in each of the case regions. These

strategies are designed to have broader relevance beyond the case regions and throughout the sugar industry value chain.

Underpinning the research approach is a ‘context-motivations-preferences-capacity’ framework for analysing women’s participation and engagement, i.e. examining:

- *Context* of decision-making at all levels (e.g. farm, community, industry, region): including industry drivers and inherent decision-making ‘culture’; farm business structures; labour shortages and other economic constraints; age / demographic issues; community expectations and legislative requirements;
- *Motivations* for engagement: including why be involved and when?; importance of ‘female politics’; family self-interest, past experience;
- *Preferences*: including how to be involved, where/what level and in what; and
- *Capacity* to be involved: including opportunities, skills and knowledge, confidence, support, family self-interest issues, off-farm work.

Significant project research activities over the life of the project included:

- Inter-disciplinary literature review to contribute to conceptual understanding and to developing an analytical framework for the research (see Appendix 1 to Milestone 3 Report);
- In-depth interviews with 70 women and 20 men involved in the sugar industry in the two case study regions to identify motivations, preferences and experiences relating to women’s participation in the sugar industry (see Appendix 2 to Milestone 3 Report and Appendix 1 to Milestone 4 Report);
- Four one-day interactive workshops with women from the sugar industry emphasizing ‘learning from others’ and ‘learning together’ in an attractive environment. These all-women facilitated activities involved diverse participants from across the different sectors of the sugar industry and they were conducted in a relaxed, friendly and inclusive way that was sensitive to differences among participants. - Two different types of facilitated workshops were held in each of the case study regions:
 - ‘*What Works for Women: Planting the seeds and growing the opportunities to enhance the participation of women in the sugar industry*’ held in June/July 2007 (See Appendices 2 and 4 to Milestone 4 report).
 - ‘*Connections Matter: Enhancing women’s involvement in a changing sugar industry*’ held in September/October 2008 (see Appendix 3 to this Milestone 7 report).
- Action research activities with women in the sugar industry from the two case study regions including:
 - Participation in Women in Sugar meetings and forums in each case study region; and
 - Collaborative establishment of the cross-regional Women in Sugar e-network (see Section 3.6 of this project report).

1.4 Developing Strategies for Enhancing Women's Participation

The project had four core inter-related research elements:

- Assessing women's participation experiences and their perspectives on motivations, preferences and capacity to be involved (i.e. on farm and in sugar industry and broader community decision-making):
 - In the two case study regions; and
 - From other rural industries.
- Developing and evaluating strategies to improve women's participation in industry sustainability initiatives and decision-making processes.
- Identifying the implications for the capacity of sugar communities to deal with and adapt to change.
- Synthesising lessons (to develop more general strategies for participation that inform theory and practice).

The focus of this current 'Strategies' report draws on all of these elements to develop improved evidence-based strategies for enhancing women's participation in initiatives and decision-making relevant to environmental, economic and social sustainability in the sugar industry.

The development of the strategies involved the appraisal of a combination of:

- Theoretical principles relevant to the relationship between women, participation, community resilience and sustainability – e.g. see Section 2 of this Report;
- Social research involving women from the sugar industry in two contrasting sugar regions (including in-depth interviews, workshops and other interactive forums, participant observation) - see Sections 3 of this Report.
- Reflection and Synthesis through stakeholder participation (e.g. Project Reference Panels, participatory action research, research evaluation activities).

2. Sugar Communities: Adapting to and Shaping Change

2.1 An Industry in Transition

Sugar communities in Australia are facing enormous challenges due to major changes largely beyond their control occurring in the last two decades that impact on their livelihood options:

Australia's agriculture sector has undergone considerable change over the last few decades. While continuing to grow in absolute terms, the size and importance of agriculture has declined relative to the rest of the economy. Within the sector, there have been marked changes in the number and size of Australian farms, the make-up of agricultural activities and the production and marketing strategies employed by farmers.

Some of the key factors shaping these trends have been changes in consumer demands and government policies, technological advances and innovation and emerging environmental concerns. The unrelenting decline in the sector's terms of trade (that is, the ratio of prices received to prices paid) has been an important source of pressure for adaptation and change by Australian farmers. The sector has also had to respond to the continuing challenge of variations in seasonal conditions. (Productivity Commission 2005, p. xvii).

In particular, the sugar industry has experienced high volatility in world sugar prices, industry deregulation, and increased international competitiveness as well as changing public expectations in relation to the environment (e.g. PC 2005; Hooper 2008). Moreover, in the last few years, low world sugar prices at various times, drought, cyclones, sugar cane smut outbreaks, urban encroachment, increased use of rotation crops (mainly soybeans and peanuts) and higher returns from alternative land uses (particularly forestry), have all contributed to a decline in harvested areas of sugar cane in Australia by 12 per cent since its peak in 2003-04 (Foster and Sheales 2008; Hooper 2008). There has also been a reduction in the number of sugarcane growers by 15% in the last three years largely due to these challenges (Hooper 2008). Importantly, the current prospects for family farming in the sugar industry are challenging:

The sugar cane industry experienced a significant decline in profitability in 2007-08, with prices easing and input costs rising. Low profitability is likely to continue to be a major challenge for sugar cane producers in coming years. For some producers, this will result in diversification into alternative agricultural industries, or exiting agriculture entirely (Hooper 2008, p.25).

Furthermore, a recent review of social drivers and processes of change in the sugar industry (Jakku *et al.* 2006) identified that due to the Australian sugar industry's predominantly coastal location, the sea change phenomenon (e.g. see Burnely and Murphy 2004) is likely to influence the future of sugar communities with the major implications being:

- A changing regional economy with a relatively reduced importance of the sugar industry and new sectors of growing importance emerging (e.g. tourism, alternative crops, service industries, etc);
- Continuing loss of sugarcane land to urban and rural residential development;

- A regional context in which the sugar industry is no longer the dominant ‘player’ in decision-making in the region;
- Increasing move to off-farm work within farm businesses;
- Changes in farming demographics with a loss of youth moving to the cities and for employment, and increasingly aging farming community (e.g. Windle and Rolfe 2005);
- Changed regional social and economic dynamism involving accommodating different values and cultural ideals, which means that communities may no longer have a traditional sugar ‘culture’ of the past.

Macadam *et al.* (2004) highlight the major implications of such rural trends for community capacity to meet the challenge of change by noting that:

The effectiveness of rural capacity building, then, will ultimately be assessed in terms of the extent to which individuals, organisations and communities are empowered to anticipate and manage change – that is, to become truly holistic, complex, adaptive systems (p. 15).

The Australian sugar cane growing industry is in transition and these challenges raise significant questions and concerns for the long-term sustainability of the Australian sugar industry and the capacity of sugar communities to deal with on-going uncertainty and change.

2.2 Communities, Resilience and Adaptive Capacity

Emerging insights from the community-based natural resource management and social-ecological systems literature, in particular, emphasise that communities and industries closely dependent on natural resources need to enhance their capacity to cope with and adapt to the impacts of uncertainty and change and to shape sustainable futures (e.g. Armitage 2005; Berkes *et al.* 2003; Bouwen and Tailleau 2004; Fabricius *et al.* 2007; Fazey *et al.* 2007; Olsson *et al.* 2006; Pahl-Wostl 2002; Pahl-Wostl *et al.* 2007; Tomkins and Adger 2004; Walker *et al.* 2004). In this literature, firstly, there is an emphasis placed on ‘system thinking’. Secondly, the terms ‘adaptive capacity’ and ‘resilience’ are contested concepts that are frequently used quite differently in different contexts; sometimes interchangeably and sometimes as polar opposites (see Armitage 2005; Brand and Jax 2007; Folke *et al.* 2003, 2005; Gallopin 2006; Paton 2005; Smit and Wandel 2006; Olsson *et al.* 2004).

‘*Systems thinking*’ has been described by Maani and Cavanni (2000) as “an emerging discipline for understanding complexity and change” (p. 7) and:

... a way of thinking about and describing dynamic relationships that influence the behaviour of systems. It consists of three types of thinking (Richmond 1997):

- *Dynamic thinking* – recognising that the world is not static and that things change constantly;
- *Operational thinking* – understanding the ‘physics’ of operations and how things *really* work;
- *Closed-loop thinking* – recognising that cause and effect are not linear and often the end (effect) can influence the means (cause).

A *systems thinking* approach highlights the need to see things as wholes and think about systems from the perspectives of interconnectedness, context, process, structure, meaning, knowledge and power (Barton *et al.* 2004). Systems thinking also involves an appreciation of *emergent properties*, which are properties that exist at one scale and not at another and appear when a system is examined as a whole instead of separate parts (Bammer 2005). Applying a systems perspective also highlights the direct and indirect impacts of change, capturing the interactions, feedback and overlap inherent within linked social-natural systems.

Diverse definitions of resilience can be found across a broad range of research fields, for example, ecology (e.g. Holling 1973, 2001; Gunderson *et al.* 1995; Gunderson and Holling 2002; Berkes *et al.* 2003; Resilience Alliance 2005), community health (Kulig 2000; Rolfe 2006), community and social psychology (e.g. Sonn and Fisher 1998; Richardson 2002); natural hazard management (e.g. Tobin 1999; Paton *et al.* 2001; Paton 2005; Sapountzaki and Chalkias 2005), and business management (e.g. Luthans 2002; Ascher 2001). As a relatively new theoretical concept in this sustainability literature, *resilience* has multiple levels of meaning, for example, as (Carpenter 2001; Holling 2001; Berkes *et al.* 2003; Kulig 2000):

- a metaphor related to sustainability;
- a property of dynamic models of linked social and ecological systems;
- a measurable quantity that can be assessed in field studies of linked social and natural systems; or
- a process in, and an emergent property of, dynamic social systems responding as a collective unit to significant adversity and risk.

Notwithstanding, however, as an emergent property of complex linked social-natural systems, resilience relates to the functioning of those systems, rather than the stability of the component parts or their ability to maintain a steady state (Gunderson *et al.* 1995, Gunderson and Holling 2002).

Adaptive capacity is an aspect of resilience that reflects learning, flexibility to experiment and adopt novel solutions, and the development of generalized responses to broad classes of challenges without losing options for the future (Walker *et al.* 2002; Folke *et al.* 2003). It is a measure of resilience in terms of society's capacity to recognise, respond to and shape change in an informed manner (e.g. reducing the impacts of change or taking advantage of new opportunities created by change).

Adaptive capacity is closely linked with concepts of sustainability, for example, Holling (2001: 399) argues that:

Sustainability is the capacity to create, test and maintain adaptive capacity. Development is the process of creating, testing, and maintaining opportunity. The phrase that combines the two "sustainable development" therefore refers to the goal of fostering adaptive capabilities while simultaneously creating opportunities.

Similarly, Berkes *et al.* (2003: 2) argue that sustainability is “a process, rather than an end product, a dynamic process that requires adaptive capacity for societies to deal with change.”

For the purposes of this study, we adopt the metaphor of ‘*adaptive capacity*’ as used by Armitage (2005) and Fabricius *et al.* (2007):

.... that reflects learning and an ability to experiment and foster innovative solutions in complex social and ecological circumstances (Armitage 2005, pp. 703-4).

Adaptive capacity is an indication of the capacity to deal with change and disturbance, and reflects learning through knowledge sharing and responding to feedbacks In social systems, adaptive capacity refers to the ability to learn from mistakes and to generate experience of dealing with change ... which in turn largely depends on the ability of individuals and their social networks to innovate (Fabricius *et al.* 2007).

Adaptive capacity resides in *actors* (e.g. individuals, groups and organisations), *social networks* (i.e. structures that connect people and organisations and enable a community to solve problems), and *institutions* (i.e. formal rules, laws, customs and norms of behaviour).

Requirements for adaptive capacity or resilience for individuals or communities identified in the literature include (Adger 2000; Folke *et al.* 2003; Lebel *et al.* 2006; Janssen *et al.* 2006):

- Learning to live with change and uncertainty;
- Nurturing self-organisation and renewal (i.e. ways to maintain and recreate identity and buffer impacts when dealing with change and uncertainty);
- Innovation including combining different types of knowledge for learning; and
- Adaptation and learning (e.g. an ability to pursue a particular set of management objectives and strategies over time and respond with new objectives and strategies when the context changes).

In this study, we focus on the local sugar region or community and the individual decision-making levels, and we adopt a broad and inclusive concept for the term “*community*” as used by Fabricius *et al.* (2007):

A collection of human beings who have something in common. A local community is a fairly small group of people who share a common place of residence and a set of institutions (Capristano *et al.* (2005) quoted in Fabricius *et al.* (2007).

The adaptive capacity or resilience of communities is critical for continuous economic prosperity and sustainable resource management in the context of uncertainty and change. Improving resilience or adaptive capacity in communities however is not merely learning how to do the same things in a better way. The transition towards sustainability through enhancing community resilience or adaptive capacity requires processes of innovation, learning and change to deal with the complexity and uncertainty that is characteristic of linked social-natural systems, such as sugar communities.

2.3 Innovation, Knowledge and Learning: The Challenge for the Sugar industry

A focus on resilience and adaptation requires a systems perspective that recognises the importance and interdependency of innovation, knowledge and learning in linked social-natural systems. The challenge for the sugar industry is to embrace new approaches to innovation, knowledge and learning, in order to enhance community resilience or adaptive capacity.

2.3.1 Innovation

Innovation is an emergent property of linked social-natural systems and it occurs at many levels within those systems; both spatial and decision-making. It can be fostered by providing environments that encourage it as well as learning at all levels of decision-making (Newman and Dale 2004). Importantly, as the recent Venturous Australia Report (2008) argues:

Innovation is not the problem; it is the answer. Innovation is not the opportunity; it is the imaginative response to opportunities. We are entering an era when the global economy is being transformed before our eyes, with huge local implications. Innovation is pre-eminent in this transformation.

.... Today innovation is understood to involve much more than the transmission of knowledge down the pipeline of production from research to development to application (pp. vi-vii).

Innovation is about far more than the funding of research and science, or even of that and commercialization. Australia thrives only if a critical mass of business enterprises and workplaces are consistently innovating – not just with next generation products, inventions and technologies, but in their operations, organisation, relationships and business models (p. x).

A focus on resilience in linked social-natural systems transgresses traditional knowledge domains for innovation. The challenge for the sugar industry is that knowledge for dealing with uncertainty and change and fostering innovation is dispersed. Reducing the barriers to communication, information flow, and feedback and creating opportunities for new interactions and knowledge creation, generation and capture can lead to enhanced resilience and increased ability of both communities and individuals to cope with and adapt to uncertainty and change (e.g. Tompkins and Adger 2004; Newman and Dale 2005; Olsson *et al.* 2006 to name a few). To this end, the centrality of social and relational networks and institutional capacity to innovation, knowledge creation and learning is widely recognised (e.g. Cross *et al.* 2001a and 2001b; Paton *et al.* 2001; Olsson *et al.* 2006). For example, to enable innovation to emerge in linked social-natural systems, Olsson *et al.* (2006) emphasise the importance of the emergence of informal networks and learning processes together with leadership and the crucial role of institutions that:

- Feature a willingness to experiment and generate alternative solutions to emerging problems;
- Span multiple levels in order for actors to draw on dispersed sources of information;
- Equip communities and individuals with the tools and information to navigate the transition; and

- Enable integration and mobilization of knowledge at critical times.

2.3.2 Knowledge

Information is not knowledge as explained by Ingold (2000, quoted in Healy 2008):

‘...information may be communicated, in propositional or semipropositional form, from generation to generation. But information, in itself, is not knowledge, nor do we become any more knowledgeable through its accumulation. Our knowledgeability consists, rather, in the capacity to situate such information, and understand its meaning, within the context of a direct perceptual engagement with our environments (Ingold, 2000, p. 21).

The creation and use of knowledge in the solution of problems is inherently a social process (Cross *et al.* 2001b, Wenger 2004; Bruckmeier and Tovey 2008). Granovetter’s (1973) seminal work emphasises the critical role of networks and social interactions in the construction and acquisition of information and especially for bringing together different forms of knowledge and experience. Cross *et al.* (2001a; 2001b) investigated the social aspects of knowledge sharing and development in advice networks of consulting organisations and found that people helped other people in five distinct ways (Cross *et al.* 2001b, p.440)

- *Finding solutions*: people can turn to other people and get specific information or answers that address questions or problems.
- *Locating information / meta-knowledge*: people often turn to others and learn about the location of relevant knowledge.
- *Reformulating the problem*: people often turn to others for information and engage in interactions that lead them to think differently about the problem.
- *Validating actions or confirming thinking*: people turn to others and may not receive additional information but value the interaction because their own solutions or plans are validated.
- *Legitimation*: sometimes people turn to others for information and benefit by virtue of being able to tell others that they consulted that person – e.g. a respected source.

2.3.3 Social Learning

Learning is necessary to improve our understanding and ability to respond to and shape change. It is a multi-faceted phenomenon that includes (Saljo 1979 quoted in Muro and Jeffrey 2008):

- Acquiring information and increasing knowledge;
- Memorizing;
- Acquiring facts, skills and methods;
- Making sense of abstracting meaning; and
- Interpreting and understanding reality in different way by reinterpreting knowledge.

The notion of social learning recognises learning as inherently a social process. The process of social learning encompasses (e.g. Pahl-Wostl 2002; 2006):

- The learning that individuals obtain through *observing others* and their social interactions within a group (e.g. through imitation of role models);
- The learning from *informal institutional settings and participatory approaches*, which draws on the concept of “communities of practice” that emphasises learning through participation with the expectation that learning will lead to joint practices and collective action; and
- The learning through *structured processes* that capture people’s knowledge and experience and contribute directly to strategy development and decision-making.

While conceptions of social learning are widely contested in the literature and have been used to refer to all kinds of processes of learning and change of individuals and social systems, most perspectives raise questions about the nature of *knowledge* and *knowing* (e.g. Blackmore 2007; Steyaert *et al.* 2007), for example:

Knowledge as in ‘a body of knowledge’ can be synonymous with information or understanding. It can also refer to a state of knowing but there are different ways of knowing with different degrees of rationality ranging from scientific and philosophical to more intuitive and innate. Knowledge might be learned or directly perceived. (Blackmore 2007, p. 513).

There are multiple ways of knowing, evaluating and acting in linked social-natural systems. Importantly, there is an increasing recognition of the importance of ‘knowledge co-production’ or ‘learning with each other’ as well as the localised and distributed character of knowledge (e.g. Berkes *et al.* 2003; Carolan 2008; Dargan and Shucksmith 2008; Davidon-Hunt 2006; Isaac *et al.* 2007; Ingram 2008; Morgan and Murdoch 2000; Muro and Jeffrey 2008; Pahl-Wostl *et al.* 2008; Rist *et al.* 2007; Steyaert *et al.* 2007; Tovey 2008). Bruckmeier and Tovey (2008) argue that knowledge is socially distributed in different and unequal forms and that co-operation between actors is a process of re-distributing knowledge. Rejecting the ‘expert versus lay knowledge’ and ‘scientific versus tacit knowledge’ distinctions in the literature, Bruckmeier and Tovey (2008), Healy (2008) and Tovey (2008) advocate a focus on the importance of ‘knowledge processes’ which involves the often neglected challenges of co-operation including:

... problems of inequality, social exclusion, power differences, conflicts and incompatible interests. It is in conditions of inequalities and non-equal opportunities, differentiated ownership, access to and control over resources, that co-operation and knowledge use have to happen. Sustainable development ... becomes a question of knowledge-based practices in which the interaction between a combination of different kinds of knowledge is the decisive issue, requiring a transdisciplinary capacity for co-operation and knowledge use from the respective actors. In managing such knowledge practices, inequalities in power, knowledge and access to resources in the development process need to be taken into account (Bruckmeier and Tovey 2008, p. 326).

This process-based approach places emphasis on learning through mutual interaction in a context of shared experiences rather than ‘expert knowledge encounters’, which typically emphasise dissemination and knowledge transfer and are characterized by an imbalance of power (Morgan and Murdoch 2000; Kesby 2005; Ingram 2008; Carolan 2008; Healy 2008). It also places emphasis on the importance of processes rather than on the sources and formal characteristics of knowledge. For example, Healy (2008) argues that:

Knowledge is rather the situated form such information takes when used and applied in specific circumstances. As a result it must encompass the many matters attaching to these such as those of power, trust, credibility, legitimacy and so on (p.4).

Knowledge and power are intimately related because of the way the practices involved in the generation and/or application of knowledge configure and reconfigure networks of relations in ways that enable and constrain people's options and choices (p. 5).

Furthermore, Kesby (2005) argues that although participation is a form of power it can also be a valuable resource to challenge the status quo:

.... rather than revealing subjugated knowledges and accessing silenced voices, participatory technologies and social relations actually create new forms of knowledge and ways of knowing. Participatory approaches are inseparable from the exercise of power (p. 2042).

..... Thus, while participation must be conceived a form of power and its tyrannical tendencies resisted, because it provides an alternative guide for living it can also be conceived as a valuable resource on which women and men can draw in order to challenge the status quo (p. 2050).

In this context, increasingly participation as a process is regarded as a legitimate and effective mechanism for addressing the challenges and risks of complex contemporary problems of sustainable development and enhancing societal resilience in the face of change. Significantly the issues raised above point to a need in the Australian sugar industry for new approaches to participation for learning, knowledge creation and use to enhance community resilience or adaptive capacity to deal with uncertainty and change in sugar communities.

3. Women and the Australian Sugar Industry

3.1 Family Farming: Living in a Context of Change

Small privately-owned family farms and harvesting enterprises continue to dominate the sugar industry in Australia (e.g. Hooper 2008). Interviewees from both of this project's case study regions have identified that there are major adaptations occurring in the character of family farming within the Australian sugar industry as a consequence of the major changes occurring in the sugar industry (see Section 2.1 above). These adaptations to family farming include:

- Greater diversity of farm structures (e.g. size, management arrangements);
- Alteration of farming goals (including make-up of farm activities and/or diversification either within sugar or into other industries);
- Changes in household labour arrangements;
- Increasing reliance on sources of income outside traditional sugar production (both on-farm and off-farm); and
- A small shift in local cultural norms (e.g. towards a mindset more sensitive to variable circumstances and the need for change in farm practices and 'ways of doing things') – however the translation of mindsets to on-ground practice overall is lagging.

A recent ABARE survey also identified that:

In 2007-08, the sentiment of many producers of all scales of sugar cane production swung strongly away from expanding sugar cane production. Many of these producers indicated an intention to either maintain the current enterprise mix or reduce sugar cane production and diversify into other agricultural industries, or reduce their involvement in agriculture over the next three years.

In 2007-08, between 20 and 30 per cent of sugar cane producers in the southern Queensland, Bundaberg and far north Queensland regions indicated they intended to reduce their area planted to sugar cane

..... The most significant impediments to producers expanding their farming business in 2006-07 and 2007-08 are the sugar industry's outlook, the availability of suitable land and producers' financial resources. Many producers also indicated they did not intend to expand because their current scale of production suited their lifestyle or they lacked the interest to expand (Hooper 2008, pp. 20-21).

This ABARE survey also found that sugarcane producers actively seek information to better manage their farms and that the Internet is gaining increasing importance (Hooper 2008). For example, in 2007-08, for approximately 80 per cent of the sugarcane farms surveyed, media, industry organisations (such as cane grower organisations) and the Internet were the most common sources of information. While mill representatives, production groups and family or other producers were also important sources for approximately 60, 50 and 40 percent of farms surveyed respectively. However, state government agencies and the BSES were very low and declining sources of information.

In addition, a large proportion of sugar cane producers surveyed reported they participated in educational events to improve their farm management and technical skills.

In 2006-07 and 2007-08, field days (70-75 percent of farms) and workshops (50-60 percent of farms) were identified as the most important educational events attended by producers (Hooper 2008).

These adaptations and prospects for sugar family farming have significant implications for women's roles in family farming and their capacity and opportunities to participate in sugar industry sustainability initiatives and decision-making.

3.2 Women's Roles: Multiple, Diverse and Changing

Gender is widely recognised as intricately embedded in social structures and power relations in rural communities (e.g. Pini 2007; Bryant and Pini 2008; Bjorkhaug and Blekesaune 2008; Trauger *et al.* 2008). In particular, in family farming businesses gender identities are commonly associated with specific on-farm tasks and certain agricultural skills and knowledge. For example, men's identities are typically cast as 'farmers' and 'decision-makers' and 'agricultural leaders', while women's identities as being in support roles as 'farmwives', 'the book keepers' or 'gofers' and firmly connected to the domestic realm and family life, while also being the link between the household and the community (e.g. Pini, 1999; McGowan Consulting, 2006; McCartney and Ross 2003). Moreover Bellamy and Webb (2003) in a study of women in the sugar industry found that women in general have a pivotal role in the business management aspects of the farm enterprise (e.g. book keeping, correspondence, dealing with bank managers, accountants and agents), in traditional household and family roles and in researching and collecting information for the farm enterprise.

In the context of a changing sugar industry, however, women in the sugar industry involved in this study have identified that they are not a static or uniform group but a diverse group of people whose roles are multiple, diverse and changing. Although overall women in this study have not significantly challenged traditional gender identities that are characteristic of family farming in the sugar industry, times are changing. Living in the context of a changing industry, many women are now not only taking on additional responsibilities in the sugar industry but their roles are also broadening in scope and potential influence, both on-farm and off-farm. For example, for many women their involvement on-farm is expanding beyond family and domestic responsibilities to include more participation in decision-making and/or hands-on farm work. Many farm women are also increasingly engaging in off-farm work to provide additional income for the farm household, and a much smaller number are participating in organisations and initiatives that support the industry and the local rural community. There are also an increasing number of women (who may or may not live on a farm) who work in organisations and businesses supporting the sugar industry (e.g. grower groups, harvesting, milling, research and extension).

Women in the sugar industry are also highly involved in their local communities. Pini (1999) and Bellamy and Webb (2003) found that many women in the sugar industry were active in multiple community organisations, including church groups, sporting clubs, cultural or craft clubs and school associations. These findings on women's roles are common to many rural industries both in Australia and overseas dominated by family

farming (e.g. Alston 1995; Pini 1999; McCartney and Ross 2003; Trauger 2004; Albright 2006; Farmar-Bowes and Lane 2008).

Notwithstanding, it is widely acknowledged that women's contributions to Australia's agricultural industries and rural communities are under-recognised and undervalued (Alston, 1998, 2003, 2004; Elix and Lambert, 1998; Dimopoulos and Sheridan, 2000). Gender biased definitions of work, which tend to exclude much of women's labour, have lead to the 'invisibility' of women's contributions to their enterprises, families and communities (Gibson, Baxter and Kingston, 1990; Williams 1992; Alston, 1998, 2003; Argent, 1999; McCartney and Ross, 2003). Significantly, Pini (1999; 2001) highlighted the specific challenges that women in the sugar industry face, particularly in regard to their marginalisation within the industry and the lack of recognition of their contributions to the industry:

In summary women are absent in leadership positions across the whole of the sugar industry and so, non-existent as mentors, role models or change agents. Furthermore, women and the nature of their contributions to industry are invisible in the publications of CANEGROWERS, the wider industry and broader media. The work they do is not afforded value in these publications, nor the knowledge they have, given status (Pini 2001).

3.3 Challenges to Women's Participation in the Sugar Industry

With this changing industry context and women's evolving roles, women involved in this study identify significant challenges for enhancing their participation in industry initiatives and decision-making processes. The myriad of barriers and constraint to women's participation identified by sugar women in this study, include:

Socialised, cultural and attitudinal barriers and constraints:

- Gender role socialisation and stereotyping within a male-dominated industry culture;
- Self-confidence, especially in relation to operating in the public sphere;
- Undervaluing of women's role;
- Lack of industry knowledge and experience;
- Different gender styles of operation (including communication, decision-making and leadership).
- Lack of support from partners, family and peers;
- A sense of guilt associated with compromising family and enterprise commitments.

Structural and organisational barriers and constraints:

- Gender-biased social and organisational structures, which limit women's access to power and therefore limit their access to information and opportunities to gain experience in agricultural decision-making processes;
- Limited voting rights in agricultural representative bodies;
- Lack of financial control within farm businesses.

Situational and practical barriers and constraints:

- Lack of time, due to multiple roles women undertake, including on- and off-farm work commitments and family responsibilities;
- Stage of life;
- Timing of industry event and activities;
- Limited access to childcare or family-un-friendly venues or events;
- Individual's personal priorities.

These findings on barriers to women's participation are common to many rural industries and communities in Australia (e.g. Claridge, 1998; Standing Committee on Agriculture and Resource Management, 1998; McCartney and Ross 2003).

Importantly, this study has found that gender differences remain in the opportunities, powers and capacity for women to participate in sugar industry initiatives and decision-making processes at all levels. These differences are due, for example, to the pressures of women's diverse workloads, to values and attitudes characteristic to the traditional male-dominated sugar industry culture on decision-making processes, and also sometimes to women's 'power' over assets. Some relevant issues emerging from this project's research on this situation are:

- *Gender differences do exist and women's motivations and preferences for industry participation are diverse and change over time:* for example, women's identities and consequently needs vary over time with changes in women's work situations (on- and off-farm), as well as their relationships, personal history and stage of life.
- *Knowledge and education is empowering for many women in the context of uncertainty and change:* for example:
 - Increasingly women want to learn more about a wide variety of agricultural / farm business and industry-related topics; and
 - Many women want to have more influence on, or be able to make a more effective contribution to, decision-making.
- *Non-participation in industry initiatives (education/training/extension) and broader decision-making does not always necessarily mean the 'exclusion' of women;* rather in many instances it may be women's choice. In particular, male-dominated and traditional forms of information exchange and industry involvement are frequently viewed as 'hostile' or 'unfriendly' rather than 'helpful' or preferred environments for women.
- *The marginalisation, or exclusion in some instances, of women from participation in industry initiatives and decision-making processes remains a significant gender difference.* There is a long held common conception in Australia and worldwide of rural women as being in support roles (e.g. as 'farmwives' or 'the book keepers' or 'gofer' or 'administrative assistants') rather than being 'farmers' or 'managers' or contributing to farm or broader level industry decision-making. Moreover, there is the well documented exclusion of women from male-dominated rural networks both in the Australian sugar industry (e.g. Pini 2002, 2006) and in other rural industries and contexts in Australia and internationally (e.g. Grant and Rainnie 2005; McCartney and Ross 2003; Trauger et al. 2008; Shortall 2008). Women involved in this current research project have identified that such gender differences in the Australian sugar industry are contributing to:

- The continued marginalisation of women from knowledge exchange and decision-making roles within the industry at all levels (from farm to whole-of-industry);
- Many industry-based extension/educational initiatives and advice networks failing to meet sugar women's needs and/or appeal to them;
- The frequent dominant focus of industry initiatives on conventional production marginalising many sugar women because their needs for information may be more focussed on, for example, alternative approaches, diversification, etc.; and
- A continuing expectation both in industry and the local community that women's participation is largely on a voluntary basis and/or limited to implementation.

Although these emerging issues of marginalization in the Australian sugar industry are not necessarily confined to only women, bringing a gender perspective on the practice of participation within the industry may help identify a broader range of strategies for all those marginalised in decision-making and participation in sustainability initiatives at all levels of the sugar industry. Importantly, a clear need emerges for new approaches to enhance the participation and engagement of women in industry decision-making and training/educational initiatives and to help them embrace change.

3.4 Women and Participation: Motivations and Preferences

3.4.1 Participation as empowerment

Efforts to enable participation in decision-making have a long history embracing a range of perspectives and methods (e.g. Arnstein 1969; Pretty 1995; Cornwall 2003). Arnstein (1969), for example, argues that participation is the sharing of power, the ability to negotiate, compromise and be directly involved in the decisions made. Forms of participation that do not devolve some form of power to the public to determine the final outcome are regarded as tokenism. Genuine participation involves having the real power to influence decisions.

Importantly, participation has a range of perceived values depending on the form and function of participation:

- Participation as a *normative* value relates to the proposition that people should have the opportunity to have a say in decision-making that affects them (Chambers 1997);
- *Instrumental* participation uses participation as a tool or means of achieving a specific end, rather than participation being valued in itself (Buchy and Race 2001). Participation's instrumental value therefore is the value of tapping into local knowledge and other local inputs, which can lead to more efficient and effective outcomes (Webler and Renn 1995; Eversole and Martin 2005); and
- Participation can have *transformative* value where local communities have control of the decision-making agenda (White 1996). Transformative participation embraces participation as a mechanism for social change; a means to empowerment and an end in itself in the sense that it transforms people's reality and their sense of it (Buchy and Race 2001).

The idea of participation as 'empowerment' is that the practical experience of being involved in considering options, making decisions and taking action is itself transformative. Participation however may take many forms not all of which result in

empowerment. For example, Jupp (2008) argues the need to reconsider what might constitute more productive forms of participation and emphasises the importance of valuing the everyday small-scale interactions, practices and feelings as constitutive of potentially powerful forms of participation:

These can be characterised through ideas such as ‘feeling comfortable’, ‘feeling at home’, ‘helping out’ and ‘keeping going’, and involve everyday sociability and informal forms of volunteering (p. 331).

Participation through computer-mediated information and communication technologies (ICTs; including computer-based decision support tools, email and the Internet) is increasingly recognised as having many potential empowerment benefits and effects for women, including greater inclusion, cooperation, participation and well-being (e.g. Lennie 2002; Bellamy *et al.* 2002b; Bellamy and Webb 2003). However there are some corresponding complex and contradictory forms of disempowerment that need to be understood and widely acknowledged, such as effects associated with ‘technological disempowerment’ including lack of access to ICTs (Lennie 2002):

Technological empowerment was identified as a significant new under-theorised form of empowerment that requires more research. The results of this study suggest that enhancing rural women’s technological empowerment is urgently required. As well as for personal and social purposes, effective access to and use of ICTs is becoming increasingly important to rural women’s leadership and participation in community and economic development activities. (p. 242).

What form or function participation should take, how and why, when and by whom, and the effects on empowerment of women to participate in the sugar industry emerge as key issues to be addressed.

3.4.2 Motivations for participation

SCARM (2001) identifies women as major drivers of change particularly in the areas of natural resource management and rural adjustment and concludes that “if we are to increase women’s influence at the decision-making level we need to continually refine our understanding of what motivates women to become involved”. Alston (2000) writing within a feminist tradition argues that rural women’s particular perspective is essential to rural policymaking and rural visions for the future:

Increasing women’s access to power and decision-making in agriculture is a matter not only for equity and human rights but also of practical efficiency in natural resource management. Women value a less hierarchical and more inclusive decision-making process such as is demonstrated in their own organisations. Further the agenda of current farmer and industry bodies is not broad enough to encompass the issues of concern to many women – rural community development and health and quality of life issues. ... women have expressed a need for a much more holistic approach to agricultural policy development, one which nurtures the earth and the people who work and live on it.

The majority of women involved in this research project rated participation within the sugar industry as of high or very high importance for them personally. They offered a broad range of reasons why participation at various levels within the industry was important to them, ranging from the need to be involved in their family business and keeping informed in order to support the family business, through to the need for women

to have a say in the industry because they can bring different perspectives to industry issues. These women identified a wide range of factors that motivated them to participate within the sugar industry, including:

- Relevance or benefit of the activity to their businesses and their complex and diverse lives;
- Information seeking;
- Networking;
- Making a contribution to their industry and community; and
- Passion for or interest in the industry.

Some women pointed out that they would participate more if they had fewer constraints. In the study of women in the sugar industry by Bellamy and Webb (2003), the factors identified by women as *hindering* greater involvement in decision-making and direction setting on-farm and in industry were:

- Lack of time (e.g. responsibilities with children; off-farm work)
- Lack of industry knowledge (e.g. of specifics of day-to-day operations on farm; how industry system works)
- Conservative or patriarchal nature of industry and lack of encouragement of women to become more involved;
- Farm ownership structures (e.g. parent-in-law involvement or ownership); and
- Lack of personal interest.

While the factors identified by women as *fostering* greater involvement in decision-making and direction setting on-farm and in industry were (Bellamy and Webb 2003):

- Personal relationship with partner/spouse and other family members;
- Involvement of women in the sugar industry women's groups as well as educational/training courses (such as Future Profit), which have improved women's understanding of how the farm operates or how the industry system works.

3.4.3 Preferences for participation: Lessons from women's experiences in the sugar industry

Through in-depth interviews, interactive workshops and action research activities, the current research project explored women's experiences with '*sustainability initiatives*', which were defined broadly as 'formal activities, processes, relationships or tools focused on making the industry economically, socially and/or environmentally sustainable'. For example, sustainability initiatives may include initiatives supporting best management practices (BMPs), farm management systems (FMS) or business management or systems approaches (Ipe *et al.* 2001; Welch and Marc-Aurele 2001; Ice 2004; Benham *et al.* 2005). Sustainability initiatives also include other community-based activities for implementing sustainability, including Landcare, catchment management, local and regional economic development, regional natural resource management and social planning (Chamala and Keith 1995; Curtis and De Lacy 1996; Bellamy *et al.* 2002a; Bellamy and Johnson 2000), as well as informal industry networks.

Women in this current study identified a range of ways that they preferred for participating in the industry, including through:

- Interactive forums and workshops;
- Learning something new;
- Practical, hands-on activities with clear outcomes;
- Field days and farm walks; and
- Women's networks including Women in Sugar (WIS) groups.

There are a broad range of specific sustainability initiatives in which the women participants in both the north and south case regions of this study were or are involved. Many of these initiatives were focused on addressing more than one aspect of sustainability; that is, environmental, social or economic and were variously government, industry or community driven. Notably, however, although there is a rich debate and a long history of promotion of community based approaches to regional natural resource management or regional development and planning, women in this study did not identify being involved in such initiatives or that they were important to them. However women did identify some critical multi-party initiatives, programs and processes mostly in the sugar industry as 'good practice' for women's participation for sustainability.

Our approach to 'good practice' mirrors that of Toovey (2008), that is an approach that does not try to identify 'best practice' but rather to locate 'good practices' for sustainability, "that is, practices that are context-bound that are 'good' because of the way they help to embed sustainable development in local contexts" (Toovey 2008, p.196). In this sense, sustainability initiatives that women from the sugar industry involved in this study identified participating in and which meet this concept of 'good practice' fall into four categories of participation practice:

Networks for connecting women: Networks can enhance connections and information flows, facilitating creative thinking, and fostering innovation within groups, organisations, industries and communities and are critical for enhancing community resilience and improving individuals' capacity to adapt to change (see Section 3.5.1 of this report). Key examples of relevant women's networks in this study identified as involving good participation practice are:

- Women in Sugar groups (see Section 3.5.3 of this report);
- The emerging WIS e-Network (see Section 3.6.2 of this report).

Partnerships for innovation or fostering Best Management Practices (BMPs): The call for more environmentally responsible and sustainable agriculture has encouraged an emphasis on 'best management practices' (BMPs), which Ingram (2008) identifies as knowledge-intensive practices requiring new ways of exchanging information, learning through mutual interaction and shared understanding rather than dissemination or knowledge transfer. Key examples of relevant partnerships women in this study identified as involving such good participation practice are:

- Babinda Farming for the Future: Alternative cane products;

- Isis Target 100 implementation: Diversification for sustainable production;
- SRDC/Regional Advisory Group Integrated Pest Management course: Bug checking in break crops (Bundaberg and Isis).

'Mixed' participation on tools for improving business systems/practices: These targeted activities focussed on 'participation with your partner' (generally both partners of the family farm business) and also on 'a whole of business systems' approach (i.e. rather than a single component) that included:

- *Co-production of knowledge* – e.g. linking women's common pivotal knowledge of the business aspects of the farm enterprise with the male partner's knowledge of production aspects; and
- *Improving women's understanding of the industry* (including how the farm operates and how industry systems work).

Key examples of relevant initiatives women in this study identified as involving good participation practice are:

- Farm Economic Assessment Tool (FEAT): Assessing alternate business strategies
- COMPASS course: Improving farm planning

Learning from others (sugar regions or rural industries): The concept of social learning recognises the learning that individuals obtain through observing others and their social interactions within a group (e.g. through imitation of role models) (see Section 2.3.3 of this report). Key examples of 'learning from others' initiatives women in this study identified as involving good participation practice are:

- SRDC Travel and Learning: Learning from the Ord experience with smut;
- SRDC Travel and Learning: Women in Sugar Bus Trips (Narrabri cotton industry, northern NSW sugar industry; Brisbane sugar organisations); and
- Women in Sugar Australia (WISA) Conferences.

3.5 Women and Networks

3.5.1 Networks for sustainability

Networks or connections have important implications for longer term sustainability within the Australian sugar industry and community resilience in the face of uncertainty and change. *Networks* are defined for the purposes of this study as the web of relationships and links, both formal and informal, between individuals, groups or organisations that connect actors with different interests, experiences, ideas and knowledge systems, both within and external to an industry or region, and are used to enhance decision-making.

Networks are widely recognised as critical mechanisms for enhancing connections and information flows, facilitating creative thinking, and fostering innovation within organisations, industries and regional communities (e.g. Granovetter 1973; Westley 1995; Cross *et al.* 2001a, 2001b; Murdoch 2000; Morgan and Murdoch 2000; Booher and Innes 2002; Woodcock and Narayen 2000). Effective networks or connections are also recognised as being critical to enhancing community resilience and improving

individual's capacity to adapt to change (e.g. Paton *et al.* 2001, 2005; Thomkins and Adger 2004; Olsson *et al.* 2006; Davidson-Hunt 2006; Bodin *et al.* 2006). Olsson *et al.* 2006 argue that the emergence of such networks is often a self-organising process triggered by social or ecological crisis but that it also requires leadership that may be concentrated in one or a few people or dispersed in a network of several actor groups.

A distinction can be made between 'bonding' and 'bridging' relationships, ties or networks (Granovetter 1973; Putnam 2000; Woolcock and Narayan 2000):

- *Bonding* relationships or networks are strong dense ties or close relationships within communities, families or other social groups in which members are directly tied to many other members in the network; and
- *Bridging* relationships or networks are loosely linked, weak ties that extend across social groups and communities that give access to a diverse set of resources that exist in one network to members of another network.

Granovetter (1973) found that information is embedded in social networks and may only be apparent in the context of relationships and interactions. Granovetter (1973) also argues that weak ties may be the most valuable for generating new knowledge and identifying new opportunities; "those to whom we are weakly tied are more likely to move on circles different from our own and thus will have access to information different from that which we receive" (p. 1371).

Newman and Dale (2005) argue that "not all social networks are equal", and that a dynamic balance between bonding and bridging network is needed to build community resilience and improve the ability to adapt. Importantly, when dealing with uncertainty and change, Tompkins and Adger (2004) found that the ability to link different networks makes it easier to avoid following the customary response paths and facilitates flexible learning-based management.

Westerman *et al.* (2005) suggests that men and women are commonly identified with different types of social relations in networks. Men are often engaged in more formal networks and organised power structures that can improve access to resources and decision-making processes, while women are often more dependent on informal networks associated with everyday forms of activities. Aslin *et al.* (2000) however draw attention to the potential role of networks in relation to overcoming structural and organisational barriers faced by women in business and industry generally. They identify a number of studies that show that women often prefer to seek out other women as information sources, and their networks also tend to provide personal and social support in contrast to those of men. Moreover, Lennie (2002) in establishing a "supportive on-line group" emphasised the need for some all-women activities in which women can feel comfortable to openly voice their issues and concerns:

Conducting a range of all-women activities that are facilitated in a relaxed, friendly, inclusive, less hierarchical and non-patronising manner that is sensitive to differences among participants. These processes should aim to build mutual trust and understanding and enable two-way sharing of information and experiences (p. 242).

3.5.2 Women's networks in the sugar industry

This current study has found that sugar communities can be conceived of as complex networks of social relationships involving both informal and formal as well as vertical and horizontal networks. These webs of social networks connect individuals to society providing patterns of interaction and social identities (e.g. Hoang *et al.* 2006). The webs of networks that women in the sugar industry identify with and use in their daily lives exhibit many of the characteristics identified in the previous section but importantly they are influenced by a number of specific characteristics of sugar communities, in particular:

- *Sugar farm businesses are typically run from home*, and as a consequence women's personal and business environments and their associated networks overlap and intermesh in a variety of ways.
- *The Australian sugar industry value chain is complex* comprising (Higgins *et al.* 2007):
 - *Multiple sectors* (i.e. growing, harvesting, cane transport, mill processing, sugar transport and storage / shipping / marketing); and
 - *Multiple scales of decision-making* between the paddock, farm, harvester and mill levels for sugar farming businesses.

As such, this current research project found that the webs of networks or links that women in the sugar industry identify with and use can be described as:

- *Complex* – variously encompassing the multiple scales of industry and community decision-making (e.g. paddock, farm, mill area, and region) and within each of those the multiple entities involved (including government, industry, community and private).
- *Multi-purpose* – reflecting both the 'social' and 'economic' aspects of women's lives;
- *Diverse and involving a mix of 'bonding' and 'bridging' links*, i.e.:
 - Strong social ties or '*bonding*' networks (such as to family; local businesses and service providers; local sugar industry groups/organisations; and community groups); and
 - Loose '*bridging*' links or networks that potentially provide access to dispersed resources and sources of information. They may span multiple scales of decision-making or involve direct linkages to 'brokers', 'gate keepers', etc. (i.e. individuals, local groups and other organisations) who bridge to other individuals, groups or organisational levels (both horizontally and vertically).

3.5.3 Women in Sugar groups

An important initiative for women in the sugar industry with both ‘bonding’ and ‘bridging’ functions that enable women to network and share information on a regular basis are the Women in Sugar (WIS) groups. These groups are self-organising or informal networks that have developed in a number of Australian sugar regions over time with various degrees of longevity and impact amongst women who share a common interest. In the study of women in the sugar industry by Bellamy and Webb (2003) an important development for women identified was the establishment of these sugar industry women’s groups. The women identify that personally this involvement has made a real difference to them; it has improved their knowledge on matters influencing the industry and it has also given the women more confidence to contribute to decision-making on-farm. In addition, Grace (1997) found that the main benefits of rural women’s networks to rural industry organizations included:

- They encourage women in agriculture to identify as farmers and to take more active roles in family farming business; and
- They provide contexts within which a shared, women-centred, more holistic vision of rural issues is progressively being developed and articulated. This vision integrates health and well-being, community development and agricultural sustainability, and could be a source of innovative solutions to pressing problems.

The Women in Sugar groups have created networks and communication mechanisms focused on addressing the issues and needs of women in the sugar industry, although they do also focus on issues relevant to the wider farming family unit (McGowan Consulting, 2006). For instance, the Bundaberg Women in Sugar group’s corporate plan states that:

Our mission is to unite, support and represent women in Bundaberg district sugar industry through information and training and by being active participants within the industry.

The objectives of the Bundaberg WIS group range from educational objectives, such as providing information and training in all aspects of the sugar industry and promoting team work, group dynamics and skills development within the industry, through to social objectives, such as encouraging more women to be involved in the industry, providing and promoting more social interaction within the industry and embracing challenges of change in the industry (Bundaberg Women in Sugar group Corporate Plan). The Bundaberg WIS group has been going for about 12 year and during that time it has maintained the active participation of a core group of 5-6 volunteer women who have collectively driven the group. It is a ‘fluid’ group involving beyond the core 5 or 6 women an ‘ebb and flow’ of 40-45 others coming along to events and monthly meetings. Monthly meetings average 10 or so women but on occasions if there is a particular topic or guest speaker of interest 20 or more may attend. This project’s Reference Panels have noted:

Maintaining momentum in Women in Sugar groups can be a challenge, given that positions on the WIS committee are held by volunteers.

Sustaining a group like WIS in the longer term is always difficult. For example, although the Bundaberg WIS is seen by some to be doing interesting things, for others it is not seen to be radical enough.

Dealing with entrenched industry politics is also a challenge for WIS groups. The status quo tends to still prevail with the WIS still not seen seriously by the industry overall.

People are interested in the whole sugar system and participation in mill tours and visits to the sugar terminal were highly valued and well attended.

Meetings often tend to separate into two distinct groups – a “traditional” group of those without children or other commitments and a second group of “jugglers” – women managing many diverse responsibilities.

Age and off-farm employment are important factors that influence women’s capability to get involved in the sugar industry. For example, there is a generation of older women, many of whom do not have education levels to provide ‘the credentials’ seen as needed in taking on positions or jobs in the industry. While many sugar farms are not producing an effective income at present, such that many women have to take on off-farm work.

There is no formal ‘membership’ for the Bundaberg WIS group as such but women pay \$1.00 each time to participate in meetings. Importantly, Bundaberg WIS group has close ties with the Bundaberg CANEGROWERS organisation who provide vital administrative support to the group and provide them with a column in their monthly newsletters. Financial support and assistance for activities from locally-based organisations (such as CANEGROWERS and SunCorp) and through industry initiatives (e.g. Sugar Executive Officer of the federal government’s Sugar Reform initiative; SRDC Travel and Learning program) have been fundamental to the Bundaberg WIS continuing over the last 12 years.

Women from this current project’s case study regions commonly identify in interviews had other interactive forums that WIS groups are generally not highly valued or taken seriously within the sugar industry, and they are also not without controversy for some women in the industry. However, those women in this current study who have been involved in WIS groups were very positive about their importance and they identify the benefits as much more than ‘tea and scones’ including:

- Social support in response to hard times / stressed families; for example, finding out what others were doing (e.g. on their farms) and that others were in the same situation;
- Gaining information to improve farm businesses and finding out about the industry, including options for embracing change;
- Gaining confidence to learn;
- Learning in a comfortable non-hostile environment, with “like-minded women”;
- Meeting people/other women in their own sugar area; and
- Providing opportunities for networking with women in other sugar regions and other industries in Australia.

The WIS group meets Lennie’s (2002) criteria of providing relaxed, friendly, less-hierarchical and non-patronising networks for women in the sugar industry. However, WIS groups are locally-focused mill area entities, and sugar women have identified a need for better cross-regional connections for women across all sugar regions or mill areas that can build on and complement existing local WIS group networks.

3.6 Women and e-Networks

3.6.1 e-Networks: Opportunities and challenges

A recent review by Notley and Foth (2008) highlights the opportunities provided for networks by the Internet:

While the human use of networks for information sharing has a long history, networks have been given a 'new life' through the proliferation and use of the internet Networks provide extraordinary advantages as organising tools because of their 'inherent flexibility and adaptability'— both 'critical features' for survival in today's rapidly changing globalised environment (Notley and Foth 2008, p.95).

Internet technology is significantly influencing the way Australian society interacts in commercial, educational and social arenas, and is opening up new opportunities for better social participation (Lennie 2002; Lloyd and Bill 2004; ABS 2007; Bryceson 2007; Daly 2007). Although regional and socio-economic differences in Internet access persist, rural Australians are increasingly embracing the technology and all its components (ABS 2007; CCI 2008). Newly emerging Internet-based networking technologies (e.g. on-line forums; social network sites such as MySpace, Facebook) are enabling new arenas for communication, information exchange and social participation (Beer and Burrows 2007; Boyd and Ellison 2007) and influence patterns of social participation that are arguably more open, collaborative and participatory (Beer and Burrows 2007).

Improving communication, information flow and social participation is widely recognised as a major national issue for rural industries and communities (e.g. Fuchs 2007; Venturous Australia Report 2008, PC 2005; Notley and Foth 2008). Internet technologies are reducing the tyranny of distance in rural Australia and enhancing connectivity and information flow although regional and socio-economic differences persist (Bellamy *et al.* 2002b; Bellamy and Webb 2003; ABS 2007; DFEEST 2007; Blanchard *et al.* 2007; Notley and Foth 2008). The unique potential of Internet technologies relates to the richness and openness of communication and information flow, both horizontal and vertical, that these emerging dynamic technologies make possible for rural industry and communities (Notley and Foth 2008; Fuchs 2007). An online participatory culture is emerging, where users are increasingly involved in creating Internet content, as well as actively embedding its use in daily commercial, educational and social practices and processes (Boyd and Ellison 2007). A shift is emerging in Internet cultures away from more static to dynamic content and towards better quality user engagement (Beer and Burrows 2007; Boyd and Ellison 2007). Internet-based network technologies (e-networks) are part of this emerging participatory online culture (Fuchs 2007). However, the role and long term impacts of e-networks on industry decision-making, participation and capacity building, as well as how the emerging network technologies can be better harnessed to enhance learning, innovation and resilience in rural industries and communities are clear emerging issues (Daly 2005; Siddiquee and Kagan 2006; Blanchard *et al.* 2007).

E-networks arguably have the potential to enable access to new information resources, open up new forms of connectivity, enhance information flows in communities and

improve the quality and breadth of social participation or engagement. Examples of existing rural industry e-networks include:

- Rural women's e-networks (such as WINCOTT, the Women in Dairy e-network, *wlink*);
- Industry group e-networks (such as OzCotton); and
- Cross-industry e-networks (such as the Young Australia Rural Network, Queensland Rural Women's Network (QRWN); Australian Women in Agriculture).

It is argued that e-networks can enhance connectivity and enable the sharing of knowledge and information with many people simultaneously, in ways far beyond what occurs with more traditional social interaction processes. For example, Lennie (2002) found that supportive on-line groups for women enabled participants to network and share information on a regular basis. Boyd and Ellison (2007) found that the cultures emerging around e-network technologies are highly varied and that "most sites support the maintenance of preexisting social networks but others support strangers connecting based on shared interests, political views or activities. Some sites cater to diverse audiences, while others attract people based on common language or shared...identities".

Notwithstanding, there are many barriers to Internet access and use that have to be managed or overcome before e-networks become more effectively embedded in processes of communication and information flow in rural industries and communities. Considerable inequalities exist in access to Internet technologies (Lennie 2002; Blanchard *et al.* 2007; Daly 2007). For example, drawing on the 2006 Census results the report *Patterns of Internet Access in Australia* (ABS 2007) identified significant differences in Internet access based on income, education and age. This report also highlights regional differences in Internet access, with considerably lower access rates for regional and rural areas, in comparison with major metropolitan areas of Australia, especially for Broadband access. A lack of necessary infrastructure, the cost of access, the time and skills that are needed, the degree of supportive social networks and gender can all influence the degree of digital divide between those with useful access to the Internet and those without.

While recognising that access is not equitable, some recent studies however have challenged the concept of the digital divide is predominantly about access. Social dynamics such as gender (e.g. Easdown 2002; Bellamy *et al.* 2002b), or young people (Blanchard *et al.* 2007) are important and often complex barriers to Internet use in rural industries. For example, Easdown (2002) found that there are sometimes big differences in the roles of each partner in a farm family with respect to the Internet. In some instances, computer communications are seen as an extension of computer book-keeping and this means that it is often the farm women rather than men that use the Internet. However there are strong differences across industries and regions (Bellamy *et al.* 2002b). While Lennie (2002) emphasised the importance of encouraging the participation of women from diverse backgrounds and interests:

This can facilitate enhanced understandings of ‘other’ women and can result in broadening participants’ knowledge and perspectives and the development of more creative ideas and strategies for personal and community development. However, awareness is needed of the power issues that can arise when women of diverse backgrounds and levels of skills and knowledge are brought together (p. 242).

Viewed from a gender perspective, therefore, there is a need to assess e-networks in terms of participation, the distribution of some costs and benefits and efficiency of functioning.

Enhancing learning in an online environment is also a complex and emerging issue (Bryceson 2007) with key barriers to e-learning that are recognised as sustaining the digital divide in Australian communities being not only *connectivity* (e.g. infrastructure and affordable access to the Internet), but also *capability* (e.g. skills, confidence and recognition of value in using the internet) and *content* (e.g. relevant, useful and accessible information and services online) (DFEEST 2007). Moreover, Bryceson (2007) identifies in the context of distance education that incorporating some form of socialization is critical for enhancing learning in an online environment.

Notwithstanding, there are many legal considerations associated with activities conducted in emerging online participatory arenas, particularly social network sites (e.g. You-Tube, MySpace, MyFace, Google web pages), that need to be taken into account when strategizing how best to make use of emerging network technologies. A common group of legal risks associated with social network sites relate to copyright infringement, defamation and failure to protect privacy and personal information (Coates *et al.* 2007).

3.6.2 Learning from the WIS e-Network

e-Networks technologies are a dynamic arena and their potential for Australian rural industries is rapidly evolving. Drawing on the experiences and understanding on e-networks identified in the in the previous section of this report, a Women in Sugar (WIS) e-Network has been initiated through the action research phase of the CSE016 project. An ongoing legacy of the CSE016 project beyond its completion in November 2008 will be the Women in Sugar (WIS) e-Network. Initiated in June 2007, this network was established through an Organising Committee of women from a broad range of sugar regions in Queensland working together with key members of the research team and facilitated by two Network Co-ordinators, who developed guidelines for implementing the e-network including initial objectives and its rules of operation.

The Organising Committee established the objectives for the network in July 2007 as:

- Provide a point of contact and support for women across the sugar industry;
- Encourage sharing of experiences and learnings among Women In Sugar groups across the sugar industry;
- Facilitate networking between people who are passionate about their industry; and
- Encourage sharing of information about relevant news and events across the industry, which can be easily accessed by people when it suits them.

At the ‘Connections Matter’ Workshops held in August 2008 in each case study region, participants re-confirmed the role of the WIS e-Network as:

1. Providing an *information source* for women participating in the sugar industry:
 - To help women in sugar access information.
 - Collect up to-date (current) information.
 - Provide positive and progressive information which is valued.
2. Improving *networking* for women participating in the sugar industry:
 - To help keep people from the different sugar areas across the State connected.
 - Sharing of ideas.
3. Improving *business* for women involved in the sugar industry:
 - Provide information, ideas, support.
 - Keep people focused and progressing.
4. Developing a *shared understanding* of women participating in the sugar industry.

In addition, at these workshops participants also overwhelmingly supported the e-Network as being on the right track for women in the sugar industry and noted in particular that:

- It is the way of the future – also the way of the present;
- It is linking people; and
- A clear benefit is that women can access information (internet/newsletter) whenever it suits them.

The WIS e-Network’s progress to-date includes:

- A growing membership, if slowly. Current membership is over 50 and it is developing a shared understanding across both the northern and southern project groups.
- Establishment of an interactive WIS Google page. Currently a new website for the e-Network is planned which will be freestanding and not hosted by anyone and so it will provide much easier and more reliable and open access for women. The Google page however may not be dropped completely as it may need to be maintained for membership and registration purposes.
- Production of an email newsletter (also available on the website) with three newsletters produced to-date (February, April and September).
- A small amount of sponsorship and financial support sourced to help the network continue beyond the life of the research project, which will end in November 2008. These will be used as seed funding to further develop the website to a more user-friendly platform as well as to leverage further sponsorship funds.
- For a small fee, the Terrain NRM regional group based in Innisfail is providing administrative support for the WIS e-Network as part of their sustainability focus. This link was considered to be very important, e.g.
 - For administering funding;
 - For insurance and applying for funding support; and

- For its 'green-side' linkages.
- Promotion of the network through various methods including:
 - In the media (newspapers, magazine articles, local ABC radio);
 - email distribution of a promotional flyer;
 - Links on websites (e.g. SRDC, CANEGROWERS); and
 - Presentations at functions (e.g. SugarShaker events, the annual WISA conference, and at local WIS group meetings).

Women with an interest in the sugar industry now have the opportunity to use and further be involved in developing a cross-regional e-Network to suit their needs and to help keep them in touch, to exchange and access information, and potentially empowering them to make a difference in the way the sugar industry responds to challenges in their industry.

Notwithstanding these achievements, there are a number of challenges which have been, and in some cases continue to be, faced in the e-network development process and there are some lessons emerging including:

- The e-Network development has taken a lot of time to get going – much more than initially anticipated.
- Rules and guidelines for the e-Network have been set up by its Organising Committee, but although necessary, the decision process was tedious.
- Membership is currently dominated by people from industry organisations (e.g. BSES, CANEGROWERS) with only a few of the original Organising Committee members currently actively committed to the e-Network.
- There is a stigma attached to WIS initiatives and a strong perception prevails that overall the industry does not currently actively support women's initiatives.
- The network relies on voluntary contributions of material from e-Network members which is not always readily forthcoming. The biggest challenge is in finding people with the time to devote to keeping the e-Network going. An urgent need exists for one contact person from each sugar region to volunteer to act as a coordinator and provide information for newsletters and the website.
- Regarding the Newsletter: there have been on-going difficulties in getting original articles, with the majority of the current information being recycled from other sources.
- Regarding the Website some challenges in its development have been:
 - Technical difficulties with the "Google Site" such that some members have been unable to join up completely to the site;
 - People find the Google site hard to locate on the internet;
 - Not much information from WIS groups is being forwarded on to be put on the site.
 - Privacy issues have to be managed.
 - The current Coordinators are in danger of burning out and need some help. A paid coordinator's position for the e-Network is needed to enable the network to function more effectively and sustainably.

- A key challenge to be overcome for the industry is that many sugar households have limited or nil access to a computer and/or an Internet connection. In particular, flow-on implications and issues are:
 - Women without computers or Internet access may still be looking for a network;
 - Photocopying and distributing hard copy newsletters however is not seen as a sustainable method of distribution for the e-Network newsletters; and
 - Some newsletters file sizes can also be too large for slow Internet connections.
- Three key current needs for the further development of the WIS e-Network relate to:
 - *Management* – more people to help drive the e-Network. It is too much work for two people – it needs a committee/team approach and the Organising Committee needs to be re-constituted as a Management Committee.
 - *Membership* – broad membership is essential and there is a need to actively promote the e-Network and target potential new members. For example, mills would probably be willing to become sponsors, if its membership is broadened and increased.
 - *Sponsorship* – an attractive business proposition is needed. In particular, the sponsorship opportunities need to offer the sponsor value for money. The network is seen to eliminate women's isolation and offers support to them, but currently it is mostly industry people on the membership list and this is not highly attractive to potential sponsors. It would be beneficial to get more members before implementing a sponsorship drive. However, the e-network can offer better value than magazine advertising, due to its clear focus and local networks.

4. Strategies for Enhancing Women's Participation

4.1 Emerging Issues

This project has found that women's roles in the sugar industry are not static but are multiple, diverse and continually changing. It has also identified women's motivations and preferences for participation as well as a number of emerging gender differences adversely influencing women's participation in initiatives and decision-making processes and opportunities relevant to social, economic and environmental sustainability in the sugar industry. This work has demonstrated a clear case for new approaches to women's participation and engagement in industry decision-making and training / educational initiatives that recognise in particular:

- The multiple, diversity and changing nature of women's needs (see Section 3.2 of this report);
- The significant gender differences existing in the sugar industry that are contributing to the marginalisation of women from many knowledge exchange opportunities and decision-making processes in the sugar industry (see Section 3.3 of this report);
- The importance of knowledge and education for many sugar women working in a context of uncertainty and change (see Sections 3.3 and 2.3.2 of this report);
- The critical role of women's networks in enhancing community resilience and women's capacity to adapt to and shape change in the sugar industry (see Section 3.5 of this report); and
- The need for better cross-regional networks for sugar women (see Section 3.6 of this report).

Cornwall (2003) argues that participatory practices have much to offer women but will only make a difference if they are used with sensitivity to issues of difference. Requiring the representation of women on committees or ensuring women are consulted are necessary but not sufficient for making a difference (Cornwall 2003). Rather Cornwall (2003: 1338) advocates that making a difference in participation calls for:

- An approach that deals with the diversity of experiences and interactions of everyday life; and
- Strategies that are sensitive to local dynamics of difference and build on the "gender issues" that men and women can identify with and mobilise around rather than essentialising sexual difference.

Importantly, she argues that such an approach:

...would not preclude a direct focus on issues that women in general might commonly identify with, for example, property rights. But it would go beyond the assumption that all women identify with "gender issues" and that bringing about change is a zero sum game in which women-in-general are pitted against men-in-general. It would recognise that some men may also be affronted by the exclusion of women and may prove allies. Moreover, it would tackle some of the consequences of defining interventions in terms that fail to embrace the needs of people who fall outside the boundaries created by assumptions of "women's needs" What is needed is strategies and tactics that take account of the power effects of difference (Cornwall 2003: 1338).

However, there is no simple model for enhancing women's participation that can be applied in all circumstances. Participation as a process is context-dependent, it can take many forms and it can occur at different stages of an initiative or process. There are a proliferating variety of approaches to participation practice including 'inclusive', 'discursive', 'pluralistic', 'reflexive', and 'participatory' (e.g. Cornwall 2003; Kesby 2005; Stirling 2008). However, Stringer *et al.* (2006) argue that participation needs to be flexible 'not only to meet project phase objectives but also to allow context-specified needs'. Moreover, Kesby (2005) cautions that 'empowerment through participation takes time and will fail if an initiatives do not last long enough' (p. 2053) and identifies that:

A major challenge for the future is to identify the factors that enable the sustained reperformance of empowerment beyond the carefully managed environments constituted and governed by participatory power. One tactic ... is to open permanent project spaces in which empowerment can continually be reformed. However, this risks project dependency or impracticality in situations of limited resources. Another is to establish self-sustaining social groups that, postintervention, will periodically reconstitute arenas governed by the discourses and practices of participation. ... also attempts to arm participants (particularly women) with the tool of assertive language that can be carried back to their homesteads. ... A fourth possibility is for interventions to mobilize preexisting groupings and support local initiatives that have a presence independent of an issue-specific intervention and to feed participatory discourses and practices into these networks and forums ... Whatever the approach, the discourses and practices that enable empowered performances will need to become normalized if their effects are to be sustainable, and this will involve their becoming embedded in (and therefore transforming) everyday spaces (Keby 2005, p. 2058).

Finally, while the use of computer-mediated communication technologies are identified as providing emerging opportunities for participatory empowerment at a distance (e.g. Notley and Foth 2008), others point to the importance of understanding the embeddedness of these emerging technologies in daily lives and highly localized social contexts and importantly how power relations experienced in particular places or contexts can adversely affect an individual's use and adoption of these technologies, particularly for women (Gilbert *et al.* 2008; Schwanen and Kwan 2008). For example, Gilbert *et al.* (2008) working with disadvantaged women in the US health sector found that the use of ICTs has the potential to exacerbate inequalities:

The gap between those with the most and those with the least access to information and communication technologies (ICTs) is commonly referred to as the "digital divide." The digital divide is most associated with other indicators of inequality such as income, gender, race/ ethnicity and geographic location. The larger societal concern is that lack of access to the computers and the Internet as well as related information flows will exacerbate other forms of social, economic, and political marginalization (p. 913).

In overcoming the digital divide, it is important to have access to computers and the Internet, but it is much more important to have knowledge of how to use computers and how to access the Internet. ICT use is dramatically shaped by place-based networks among these individuals, with particular importance placed on household access characteristics. ... where ICT access may involve older computers and dial-up service provision, not surprisingly, use of the Internet is infrequent many "net-evaders" who do not prefer to use the Internet maintain access when needed through the proxy use of other household members. ... among the strategies used by the women to overcome digital divide - barriers were: sharing computers with place-based

social networks, particularly family members, accessing educational programs at local community centers and libraries, and coupling ICT training with engagement of needed services. (pp. 921-923).

4.2 Strategies for Enhancing Women's Participation in the Sugar Industry

4.2.1 Approach

With these issues in mind, some principles, strategies and tactics to guide improved participation practice for women in the sugar industry have emerged from this current project's research based on the appraisal of a combination of:

- Theoretical principles relevant to the relationship between women, participation, community resilience and sustainability (Section 2 of this Report).
- Social research involving women from the sugar industry in two contrasting sugar regions (including in-depth interviews, workshops and other interactive forums, participant observation; Section 3 of this Report).
- Reflection and Synthesis through stakeholder participation (e.g. Project Reference Panels, participatory action research, research evaluation activities).

The outcome of this approach is a set of recommendations for enhancing women's participation in initiatives and decision-making processes relevant to the social, economic or environmental sustainability in the sugar industry as detailed below. These involve:

- Four preferred categories or types of participation opportunities;
- Four broad guiding principles of good participation practices; and
- A number of suggested strategies and tactics for implementation that underpin these guiding principles.

4.2.2 Preferred types of participation opportunities for women

The four categories or types of participation opportunities that women prefer as identified in Section 3.4.3 of this report as constituting good participation practice are:

1. Networks for connecting women;
2. Partnerships for innovation and/or fostering best management practices;
3. Targetted activities of 'mixed participation' or 'participating with your partner' on tools for improving business systems/practices; and
4. Learning from others (sugar regions or industries).

4.2.3 Principles, strategies and tactics for guiding participation practices

The four broad but interrelated principles to guide participation practice for improving women's participation in initiatives and decision-making relevant to environmental, economic and social sustainability in the sugar industry are:

- Recognising and addressing the traditional male culture that dominates industry decision-making and initiatives;
- Recognising and addressing the competing and broadening demands of women's roles and responsibilities;

- Building women’s confidence and skills to participate; and
- Building on women’s capacity to recognise and deal with change.

Each of these principles is underpinned by a number of strategies and associated implementation tactics that relate to the recommended practice of participation as outlined below.

1. Recognising and addressing the traditional male culture that dominates industry decision-making and initiatives.

Key strategies are:

- Actively supporting women’s networks (e.g. WIS groups and the WIS e-Network) in a non-patronising way to provide targeted workshops, field days or walks and other activities that can create opportunities for women. Some tactics include, for example:
 - Become an active part of an industry network;
 - Actively engage in the industry in a sympathetic environment, and
 - Build their confidence through learning from others and learning in a group.
- Encouraging both partners or all members of the family business to participate in industry meetings, activities, processes and events. Some tactics include, for example:
 - Industry organisations specifically targeting invitations through women’s networks;
 - Encourage men to invite their partners;
 - Including a social component or ensuring activities and events are ‘family friendly’.
- Establishing the strategic relevance of an activity, process or event for the farm business. Some tactics include, for example:
 - Supporting initiatives with a financial or business focus that may particularly interest women (vs. production focus);
 - Including guest speakers of interest to women.

2. Recognising and addressing the competing and broadening demands of women’s roles and responsibilities.

Key strategies are:

- Examining the timing of events to ensure that they are suitable for either family women and/or suitability for all partners of the farm business.
- Industry supporting and promoting women’s networks and groups as they provide:
 - Social support for women particularly in hard times;
 - Opportunities for women to talk about and compare their competing demands and responsibilities; and
 - Ready access to information resources or knowledge brokers – ‘knowing what you don’t know’.
- Industry organisations actively acknowledging the diverse contributions women are making in the industry and the diversity of their roles and responsibilities.

3. Building women's confidence to participate.

Key strategies are:

- Establishing specific opportunities for women to learn and develop their skills in a 'friendly' 'non-hostile' environment. Some tactics include, for example:
 - Targeted courses offered to women;
 - Supporting women's participation in activities that involve learning from others (i.e. industries or sugar regions) either in mixed participation or women only events;
 - Disseminate information about such opportunities through direct contact with women and through the use of women's networks, newsletters, internet sites, events and gatherings.
- Providing forums for women that profile women's multiple and diverse roles on-farm and off-farm and in industry crises (e.g. smut crisis, cyclone recovery). Some tactics include, for example:
 - Involving women as presenters and speakers;
 - Emphasising the positive outcomes that result from women's multiple and diverse roles;
 - Including images of women performing their roles in industry publications and media.
- Industry organisations specifically and widely recognising key women from all sectors of the industry in a non-patronising way.
- Industry actively supporting and providing opportunities or processes for interested women to build appropriate skills for executive positions within industry organisations.
- Specifically inviting women to forums, meetings, industry activities and field events, etc. who might otherwise lack the confidence to participate. Some tactics include, for example:
 - Ensuring a number of other women are participating;
 - Get other women to bring them along.

4. Building on women's capacity to recognise and deal with change.

Key strategies are:

- Industry organisations and related support services actively supporting local women's groups and networks to enhance their capacity to provide value to women for:
 - Learning and acquiring new skills;
 - Sharing of information; and
 - Networking (both within and outside their local community and the sugar industry).
- Establishing more effective cross-regional communication processes among women in the sugar industry:
 - To exchange information and ideas and know what is going on in all areas and sectors of the industry; and

- Actively supporting and promoting the WIS e-Network and the annual WISA Conference.
- Recognising innovative initiatives involving women as well as individual visionary sugar women who are leading innovation and diversification in the sugar industry. Some tactics include, for example:
 - Industry awards; and
 - Promoting them in industry networks and the media.
- Providing forums, workshops, field events, and farm walks, etc. that employ processes for the ‘co-production of knowledge’ amongst event organisers or promoters and all other participants (i.e. rather than more traditional expert-farmer dissemination approaches). Some tactics include, for example:
 - Promoting sustainable agricultural systems or best management practices;
 - Promoting innovative technologies, business systems, alternative products, etc; and
 - Being family friendly.

4.2.4 Assessing Implementation Performance

The industry should be able to assess its performance in implementing strategies for enhancing women’s participation in industry initiatives and decision-making. Some suggested performance criteria are identified in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1. Strategies for enhancing the involvement of women in sustainability initiatives across the sugar industry

1. Recognising and addressing the traditional male culture that dominates industry decision-making and initiatives

Strategies	Performance Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting women’s networks (e.g. WIS groups and the e-Network) in a non-patronising way to provide targeted workshops, field walks and other activities for women that can create opportunities for women to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Become an active part of industry networks; ○ Actively engage in the industry in a sympathetic environment; and ○ Build their confidence through learning from others and learning in a group. • Encouraging all members of the family business to participate in industry meetings, activities, processes and events, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Industry organisations specifically targeting invitations through women’s networks; ○ Encourage men to invite their partners; and ○ Ensuring activities and events are ‘family friendly’. • Establishing the strategic relevance of an industry activity, process and event for the farm business, e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Supporting initiatives with a financial or business focus that may particularly interest women (vs. production focus); and ○ Including guest speakers of interest to women. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased involvement in industry networks by women; • Increased participation by women in training days or field days; • Changes in the views expressed by women in the industry about their inclusion and influence; • Changes in the views expressed by women in the industry about their access to learning opportunities. • Improved representation and participation of women in a range of industry activities, processes and events; • Improved recognition of the complementary skills needed within the farm business, emphasising the value and diversity of the enterprise’s human and physical resources. • Increased attention given to making industry activities and events family friendly. • Changes in the views expressed by women in the industry about the strategic relevance of industry activities, processes and events; • Increase in the number of women guest speakers at industry activities and events.

2. Recognising and addressing the competing and broadening demands of women's roles and responsibilities

Strategies	Performance Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examining the timing of activities and events to ensure that they are suitable for all partners of the farm business or family. • Industry supporting and promoting women's networks and groups (e.g. WIS groups and the e-Network) as they provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Social support for women, particularly in hard times; ○ Opportunities for women to talk about and compare their competing demands and responsibilities; and ○ Ready access to information resources or knowledge brokers – 'knowing what you don't know' • Industry organisations actively acknowledging the diverse contributions women are making in the industry and the diversity of their roles and responsibilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training, meetings and other activities are conducted in a way that is family friendly and recognise the demands on women (for example, workshops are held from 9.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m.); • Increased in involvement of women in planning the design, timing and format of activities and events. • Increased recognition across the industry of the value of women's networks and groups; • Increased support and promotion across the industry for the activities of women's networks and groups. • Increased recognition within industry organisations of women's multiple and diverse roles and responsibility within the industry, both on-farm and off-farm.

3. Building women's confidence and skills to participate

Strategies	Performance Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing specific opportunities for women to learn and develop their skills, knowledge and participation in a 'friendly' 'non-hostile' environment through targeted courses offered to women. • Disseminate information about opportunities through direct contact with women and through the use of women's networks, newsletters, internet sites, events and gatherings. • Providing forums for women that profile women's multiple and diverse roles on-farm and off-farm and in industry crises (e.g. smut crisis, cyclone recovery): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Involving women as presenters and speakers; ○ Emphasising the positive outcomes that result from women's multiple and diverse roles; ○ Including images of women performing their roles in industry publications and media. • Industry organisations specifically and widely recognising key women from all sectors of the industry in a non-patronising way. • Industry actively supporting and providing opportunities or processes for interested women to build appropriate skills for executive positions within industry organisations. • Specifically inviting women to forums, meetings, industry activities and field events, etc. who might otherwise lack the confidence to participate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensuring a number of other women are participating; and ○ Encourage other women to bring them along. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased number of women participating in courses targeted for women in the industry. • Increased use of women's networks, newsletters, internet sites, events and gatherings to disseminate information about learning opportunities. • Industry and mainstream media profile women's multiple and diverse roles on-farm and off-farm and in industry crises. • Increased number of women involved as presenters and speakers in industry events. • Increased number of images of women as active industry members in industry publications and media. • Key women across all sectors of the industry encouraged to share their knowledge and experience with local, regional and national industry groups and networks. • Increased number of women on industry boards and committees. • Changes in the views expressed by women in the industry about their inclusion and influence.

4. Building on women's capacity to recognise and deal with change

Strategies	Performance Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry organisations and related support services actively supporting local women's groups and networks to enhance their capacity to provide value to women for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Learning and acquiring new skills; ○ Sharing of information; and ○ Networking (both within and outside their local community and the sugar industry). • Establishing more effective cross-regional communication processes among women in the sugar industry: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To exchange information and ideas and know what is going on in all areas and sectors of the industry ○ Actively supporting and promoting the e-Network, annual WIS Conference. • Recognition of innovative initiatives involving women as well as individual visionary sugar women who are leading innovation and diversification in the sugar industry, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Industry awards; ○ Promoting them in industry networks and the media. • Providing forums, workshops, field events and farm walks, etc. that employ processes for the 'co-production' of knowledge (i.e. amongst event promoters and all participants) rather than more traditional expert-farmer dissemination approaches and that focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Promoting sustainable agricultural systems or best management practices; ○ Promoting innovative technologies, business systems, alternative products, etc; and ○ Being family friendly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased support given to women's groups and networks for skills development, information sharing and networking. • Increased awareness of cross-regional communication opportunities among women from all sectors of the industry. • Increased participation of women in cross-regional communication processes. • Increased recognition and promotion of innovative women across the industry. • Increased focus on 'co-production' of knowledge approaches within industry activities and events.

5. References

- ABS 2007. *Patterns of Internet Access in Australia*. Australian Bureau of Statistics Report No. 8146.0.55.001.
- Adger, W.N. 2000. Social and ecological resilience: are they related? *Progress in Human Geography* 24 (3): 347-364.
- Albright, C. 2006. Who's running the farm?: Changes and characteristics of Arkansas women in agriculture. *American Journal of Agricultural Economics* 88 (5): 1315-1322.
- Alston, M. 1995. *Women on the Land: Hidden Heart of Rural Australia*. University of New South Wales Press: Sydney.
- Alston, M. 1998. Farm women and their work: Why is it not recognised? *Journal of Sociology* 34 (1): 23-34.
- Alston, M. 2000. *Breaking Through the Glass Ceiling. Women, power and leadership in agricultural organizations*. Harwood Academic Publishers: The Netherlands.
- Alston, M. 2003. Women's representation in an Australian rural context. *Sociologia Ruralis* 43(4): 474-487.
- Alston, M. 2004. Who is down on the farm? Social aspects of Australian agriculture in the 21st century. *Agriculture and Human Values* 21: 37-46.
- Argent, N. 1999. Inside the black box: Dimensions of gender, generation and scale in the Australian rural restructuring process. *Journal of Rural Studies* 15 (1): 1-15
- Armitage, D. 2005. Adaptive capacity and community-based natural resource management. *Environmental Management* 35 (6) 703-715.
- Arnstein, S. R. 1969. Eight rungs on the ladder of citizen participation. *Journal of the American Institute of Planners* 35: 217-223.
- Ascher, W. 2001. Coping with complexity and organisational interests in natural resource management. *Ecosystems* 4: 742-757.
- Aslin, H.J., Webb, T. and Fisher, M. 2000. *Fishing for Women: Understanding women's roles in the fishing industry*. Bureau of Rural Sciences: Canberra.
- Bammer, G. 2005. Integration and implementation sciences: Building a new specialization. *Ecology and Society* 10 (2): 6 [on-line] URL: <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol10/iss2/art6/>.
- Barton, J., Emery, M., Flood, R., Selsky, J. and Wolestenholme, E. 2004. A maturing of systems thinking? Evidence from three perspectives. *Systemic Practice and Action Research* 17 (1): 3-36.
- Beer, D and Burrows, R. 2007. Sociology and, of and in Web 2.0: Some initial considerations. *Sociological Research Online* 12 (5). <http://www.socresonline.org.uk/12/5/17.html>
- Bellamy, J.A. and Johnson, A.K.L. 2000. Integrated resource management: moving from rhetoric to practice in Australian Agriculture. *Environmental Management* 25(3), 265-280.
- Bellamy, J.A. and Webb, V. 2003. *Benchmarking the use of new technologies for natural resource management: A pilot study on innovation and change in the sugar industry*. Activity P1~6. Final Report. June 2003. CRC for Sustainable Sugar Production.
- Bellamy, J., Ross, H., Ewing, S. and Meppem, T. 2002a. *Integrated Catchment Management: Learning from the Australian Experience for the Murray-Darling Basin*. Final Report. January 2002. A Report for the Murray Darling Basin Commission. CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems: Brisbane. http://www2.mdbc.gov.au/naturalresources/icm/icm_aus_x_overview.html

- Bellamy, J.A., Webb, V., Mayocchi, C. and Leitch, A. 2002b. *Improving Resource Management through Rural Women's Use of New Technology: A pilot study on impediments and opportunities for learning activities*. Final Report. Prepared for AAA-FarmBis – Skilling Farmers for the Future Program. CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems: December 2002.
http://www.daff.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0019/206821/csiro_research_report.pdf
- Benham, B., Robbins, J., Brannan, K., Mostaghimi, S., Dillaha, T., Pease, J. and Smith, E. 2005. Development of survey-like assessment tools to assess agricultural best management practice performance potential. *Journal of Soil and Water Conservation* 60 (5): 251-259.
- Berkes, F., J. Colding and C. Folke (eds). 2003. *Navigating social-ecological systems: Building resilience for complexity and change*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.
- Bjorhaug, H. and Blekesaune, A. 2008. Gender and work in Nowegian family farm businesses. *Sociologia Ruralis* 48(2): 152-165.
- Blackmore, C. 2007. What kinds of knowledge, knowing and learning are required for addressing resource dilemmas?: A theoretical overview. *Environmental Science and Policy* 10: 512-525.
- Blanchard, M., Metcalf, A. and Burns, J. 2007. *Bridging the rural divide: creating opportunities for marginalized young people to get connected*. Research Report No. 1, December 2007. Inspire Foundation: Victoria.
- Bodin, O., Crona, B., Ernston, H. 2006. Social Networks in Natural Resource Management: What Is There to Learn from a Structural Perspective? *Ecology and Society* 11(2): r2. [online] URL: <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol11/iss2/resp2/>
- Booher, D.E. and Innes, J.E. 2002. Network power in collaborative planning. *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 21: 221-236.
- Bouwen, R. and Tailleau, T. 2004. Multi-party collaboration as social learning for interdependence: Developing relational knowing for sustainable natural resource management. *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology* 14: 137-153.
- Boyd, D.M. and Ellison, N.B. 2007. Social network sites: Definition, history and scholarship. *Journal of Computer-mediated Communication* 13 (1), Article 11.
<http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol13/issue1/boyd.ellison.html>
- Brand, F.S. and Jax, K. 2007. Focusing the meaning(s) of resilience: Resilience as a descriptive concept and a boundary object. *Ecology and Society* 12(1): 23. [online] URL: <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol12/iss1/art23/>
- Bruckmeier, K. and Tovey, H. 2008. Knowledge in sustainable rural development: From forms of knowledge to knowledge processes. *Sociologia Ruralis* 48 (3): 313-329.
- Bryant, L. and Pini, B. 2008. Gender, class and rurality: Australian case studies. *Journal of Rural Studies* doi:10.1016/j.jrurstud.2008.05.003
- Bryceson, K. 2007. The on-line learning environment – a new model using social constructivism and the concept of 'Ba' as a theoretical framework. *Learning environment research* 10:189-206.
- Buchy, M., & Race, D. 2001. The twists and turns of community participation in natural resource management in Australia: What is missing? *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management* 44: 293-308.
- Burnley, I. and Murphy, P. 2004. *Sea Change: Movement from metropolitan to Arcadian Australia*. University of New South Wales Press: Sydney.
- Carolan, M.S. 2008. Democratizing knowledge: Sustainable and conventional agricultural field days as divergent democratic forms. *Science Technology and Human Values* 33: 508-528.
- Carpenter, S., Walker, B., Anderies, J.M. and Abel, N. 2001. From metaphor to measurement: Resilience of what to what? *Ecosystems* 4: 765-781.
- CCi Digital Futures Report, 2008. *The Internet in Australia*. ARC Centre for Creative Industries and Innovation, Swinburne University of Technology, July 2008. Available on-line: www.cci.edu.au/projects/digital-futures..
- Chamala, S. and Keith, K.. 1995. *Participative approaches for Landcare: Perspectives, policies and programs*. Australian Academic Press: Brisbane.

- Chambers, R. 1997. *Whose reality counts? Putting the first last*. Intermediate Technology Publications: London.
- Claridge, C. 1998. Rural women, decision making and leadership within environmental and Landcare groups. *Rural Society* 8(3): 183-195.
- Coates, J, Suzor, N. and Fitzgerald, A. 2007. *Legal Aspects of Web 2.0 Activities: Management of legal risk associated with the use of YouTube, MySpace and Second Life*. Report Prepared for Smart Service Queensland, July 2007. ARC Centre of Excellence for Creative Industries and innovation. Queensland University of Technology: Brisbane, Australia.
- Cornwall, A. 2003. Whose voice? Whose Choices? Reflections on gender and participatory development. *World Development* 31 (8): 1325-1342.
- Cross, R., Borgatti, S.P. and Parker, A. 2001a. Beyond answers: dimensions of the social network. *Social Networks* 23: 215-235.
- Cross, R., Rice, R.E. and Parker, A. 2001b. Information Seeking in Social Context: Structural Influences and Receipt of Information Benefits. *IEEE Transactions on Systems, Man, and Cybernetics—Part C: Applications and Reviews* 31 (4): 438-448.
- Curtis, A. and De Lacy, T. 1996. Landcare in Australia: Beyond the expert farmer. *Agriculture and Human Values* 13 (1): 22
- Daly, D.E. 2005. *Bridging the Digital Divide: The Role of Community Online Access Centres in Indigenous Communities*. Discussion Paper No. 273/2005, The Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research. The Australian National University: Canberra.
- Dargan, L. and Shucksmith, M. 2008. LEADER and innovation. *Sociologia Ruralis* 48 (3): 274-291.
- Davidson-Hunt, I.J. 2006. Adaptive learning networks: developing resource management knowledge through social learning forums. *Human Ecology* 34 (4): 593-614.
- Department of Further Education, Employment Science and Technology (DFEEST) 2007. *Review of Online Access Centres in Regional South Australia. June 2007*. Digital Bridge Unit, Information Economy Directorate, DFEEST, Government of South Australia.
- Dimopoulos, M. and Sheridan, M. 2000. *Missed Opportunities. Unlocking the future of women in Australian agriculture. Stage 2 Report*. RIRDC Publication No. 00/44. RIRDC: Canberra.
- Easdown, W. 1999. The social infrastructure needed to develop rural Internet use in southern Queensland. *Rural Society* 9(3), 585-599.
- Elix, J. and Lambert, J. 1998 *Missed Opportunities. Harnessing the potential of women in Australian agriculture. Volume 1: Social Survey and Analysis*. Canberra: RIRDC and Department of Primary Industries and Energy.
- Eversole, R. and Martin, J. (eds.) 2005. *Participation and Governance in Regional Development: Global Trends in and Australian Context*. Ashgate: Hampshire, England.
- Fabricius, C., Folke, C., Cundill, G. and Schultz, L. 2007. Powerless spectators, Coping actors, and adaptive co-managers: a synthesis of the role of communities in ecosystem management. *Ecology and Society* 12 (1): 29. [online] URL: <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol12/iss1/art29/>
- Farmer-Bowers, Q. and Lane, R. 2008. Understanding farmers' strategic decision-making processes and the implications for biodiversity conservation policy. *Journal of Environmental Management*, doi:10.1016/j.jenvman.2008.05.002.
- Fazey, I., Fazey, J.A., Fischer, J., Sherren, K., Warren, J., Noss, R.F. and Dovers, S.R. 2007. Adaptive capacity and learning to learn as leverage for social-ecological resilience. *Frontiers in Ecology and Environment* 5 (7): 375-380.
- Foster, M. and Sheales, T. 2008. Sugar: Outlook to 2012-13. *Australian Commodities* 15 (1; March Quarter 2008): 49-55.

- Folke, C., Colding, J. and Berkes, F. 2003. Synthesis: Building resilience and adaptive capacity in socio-ecological systems. Pp. 352-387 in F. Berkes, C. Folke, and J. Colding, *Navigating socio-ecological systems: Building resilience for complexity and change*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.
- Fuchs, C. 2007. *Internet and Society: Social Theory in the Information Age*. Routledge: New York.
- Gallopín, G.C. 2006. Links between vulnerability, resilience and adaptive capacity. *Global Environmental Change* 16: 293-303.
- Gibson, D., Baxter, J. and Kingston, C. 1990. *Beyond the Dichotomy: The paid and unpaid work of rural women*. Centre for Rural Welfare Research: Wagga Wagga.
- Gilbert M.R., Masucci M., Homko C., and Bove, A.A. 2008. Theorizing the digital divide: Information and communication technology use frameworks among poor women using a telemedicine system. *Geoforum* 39: 912–925.
- Grace, M. 1997. *Networking Systems for Rural Women*. RIRDC Publications No 97/4, Canberra: RIRDC.
- Granovetter, M.S. 1973. The strength of weak ties. *The American Journal of Sociology* 78 (6): 1360-1380.
- Grant, J. and Rainnie, A., 2005. The Hidden role of gender exclusion in regional development agencies. In: Eversole, R., Martin, J. (Eds.), *Participation and Governance in Regional Development*. Ashgate, Aldershot, pp.
- Gunderson, L.H., Holling, C.S. and Light, S.S. 1995. *Barriers and Bridges to the Renewal of Ecosystems and Institutions*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Gunderson, L.H. and Holling, C.S. (eds). 2002. *Panarchy: Understanding transformations in human and natural systems*. Island Press: Washington
- Hoang, L.A., Castella, J-P. and Novosad, P. 2006. Social networks and information access: Implications for agricultural extension in a rice farming community in northern Vietnam. *Agriculture and Human Values* 23: 513–527.
- Healy, S. 2008. Towards an epistemology of public participation. *Journal of Environmental Management* doi:10.1016/j.jenvman.2008.05.020.
- Higgins, A., Thorburn, P., Archer, A. and Jakku, E. 2007. Opportunities for value chain research in sugar industries. *Agricultural Systems* 94: 611-621.
- Holling, C.S. 1973. Resilience and stability of ecological systems. *Annual Review of Ecology and Systematics* 4: 1-23.
- Holling, C.S. 2001. Understanding the complexity of economic, ecological, and social systems. *Ecosystems* 4: 390-405.
- Hooper, S. 2008. *Financial performance of Australian sugar cane producers 2005-06 to 2007-08*. ABARE Research Report 08.8 for the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Canberra, September 2008.
- Ingram, J. 2008. Agronomist–farmer knowledge encounters: an analysis of knowledge exchange in the context of best management practices in England. *Agriculture and Human Values* 25: 405–418
- Ice, G. 2004. History of innovative best management practice development and its role in addressing water quality limited bodies. *Journal of Environmental Engineering* 130 (6): 684-689.
- Ipe, V., De Vuyst, E., Braden, J. and White, D. 2001. Simulation of a group incentive program for farmer adoption of best management practices. *Agricultural and Resource Economics Review* 30 (2): 139-150.
- Isaac, M.E., Erikson, B.H., Quashie-Sam, S.J. and Timmer, V.R. 2007. Transfer of knowledge on agroforestry management practices: The structure of farmer advice networks. *Ecology and Society* 12(2): 32. [online] URL: <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol12/iss2/art32/>
- Jakku, E., Bellamy, J., Kelly, G., Ross, H., Darbas, T., Lawrence, G., Benn, K., Bohnet, I. and Smith, T. 2007. Social drivers and processes of change: Community and regional issues and opportunities for people development in the Australian sugar industry. In: SRDC,

- Research and Development Strategies to Advance the Australian Sugarcane Industry*. SRDC: Brisbane.
- Janssen, M.A., Bodin, O., Anderies, J.M., Elmqvist, T., Ernstson, H., McAllister, R.J., Olsson, P. and Ryan, P. 2006. Toward a network theory perspective of the study of resilience in social-ecological systems. *Ecology and Society* 11(1): 15 [on-line] URL: <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol11/iss1/art15/>.
- Jupp, E. 2008. The feeling of participation: Everyday spaces and urban change. *Geoforum* 39: 331–343.
- Kesby, M. 2005. Rethorizing empowerment-through-participation as a performance in space: Beyond tyranny to transformation. *Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 30 (4): 2037-2065.
- Kulig, J.C. 2000. Community resilience: The potential for community health nursing theory development. *Public Health Nursing* 17(5): 374-385.
- Lebel, L., Anderies, J.M., Campbell, B., Folke, C., Hatfield_Dodds, S., Hughes T.P. and Wilson J. 2006. Governance and the capacity to manage resilience in regional social-ecological systems. *Ecology and Society* 11(1): 19 [on-line] URL: <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol11/iss1/art19/>.
- Lennie, J. 2002. Rural women's empowerment in a communication technology project: some contradictory effects. *Rural Society* 12 (3): 224-245.
- Lloyd, R. and Bill, A. 2004. *Australia Online: How Australians are Using Computers and the Internet. 2001*. Australian Bureau of Statistics Catalogue No. 2056. Commonwealth of Australia.
- Luthans, F. 2002. The need for and meaning of positive organizational behavior. *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 23: 695-706.
- Maani, K and Cavanni, R.Y. 2000. *Systems thinking and modelling: understanding change and complexity*. Prentice Hall: Auckland, New Zealand.
- Macadam, R., Drinian, J., Inall, N., and McKenzie, B. 2004 *Growing the capital of Australia: The task of capacity building*. RIRDC Publication No. 04/034. Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation: Winmalee, NSW.
- McCartney, F. and Ross, H. 2003. *Looking Beyond the Boundary Fence: Rural Women, Natural Resource Management and Sustainable Development*. School of Natural and Rural Systems Management, The University of Queensland: Gatton.
- McGowan Consulting. 2006. *CANEGROWER'S Strategy for Women and Teams*. Report prepared for CANEGROWERS, URL: accessed 22/09/08. http://www.canegrowers.com.au/docs/Women_Research_Sept06.pdf.
- Morgan, K. and Murdoch, J. 2000. Organic vs. conventional agriculture: knowledge, power and innovation in the food chain. *Geoforum* 31: 159-173.
- Murdoch, J. 2000. Networks a new paradigm of rural development? *Journal of Rural Studies* 16: 407-419.
- Muro, M. and Jeffrey, P. 2008. A critical review of the theory and application of social learning in participatory natural resource management processes. *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management* 51 (3): 325-344.
- Newman, L. and Dale, A. 2005. Network structure, diversity, and proactive resilience building: a response to Tompkins and Adger. *Ecology and Society* 10(1): r2. [online] URL: <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol10/iss1/resp2/>
- Notley, T. and Foth, M. 2008. Extending Australia's digital divide policy: an examination of the value of social inclusion and social capital policy frameworks. *Australian Social Policy No. 7*: 87-110.
- Olsson, P., Gunderson, L.H., Carpenter, S.R., Ryan, P., Lebel, L., Folke, C. and Holling, C.S. 2006. Shooting the rapids: Navigating transitions to adaptive governance of Social-Ecological Systems. *Ecology and Society* 11(1): 18. [online] URL: <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol11/iss1/art18/>
- Pahl-Wostl, C. 2002. Participative and stakeholder-based policy design, evaluation and modelling processes. *Integrated Assessment* 3: 3-14.

- Pahl-Wostl, C, Craps, M., Dewulf, A., Mostert, E., Tabara, D. and Tailleau, T. 2007. Social learning and water resource management. *Ecology and Society* 12(2): 5. [online] URL: <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol12/iss2/art5/>
- Pahl-Wostl, C., Mostert, E. and Tabara, D. 2008. The growing importance of social learning in water resource management and sustainability science. *Ecology and Society* 13(1): 24. [online] URL: <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol13/iss1/art24/>
- Paton, D., Millar, M. and Johnston, D. 2001. Community resilience to volcanic hazard consequences. *Natural Hazards* 24: 157-169.
- Paton, D. 2005. Community resilience: Integrating hazard management and community engagement. Paper presented at the 'International Conference on Engaging Communities', 14-17 August 2005, Brisbane, Australia.
- Pini, B. 1999. Women's Participation in the Sugar Industry: Survey Report. Unpublished document.
- Pini, B. 2001. *From the paddock to the boardroom: The gendered path to agricultural leadership in the Australian sugar industry*. Thesis (Ph.D.). Queensland University of Technology: Brisbane.
- Pini, B. 2002. Focus groups, feminist research and farm women: Opportunities for empowerment in rural social research. *Journal of Rural Studies* 18, 339-351.
- Pini, B. 2006. The critique of 'new' rural local governance: The case of gender in a rural Australian setting. *Journal of Rural Studies* 22: 217-231.
- Pini, B. 2007. Always an outlaw: Daughters-in-law on Australian family farms. *Women's Studies International Forum* 30: 40-47.
- Pretty, J. 1995. Participatory learning for sustainable agriculture. *World Development* 23(8): 1247-63.
- Productivity Commission (PC). 2005. *Trends in Australian Agriculture*. PC Research Paper. Australian Government: Canberra.
- Putnam, R. 2000. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. Simon and Schuster: New York.
- Resilience Alliance 2005. Key concepts: Resilience. <http://www.resalliance.org/index.php?id=1> Accessed 31/01/06.
- Richardson, G.E. 2002. The metatheory of resilience and resiliency. *Journal of Clinical Psychology* 58(3): 307-321.
- Rist, S., Chidambaranathan, M., Escobar, C., Wiesmann, U. and Zimmermann, A. 2007. Moving from sustainable management to sustainable governance of natural resources: The role of social learning processes in rural India, Bolivia and Mali. *Journal of Rural Studies* 23: 23-37.
- Shortall, S. 2008. Are rural development programmes socially inclusive? Social inclusion, civic engagement, participation, and social capital: Exploring the differences. *Journal of Rural Studies* 24: 450-457.
- Siddiquee, A. and Kagan, C. 2006. The Internet, empowerment and identity: An exploration of participation by refugee women in a Community Internet Project (CIP) in the United Kingdom (UK). *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology* 16: 189-206.
- Smit, B. and Wandel, J. 2006. Adaptation, adaptive capacity and vulnerability. *Global Environmental Change* 16: 282-292.
- Sonn, C.C. and Fisher, A.T. 1998. Sense of community: Community resilient responses to oppression and change. *Journal of Community Psychology* 26 (5): 457-472.
- Standing Committee on Agriculture and Resource Management (SCARM). 1998. *A Vision for Change: National Plan for Women in Agriculture and Resource Management*, Canberra: Standing Committee on Agriculture and Resource Management.
- Steyaert, P., Barzman, M.S., Brives, H., Ollivier, G., Billaud, J.P., Hubert, B. 2007. The role of knowledge and research in facilitating social learning among stakeholders in natural resources management in the French Atlantic coastal wetlands. *Environmental Science and Policy* 10 (6): 537-550.
- Stirling, A. 2008. "Opening Up" and "Closing Down": Power, participation, and pluralism in the social appraisal of technology. *Science, Technology and Human Values* 33: 262-294.

- Stringer, L.C., Dougill, A.J., Fraser, E., Hubacek, K., Prell, C. and Reed, M.S. 2006. Unpacking “participation” on the adaptive management of social-ecological systems. *Ecology and Society* 11(2): 39. [online] URL: <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol11/iss2/art39/>
- Schwanen, T. and Kwan, M. 2008. The Internet, mobile phone and space-time constraints. *Geoforum* 39: 1362–1377.
- Tobin, G.A. 1999. Sustainability and community resilience: the holy grail of hazards planning? *Environmental Hazards* 1: 13-25.
- Tompkins, E.L. and Adger, W.N. 2004. Does adaptive management of natural resources enhance resilience to climatic change? *Ecology and Society* 9(2): 10. [online] URL: <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol9/iss2/art10>
- Tovey, H. 2008. Introduction: Rural sustainable development in the knowledge society era. *Sociologia Ruralis* 48 (3): 185-199.
- Trauger, A. 2004. ‘Because they can do the work’: women farmers in sustainable agriculture in Pennsylvania, USA. *Gender, Place and Culture* 11 (2): 289-307.
- Trauger, A., Sachs, C., Barbercheck, M., Kiernan, N.E., Brasier, K. and Findeis, J. 2008. Agricultural education: gender identity and knowledge exchange. *Journal of Rural Studies* 24: 432–439.
- Venturous Australia Report, 2008. *Venturous Australia. Building Strength in Innovation*. Report to Australian Government, August 2008. Cutler & Co Pty. Ltd: Melbourne.
- Walker, B.H., Carpenter, S.R., Anderies, N., Abel, N., Cumming, G.S., Janssen, M.A., Lebel, L., Norberg, J., Peterson, G.D. and Pritchard, R. 2002. Resilience management in social-ecological systems: a working hypothesis for a participatory approach. *Conservation Ecology* 6(1): 14. [on-line] URL: <http://www.consecol.org/vol6/iss1/art14/>.
- Walker, B., Holling, C.S., Carpenter, S.R. and Kinzig, A. 2004. Resilience, adaptability and transformability in social-ecological systems. *Ecology and Society* 9(2): 5. [online] URL: <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol9/iss2/art5>
- Webler, T. and Renn, O. 1995. A brief primer on participation: Philosophy and practice. In O. Renn, T. Webler & P. Wiedemann (eds.) *Fairness and Competence in Citizen Participation: Evaluating Models for Environmental Discourse*. Kluwer Academic Publishers: Dordrecht, pp. 17-33.
- Welch, E. and Marc-Aurele, F. 2001. Determinants of farmer behavior: Adoption of and compliance with best management practices for nonpoint source pollution in the Skaneateles Lake Watershed. *Journal of Lake and Reservoir Management* 17(3): 233-245.
- Wenger, E. 2004. Knowledge management as a doughnut: Shaping your knowledge strategy through community of practice. *Ivy Business Journal* January/February 2004, 1-8.
- Westermann O., Ashby, J. and Pretty, J. 2005. Gender and social capital: The importance of gender differences for the maturity and effectiveness of natural resource management groups. *World Development* 33 (11): 1783-1799.
- Westley, F. 1995. Governing design: the management of social systems and ecological management. In L.H. Gunderson, C.S. Holling, and S.S. Light (eds.). *Barriers and Bridges to the Renewal of Ecosystems and Institutions*. Columbia University Press, New York.
- White, S.C. 1996. Depoliticising development: the uses and abuses of participation. *Development in Practice* 6(1): 6-15.
- Williams, J. 1992. *The Invisible Farmer: A Report on Australian Farm Women*, Canberra: Commonwealth Department of Primary Industries and Energy.
- Windle, J. and Rolfe, J. 2005. Growers’ Perspectives on the viability of sugarcane farming systems in Central Queensland. *Australasian Agribusiness Review* 13, Paper 8: 1-19.
- Woolcock, M. and Narayan, D. 2000. Social capital: Implications for development theory, research, and policy. *The World Bank Research Observer* 15 (2): 225-249.

SRDC Research Project

CSE016 Final Report

Appendix 9: Communication and Stakeholder Involvement Strategy Report

Project CSE016:

Sugar communities and resilience to change: Opportunities for enhancing women's participation in sustainability initiatives

**PROJECT COMMUNICATION
AND STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT STRATEGY**

Bohnet, I., Jakku, E., Bellamy, J. and Matthiesson L.

July 2007

1. THE CSE016 PROJECT

1.1 Project Description

The overall objective of the CSE016 project is to work, in two rural regions, with women in the sugar industry, in collaboration with other industry, government, community, research and extension stakeholders, to concurrently:

1. Develop a shared understanding amongst collaborators and researchers of:
 - a. The major social, economic and institutional influences on women's participation in initiatives relevant to sustainability and the sugar industry; and
 - b. The value of and opportunities for enhancing women's participation in such initiatives.
2. Identify, implement and evaluate strategies that improve women's participation in initiatives relevant to environmental, economic and social sustainability in the sugar industry, using participatory action research.
3. Facilitate wide, ongoing communication and uptake of findings on strategies for strengthening the participation of women in sustainability initiatives to enhance sugar communities' capacity to deal with change within and beyond the case study regions.

The project is being conducted over three years (2005-2008) and has three major phases:

- Phase 1 – *Scoping* the issues and stakeholders involved in each region through interviews with representatives of key organisations and others involved in relevant policy processes.
- Phase 2 – *Learning from the regions*, by interviewing women involved in the sugar industry in the two regions about their experiences and holding workshops with women from other sugar regions and other agricultural industries to capture learnings from other women. Identify current sustainability initiatives within each region which may benefit from greater women's involvement, and develop action research 'case studies' in collaboration with one or two suitable initiatives in each region.
- Phase 3 – *Working collaboratively* with action research case study initiatives to develop, implement and evaluate strategies to increase women's involvement.

1.2 Need for Communication and Stakeholder Involvement Strategy

The key challenge for this project is to develop and implement it as an effective participatory research project that contributes to improvements in opportunities for women's participation in sustainability initiatives. This will require on-going communication and stakeholder involvement as part of the change process. Communication and stakeholder involvement is essential to:

- o understanding of concerns and needs of partners;
- o identifying shared key messages;
- o building partnerships and networks;
- o enabling learning at individual, community, institutional and industry policy levels (Kirk and Metcalf, 2000).

2. COMMUNICATION AND STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT STRATEGY FOR THE CSE016 PROJECT

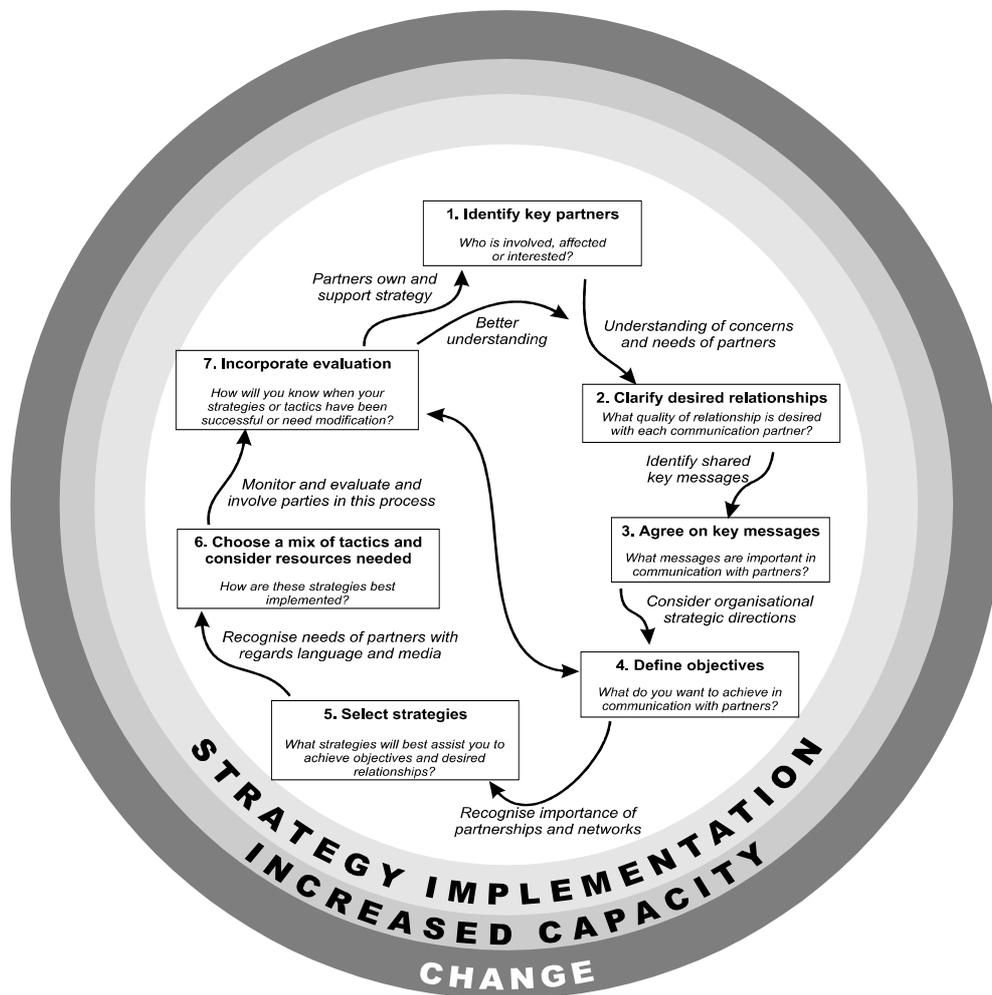


Figure 1: A seven-step guide to communication (Kirk and Metcalf, 2000)

2.1 Framework for Communication and Stakeholder Involvement Planning

A framework for communication planning and stakeholder involvement provides a structure to follow and helps ensure best practice. The above seven step process (Figure 1) has been used as a guide for developing this communication and stakeholder involvement plan. The plan identifies key stakeholders on their 'functional' basis, their attitudes to the research, our objectives, key messages to be communicated to the different stakeholder groups, strategies to achieve objectives, allocation of tasks, the timeline and how evaluation will occur. The project work plan and the communication and stakeholder involvement plan are closely aligned and may be revised as the project progresses.

2.2 Identifying Key Stakeholders in the Project

The project is being conducted with women in the sugar industry, in collaboration with other sugar industry, government, community, research and extension stakeholders in two study regions, one in the north (i.e. Herbert to Mossman districts) and the other in the south (i.e. Bundaberg and Isis districts). Collaboration between the research team and key partners is reflected in the project contract. Table 2 provides an overview of the different stakeholder categories in the project.

Table 2. Stakeholder Categories

Stakeholder categories	Who they are	Role in relation to project
Co-Investigators & Reference Panel Members	Co-Investigators (individuals or organisations listed in the project contract): Ms Sherry Kaurila, Hinchinbrook Shire Councillor and grower; Ms Lyn Thomas, Bundaberg Women in Sugar; Mr James Ogden-Brown, BSES Ltd, Bundaberg; Mr David Calcino, BSES Ltd, Meringa; and Ms Fiona McCartney, Burnett Mary Regional Group for NRM, Bundaberg.	Local project contacts in the case study regions. Responsible for provision of input, feedback and advice on project direction; 'being' local advocates for the project and sounding board in the case study regions; provision of input into project progress and deliverables.
	Project collaborators (not listed in the project contract): Northern study region: Kirsten Brooks, Wet Tropics Women in Sugar Group; Veronica Lizzio, Wet Tropics Women in Sugar Group; Fred Marchant, Sugar Executive Officer, Cairns; Judy Rehbein, FutureCane Industry Liaison Officer, Babinda; Danielle Skocaj, Extension Officer, Tully BSES; Rachael Wicks, FNQ NRM, Manager, Community Engagement and Communication Southern study region: Paul Nicol, Productivity Officer, Isis Mill; Jenny Rule, Bundaberg Women in Sugar Group; Anne Slattery, Centacare; Leath Stewart Team leader, DPI&F; Sandra Webb, Isis Women in Sugar Group.	Provide input, feedback and advice on project direction; link the project into relevant sustainability initiatives in each case study region; provide input into project progress; ensure that the project delivers practical outcomes; provide the conduit for reporting into and communication with relevant institutions; contribute to once or twice a year face to face meetings, with phone and email interaction throughout the year
Case study collaborators	Individuals, particularly women, involved in sustainability initiatives in the sugar industry or other sustainability initiatives related to NRM.	Commitment to contribute their perspectives/experiences through involvement in interviews, focus groups and/or workshops and to collaborating through action research activities.
Influencers & Implementers	NRM bodies, canegrowers, BSES, SRDC, Women in sugar groups, catchment management and other community groups, DPI&F and other government agencies.	These organisations do not have a formal role in the project; however, they are important, particularly in phase 3 of the project. Therefore, individuals representing some of these organisations are co-investigators and project collaborators.

2.3 Levels of Communication and Stakeholder Involvement

One of the key activities in the first reference panel meeting was mapping the relevant stakeholders in the northern and southern region according to levels of communication and stakeholder involvement. The outcomes of this exercise are presented in the appendices. Appendix A summarises the key stakeholders in the northern region by ‘functional’ basis and Appendix B presents the information on key stakeholders in the northern region according to their different geographical scales or levels of influence. Appendices C and D present the equivalent data for the southern region.

The reference panel identified three broad levels of interaction between the chief investigators and key stakeholders in the project (Figure 2).

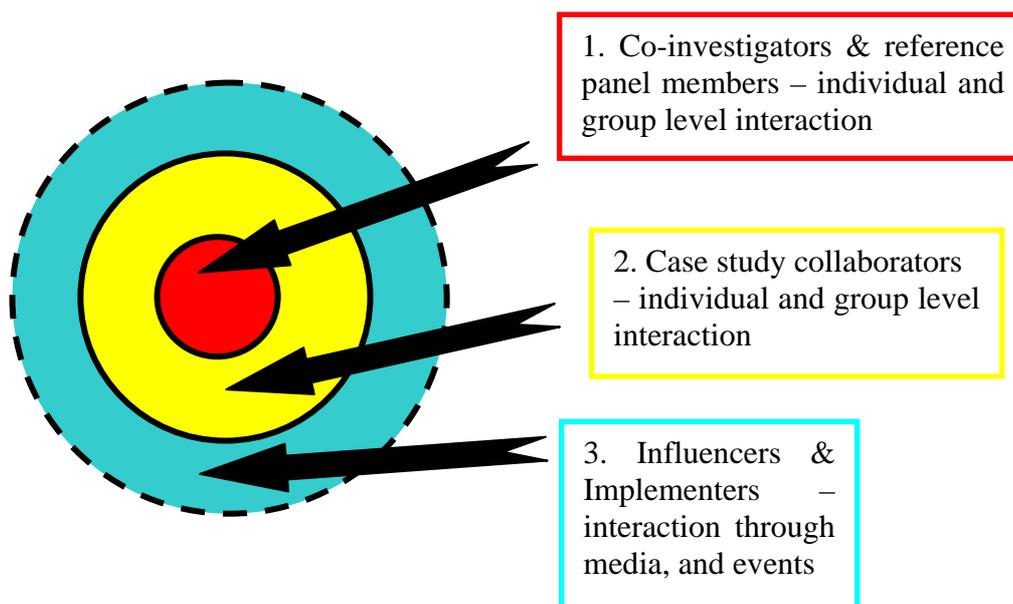


Figure 2: Levels of interaction between project participants and the project team

1. Co-investigators & reference panel members – these are the key local project contacts in the case study regions. The aim of this interaction is gain support for the project; input, feedback and advice on project direction; link the project into relevant sustainability initiatives in each case study region; ensure that the project delivers practical outcomes.
2. Case study collaborators – these are the individuals/women involved in sustainability initiatives in the sugar industry or other sustainability initiatives related to NRM. They will work in close collaboration with the co-investigators and reference panel members. These individuals are likely to have a high level of ownership of the project through the contribution they are making. They will have access to the co-investigators and reference panel members to discuss the research and to provide feedback.
3. Influencers & Implementers – some individuals form part of the above groups actively involved in the project. These individuals provide the link between the project and the organizations and groups and ensure that communication will filter through established communication channels such as newsletters, newspapers, radio, trade journals.

Each of the three levels of interaction expected to occur in the project has a communication and stakeholder involvement strategy for success. The details are provided in the communication and stakeholder involvement plan.

3. COMMUNICATION AND STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT PLAN FOR THE CSE016 PROJECT

PHASE 1: Scoping						
Stakeholder category	Attitude to issue	Our objective	Key Message	Potential tactics	Responsibility/resources	Timing
1. Co-investigators and reference panel members	Hesitant about if and how to get involved in the project Unsure about project science, implementation and their needs	Get co-investigators and reference panel members interested in and understanding the research	Working together to find strategies to improve women's participation in sustainability initiatives	Personal contact with co-investigators and reference panel members to promote research and get them on board	Emma, Iris, Jenny	Starting November 2005 - ongoing
				Face-to-face interviews with representatives of key organisations and others involved in relevant policy processes.	Emma, Jenny, Iris	May 2006 – March 2007
				Participation in activities and initiatives (e.g. Women in Sugar meetings, field days) led by reference panel members	Emma, Iris, Jenny	ongoing
2. Case study collaborators	Unaware of project	Develop good relationships for long term	Researchers working with regional/local groups and/or individuals to enhance opportunities for women to participate in sustainability initiatives	Participation in local activities and initiatives (e.g. Women in Sugar meetings)	Emma, Iris, Jenny	ongoing
3. Influencers & Implementers	Unaware of project	We want them to hear about the project We want them to be interested in the research and its outcomes and supportive of it	The CSE016 project provides great potential to address one of the 'big issues' in the rural communities and farming sector	Widely disseminate newsletters	Emma, Iris, Jenny	ongoing

PHASE 2: Learning from the regions						
Stakeholder category	Attitude to issue	Our objective	Key Message	Potential tactics	Responsibility/resources	Timing
1. Co-investigators and reference panel members	Engaged with project, unsure how effective it will be, keen to assist.	Promote co-investigators and reference panel members as key partners in the project	Researchers working with key regional stakeholders on this project to address 'real' issues and to work in the regional/local context	Personal contact with co-investigators and reference panel members to promote research	Emma, Iris, Jenny	ongoing
				Develop newsletter articles in collaboration with co-investigators and reference panel members	Emma, Louise	ongoing
				Jointly promote research project through existing networks	Emma, Iris, Jenny, co-investigators, reference panel members	ongoing
2. Case study collaborators	Unsure about whether to get involved with project	Demonstrate value from science Promote them as key research partners in the project	Researchers working with regional/local groups and/or individuals to enhance opportunities for women to participate in sustainability initiatives	Participation in local initiatives (e.g. Women in Sugar meetings)	Emma, Iris, Jenny	ongoing
				Interview women involved in the sugar industry in the two districts about their experiences.	Emma, Iris, Jenny	March to May 2007
				Participate in workshops with women from other rural industries and other sugar regions to capture learnings from other women.	Emma, Iris, Jenny	June 2007
3. Influencers & Implementers	Low awareness about the project	We want them to be interested in the research and its outcomes and supportive of it	The CSE016 project provides great potential to address one of the 'big issues' in the rural communities and farming sector	Widely disseminate newsletter articles	Emma, Iris, Jenny, Louise, co-investigators, reference panel members	ongoing

PHASE 3: Working collaboratively						
Stakeholder category	Attitude to issue	Our objective	Key Message	Potential tactics	Responsibility/resources	Timing
1. Co-investigators and reference panel members	Engaged with project, starting to see how the project may have an impact, keen to assist.	Promote co-investigators and reference panel members as key partners in the project	Researchers working with key regional stakeholders on this project to address 'real' issues and to work in the regional/local context	Personal contact with co-investigators and reference panel members to develop and implement action research plans.	Emma, Iris, Jenny	Starting November 2005 - ongoing
				Jointly promote action research activities through existing networks	Emma, Iris, Jenny, co-investigators, reference panel members	April 2007 - ongoing
2. Case study collaborators	Starting to see ways that they can be involved in the project	Demonstrate value from science Promote them as key research partners in the project	Researchers working with regional/local groups and/or individuals to enhance opportunities for women to participate in sustainability initiatives	Newsletter and/or newspaper articles reporting on findings from the case studies	Emma, Jenny, Iris, Louise	ongoing
3. Influencers & Implementers	Growing awareness of the project	We want them to be interested in the research and its outcomes and supportive of it	The CSE016 project provides great potential to address one of the 'big issues' in the rural communities and farming sector	Maintain regular newspaper articles, articles in NRM newsletters and other relevant stakeholder newsletters/publications	Emma, Jenny, Iris, Louise	ongoing

4. REFERENCES

- Kirk, L. and Metcalfe, J. (2000) Relationships – the Building Block to Successful Communication. Presentation to an Irrigation Conference, Melbourne, Australia, 2000.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix A: Summary of key northern stakeholders on ‘functional’ basis

Collaborators	Influencers	Implementers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CSE016 project team ● Project Reference Group (North) ● Regional NRM Bodies (FNQNRM and BMNRM) ● Key State agencies (SD) ● Women in Sugar Groups (DEFOS; potential new northern group) ● Key Sugar women from region (eg. Sherry Kaurila) ● Case study participants ● RD&E bodies/clients (CSIRO, SRDC, BSES) ● Other Research Projects (Cathy McGowan, Joy Doguera) ● Sugar Agency Network (SAN) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Women’s groups (Other WIS groups; Rural Women’s Network, Women in Agriculture, ‘Sugar Shakers’) ● Grower Organisations (CANEGROWERS, Australian Cane Farmers Assoc., Mossman Agricultural Services, etc) ● Mills/millers in case regions ● Sugar research and extension bodies (SRDC, BSES) ● Sugar Industry service providers (DPI, BSES, productivity services groups in each case region) ● Other Rural Industry Peak bodies (QFF/GrowCom/AgForce) ● Community NRM bodies in regions (Regional NRM – partic Coordinators and Industry advisory groups)) ● State Government agencies (SD/RAG) ● Federal Government agencies (DOTARS - SIRP, ACCs) ● Local Government and related regional associations (ROCs, RPACS) ● Support services for women (e.g. health and welfare) ● Key Downstream Industry Groups (Sugar Terminals, Qld Sugar Ltd., Ports Corporation) and product sellers (e.g. fertiliser companies) ● ‘Sugar clusters’ and other small industry or grower groups ● Religious/ethnic groups (e.g. Catholic Church] ● Harvesters (Cane Harvesters Association) ● Indigenous groups (Rainforest group, WT Advisory group) ● Chambers of Commerce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ‘Sugar clusters’ and other grower groups (including productivity services groups for mill areas) ● Grower organisations, (e.g. CANEGROWERS and Australian Cane Farmers Association, Mossman Agric Services) ● Key individuals in case study areas (i.e. local ‘champions’) ● RAG people ● BSES extension people ● Future Cane Liaison officers

Appendix B: Summary of key northern stakeholders by geographical scale/level of influence¹

External to Region	Regional	'Local'/Sub-regional
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CSE016 project team ● RD&E bodies/clients (CSIRO, SRDC, BSES) ● Federal Government agencies (DOTARS - SIRP, ACCs) ● Key State Government agencies (SD) ● Women's groups (Other WIS groups; Rural Women's Network, 'Sugar Shakers') ● Key Downstream Industry Groups (Sugar Terminals, Qld Sugar Ltd., Ports Corporation) and product sellers (e.g. fertiliser companies) ● Other Regional NRM Bodies (BMRG) ● Other Research Projects (Cathy McGowan, Joy Doguera) ● Sugar Agency Network (SAN) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Project Reference Group (North) ● Community NRM bodies in region (Regional NRM – partic Coordinators and Industry advisory groups) ● Key State agencies (SD/RAG) ● Support services for women (e.g. health and welfare) ● Sugar Industry service providers (DPI, BSES, Future Cane Liaison officers, RAG people) ● Local Government regional associations ● Religious/ethnic groups (e.g. Catholic Church)] ● Harvesters – Cane Harvesters Association] ● Indigenous groups (Rainforest group, WT Advisory group) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Local Governments and related associations ● 'Sugar clusters' and other grower groups including productivity services groups in each region ● Grower organisations, (e.g. CANEGROWERS and Australian Canefarmers Association, Mossman Agric Services) ● Mills/millers in case regions ● Women in Sugar Groups (BWIS, potential new north group) ● Key Sugar women from case regions (eg. Sherry Kaurila, Lynne Thomas); ● Key individuals in case study areas (i.e. local 'champions') ● Case study participants ● RAG people ● BSES extension people ● Future Cane Liaison officers ● Chambers of Commerce

¹ Colour coding based on previous table, i.e. collaborators, influencers and implementers.

Appendix C: Summary of key southern stakeholders on ‘functional’ basis

Collaborators	Influencers	Implementers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CSE016 project team ● Project Reference Groups (Southern) ● Regional NRM Bodies (BMRG) ● Key State agencies (DPI, NRMW, SD, CentreCare) ● Women in Sugar Groups (e.g. BWIS, Iis WIS) ● RD&E bodies/clients (CSIRO, SRDC, BSES) ● Case study participants ● Millers (Bundaberg Sugar; Isis Mill) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Women’s groups (Other WIS groups) ● Grower Organisations (CANEGROWERS, Australian Cane Farmers Assoc.) ● Mills in case regions (Isis, Bundaberg and Maryborough) ● Sugar research and extension bodies (SRDC, BSES) ● Sugar Industry service providers (DPI, BSES, productivity services groups in each case region) ● Other Rural Industry Peak bodies (QFF/GrowCom/AgForce) ● Community NRM bodies in regions (BMRG, Landcare) ● State Government agencies (State – DPI, NRMW, SD/RAG, CentreLink) ● Federal Government agencies (DOTARS – SIRP/WBB ACC) ● Local Government (especially Transport and development planning) and related regional associations (ROCs, RPACS) ● Support services for women (e.g. health and welfare) ● Key landholders (including mills) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Community level NRM groups in regions (Landcare sector, Catchment Management groups) ● Women in general in the sugar industry ● CANEGROWERS and Mills collaborating in implementing initiatives (Bundaberg Sugar Services Limited or BSSL; Isis Sugar Partnerships; Isis Target 100 or IT100; and Maryborough 85/5)

Appendix D: Summary of key southern stakeholders by geographical scale/level of influence²

External to Region	Regional (whole)	'Local' or Sub-regional
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CSE016 project team ● RD&E bodies/clients (CSIRO, SRDC, BSES); ● Other Rural Industry Peak bodies (QFF/GrowCom/AgForce) ● Federal Government agencies (DOTARS - SIRP, ACCs) ● State Government agencies (State – DPI, NRMW, SD/RAG, CentreLink) ● Women's groups (Other WIS groups; Women in Agriculture') 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Project Reference Groups (Southern) ● Women in Sugar Groups (BWIS, Isis WIS) ● Community-based NRM bodies in region (BM Regional Group, Landcare) ● Key State agencies (DPI, NRMW, SD, CentreCare) ● Support services for women (e.g. health and welfare) ● Sugar Industry service providers (DPI, BSES) ● Sugar research and extension bodies (SRDC, BSES) ● Local Government regional associations (ROCs, RPACS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Community level NRM groups in regions (Landcare sector, Catchment Management groups) ● Local Government (espec. Transport and development planning) ● CANEGROWERS and Mills collaborating in implementing initiatives (Bundaberg Sugar Services Limited or BSSL; Isis Sugar Partnerships; Isis Target 100 or IT100; and Maryborough 85/5) ● Mills/millers in case regions (Isis, Bundaberg and Maryborough) ● Bundaberg Sugar ● Grower Organisations (CANEGROWERS, Australian Cane Farmers Assoc.) ● Key landholders (including mills) ● Women in general in the sugar industry ● Case study participants

² Colour coding is based on previous table, i.e. collaborators, influencers and implementers.

SRDC Research Project

CSE016 Final Report

Appendix 10: Project communication activities and outputs

APPENDIX 10: PROJECT COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS

Table A10.1 (below) outlines the media articles published over the life of this project, which have ensured that the key lessons and practical, industry relevant strategies for strengthening the participation of women in the sugar industry have been shared both within and beyond the project's case study regions.

Table A10.1: Media articles reporting on project findings and activities

Communication purpose	Media Articles
Reporting on the project objectives and sharing project findings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research update in <i>Tropical Landscapes Update</i>, 11 April 2006 • 'Women an answer to sugar jobs drain', <i>Australian CANEGROWER</i>, 13 August 2007, p. 14-15. • Short articles in Bundaberg WIS e-newsletters (August 2007, p. 1, and September, 2007, p. 1). • '<i>Sugar Shakers</i>' <i>Shaking News</i>, September 2007, p.1-2, features reports on the Mission Beach 'What works for women' workshop and the Reference Panel meeting in South Johnstone. • 'What women are thinking', <i>Australian CANEGROWER</i>, 8 October 2007, p. 2. • 'Women play big part in industry', <i>Rural Weekly</i>, 23 October 2007, p. 12. • 'Times are changing for women in sugar industry', <i>Whitsunday Guardian</i>, 31 October, 2007, p. 22 • 'Women's role in cane', <i>Australian CANEGROWER</i>, 19 November 2007, p. 10 • 'Women changing the industry', <i>Australian Sugarcane</i>, 1 November 2007, p. 24 • 'Women's growing cane role', <i>North Queensland Register</i>, 1 November 2007, p. 9
Promoting project workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'What Works for Women' Workshops, <i>CANEGROWERS Isis Newsletter</i>, May 2007, p. 10 • 'Workshop for Women', <i>Wide Bay Rural Weekly</i>, 23 May 2007, p. 8 • 'Workshop to study the role of women in sugar industry', <i>Isis Town and Country Newspaper</i>, 7 June, 2007, p. 4 • 'What works for women in the sugar industry', <i>Tully Times</i>, 7 June, 2007, p. 9 • Articles promoting the Mission Beach 'What works for Women' workshop appeared in the Innisfail, Babinda, Mossman and Tablelands CANEGROWERS Newsletters, June 2007. • 'Ideas, inspiration for women', <i>Rural Weekly</i>, 20 June 2007. • 'What works for women' workshops and Jenny Bellamy's visit to the Bundaberg Women in Sugar's July meeting reported on in the group's section of the Bundaberg CANEGROWERS newsletter, July 2007. • 'Connections Matter: Enhancing women's involvement in a changing sugar industry', <i>CANEGROWERS Isis Limited</i>, July 2008, p. 9. • 'Webb to speak on sugar issues', <i>Isis Town and Country Newspaper</i>, 14 August 2008, p. 4.
Promoting the e-network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Sugarcane Women's E-network', <i>CANEGROWERS Isis Limited Newsletter</i>, 4 November 2007, p. 4. • 'Women joining forces', <i>Rural Weekly</i>, 28 November 2007.

Communication purpose	Media Articles
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Network initiative for sugar women’, <i>Isis Town and Country</i>, 29 November 2007. • Women’s e-network’, <i>Australian CANEGROWER</i>, 17 December 2007, p. 3 • ‘Women needed for e-network’, <i>Rural Weekly</i>, 08 January 2008, p. 2 • ‘Women in Sugar – Communicate Electronically Course’, <i>SRDC E-news</i>, February 2008. • ‘E-network will connect women in sugar industry’, <i>Tully Times</i>, February 2008. • ‘Sugar women online’, <i>News Mail</i>, 24 March 2008, page 5. • ‘New networks in sugar: women make the sweet connection’, <i>Gympie Times</i>, 27 March 2008, page 19. • ‘New networks in sugar: women make the sweet connection’, <i>Fraser Coast Chronicle</i>, 27 March 2008, page 19. • ‘Calling all sugar women’, <i>SRDC eNews</i>, May 2008. • Article on the WIS E-Network appeared in the RAG flyer with <i>Canegrowers Magazine</i> and <i>Harvester Magazine</i>, June 2008.

Participation in industry events and radio and television interviews also allowed for sharing of research findings. Specifically, other communication activities that have occurred over the life of the project are:

- Radio interview of Emma Jakku on ABC Radio’s Country Hour, 15 July 2005.
- “Welcome Aboard” Women in sugar industry leadership dinner, attended by Emma Jakku, 29 May 2006.
- Bundaberg Women in Sugar group meetings, attended by Jenny Bellamy, 01 August 2006 and 03 October 2006.
- Wet Tropics Women in Sugar group meeting, attended by Iris Bohnet 23 August 2006.
- Wet Tropics Women in Sugar meeting, attended by Emma Jakku, 04 April 2007.
- Bundaberg Women in Sugar group meeting, attended by Jenny Bellamy, 03 July 2007.
- Women in sugar researchers lunch with Cathy McGowan, Joy Deguara, Sherry Kaurila, Diana Maldonado and Bianca Boseley, attended by Emma Jakku and Jenny Bellamy, 23 July 2007.
- Emma Jakku reported on interview findings in an ABC Radio interview, 19 October 2007.
- Sandra Webb produced the first WIS E-Network e-newsletter, *Connecting Women*, February 2008.
- Wendy Finlayson and Jenny Bellamy attended the Women in Sugar Australia Conference in the Burdekin and presented an overview of the project and WIS e-Network activities, 06 – 07 March 2008.
- Wendy Finlayson and Iris Bohnet presented an overview of the project and the WIS E-Network at the Communicate Electronically Course, held at Mission Beach, 18 March 2008.

- Sandra Webb appeared on the Channel 7 Local News (Wide Bay), discussing the WIS E-Network, 26 March 2008.
- Sandra Webb produced the second WIS E-Network e-newsletter, *Connecting Women*, April 2008.
- Wendy Finlayson demonstrated the WIS E-Network's web site to participants at the Wet Tropics Women In Sugar Basic Computer Course, 07 May 2008.
- Wendy Finlayson met with Alan Dale of Terrain to organise administration of WIS E-Network, 04 June 2008.
- Wendy Finlayson demonstrated the WIS E-Network's web site to participants at the Wet Tropics Women In Sugar Basic Computer Course 16 July 2008.
- Jenny Bellamy and Iris Bohnet presented an overview of the project and Wendy Finlayson presented an overview of the WIS e-Network activities, at the Mission Beach "Connections Matter" Workshop, 13 August 2008.
- Jenny Bellamy and Iris Bohnet presented an overview of the project and Sandra Webb presented an overview of the WIS e-Network activities, at the Bundaberg "Connections Matter" Workshop, 15 August 2008.
- Wendy Finlayson was interviewed at the Queensland Rural Women's Network Conference in Bundaberg on the WIS E-Network, for the *Honestly Woman* magazine, 28 August 2008.
- Sandra Webb produced the third WIS E-Network e-newsletter, *Connecting Women*, September 2008.

Another important communication activity over the life of the project was meetings with the project's Reference Panels, which were particularly valuable for developing research partnerships and improving the research team's understanding of local issues. Teleconferences with the WIS E-Network Organising Committee were also important for the initial development of the WIS E-network. Table A10.2 summarises the timing of the Reference Panel meetings and the WIS E-Network Organising Committee teleconferences, including when details of these meetings were reported.

Table A10.2: Project meetings

Project meetings	Timing	Reporting
Northern Reference Panel meetings	15 March 2006	Milestone Report No. 2, April 2006
	26 October 2006	Milestone Report No. 4, August 2007
	16 July 2007	Milestone Report No. 4, August 2007
	27 March 2008	Milestone Report No. 6, April 2008
	30 September 2008	Milestone Report No. 7, October 2008
Southern Reference Panel meetings	17 March 2006	Milestone Report No. 2, April 2006
	16 October 2006	Milestone Report No. 4, August 2007
	10 July 2007	Milestone Report No. 4, August 2007
	25 March 2008	Milestone Report No. 6, April 2008
	1 October 2008	Milestone Report No. 7, October 2008
Women in Sugar E-Network Organising Committee Teleconferences	13 September 2007	Milestone Report No. 5, October 2007
	25 October 2007	Milestone Report No. 6, April 2008
	21 November 2007	Milestone Report No. 6, April 2008

SRDC Research Project

CSE016 Final Report

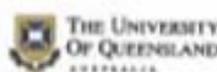
Appendix 11: Fact sheets

APPENDIX 11: FACT SHEETS

This appendix contains the three fact sheets that were produced and distributed during this project.



Research overview



Opportunities for enhancing women's participation in sustainability initiatives:

A study of the role of women in the sugar industry

What are women in the sugar industry involved in? What are the factors that motivate or limit their participation in the sugar industry? And what more could be done to improve their participation in the sugar industry?

Research background

A CSIRO and University of Queensland research team, is collaborating with local people from two case study regions - one in the far north (Herbert to Mossman) and one in the south (Bundaberg and Isis districts) - in a study to understand the participation of women in the sugar industry at the farm, industry and community levels.

This understanding will be used to identify practical strategies to encourage and strengthen women's role in ensuring the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the sugar industry.

The study is funded by the Sugar Research and Development Corporation, the CSIRO and the University of Queensland.



Bundaberg Women in Sugar members at a Bug Busters Workshop. Photo courtesy of Bundaberg Women in Sugar.

Women in the sugar industry: an undervalued resource

Rural women's contributions to their enterprises and communities often tend to be under-recognised and under-valued. This study will build a better understanding of what women in the sugar industry are involved in and what their preferences are for being involved in the sugar industry.

The study is also examining the barriers to women's participation in the sugar industry and the opportunities and options available to increase women's participation.



What are the research objectives?

The research team aims to work with women in the sugar industry, in collaboration with other sugar industry, government, community, research and extension stakeholders, to:

- Develop a shared understanding of:
 - a) The major social, economic and institutional influences on women's participation in initiatives relevant to sustainability and the sugar industry; and
 - b) The value of and opportunities for enhancing women's participation in such initiatives.
- Use participatory action research to identify, implement and evaluate strategies that improve women's participation in initiatives relevant to environmental, economic and social sustainability in the sugar industry.
- Facilitate wide, ongoing communication and uptake of findings to enhance sugar communities' capacity to deal with change within and beyond the case study regions.

What is the research plan?

The research will be conducted in four phases:

1. Building research partnerships, by establishing a Reference Panel in each of the case study regions;
2. Specific case studies of women's participation in sustainability initiatives within the sugar industry, including interviews, focus groups and interactive workshops;
3. Trialling and refining action plans to increase women's involvement in the case study initiatives, using participatory action research; and
4. Reflecting and synthesising key lessons from the case studies through interactive workshops and participatory evaluation activities.



What will be delivered?

- Practical recommendations for improving the participation of women in sustainability initiatives, developed in collaboration with women in the sugar industry and other government and community stakeholders in the case study regions;
- A report developed with women and other key stakeholders, summarising the learnings and experiences of women who have been or are involved in sustainability initiatives;
- Ongoing communication activities (e.g. newsletter articles, conference papers, workshops) to ensure awareness of and involvement in the project by potential users of the research in industry, extension and research sectors.

The project will be completed in November 2006.

What will be the outcomes?

- Increased understanding by sugar industry, government, community, research and extension stakeholders of opportunities and strategies for enhancing women's participation in sustainability initiatives;
- Increased participation of women in sustainability initiatives, through the collaborative development and implementation of locally driven action plans that foster women's involvement in these initiatives;
- Improved capacity of sugar communities to deal with change; and
- More effective capacity building strategies to encourage an increased uptake of sustainable farming practices.

Need to contact us?

CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems

Dr Emma Jakku
Tropical Landscapes Program
CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems
Level 3, Queensland Bioscience Precinct
306 Camody Road, St Lucia QLD 4067
Phone: (07) 3214 2231
Fax: (07) 3214 2308
Email: Emma.Jakku@csiro.au
Web: <http://www.cse.csiro.au/research/tropical/>

Dr Iris Bohnet

Tropical Landscapes Program
CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems
Po Box 760, Atherton, QLD 4883
Phone: (07) 4091 8826
Fax: (07) 4091 8888
Email: Iris.Bohnet@csiro.au
Web:
<http://www.cse.csiro.au/research/landscapescenarios/>

University of Queensland

Jenny Bellamy
School of Natural and Rural Systems Management
The University of Queensland
St Lucia, QLD 4067
Phone: (07) 3365 2163
Fax: (07) 3365 9015
Email: jenny.bellamy@uq.edu.au
Web: <http://www.nrsm.uq.edu.au/>

Changing role of women in decision making for the sugar industry



In the Australian sugarcane industry, women now play a greater role in decision making at all levels. While challenges to participation still exist, there are new opportunities emerging.

Researchers from CSIRO and the University of Queensland worked with more than ninety men and women from the sugar industry across two contrasting sugar regions (in terms of environment, economy and social and institutional arrangements) – one in the far north (Tully to Babinda) and one in the south (Bundaberg and Isis districts).

Both men and women from the industry participated in this study through a series of more than 60 interviews, two women's workshops, as well as ongoing contributions from the projects two reference panels and from members of three Women in Sugar groups.

An important finding of the study was that the role and status of women has changed, albeit slowly, over the past 20 years: these days more women are involved in decision making across the spectrum of the industry, and there is also greater recognition of the role of women in the industry.

Importantly too the industry context is changing which is leading to new imperatives and also new opportunities for greater participation in decision making for women at the farm, industry, community levels.

Women are a valuable resource

This study has shown that women continue to play a significant and valuable role in the sugar industry but this role is often poorly recognised and undervalued. Women's diverse roles include on-farm work, off-farm employment and voluntary community work as well as a primary carer role in the family. There is also growing recognition, by both men and women alike, that women often



Women in the sugarcane industry juggle a number of roles however they find their contribution at all scales is being recognised more broadly.

Photo Dianne Bush

bring new or different thinking to a decision situation including a more holistic and long-term perspective to social, environmental and economic issues.

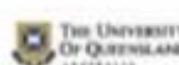
This CSIRO/UQ study aimed to understand the participation of women in the sugar industry at the farm, industry and community levels. This understanding could then be used to identify practical strategies to encourage and strengthen women's role in contributing to the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the sugar industry.

Changing times

Both men and women interviewed in this project felt that the sugar industry is now accepting women's participation in what were traditionally male roles. They also felt that there is greater recognition of the contribution women make to the industry, with less focus on gender and an increasing focus on 'doing the job well' in changing times.

Although challenges persist, one important change is that women are now being accepted on some industry boards and they are contributing more to industry meetings.

Also they are increasingly being employed in different sectors within the industry, for example, as one Southern interviewee said:



There's women in various roles now that were probably a little bit unheard of that might have raised a few eyebrows going back some years...not only being involved but they've proved to all and sundry, including all the local menfolk that they can do a damn fine job.

A personal commitment

Most of the women personally consider it very important to be involved in the industry because they felt as women they often see things from a different perspective. They often provide support in stressful times within an industry that is undergoing change.

They believe that this different, female perspective is as important at the scale of the family business as it is at the scale of the industry organisation. Some of the male interviewees' agree, as one male interviewee reflected:

You get a woman's touch and approach on things. ...I see they're an important part. They give a different look, a different aspect. (Northern interviewee)



Both men and women interviewed felt that women often see things from a different perspective.

Balancing roles

Women are involved in the sugar industry in a range of ways across the spectrum of industry activities including the growing and milling sectors, industry support sectors, and many different industry groups.

More commonly at the enterprise level, women are involved in the administrative or managerial roles rather than the physical

farm work, for example, one Northern interviewee said:

I do all the administration side of it. Decision making, like why we're buying this next piece of equipment. ...do all the accounts, wages, BAS and any other things that have to be sorted out as far as licensing and things like that.

Although this is not always the case with many women also being very 'hands on', for example, one woman described her very active role:

Any spraying that needs to be done, fertilising of the cane, getting the fallow paddocks ready for planting, the maintenance to drains and headlands because we're in a wet area, maintenance to the buildings. Sometimes maintenance to tractors, but I'm not very good at that and the books, I do them as well. (Northern interviewee)

The importance of women in decision making in the family partnership is also a common theme, as one male farmer said about his wife's role:

When I say management, I don't mean just doing the books, I mean the whole thing. ...It's very difficult to do the management role on your own. You need someone to talk to that understands what you're saying and put other options out there. (Northern interviewee)

Many women also work off farm, often in the education sector, but also in the commercial and agricultural sectors. While off farm work is challenging for many women to juggle with their farm and family commitments, it is increasingly becoming significant for many as a source of income, for example one woman explained:

I was spending around 50 or so hours off-farm working, as well as my own farm work. Now I spend, on average, 30-35. ...It's allowed the farm to stay operating. Otherwise, we wouldn't eat; it's as simple as that. (Southern interviewee)

Motivations for involvement

Women cited many motivations for wanting to be involved: a strong one was a direct benefit for their business. Many women also

highlighted the interconnections between information seeking and networking and emphasised the importance of keeping up to date with the latest information in order to improve their farming practices. For example, one Northern woman described how useful she found interacting at industry gatherings:

Because we all need knowledge of what's happening and knowledge empowers, but also to get different points of view.

Another described the rapid pace of change in the industry and the need to be informed:

So that I can keep up with what's going on, with all the changes in the industry. This is my life so I have to keep up with what's going on in my life. (Southern interviewee)

Other women indicated they got involved because they had an interest or passion for the industry that often stemmed from a long family involvement, or just wanted to make a contribution or learn something new. Often that sense of history is very important as one Northern woman explained:

I guess I have a general passion for the industry, being born and bred on the cane farm, I guess it's instilled in you. And it's, I think it's a great industry to be involved in. Sugar's used for everything. ...But it's good being involved in something that has a strong history in the Australian ag sector. I guess it helps carrying on a bit of family tradition, too.

Not everyone indicated they had an interest in participating in the industry: in particular some women indicated they would prefer not to be involved at the industry organisation level. Some felt they were too old to participate and would leave that to the younger generation: others felt burnt out, as one woman said:

There would have to be some big changes in the industry before I would invest any more emotional energy in it. (Southern interviewee)

Barriers to women's involvement

Barriers that restrict women's participation in the industry include socialised constraints, for example, the very male dominated and conservative culture of the industry was a recurring theme, as one respondent said:

I think some challenges for some women are just going to the meetings. Just getting there. Some of them feel that...the husband's the cane farmer and they're the housewife. (Southern interviewee)

Other hindrances cited are a lack of supportive environment for women; as well as structural constraints such as rules about voting rights within industry organisations, which only allow for one vote per farm assignment.

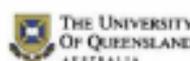
It was also recognised by project participants that there are significant personal and practical barriers that affected women's engagement in this industry such as time constraints, the multiple roles played by women in a family farm context, their generation or stage of life, level of confidence, off farm work and the timing of industry events.



Sugarcane grown in the Wet Tropics lowlands.

New opportunities

New opportunities have arisen through unexpected routes, for example, the outbreak of smut meant that the 'manpower' needed to deal with this crisis often came from women, as one Southern interviewee said.



When smut broke out the people that stood up and were available immediately to go into the fields to inspect the fields for smut were women and they were very, very good at it, probably better than any men we had in the field.

In more routine ways, interviewees nominated a range of opportunities for women to participate within different sugar industry sectors, including training, courses or workshops, industry meetings, including shed meetings, employment opportunities, research projects, Productivity Services, industry boards, Women in Sugar groups and also dealing with and adapting to change through pushing for new industries, technologies or practices.

For example, a few men identified opportunities for greater participation of women in driving new industries, technologies or practices within the sugar industry. As one northern interviewee said:

But these new industries, the ones I'm talking about are linking probably sugar, the cane industry with a heap of new things and because women were involved from its inception, I think you will find they will be the ones putting their hand up and saying, well I'll be on the board of that because I understand the process.

Not all women felt there were chances to be involved: some felt there was a lack of opportunities or a lack of awareness or promotion of opportunities.

Some common themes

This study also identified a number of common themes regarding women's participation from similar studies across different Australian agricultural industries (for example, cotton, grain and beef).

In line with these other industries, women in the sugar industry also identified as important to improving women's participation in decision-making in the sugar industry:

- networking and communication
- ongoing learning and skills development
- the diversity of ways that women can contribute to agricultural industries
- support from friends and family
- leadership skills.

Other qualities highlighted include the motivation, knowledge, credibility, bravery and confidence which are essential for decision-making in any rural industry.

Towards a more resilient industry

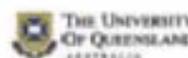
The project is funded by the Sugar Research and Development Corporation. Interviews for this project were carried out in 2006-07. The two workshops were also held in 2007

The researchers collaborated with: Bundaberg, Isis and Wet Tropics Women in Sugar groups, BSES Limited in Meringa, Tully and Bundaberg, CANE GROWERS in Tully, Innisfail, Bundaberg and Isis, Queensland Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries in Cairns, Townsville and Bundaberg, Burnett Mary Regional Group for NRM, Terrain NRM, FNQ and Wide Bay Area Consultative Committees, Isis Mill, Centacare as well as individuals across the industry.

Contact Dr Emma Jakku
CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems
Phone +61 7 3214 2231
Fax +61 7 3214 2308
Email Emma.Jakku@csiro.au

Contact Jenny Bellamy
University of Queensland
Phone +61 7 3365 2163
Fax +61 7 3365 9015
Email jenny.bellamy@uq.edu.au

Contact Dr Iris Bonnet
CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems
Phone +61 7 4059 5012
Fax +61 7 4055 6338
Email Iris.Bonnet@csiro.au



Supporting women's participation in the sugar industry: more than tea and scones.



As women broaden their role and status in the Australian sugar industry, the opportunities for them to participate are also expanding.

Researchers from CSIRO and the University of Queensland worked with more than ninety men and women from the sugar industry across two contrasting sugar regions (in terms of environment, economy and social and institutional arrangements) – one in the far north (Tully to Babinda) and one in the south (Bundaberg and Isis districts).

Both men and women from the industry participated in this study through a series of more than 60 interviews, two women's workshops, as well as ongoing contributions from the project's two reference panels and from members of three Women in Sugar (WIS) groups.

The study found that over the past five years more women have become involved across the spectrum of the sugar industry including in the growing and milling sectors, industry support sectors, and many different industry groups.

Another key finding was that the role of women in the industry is changing to support the need for greater flexibility and adaptation in farm business systems in the sugar industry. This is linked to the important contribution and opportunities that have been provided by different 'sustainability' initiatives, for example WIS groups and Isis Target 100.

Women's preferences for participation

Women interviewed in this study nominated a range of ways that they preferred to participate within the sugar industry, including forums and workshops, learning something new and practical, hands-on activities.

Smaller workshops or forums are preferred by many women who like the personal, small



The Bundaberg Women in Sugar members with Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries extension officer Austin Molennan at a bug blasters Workshop. Photo by Coral Zunker.

group, face-to-face interaction, and the opportunity to network and exchange ideas. As one Northern interviewee said:

I do like to go to forums and meetings where other women are involved just to get their ideas on what is going on or what they think.

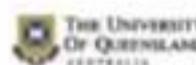
Several women commented that they liked to participate in any industry-relevant activity or event, as long as they felt they would learn something new. Some women really enjoy the learning aspect, like this Northern interviewee:

If they're doing different field days or something like that or new advancements in cropping and things like that, I'll go to them. I'm happy to go to them because you're learning something about what the industry is achieving.

Other women really appreciate practical, hands-on activities, for example:

Well the farm walks and the practical things like that... I would rather be involved that way, rather than in a meeting forum type of thing where there's opinions being passed... I'm just not strong on that at all. (Southern interviewee)

However some women lack the confidence to attend the more 'male' events, such as shed meetings, or found them not very interesting, as two northern interviewees said:



Shed meetings I think are designed for the fellas, so they can look at each other's machinery. (Northern Interviewee)

I wouldn't feel welcome at a shed meeting, I'd feel out of place. ... I wouldn't feel confident enough to go. (Northern Interviewee)



Sustainability initiatives offer an important way for women to become involved in the sugar industry

Participation in 'sustainability' initiatives

Women from the two study areas have participated in a broad range of industry-related activities, processes or programs which focussed on moving the sugar industry to be more socially, economically or environmentally sustainable.

These included:

- Grower-led initiatives (e.g. WIS groups; Babinda Farming for the Future)
- Industry-based/driven partnerships or projects (e.g. Isis Target 100; Bundaberg Grain and Cane initiative; SRDC Travel and Learning projects)
- State Government collaborative programs (e.g. the 'FEAT' and 'New Farming Systems' initiatives under the FutureCane program).

Women's experiences with such initiatives, although varied, are generally regarded as very important in improving women's participation in the industry decision-making. They bring improved understanding of the industry to the farm enterprise and greater confidence in taking up new options for the farm business. They are also able to contribute to decision making on on-farm activities as well as respond to crises impacting on the industry. As two interviewees explained:

It's very good to be proactive. Don't wait for people to make things better for you. We have to get in there and get on with it. If you've got something that you think's going to happen, well make it happen. I think that's probably the most important and be prepared to look at other options.

I'm like the sounding board a lot of the time. We bounce ideas off [each other]. We certainly looked into the feasibility of purchasing the equipment. I think we have now set that up with the idea that one day it will be a small business that we can sell. That's something that we would like to be able to do.

Women in Sugar groups

One initiative successfully increasing women's participation in the industry is the Women in Sugar (WIS) groups. These were nominated by several women as a key opportunity for women to participate within the sugar industry.

WIS groups have arisen partially because of the difficult economic times for the industry but also in response to the common issue of isolation of women due to limited networking opportunities for them in the sugar industry.

These groups have been established with quite different histories and tend to evolve, as one Bundaberg WIS member explained:

So I think that [WIS] will be a unique solution in each region, and it should be, and it should be a grass roots solution and then, as capacity and capability increases, then their willingness and ability to take on more challenges will improve.

WIS groups provide a variety of ways for involvement as one interviewee describes:

Women in Sugar have given them that forum to voice their opinions and they're being taken notice of now... (Northern Interviewee)

Many women like to be involved through Women in Sugar groups as these enable networking and interaction with like minded women, as these two Southern interviewees indicate:

I think the Women in Sugar is a very good idea where they can network together and sort of feed

Ideas off one another, just general sort of drawing people of the same interests together...

I've invited so many women [to local Women In Sugar group]; whenever I see women I ask them to come along and there's always opportunities there and it's very much a participative organisation, a supportive organisation whereas we support every one.

The groups also provide an entry point for women into what has been a traditional male culture. One male Southern interviewee said:

I think the Women In Sugar has been a great thing to get the women... in a side door into some of the decision making in the industry because up until a number of years ago there didn't seem to be an opportunity there or they always said it was a boy's club. Which I sort of disagree with in one way. You've got to get into something and actually put the hard yards in to actually work and understand. It's not an industry that you can just step into in one, two or three or five years and understand it.

Some women appreciated the practical focus of WIS, for example one Southern interviewee:

I want to learn on-farm practices. That's what I want out of Women In Sugar. I want them to run workshops that will show me how to run out an irrigator and all of that stuff....

Although not everyone agrees that a group that caters specifically for women is needed. A number of women in both case regions questioned the need for WIS groups and their focus. Some women do not see the need for involvement in a specific women's organisation and consider it as not the way to deal with change and the challenges in the industry. As one Southern woman said, it can just be another way of being left out:

Only if it had men involved, I will. ...I don't see any point in having women separate. It just continues the sugar industry to traditionally leave the women out of things. It just continues it. It's been the best way for the men to make token gestures that they want the women to be involved, but they've kept them separate, where they want them.

Yet WIS groups are also proving their worth in very tangible ways, for example the role they

played in one industry crisis – the outbreak of smut. One Bundaberg WIS member explained:

(It is) an alternative to something like CANEGROWERS, I was quite surprised with one of the husbands who said, 'You know we'd never have got through this thing [smut response] if it hadn't been for Women In Sugar because that was the only way we got any information!'



Sugarcane growing around the Cairns hinterland

Strategies to increase participation

Several broad approaches were identified to assist women to be involved including: addressing the traditional male culture, recognising the competing demands of women's responsibilities, building women's confidence to participate as well as to recognise and deal with change. More specific strategies emerged, such as the following.

1. Overcoming the industry 'male culture'

- Establishing the strategic relevance of an initiative for the farm business (e.g. a financial focus that may particularly interest women).
- Targeting women through women's networks (e.g. through a WIS-driven workshop) and also including a social component to initiatives to encourage women's participation (e.g. including guest speakers of interest to women).
- Having both partners of the family business participating in industry activities – encouraging men to invite their partners to events.

2. Helping balance competing demands

- Examining the timing of events to ensure that they suit women (e.g. making them 'family friendly').

- Examining meeting processes, since women are not always interested in general meetings.

3. *Building women's confidence*

- Recognising the importance of having a number of women participating in various ways to give women greater confidence to be actively involved.
- Specifically inviting women who might lack the confidence to participate.
- Providing women with confidence building opportunities to be actively involved (i.e. 'get out there and make things happen themselves').

4. *Building on women's capacity to recognise and deal with change*

- Industry providing support for Women in Sugar initiatives – recognising their value in a non-patronising way.
- Establishing a more effective communication network among women within the sugar industry.
- Industry supporting and building women's skills to be more actively involved in executive positions within industry organisations.
- Developing women's skills for strategic decision making in their farm business, to assist them to manage change.

Dealing with change

One interesting finding from this research related to women and change. Both men and women felt that women generally have a greater capacity to identify the need for change and develop strategies to deal with it.

For example in one new initiative, Isis Target 100, many women became involved and played an important role in trying new things. One male interviewee from Bundaberg said:

Part of that change is getting break crops in and I think the ladies have played a very good part there. They've accepted that principle much more readily than the male component. They've embraced that quite readily. They get involved in bug checking workshops and things like that.

Women indicate they are often very interested in acquiring new skills to facilitate change in practices to benefit the future sustainability of their family business.

Towards a more resilient industry

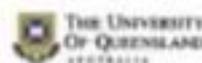
The project is funded by the Sugar Research and Development Corporation. Interviews for this project were carried out in 2006-07. The workshops were also held in 2007.

The researchers collaborated with: Bundaberg, Isis and Wet Tropics Women in Sugar groups, BSES Limited in Meringa, Tully and Bundaberg, CANEGROWERS in Tully, Innisfail, Bundaberg and Isis, Queensland Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries in Cairns, Townsville and Bundaberg, Burnett Mary Regional Group for NRM, Terrain NRM, FNQ and Wide Bay Area Consultative Committees, Isis Mill, Centacare as well as individuals across the industry.

Contact Dr Emma Jakku
CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems
Phone +61 7 3214 2231
Fax +61 7 3214 2308
Email Emma.Jakku@csiro.au

Contact Jenny Bellamy
University of Queensland
Phone +61 7 3365 2163
Fax +61 7 3365 9015
Email jenny.bellamy@uq.edu.au

Contact Dr Irit Bohnet
CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems
Phone +61 7 4059 5012
Fax +61 7 4055 6338
Email Irit.Bohnet@csiro.au



SRDC Research Project

CSE016 Final Report

Appendix 12: WIS E-Network e-newsletters

APPENDIX 12: WIS E-NETWORK E-NEWSLETTERS

This appendix contains the three issues of *Connecting Women*, the WIS E-Network e-newsletter, produced and distributed by Sandra Webb over the life of this project.

Connecting Women

Issue 1

February 2008

From the e-news team...

Welcome to the first edition of our brand new e-news letter. We hope this will be a work in progress and welcome all suggestions and comments to continue to make this publication bigger and better all the time.

The aim of this newsletter is to connect, and keep informed the women in all sugar growing regions across Australia. But not only growers. We want this to become a publication that is relevant to all women in all sectors including growing, milling and industry bodies.

We are currently putting together a database of contacts who may be able to contribute to the newsletter so if you know anyone, male or female, don't hesitate to drop us a line.

Another integral part of this project is our google page which will put all of what you see in this publication onto the net. Wendy Finlayson from Tully has done a great job in getting this google page up and running so if you wish to subscribe to both the e-newsletter and google group make sure you email Wendy for an application form.

We hope you enjoy this first newsletter.

Sandra Webb

Southern Region Co-ordinator



Inside this Issue...

- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| 1 | Google Group |
| 2 | What's On—Calendar of Events |
| 2 | Fashion Trends |
| 2 | Positions Vacant |
| 2 | GIVE Conference 2008—Mackay |
| 3 | Here Come The Women—Review |
| 3 | Communicate Electronically |
| | Courses |
| 4 | WISA Conference—Burdekin |

Connecting to The Google Group

An integral part of this project is our Google page which will have the newsletter of the e-network, plus information from various "Women in Sugar" groups on the net. The page also has an area for group discussions. The page is only able to be viewed by members of the group, it is not an open internet page that anyone can look at. You can only be a member if you fill out the membership application form and receive an invitation to the page. **Membership is FREE!!**

We had some initial teething problems with the set up of the page, it seems that everyone who had become a member was receiving everything that was posted to the site. This problem has now been fixed, but it means the site is fully moderated, and messages don't get posted until they have been checked. Some people have been having serious problems accessing the site to join, and we have tried to help those, but we are not sure whether it's a problem with the Google site or computer programming, or a mixture of the two. There has also been some issues with the site malfunctioning. This problem seems to have righted itself for now, we'll keep you posted on these issues.

We send out a big thank you to those of you who are sending us information to put on the site about up and coming workshops, conferences, and regional newsletters. The strength of this site really relies on this information being fed into it. So thank you again!



In order to receive the newsletter and/or to participate on the Google page, please request an application form by emailing: women-in-sugar@googlegroups.com

Wendy Finlayson

Northern Region Co-ordinator

Connecting women in the sugar industry nationally

Connecting Women

Calendar of Events

February

23 & 24

Clifton Landcare—Hugh Lovel

Workshop

Saving time, Materials and Energy by looking at the Farm, in its Larger Environment

28 & 29

GIVE Conference 2008

Magdaly

March

6, 7

WTSA Conference

Burdekin

18

Communicate Electronically

Tully

28

Communicate Electronically

Burdeberg / Isis



Have you seen the latest fashion trend going mad in Queensland. Fashion gurus are clamouring over each other to be the first to be seen in the latest summer design.

Positions Vacant

National Rural Women's Coalition

Coordinator

Contract until June 2008 with the possibility of extension to June 2009.

Position: Coordinator

Hours of Work: 64hrs hours per month (flexible)

Rate per Hour: \$30.00 per hour

Location: Negotiable

Applications close 25 February 2008

For more info: grwebb1@brwc.qpsd.com

News from

Magdaly

GIVE CONFERENCE 2008

New technology, new experiences, new innovation and new friends are all to be found at the second sugarcane industry Grower Innovation Virtual Expo—GIVE 08.

GIVE 08 is a conference for everyone involved with the sugarcane industry—unique because it is organized and presented by growers.

Hosted by the Pine Creek Sustainable Farmers Group, Magdaly Five Producers and the Calen and St Helen Young Farmers Group, GIVE 08 promises to inspire and intrigue.

Grower groups from across the industry, involved in a variety of projects funded by the Sugar Research and Development Corporation, have been invited to present at the conference. Topics are varied and include developing compost as an alternative fertilizer source; the economics of controlled traffic versus conventional systems; variable planting rates and pre-planting application of fertiliser; and fallow crops as supplementary income sources.

GIVE 08 will be held at the Windmill Conference Centre in Magdaly on 28 and 29 February 2008. Presentations will be given both days and the event includes a BBQ on the Thursday evening and a field trip to visit some innovative technology in practice in the Magdaly region on the final day. The registration cost is \$50.

To register for GIVE 08 contact Rosalie McKenna on 07 4944 2601 before 18th February. For event information contact Joe Muscat on 0429 377 162 or Chris Alyward 0437 330 877.

Connecting women in the sugar industry nationally



Connecting Women

News from.....

Ingham

"Here Come The Women"

Innovation Showcase - 14 February 2008

Firstly I would like to say a big well done and congratulations to the women who put this showcase together. I am sure I am not alone in saying that I had a really great day! There was a crowd of around 130 people. The hall was set out in purple and green, very fitting for a showcase for women in the sugar industry, with trade displays that had a wide variety of things to look at and discuss with local business.

The day was full of informative talks from Sherry Kaurila, Lyn McLaughlin and Caroline Coppo, about their projects, life experiences and what makes them successful. There was also a token male speaker, Gordon Edwards from KFSU who talked about a subject close to many people hearts - chocolate, and it's use for increasing fibre intake and various other applications.

Keynote speaker, Professor Sandra Harding (Vice chancellor of James Cook University) shared with us her 4 Tactics and Actions of coping in the demanding roles we chose to undertake. The Tactics were: Focus; Be prepared; Build networks and contacts; and Freedom (finding some personal space)

The "Big picture actions" were: Be confident (acquired); Make a difference; Embrace change; Lead with good faith.

An interview was run by Dr Su Bandstranaike, who transported everyone to the set's of show's like Sunrise, Good Morning Australia etc., where 3 local women (Niki Ladel, Vanessa Aquilini and Kate Milton) were put under the spotlight and interviewed about their beliefs and convictions, how they got to where they are, and their perceptions of the sugar industry.

Between speakers we were all entertained by bush poet Melanie Hall, who did a great job at making everyone laugh.

"Faces of 2008", honoured and recognised women who have given to the sugar industry, both locally and regionally. These women were Maria Betteraro, Yvonne Bloomer, Dorothy Hatfield, Glynis Romano, Michelle Gallipo, Heather Liddle, Therese Russell, Josie Vecchio, Vickie Davis-Mignuel and Tammy Pelizzari.

Other events of the day was an auction of a painting and the wonderful raffle prize draws, lucky door prize's and trade display award (won by the Cancer Council).

Again, well done to the organisers of the day and to all the business that put in the effort to display their information and to all the women (and the odd man) who attended the day, hope to see it all happen again next year.

Wendy

Communicate Electronically Courses

The purpose of the "Communicate Electronically" course is to assist women in the sugarcane industry to develop skills in the use of the internet for communication and collaboration. Participants will have the opportunity to work together to develop an email and online network to improve communication and information sharing and form powerful networks and relationships for future collaboration.

The course is intended for women within the sugarcane industry who would like to improve their skills in communicating and collaborating online.

For more details contact Emma Jakku on 07 3214 2231 or Email Emma.Jakku@csiro.au or Wendy Finlayson on 07 4066 5594 Email dwfinlayson@bigpond.com

Connecting women in the sugar industry nationally

Connecting Women

News from.....

Burdekin

The Burdekin will be hosting the 2008 Women In Sugar Australia Conference on the 6th and 7th March to coincide with International Women's Day which occurs on the 8th March each year.

The conference is a gathering of WIS networks and provides the opportunity to showcase what each area has achieved throughout the year.

For further information about the conference please contact Lisa or Michelle on 4783 1144
RSVP: 18th February 2008



Anger Management For Women

Husband: When I get mad at you, you never fight back. How do you control your anger?

Wife: I clean the toilet bowl.

Husband: How does that help?

Wife: I use your toothbrush

Bundaberg

Our first meeting of the year was our A.G.M. which was held on the 5th of February. Office Bearers for 2008 elected were:

Chairperson: Margaret Doughty

Vice Chair: Jenny Rule

Secretary: Anne Slattery

Treasurer: Robyn Poulsen

E-Mail Co-Ordinator & Newsletter:

Katrina Chapman

Guest speaker for the meeting was Veronica Chapman the new Farm Financial Counselor with the DPI&F. She spoke about what her role entails and the services she is able to assist primary producers with such as accessing appropriate government assistance, assessing farm viability and preparing cash flow budgets. It is a free confidential service. Veronica can be contacted at the Bundaberg DPI&F office on 4131 5831.

Our Sugar Journal titled 'You can't eat the Dirt' is ready to be published. We are currently investigating possible venues and dates for the launch of the book. A likely launch date will be in April, date to be confirmed. The Bundaberg Rum Bond Store is very interested in promoting the book as lots of their visitors ask about the Sugar Industry.

Connecting women in the sugar industry nationally

Woo Hoo For Women!



This all female captain and crew of a passenger airliner recently took great pleasure in announcing that for the duration of their flight the cockpit of the plane would be referred to as the "Box Office"!!!
Good on you girls!

Connecting Women

Issue 2

April 2008



Connecting women in the sugar industry nationally

From the e-news team...

The response to our first newsletter was terrific and we thank those of you who sent feedback to either Wendy or myself. We have received quite a few articles this month from you and hope you continue to support the newsletter and spread news of the great things happening in our industry.

We are still trying to establish a network of contact people, one from each growing district, to supply us with news from their area. This would make Wendy's and my job a little easier and also make sure that all areas are well represented. If you are interested in becoming the contact person for your region please let Wendy or myself know.



Sandra Webb

Southern Region Co-ordinator

Inside this Issue...

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1 | Google News |
| 2 | What's On—Calendar of Events |
| 2 | Irish Connections |
| 2 | Coca Cola Regional Scholarships |
| 3 | Combating Smut in the Isis |
| 3 | Women's Leadership Grants |
| 4 | Improved Sugar Production Practices |
| 4 | "You Can't Eat the Dirt" Book Launch |
| 5 | Sugarcane Secret |
| 5 | Flood Assistance for the North |
| 6 | Farm day 2008 |
| 6 | Communicate Electronically Review |
| 6 | Sugar Industry Counselling |
| 7 | 2008 WISA Conference Review |

Google News...

Welcome to another review of the Google page for Women in Sugar eNetwork. The technical problems that have previously been experienced on the page seem to have sorted themselves out for the time being, fingers crossed for the future. As many of you probably already know I have opened up the page for viewing by the general public. We have done this as we are soon going to be asking different organisations for some form of support and sponsorship and in order to do this we would like them to be able to visit the site, to get an idea of what they are supporting.

There is some new stuff on the page that you should take some time and have a look at. There is a training program for the Burdekin Ag College (AACC), there is Mackays latest news and photos from WISA recently held in Ayr. There is also now a "Useful Websites for Business and the Sugar Industry" page, where you can find a listing of websites you may find useful. If any of you know of other websites that aren't in this list please let me know so I can add it to the list.

Please keep sending in information for the site so we can keep it current and useful to the industry.



Wendy Finlayson

Northern Region Co-ordinator

Connecting Women



Connecting women in the sugar industry nationally

Calendar of Events

May

6th - 21st SRDC "Sugar & Spice" - Regional Workshop Series
24th 25th Farm Day 2008

June

30th Close of Applications Woolworth Ag scholarships

August

27th 28th QRWN Conference - Bundaberg

October

15th World Rural Women's Day

Scholarships for Kids

Coca-Cola Regional Scholarships Program is offering 34 scholarships worth \$2000 each for students studying Agriculture related subjects and are members of Agriculture Show Societies. Applications for Scholarships close 30 June 2008. For further information or application information contact Geoff Fader at gfader@bigpond.net.au, or visit: <http://www.acas.asn.au/coca-cola/>

Woolworths Agricultural Scholarship open for applications!

Who was the first person to say, 'See that chicken there... I'm gonna eat the next thing that comes outta it's bum.'



Fancy a trip to Ireland...

To celebrate World Rural women's day on October 15th the Irish women in agriculture group are holding a national conference for women in agriculture.

As part of this years conference there will be 2 keynote speakers from Australia, Robyn Moore and Lyn Skyes. The links between the Irish and Australian Women in Agriculture are deep. 32 Irish women in agriculture visited Australia in Oct 2004 and had a marvellous time - so the Irish women look forward to strengthening the links this October. The Nebraskan women in agriculture and the Sth Dakotan women in agriculture from the USA will also be attending and also women from UK and European groups.

Package trips can be organised for any group - to arrive a week early and visit farms, meet women in Ireland and do tourist things - shop etc! The group has offered to organise accommodation in farmhouse/ country B&Bs and then if the group wish to stay on after the event further activities can be organised. For further information please contact Mary Carroll

4 Faha Glen
Faha
Killarney
Co Kerry

mary.carroll@ireland.com
www.womendrivetractorstoo.com



Connecting Women



News from.....

Isis...

Outsmarting Smut

The Isis cane growing region has reduced the percentage of smut susceptible varieties from 80% to 53% in two years and projected figures show further reductions to 35% in 2009 and 20% in 2010.

Eoin Wallis, BSES Limited Chief Executive Officer said three major initiatives supported by BSES have contributed to this excellent result.

Coordinating the introduction of 1700 tonnes of resistant varieties from North Queensland in September 2006 allowed growers to access more than 25000 tonnes of planting material in 2007. Isis industry figures show only 10-15% of that cane was sent to the mill. The remaining 85-90% was planted-out by growers.

While this alone places Isis in a good position for the 2008 spring plant, a further 60 tonnes of resistant planting material was supplied to Isis growers in September 2007 in the form of one eye setts. The one eye setts were cultivated at BSES Bundaberg research station using recently released smut-resistant variety Q232A. "This 60 tonnes will multiply to about 1000 tonnes by September this year and be available to more growers for planting," he said.

The third initiative being used to help Isis growers out-smart smut is the BSES tissue culture system.

Mr Wallis said 24000 seedlings of smut-resistant varieties KQ228A and Q232A were produced using the tissue culture system and planted onto a Childers farm in February 2007. This cane helped fill a shortage of suitable planting material for autumn planting in 2008. The seedlings produced 340 tonnes of cane some of which was distributed for planting this Autumn.

"Isis has set a great example and with the increase in resistant varieties being grown, the area should soon see an increase in productivity and smut should have minimal effect on productivity in coming years."

2007-08 Women's Leadership and Development Programme Grants...

Applications are invited from eligible national women's non government organisations (NGOs) to undertake projects that contribute to public policy and/or service development, or help national women's NGOs become more effective.

Proposals must demonstrate relevance to one or more of the following aims:

- promote women's social inclusion (for example, projects that assist marginalised women to better be able to participate in their community); and/or
- build women's capacity to take on greater leadership responsibilities; and/or
- build the capacity of women's non-government organisations to represent the views of their members and contribute to the development of public policy and/or service delivery.

Applicants may apply for up to \$100,000 (excluding GST) per project.

Applications for funding must be for outcome-based projects with tangible results that will benefit women. Projects can be for national or place-based solutions and must be completed within 12 months of commencement. It is anticipated that funding will be allocated to successful applicants by 30 June 2008.

Applicants must read the Application Guidelines before submitting an application.

Visit for more details: http://www.ofw.fahcsia.gov.au/leadership_development/womens_development_programme/wdp_07-08.html

Or contact the Office for Women

Phone: 1800 808 863

Email: women@fahcsia.gov.au



Connecting women in the sugar industry nationally

Connecting Women



News from.....

Burdekin

Demonstration farms to showcase improved sugar production practices within NQ

The Queensland Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries (DPI&F) in partnership with the Australian Government are working with North Queensland sugar producers to establish farms that showcase how to go about implementing environmentally sensitive management practices without compromising profitability.

The farms, located in the Tully and the Lower Burdekin, are a new concept whereby existing commercial farming enterprises in each district will be progressively transformed into examples of contemporary best practice.

The project builds upon a solid body of work already undertaken by DPI&F, BSES, CSIRO, Regional Natural Resource Management Bodies and Industry stakeholders. Mr Durham said the project was part of an ongoing response by the sugar sector to minimise the environmental impact of their industry.

"We live and farm in a unique part of the world, and the choices we make as land managers have flow-on effects for not only our neighbours, but also for sensitive receiving environments.

"For this reason the project will focus on key pollutants of concern such as nutrients, sediment and agricultural chemicals," Mr Durham said.

The project will operate for a minimum of three years, thanks to a \$600,000 grant from the Australian Government.

"During this time, we will be enlisting the expertise of growers and relevant stakeholders within each district to help guide the development, implementation and monitoring of the project.

Ultimately it's about assisting the North's sugar producing community to improve the quality of water leaving farms and entering the Great Barrier Reef, whilst remaining viable and profitable," Mr Durham said.

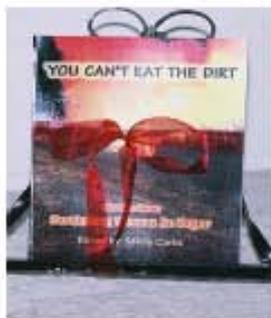
For more information please contact DPI&F's Ian Durham on 4722 2511.



Connecting women in the sugar industry nationally

Bundaberg...

"You Can't Eat the Dirt" Eeck Launch



Friday the 18th of April, we celebrated the launch of our book "You Can't Eat the Dirt" at Fairymead House. It was a very enjoyable event, which was attended by about 60 guests including most of the people who contributed stories to the book. The former Mayor of Bundaberg Kaye McDuff officially launched the book and told some amusing stories from her time as a young, newly married cane farmer's wife at South Kalkie. Guests also enjoyed poetry readings from Geoff McCarthy and Jenny Rule of a few of the poems from the book. "You Can't Eat the Dirt" is available for sale for \$15.00 at the Bundaberg Canegrowers and also from Dymocks Booksellers Bourbong Street Bundaberg.

Connecting Women



SUGARCANE SECRET (An extract from an article by Danae Jones)

Sonya Maley, a visionary Mossman woman with a passion for science and technology has developed a revolutionary cane separating innovation, which is set to introduce the global population to the long line of health benefits that sugarcane can offer.

Sonya's sugar cane separating system which she has worked on for the past five years, is the only one of its type in the world and offers natural alternative sweetening bases, whole food and fibre products with a multitude of health benefits putting to rest the theory that sugar is bad for you.

The process effectively strips the cane of its rind (outside skin containing many impurities) and leaves the clean pith (the moist centre of the cane). The juice is then separated from the white inner fibre and used to produce whole food products with naturally-occurring complex sugars and higher fibre levels. The technology is also expected to produce various other raw streams of material and natural juices containing antioxidants and other health properties.

"It is very difficult to lead innovation in an industry that is entrenched in its ways and sceptical of alternative pathways. Being a woman doesn't help. It's been a tough few years but the support from the rural business and farming sector has been wonderful," Ms Maley said.

There has been strong interest from food manufacturing companies looking for more natural and healthy substitutes to refined sugar and dietary fibre. Ms Maley believes the future for the sugar industry is bright with a multitude of new product opportunities that are made possible through our cane separation technology.

"To be relevant in the sugar industry as it moves forward, we have to improve the base value of the crop, reduce reliance on global commodity markets, be energy and water wise and manufacturer products that provide value in health and nutrition."

For more information

Sonya Maley

Managing Director

Resis Australia Pty Ltd

PO Box 877

Mossman Q 4873

Tel/Fax: +61 7 4098 7728

Mobile: 0408 460724

Email: sonya@resisaustralia.com.au

Website: www.resisaustralia.com.au



Connecting women in the sugar industry nationally

Flood Assistance For the North...

Primary producers and small business owners in the local government areas of Bowen, Burdekin and Rockhampton City (as named prior to council amalgamations which took effect from 15 March 2008), who suffered direct damage from monsoonal flooding in January and February of this year are now eligible to apply for Special Disaster Flood Assistance grants of up to a maximum of \$25,000 from QRAA.

The scheme is designed to assist primary producers and small businesses recover from the damage caused by the monsoonal rains and flooding which devastated parts of Queensland in January and February 2008. To be eligible for QRAA's grant assistance, producers and small business owners must be located in a local government area declared eligible for Special Disaster Flood Assistance. These areas, as well as other eligibility requirements that apply, are outlined in the Scheme's guidelines which are available on QRAA's website www.qraa.qld.gov.au or contact QRAA on Freecall 1800 623 946 for further information.

Liaison Officers in Mackay and Rockhampton are also available to assist and can be contacted on our Freecall number or on the local numbers listed below:

- Mackay Client Liaison Officer – Peter Crowley (07) 4967 0728
- Rockhampton Client Liaison Officer – Brendan Hamilton (07) 4936 1872

Connecting Women

Connecting women in the sugar industry nationally



Communicate Electronically Course ...

The Communicate Electronically Course held at Mission Beach was held on the 18th of March. Nine participants attended this course, and were instructed on the various technologies, software, hardware and etiquette needed to be able to communicate effectively on the internet.

The second round of the course which was to be held at Chaverim near Bundaberg has had to be cancelled, due to issues associated with funding. This is very disappointing but hopefully there will be other training opportunities available at a later date.

Participants from the Mission Beach Communicate Electronically course with trainer Judi Canton (front)



Sugar Industry Counselling...

At the mercy of nature and the international commodity markets, there are no guarantees of an income or future. For one person, it is difficult enough. Add to that a family, and it becomes one of life's great challenges. The stresses and strain on relationships with partners, children and extended family members can be enormous. It goes without saying that the changes in the Sugar Industry have impacted many a great deal.

Counselling can help – it won't solve all of the issues or problems you are faced with, but it can help you to put things in perspective and give you the fundamentals to cope through this challenging time. No issue is too large or too small to bring to counselling. They may include parenting, self-esteem, money worries, family violence, loss or grief, managing anger, communication problems, sexual difficulties, step families, in-laws, etc...

Currently, there is government funding available to provide counselling free of charge to those affected by the changes in the Sugar Industry within QLD and also those affected by drought.

Contact Relationships Australia on 1300 364 277 which is the cost of a local call, and you will be directed to your nearest branch who will be able to provide you with more information and book you in for an appointment or contact time. For our locations and venues across QLD look at our website www.relationships.com.au.

Farm Day 2008

Farm Day was set up in 2006 to help foster a greater understanding of farming through a city and a farming family sharing a day together on a farm. Farm Day provides a real hands-on experience which is increasingly uncommon for city families. Farm Day is held nationally on either day of the weekend May 24th or 25th 2008.

The host farm and their guests are personally matched together based on criteria such as distance they are willing to travel, ages of children and special interests.

Farm families and city families can register to take part in Farm Day through this website – www.farmday.com.au

MLA is a primary supporter of Farm Day which is also supported by the Rural Industries Research & Development Corporation and endorsed by the National Farmers' Federation.

Behind every
successful man
there is a surprised
woman...



Connecting Women



Connecting women in the sugar industry nationally

2008 WISA Conference...

The 2008 WISA Conference was held at the Burdekin Sire Council Chambers in Ayr on 6th & 7th March. The first keynote speaker, Burdekin Mayor Lyn McLaughlin stated it was the first ever women's conference to be held in the area. The second speaker was Rosemary Menkens (State Member of Parliament for Burdekin). She noted that when the first WIS group started several years ago, there was some local "concern" about this group's agenda. Now the group has developed, there is a need for it in the present and into the future as a supporting network. Both keynote speakers noted the importance of changing needs, networks and leadership in the community.

The first informational presentation was from Zoe Bainbridge (Australian Centre for Tropical Freshwater Research), who presented water quality data from research projects from Mackay to Tully. Of concern were Nitrate and Pesticide levels that were detected as a high priority issue. Atrazine and Diuron were the most commonly detected pesticide residues, and were found at a higher rate in the Wet Tropics results. The research is now aimed at working with industry to improve these results into the future.

The next presentation was from Adam Connell and Jude Robinson from BBIFMAC (Burdekin-Bowen Integrated Floodplain Management Advisory Committee), who are working on a project to set up growers to "self monitor" their water quality with the philosophy of "if you can't measure it – you can't manage it". They aim to involve about 60 growers in this project, measuring about 150 sites in total. The monitoring kits are made up of nitrate and phosphate strip kits, conductivity meter and a turbidity measure. One out of every 20 samples taken is sent to a lab for analysis, to monitor the accuracy of field kits. All results are entered onto a password protected internet site, where grower identities are not revealed to protect their privacy. This is an excellent hands on project that growers can engage in to show that they are being responsible for the environment.

Avril Robinson from the Australian Agricultural College Buredekin, then went through the Farm Management Systems (FMS) for environmental sustainability, developed for the Burdekin area, aimed to meet existing and future regulatory requirements. Avril presented a matrix of the BATWEB system, which linked technical websites to aid the FMS's, and provide data sharing for continuous improvement of the industry. She also presented some feedback from what growers said they wanted:

1. Recognition for what they are doing;
2. Simplified Work Place Health & Safety;
3. Show they are "environmentally friendly".

Chris Cameron, a locally-based grower consultant presented the concept of using biological principles (use of compost) for land productivity and sustainability, and the reality of rising fertiliser prices and yield decline. James Doyle from the Dept of State Development in Charters Towers then gave a presentation on the environmental Goods & Services Industry involving mostly small and privately owned firms, profiling local trends and global trends. He introduced the new Qld Government's "Regions of Enterprise" initiative focusing on new technology that has an international market.

Once the information session was finished (as well as lunch) all of the Women in Sugar groups then presented what has been happening in their region's. The Herbert region DEFOS group (Develop Education with a Focus On Women) kicked proceedings off, with Josie Vecchio letting us know that DEFOS was now in it's 10th year and is changing it's name to Women in Sugar Herbert due to the confusion of understanding the previous name. In the past years DEFOS has offered educational courses such as Compass, Chemcert, first aid etc. They have 10 regular members, all of who are getting close to retirement, so there is a need for new younger members. It was identified that many women in the sugar industry are either at work (off farm jobs) or they are baby sitting, and that there is also still cultural resistance to the networking groups.

Margaret Doherty presented what the Bundaberg WIS had been up to, some of those items were as follows: Running an IPM course, involved in a National soybean conference, and participating in stress relief days and a wine tasting event held at the Chaverim complex, a farm visit (strawberry farm), mill and terminal tours, the Ord River smut trip, participating in the CSIRO/UQ "What Work's for Women" workshop, and a heritage tour of Maryborough.

Connecting Women



Connecting women in the sugar industry nationally

They are also about to launch a book titled "You Can't Eat the Dirt" which is a compilation of short stories of life and times on the land and recipes written by women in the region. The book will be available for \$15. Ann Jensen gave us the rundown on what Mackay WIS had been doing over the last 12 months. At every second meeting they have a guest speaker. Some of those have been representatives from Mackay sugar, Qld health (talking about bowel screening), Centrelink (on funding guidelines). The women had also attended a local Canegrowers meeting and contributed to the compiling of the local sugar history.

The Burdekin women (presented by Helen Virio) had also been having a variety of forums with guest speakers presenting on topics such as: succession planning, mental health, and "Where are the women" to name a few. They had a 'best practice' farm tour, a visit to the Burdekin Ag College and they have been diligently working towards this WISA conference. Helen acknowledged the support they are receiving from the local Burdekin Canegrowers organisation and that they were now starting to get a few younger women along. Jenny Bellamy (Uni Qld) and myself gave the group an overview of the CSIRO/UQ/SRDC project and the development of a cross-regional women in sugarcane enetwork, as well as opportunities to participate in a "Communicating Electronically" course for women in the sugar industry. The "Baton" was then passed onto the Bundaberg women, who will host next years WISA. We hope to work on a travel & learning application for funding to enable women from all areas to travel to Bundaberg for the event. The conference dinner was enjoyed by all who attended, and we were surprised by the new federal member for Dawson (James Bidgood) joining us for dinner. Needless to say some lobbying for the industry happened that night. The bus tour on the Friday was also very informative and enjoyable, looking at some of the extensive activities in the Burdekin area, and some of the recent flood damage. The irrigation weirs and pump stations were inspected in the morning. Lunch was at the Australian Agricultural College where Robyn O'Sullivan gave us the "virtual" tour and Pauline Catt advised the group of the recognition of prior learning to obtain further qualifications.

The two days were enjoyed by all that attended and it was great to finally get to meet some of the people that we have contact with via teleconferences and emails. Thank you very much to the Burdekin women for hosting WISA, a great effort, and I look forward to doing it all again next in Bundaberg!!

Wendy



Delegates from the recent 2008 WISA Conference

Connecting Women



Connecting women in the sugar industry nationally

SRDC "Sugar & Spice Regional Workshops

Find out how R&D can add 'spice' to the sugarcane industry to achieve **bigger crops - lower costs - greater productivity - less work - higher profit - more throughput.**

- ◆ **6 - 21 May 2008**
 - ◆ **Ayr** 6 May (Ayr Showground, Main Hall)
 - ◆ **Ingham** 7 May - commencing at **2.30 pm** (Knight Club)
 - ◆ **Tully** 8 May - commencing at **2.30 pm** (Tully Mill Recreation Building)
 - ◆ **Gordonvale**—9 May (The Mulgrave Rambler)
 - ◆ **Ballina** - 12 May (Ballina Beach Resort)
 - ◆ **Childers** - 15 May (Isis Club)
 - ◆ **Bundaberg** - 16 May (Bert Hinkler Motor Inn)
 - ◆ **Mackay** - Tuesday 20 May (Seabreeze Resort Hotel)
 - ◆ **Proserpine** - 21 May (RSL Club)
- ◆ Download and print the registration form from www.srdc.gov.au and mail or fax it to us.
Email Andrea Ferris (aferris@srdc.gov.au) and let her know which workshop you are attending



A woman in her fifties is at home happily jumping unclothed, on her bed and squealing with delight. Her husband watches her for a while and asks, "Do you have any idea how ridiculous you look? What's the matter with you?"
The woman continues to bounce on the bed and says, "I don't care what you think, I just came from having a mammogram, and the doctor says that not only am I healthy, but I have the breasts of an 18 year-old."
The husband replies, "What did he say about your 55-year old arse?"



She replied, "Your name never came up."



Bundaberg and Isis ladies attending the book launch of "You Can't Eat The Dirt"

To contact us:
Wendy dwfinlayson@bigpond.com
Sandra gwebb1@bigpond.com

Connecting Women

Issue 3

September 2008



From the e-news team...

It has been some time since our last e-newsletter due to many and varied circumstances. So much is going on in the state that we have all been caught up in a mountain of "stuff".

A big thank you to those of you who attended the recent "Connections Matter" workshops held in Mission Beach and Bundaberg. Although numbers were small, the quality of the keynote speakers was excellent and we have received a great deal of valuable feedback to help us progress the e-network into the future.

Of course we are still looking for enthusiastic people to come on board and help with the administration of the network and all offers of help will be gratefully received.

Recently, Wendy and myself gained some valuable funds to help us develop the google group into a more stable format. Wendy is doing a lot of work on this and will give more details below.

I hope you enjoy this, our third e-newsletter.

Sandra Webb

Southern Region Co-ordinator



Inside this Issue...

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| 1 | From the e-news team |
| 1 | Google Group Progress |
| 2 | What's On—Calendar of Events |
| 2 | Profile on People—Sherry Kaurila |
| 3 | News from the Wet tropics WIS |
| 3 | QRWN Conference—Bundaberg |
| 4 | Healing with Vinegar |
| 4 | Dealing With Depression Workshop |
| 4 | RIRDC Rural Women's Awards |
| 5 | Reef Rescue Funding Package |
| 6 | QRWN Conference photos |

Connecting women in the sugar industry nationally

The Google Group - Moving On

Google/Web Page News

As some of you already know, we are planning to take the "google page" away and set it up as our very own web page with our own URL address. Having our own web address will make us much easier to locate, because at the moment it is embedded in the Google site and is difficult to find if you don't know what you are looking for.

According to the survey we conducted at the "Connections Matter" Workshops, the Newsletter and Calendar of Events rated very highly for features of the web page. Other features that rated high were web pages for each regional group of Women in Sugar, a photo gallery and a latest news bulletin, so you can expect to see these features on the Web site when it gets up and running.

In the very near future we will be doing a sponsorship drive specifically for the web site. Bundaberg Sugar has already approached us with some sponsorship, which is great news. I will do up a sponsorship kit to send out to likely sponsors, of which I would very much like your help in identifying where and who should receive these kits.

Looking forward to hearing your views.

Wendy Finlayson

Northern Region Co-ordinator



Connecting Women



Calendar of Events

September

24th

Responding to depression in
Rural Communities
(SARINA)

October

15th

World Rural Women's Day

Quotable Quotes

Whatever women must do, they must do twice
as well as men to be thought half as good.
Luckily, this is not
difficult!!

To contact us:

Wendy dwinlayson@bigpond.com

Sandra gswebb1@bigpond.com

women-in-sugar@googlegroups.com

<http://groups.google.com.au/group/women-in-sugar>

Can you guess the bra size?



Profile on People...

Sherry Kaurila

Sherry Kaurila was the keynote speaker at the recent "Connections Matter" workshop in Mission Beach. Sherry was born in Gayndah, and now resides in Long Pocket, Ingham. She is married to Doc, a farmer who has been harvesting cane on the riverbanks of the Herbert River since 1964. She has five grown children; Luke, Caroline, Heli, Ruth, and Elizabeth.

Sherry and Doc have run a farming and harvesting business for more than 37 years. In that time Sherry has also been involved in P&C Associations, Preschool by Correspondence, Community groups and their local church.

Also in her busy life Sherry has managed to become very involved in many community activities. She has been involved with the Shire Council, the Ministerial Regional Community Forum for NQ, the Townsville Health Community Council and the Queensland Food, Fibre, and Agribusiness Council just to name a few.

When asked about networking, Sherry believes networking for rural women is essential. "You can't do it on your own," says Sherry. "Women have always used networks and connections for information, support and friendship. Every time you send a card, call a friend, invite people over, visit a relative, send an e-mail- that's networking!" she adds.

In her spare time, Sherry's hobbies include netball and tennis.



Connecting women in the sugar industry nationally

Connecting Women

News from.....

Wet Tropics ...

This group is really still in its infancy, but we are striving ahead. This year so far we have run a few very successful beginner computer courses in Excel and use of the internet, to aid in growers gaining some confidence in using these programs.

We also had a display at the Tully Show to let local people know what our group is about and when we meet. Hopefully we will gain a few more members and interest as a result. QDPI kindly donated the posters and hand outs.

Our group is also now affiliated with, and represented at our local Chamber of Commerce, where we are promoting the beautification of our town, Tully.



Jenny Flegler with the Tully Show display



QRWN Annual Conference... Bundaberg

For those of you who missed it, I am truly sorry. This event should mark everyone's calendar as it is a great opportunity to be inspired, network with women outside your circle and to let your hair down and have some fun. There was something for everyone at this conference; some business workshops, craft workshops, laughter workshops, deportment and etiquette training and much more. But mostly there was a lot of networking going on, particularly at the nightly functions where the Mackay ladies really showed the way in having a bit of fun!!

I am glad to say that Women In Sugar made up nearly a quarter of the attendants at this years conference, lets hope for something similar in the future.

There is a big thank you note for CSR in Mackay and DrumMuster in the north, for getting behind this event and putting some dollars towards getting women from regional areas to this event.

There was also some talk with the QRWN executive of where Women In Sugar groups could potentially set them selves up as a special interest QRWN branches. Please let me know if this would interest any of the groups out there.

Our very own network will get a mention in their "Honestly Woman" magazine (which you receive as part of your subscription), as they are doing up a profile of myself and the Sugar Network.

So for those of you who are not QRWN members already, my advice to you is to have a look at it and sign up to be a member for a year (\$44), just to see if it is for you or not. If nothing else it is worth it just for the conference!!!

www.qrwn.org.au

Wendy Finlayson

See photos of some of the conference delegates on page 6

Connecting women in the sugar industry nationally

Connecting Women

Connecting women in the sugar industry nationally

RIRDC Rural Women's Award...

Applications are being accepted for the RIRDC Rural Women's Award.

The aim of the program is to celebrate rural women and their contribution to primary industries. It provides a bursary of \$10,000 for each state and territory winner to support them in developing their leadership capacities.

The award is open to all women involved in primary industries, including broad-acre farming, intensive livestock, cropping, horticulture, fisheries, forestry, natural resource management and related service industries.

Applications will close on Wednesday 15 October 2008.

Further information can be obtained at www.ruralwomensaward.gov.au

Or you can contact Kaye Nunan on (07) 3239 3254 or kaye.nunan@dpi.qld.gov.au

Era Size?



Healing With Vinegar...

- ♦ **Headache:** Soak the corner of a cotton handkerchief in white vinegar and hold to the nose for five minutes. Breathe deeply to inhale the smell through the nasal passages. (I tried this when pregnant and found it did work—SW)
- ♦ **Ear Infections:** Make up a solution of equal parts vinegar and olive oil. Apply to the effected ear using cotton wool bud soaked in the solution. (I use this with my kids—SW)

Responding to depression in Rural Communities ...

A Workshop examining depression in rural communities is being held in Sarina.

Topics covered include...

What causes depression and how it can be effectively treated.

What is it like to live with depression?

How to recognise depression and related disorders

How to approach someone you're concerned about

What resources are available from beyondblue and in the local community?

How can you extend these messages in you local community

****Training is FREE & LUNCH is included****

Date: 24 September 2008

Time: 10am – 2pm

Venue: St Michael's Parish Centre (Range Road)

RSVP: 15 September 2008 via fax or email

For all Enquiries contact:

Donna Hita (Community Support Worker) Mackay Division of General Practice LTD

Phone: (07) 4953 4491 or **Fax:** (07) 4953 4681

Email: dhita@mackaydgp.com.au

Connecting Women



Connecting women in the sugar industry nationally



Reef Rescue Funding Package

The Federal Government recently released details of the Reef Rescue Funding Package which will roll out incentives for growers over the next five years.

The funding was made available as a result of a submission put forward by Canegrowers, and representatives of the horticulture, dairy and grazing industries in conjunction with the various NRM groups across the state.

Each region will be granted funding according to their impact on the Great Barrier Reef which will be distributed between each of the commodities in each area.

Within the sugar industry, working parties up and down the coast have been working on a framework which rates farming practices according to the impact they may have on the reef. This framework consists of four categories (labelled A,B,C and D) which basically reflect historic practice, common practice, best practice and innovation. The practices identified are those which specifically examine soil, nutrient, sediment and pesticide management.

Funding incentives will be granted to individuals or groups of growers who are wishing to undertake projects which address these areas and will elevate their farming practices to a higher level in the framework.

Those growers interested in accessing funds will be required to complete a farm productivity assessment from which an action plan will be developed identifying the areas in which improvements can be made. This will then form the basis of the growers application for funding.

For more information on the Reef Rescue Package in your region phone your local Canegrowers office or NRM group.



Connecting Women



QRWN Conference 2008



Delegates from Women In Sugar groups from around the state took the opportunity to strengthen networks at the recent QRWN Conference held in Bundaberg.



Connecting women in the sugar industry nationally



Mackay WIS members at the recent QRWN Conference in Bundaberg

SRDC Research Project

CSE016 Final Report

Appendix 13: Learning From Other Industries Report

Project CSE016:

Sugar communities and resilience to change: Opportunities for enhancing women's participation in sustainability initiatives

**WORKING REPORT
LEARNING FROM OTHER INDUSTRIES**

Emma Jakku and Jenny Bellamy

August 2007

Introduction

This working report summarises the key themes that emerged from the guest speaker presentations at the ‘What works for women’ workshops, which focused on sharing experiences and learnings regarding women’s participation in agricultural industries.

Box 1 (below) summarises the guidelines for guest speakers, which detailed the themes that their presentations could address.

BOX 1 Guest speaker guidelines

- 1. What roles, levels of participation and/or influence do women have in decision-making on farm, within industry organisations and the broader community?**
 - Across different areas/levels/sectors relevant to the industry (on-farm, within industry organisations, in the research and extension sectors and at a broader community/regional level)?
 - Does the level of influence of women vary across these levels / sectors of decision making?
 - How satisfied are women with their current roles and level of participation across the levels / sectors?
 - Has the role and status of women in the industry changed over the last 5 to 10 years?
- 2. What are the factors that influence women’s participation in decision-making?**
 - What are some of the challenges that influence women’s participation (e.g. personal, social/cultural, economic and institutional)?
- 3. What are women’s preferences for participation in the industry at all levels?**
 - How much importance is placed on women’s participation (by women and men)?
 - What are some of the factors that motivate women to participate?
 - What are some of the ways that women prefer to participate?
- 4. Some examples of women’s experiences with ‘sustainability initiatives’ (i.e. formal activities, processes or tools focussed on making the industry economically, socially and/or environmentally sustainable).**
 - What were some of the key lessons that have emerged from women’s participation in these initiatives?
- 5. What is the importance and function of women in agriculture groups and networks in the industry?**
 - What kinds of women’s groups or networks exist in the industry / industries?
 - What were some of the key lessons that you have learnt from your involvement with such groups or networks?
- 6. What are the lessons from your industry on strategies for improving women’s participation in all levels/sectors of decision-making?**
 - What strategies have been most effective in your industry for improving women’s participation?
 - What factors might influence the success of these strategies in enhancing women’s capacity to better adapt to and shape change in their industry or community?
 - Are there any recommendations emerging from your industry’s experience for the sugar industry?

Experiences and learnings from other industries

Kate Schwager: Experiences and learning from the cotton industry

Background¹

At a time when farmers and their families in Australia's rural west are doing it particularly tough, Kate Schwager stands out as an inspiration. An ardent lover of the land, Kate with her husband runs a farming enterprise and successful website business from her home, 40 Kilometres outside of Wee Waa in north western NSW.

Kate's vision for agriculture is that it continues to strive for improvement in quality of farming and management of the land and the promotion of its achievements. Her commitment to rural Australia and her enthusiasm to showcase agriculture and the rural communities it supports, has led her to instigating the Rural Towns Web Package. The package was borne out of the success and the opportunities offered by the Wee Waa website. The small town's package is an easy to use web development program which builds small town websites in a cost and user friendly way. Kate won the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation Rural Women's Award for NSW 2006 for the Rural Towns Web Package

She believes that once a number of rural town sites have been set up, a rural towns network can be established to showcase the large variety of agricultural industries Australia boasts and the vast array of rural towns and communities it supports.

Kate Schwager is also the coordinator of Wincott, Australia's largest Network of Women in Cotton, boasting a membership of 280 and a broader network of 1300 women and families, community and industry networks. She is also the president of the local chamber of commerce and has been involved in a number of fund raising events for her local community.

Wincott

Wincott is a network for all women involved both directly and indirectly in the Australian cotton industry, offering an alternative opportunity for them to increase their knowledge and develop their skills.

Wincott activities include:

- Field days, information days, marketing days;
- Healthy Farming Families
- Meeting with the Bundaberg Women in Sugar group
- The Cotton Advanced - "Addressing the skills Shortage"
- Tours - Gin, Classing Rooms, Bayer manufacturing plant, Port of Brisbane
- Starter Kit booklet about the industry
- APC Course – Leadership Course
- Guest Speakers at AGM
- Website www.wincott.net.au
- Newsletters and Updates

¹ The guest speaker backgrounds included in this report were prepared by the guest speakers for promotion of the workshops.

Wincott has received funding from the Cotton Research Development Corporation, the Office of Status of Women, Greening Australia and the CCC Cooperative Research Centre. It has received sponsorship from Grant Thornton, ANZ, Monsanto, Telstra Country Wide, Bayer Crop Science and Drummuster.

Barriers to women's involvement in the cotton industry

The major barriers to a higher level of involvement of women in the cotton industry are:

- Distance and Time
- Mentoring and Gender
- Skills and Confidence
- Knowledge
- Leadership Course
- Future Funding

Strategies to address these barriers

The key strategies that Wincott have used to address the barriers to women's involvement in the cotton industry are:

- Newsletters and Website
- Network and Communication
- Industry issues and Feedback
- Resource network
- Database of members
- Local area activities
- Workshops and Information Days
- Starter Kit for Women new to industry
- Advancing Partnerships in Cotton course

Wincott's plans for the future include:

- Continue coordination of communication and network activities
- Continue facilitation of learning and up skilling activities
- Provide opportunities
- Promotion of the network
- Information source
- Lobby Group

Key messages²

- Paid membership didn't work for Wincott.
- The employment of a person in a Public Relations position to get the group going and keeping things active is crucial to Wincott's success.
- Wincott is united.
- Participants at the workshop could relate to Kate's experience of losing confidence after raising a family.
- Wincott has ideas to share with Women in Sugar groups.

² The key messages sections in this report are partly based on the guest speaker summaries from the post-workshop report, prepared by SeeChange consulting.

- Geographical distance is hard for the cotton women but they still have good communication.
- Wincott's newsletter is a great way to communicate.

Joy Deguara: Experiences and learnings from agricultural industries

Background

Joy Deguara is an active partner in the management of a family run commercial and stud cattle business in the Nebo district of Central Queensland where the family have had grazing interests for about 30 years. The stud business has now moved to focus on sourcing and selling genetics in overseas countries. Joy is also the business manager for the family's off farm business interests.

Joy runs a small rural community development consultancy working mainly with rural community groups, local government and industry groups. Current work includes a long term project with the sugar cane industry to increase the participation of women and young people in the governance of the industry.

Being a State Councillor on Agforce and a Director of Beef Australia gives Joy the opportunity to participate in industry matters at a state, national and international level.

Factors influencing women's participation in agricultural industries

Joy identified the following factors as the major influences on women's participation in agricultural industries:

- Perceived lack of knowledge and ability – by both women themselves and some men
- Non family friendly meeting times – no childcare
- The “Old Boy's” network
- Most industry positions voluntary – women are needed to work at home
- Many current Board members feel women should be able to get elected ‘if they are good enough’ – without special consideration

Joy also highlighted the way in which:

- Women are more likely to be open to, and see the need for, change
- Many women don't wish to participate in industry formally through a Board position but want to contribute in other ways
- Women's Industry Groups can provide hugely diverse ways in which women can make a significant contribution to the future direction of their industry
- Many women want to know and fully understand their industry

Women in Sugar groups

Based on her interaction with Women in Sugar groups, Joy made the following observations:

- There is a wide range of Sugar Women's Groups currently operate in Queensland.

- They are in various stages of development – ranging from just forming to being established for 13 or 14 years.
- The diversity of the groups she has worked with is impressive.
- In some areas there are very distinct outcomes from these groups, including increased participation and activity in sugar industry matters.

Key messages

- Putting learnings into practice is rewarding.
- Joy left school early, no formal education – she worked through education through life as an adult learner, with a practical focus.
- Keeps motivated, keeps improving herself.
- Women often prefer to make other contributions besides being on boards.
- Family support is essential.
- Networks and support teams are a vital part of women's participation in industry activities.
- Need to be passionate!

Robyn Boundy: Experiences and learnings from the pork industry

Background

Coming from a dysfunctional family background there were a series of incidents in those very early years which made Robyn realise at the age of five years old that it was going to be up to her to achieve the best that she could for herself.

Having to go out to work upon completion of her primary school education rather than continuing with secondary school has certainly not been a barrier to achieving success in the 'University of the Real World' as Robyn has always been hungry for knowledge and willing to share her learning with others.

Robyn's involvement in community organisations and agri-politics over the last forty four years has provided a wonderful synergy for her 'formal learning.' Ongoing interaction within Industry and Community organisations provided the information that was so beneficial for her own business decisions especially in times of increasing change by being able to implement major legislative guidelines within her own piggery in a timely manner rather than having to be forced to comply at great cost. A willingness to step outside her comfort zone has opened many doors for Robyn.

Robyn employs nine staff within her piggery and hairdressing business and she also manages her own domestic rental properties. Robyn also sit on two boards, one as company secretary, and the other as a Director of Queensland Pork Producers Incorporated where she also holds the position of State Vice President/ Secretary/ Treasurer.

Experiences in participation in pork industry decision-making

Robyn made the following observation about involvement in industry decision-making, based on her experiences in the various positions that she has held within pork industry organisations:

- The nature of intensive animal production allows for input from both partners in the enterprise
- Hands on in all aspects of Pork Production leads to the knowledge – leads to representation
- Once in industry executive positions it can be very lonely at the top
- Respect is gained by industry members through credible input
- Always maintain ones' own integrity
- Be willing to put your hand up for involvement
- Address issues with dignity

Robyn also highlighted the importance of networks for women's participation in industry decision-making: 'Put yourself out there and the world will come to you'. She also emphasised the value of being involved in industry training and understanding the constitution or committee rules of industry organisations.

Strategies

Robyn identified the following strategies for participation in industry decision-making, based on her learnings from involvement in the pork industry:

- Don't expect to get there overnight
- Maintain ongoing skills development
- Develop leadership qualities
- Lead with a very open mind
- Have long term goals
- Maintain credibility

Key messages

- The pork industry has undergone some significant changes.
- 'Share your knowledge' is not easy.
- Involvement is usually unpaid/voluntary, even at Robyn's level.
- Involvement in community and business can be rewarding.
- Acquiring knowledge is vital to utilize in and improve your business (being on boards, committees etc).
- Motivation, bravery, knowledge and credibility are important foundations for industry involvement.
- Communication and networking is essential for successful industry participation.
- Women can do it!
- Believe in yourself.
- Long term goals are important

Cathy McGowan: Experiences and learnings from the Australian Women in Agriculture movement

Background

Cathy McGowan is the principal of Catherine McGowan Consulting. She is a rural consultant, academic and farmer of prime lambs and walnuts. Her experience includes researching effective services for rural communities, such as child care and palliative

care and the design and presentation of leadership and change management programs for agricultural industries.

Her major current work is with horticultural industries, where she is responsible for a national program to encourage and support leadership within horticultural. She is also interested in agri- politics. Among recent activities, she has been on a government advisory committee on the World Trade Organisation, chair of the Regional Women's Advisory Council offering policy advice to the Deputy Prime Minister and his department, and president of the national organisation, Australian Women in Agriculture.

Cathy has a Masters of Applied Science in Agriculture and Rural Development, a Bachelor of Arts Degree and Diploma of Education. She is a graduate of the Australian Rural Leadership Program and a Churchill Fellow. In 2001 her work with the dairy industry won an international award for excellence in extension.

Experiences in increasing the participation of women in Australian agriculture

Cathy shared her personal journey of working to raise the profile and increase the participation of women in Australian agriculture. She talked about her experiences on boards within the Victorian Farmer's Federation, Australian Women in Agriculture and her local Community Credit Union. She also shared her learnings based on involvement in research projects on increasing the participation of women in the dairy, horticulture and sugar industries. She pointed out that both Women in Dairy and Women in Horticulture have active email networks and suggested that this is one area where the Women in Sugar movement could be strengthened.

Cathy explained her 'bloom where you are planted' and 'let your light shine' mottos, which underline the importance of women having the confidence to accept who they are and to discover and develop their own potential.

Cathy highlighted the importance of networking and public speaking skills and emphasised that these are skills that can be learnt. She also discussed an alternative approach to leadership, which focuses on bringing people together and pulling people with you. She also discussed the voting system within industry organisations and advocated a change in the voting system to allow for multiple votes per farming enterprise rather than the current one vote per farm, which exists in many industry organisations, including CANEGROWERS.

Key messages

- 'Bloom where you are planted.'
- Family involvement and support is critical.
- Communicating with your family and friends is important – need to find a way to do this.
- Never too old to learn.
- Pull others with you.
- Need to be open to new ideas.
- Hard to come back to your roots.
- Leadership and public speaking can be learned.
- Being true to yourself (and happy with who you are) – 'Let your light shine'

- Enthusiastic for learning.
- You can learn to be a leader – face your fears, get skills.
- Anything is possible.
- Necessity can be a catalyst to change.
- Determination is important.
- Get involved!

Conclusion

At the ‘What works for women’ workshops, the guest speakers shared their experiences and learnings regarding women’s participation in agricultural industries with participants.

A number of common themes emerged regarding women’s participation in agricultural industries, particularly the importance of:

- Networking and communication;
- Ongoing learning and skills development;
- The diversity of ways that women can contribute to agricultural industries;
- Support from friends and family;
- Leadership skills.

Above all, the guest speakers highlighted the motivation, knowledge, credibility, bravery and confidence that are essential for participation in industry decision-making.