



# **Rural Women's Network**

## **2011 Review**

### **Final Report & Recommendations**



Department of  
Primary Industries



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## Foreword

- How effective have current Rural Women's Network (RWN) activities been?
- Where should we be focusing our energies into the future?
- How satisfied are our 'customers' with RWN services?

These are some of the key questions for us to consider as we celebrate 20 years of the RWN program.

With a very small team covering all of the state of NSW, we need to continue to think smarter about what we *can* do by engaging the wisdom of others, expanding our knowledge, co-creating collaborative solutions, harvesting ideas, gathering productive feedback and testing assumptions.

Rural women are clearly experts in their own lives so we wanted to ask them what should stay the same and what changes might make the most difference and impact positively on their lives.

Without access to funding for an external review process, the information in this report was gathered through using internal RWN resources. We gathered the data using two surveys and a face to face forum followed by a simple analysis of the information.

The RWN sincerely thanks all those who have participated in this review process. Your time, ideas and feedback have been valued very much. The findings uncovered in this report from the 177 individuals who engaged in the process will help with RWN planning and has also contributed to continually building a productive interactive dialogue with key stakeholders. We hope you continue to work with us to ensure the rural women in this state thrive and prosper.

**Sonia Muir**  
**Manager Community Engagement Unit**  
**Department of Primary Industries**  
**23 January 2012**

*"The more stakeholders we engage and regularly communicate with, the less risk to our organisation and the more connected we are to our mission" ~ Dr Richard Jones, Copenhagen University*



## Brief background to the Rural Women's Network (RWN)

There is no one clear definition of what is 'rural' NSW. According to the last census data (2006) 27.4% of the total NSW population lived in rural, regional or remote areas outside major cities (Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong)<sup>1</sup>. Women from within this census defined 'rural' sector have been the RWN's target group since it was established in 1992.

Geographic isolation, socioeconomic disadvantage, greater exposure to injury risks and reduced access to services can significantly impact on rural women's lives.

The RWN was set up as a state-wide NSW government program to share information, be a voice and promote action on rural women's issues. To achieve this, the small team often works in partnership with the NSW Rural Women's Council, key individuals, groups, non-government and government agencies.

### **Services the RWN currently provide include:**

- Promoting rural women's achievements and key community activities
- Sharing information with rural women and families
- Presenting at events
- Facilitating workshops
- Providing links and referrals to networks, individuals, groups

### **Current RWN priorities include:**

- Producing and distributing The Country Web free newsletter
- Coordinating the annual RIRDC Rural Women's Award in NSW
- Facilitating two-day Shaping Our Futures Together<sup>2</sup> (SOFT) self development /leadership workshops
- Supporting the annual Rural Women's Gatherings<sup>3</sup> hosted by communities
- Coordinating the annual Hidden Treasures Honour Roll recognising rural women volunteers
- Engaging with stakeholders through our website ([www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/rwn](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/rwn)) social media (twitter: @NSW\_RWN) and the Rural Email List (REL)
- Promoting the Daring to Dream books featuring stories of rural women achievers

*RWN is an excellent network of support for women across regional NSW, as well as those in the cities with an interest in regional issues and challenges. Excellent team behind the efforts ~ online survey.*

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<sup>1</sup> The Health of the People of New South Wales - Data book Rural and Remote Populations (2008)  
[www.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au)

<sup>2</sup> For a list of where SOFT course have been held see Appendix 1

<sup>3</sup> For a list of where Gatherings have been held see Appendix 2



## Executive summary

The Department of Primary Industries' RWN program aims to provide a quality service that is innovative, provides value for money and is responsive to feedback from our key 'customers' who are women living in rural, regional and remote parts of NSW.

As a government funded service provider we wanted to review our current activities and investigate how best to improve our performance around existing activities and get advice on the development of potential future projects. We did this by asking a wide range of stakeholders what they thought.

### **What we wanted to know:**

1. How effective current RWN activities have been
2. Where the RWN should be focusing its energies into the future
3. Create a benchmark of customer satisfaction of RWN services

### **How we planned to get some answers<sup>4</sup>:**

- Online survey sent out through the rural email list subscribers
- Paper survey distributed to 2011 Rural Women's Gathering participants
- Invitation-only future directions forum at Dubbo

## **Key learnings and recommendations<sup>5</sup>**

The RWN appears to be travelling well in terms of customer satisfaction but there is always room to improve. We need to make sure our activities don't appear to only focus on those living in the Central West. Even though we do cover the whole state, the survey revealed a perception that we don't. We need to get better at promoting where we do activities and map out an annual strategy to try and ensure the RWN visits all regions at least once each year.

*Maybe run some more workshops for rural women in areas not done before. A lot of the programs seem to be run in and around the Orange, Parkes and Dubbo area. What about other areas such as Far West, Monaro, South West and Southern NSW ~ online survey.*

**Recommendation 1:** Develop a whole of NSW engagement strategy that ensures RWN activities are held in all regions.

**Recommendation 2:** Create a map that shows RWN engagement activities across NSW regions annually.

**Recommendation 3 :** Establish a team of volunteer 'women's voices' – at least one from each region – to participate in quarterly linkups to provide regular feedback on RWN activities, pursue ideas and identify hot and emerging issues.

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<sup>4</sup> (see Appendix 3 for raw data details)

<sup>5</sup> Quotes from respondents provided useful feedback. These have been scattered through the text. To cut down on volume comments have been combined where sentiments have been very similar. Some light editing has been necessary to some comments to correct spelling and comprehension.

We need to continue to target farming and town/village women and actively strengthen our linkages with other key women's groups and networks.

*Could the RWN seek an alliance with Women on Boards? ~ online survey.*

*Make RWN known more broadly via other networks (CWA, Australian Breastfeeding Association, Show Societies, Young Farmers and Sports Clubs). Need to be sure these organisations know you are a 'complement' not a threat ~ paper survey.*

**Recommendation 4:** Develop a collaborative activity with a key women's group each year.

We need to develop ways to engage more with Aboriginal women and those from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds (CALD) as very few completed the surveys.

**Recommendation 5:** Hold a Future Directions Forum specifically targeting Aboriginal women.

**Recommendation 6:** Hold a Future Directions Forum specifically targeting women from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds (CALD).

The Rural Women's Council (RWC) had significant support amongst review participants. Survey respondents believed it was providing a key voice for rural women by directly informing government about rural women's issues. The Council has not met since February 2011 and its future role needs to be resolved.

*Get Rural Women's Council going again ~ paper survey.*

**Recommendation 7:** Get clarity on the future of the NSW Rural Women's Council.

It was suggested that changing the RWN name could make it more inclusive and build our profile with non-farming women and women from remote areas. With the RWN having such a strong 'brand' we need to think carefully about how to do this.

**Recommendation 8:** Redesign the RWN logo to be more inclusive of regional and remote women.

As a priority, we clearly need to keep supporting the highly valued annual **Rural Women's Gatherings**, producing **The Country Web**, providing information through the **Rural Email List (REL)**, capturing **women's stories** and coordinating the **RIRDC Rural Women's Award**.

It was stated (at Dubbo forum) that the **Shaping Our Futures Together (SOFT)** courses not only provided benefits to women but also gave the RWN a unique opportunity to engage with course participants on a deeper level and become better informed about issues.

*I do not purchase publications or magazines as I am on a tight budget so I very much enjoy receiving my printed The Country Web ~ paper survey.*

*Gatherings allow you to get together with like-minded people, share life's experiences and learn from presenters and workshops ~ paper survey.*

*We need more personal and professional development courses like SOFT run in rural areas to enable women to gain confidence and skills for both career and community ambitions ~ online survey.*

*RIRDC Rural Women's Award opens doors through respect and acknowledgement of women's abilities ~ paper survey.*

*The Rural Email List (REL) is extremely valuable providing broad based information. Links however can be lost in the sheer volume ~ online survey.*

**Recommendation 9:** Continue to support the annual Rural Women's Gathering Committees, produce two copies of *The Country Web* newsletter annually, distribute the *Rural Email List (REL)*, record and promote rural women's stories through *Hidden Treasures*, coordinate the *RIRDC Rural Women's Award* and offer *Shaping Our Futures Together (SOFT)* courses.

It was also noted that men needed to be encouraged to read the *Country Web* as the information was useful to them as well.

**Recommendation 10:** Develop a spotlight on the front cover of *The Country Web* to attract men to read it.

Our focus in the future needs to continue to move into the social media space – especially if we desire to engage with younger women – suggested as another group we needed to specifically target.

*We need workshops on using social media, I think people should learn about this medium of communication as it is the way of the future and has become part of our daily lives ~ online survey.*

**Recommendation 11:** Hold a Future Directions Forum specifically targeting younger women.

We will need manage this carefully to ensure we have adequate resources to maintain quality and consistent content that is a feature of successful interactive sites using platforms such as Facebook, Slideshare, Flickr (photosharing) Youtube (videosharing) Twitter<sup>6</sup> (microblogging), LinkedIn<sup>7</sup> and blogs.

*Facebook, are you on it? ~ online survey.*

**Recommendation 12:** Research resources needed to extend the RWN's social media presence.

Only a small number of respondents currently use Twitter even though a large number were keen to delve into social media.

*I would like to learn about webinars, Twitter, Facebook and Skype ~ online survey.*

**Recommendation 13:** Continue to monitor growth of Twitter followers.

Perhaps training in social media is an area that needs to be investigated for both RWN staff and rural women. Even though it is clear that we do need to move into this space we need to ensure we don't disenfranchise our major stakeholder group of women in their 50s.

*Stop over the top focus on social networking, people out here still have dial up, bring on the NBN ~ online survey.*

**Recommendation 14:** Approach departmental 'social media champions' to assist with social media planning and run lunchbox training sessions on social media for staff.

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<sup>6</sup> As of October 2011 Twitter had 300 million users. Every day, 450,000 people signed up. One-third tweet on their mobile phone, 3 million websites have Twitter buttons, and over 200 million tweets are sent per day. <http://www.womens-forum.com/meetings/program/session/what-if-we-all-have-to-start-tweeting>

<sup>7</sup> As of August 2011 LinkedIn had more than 120million users. The average age of users is 45. LinkedIn complements more personal networking sites such as Facebook by serving as a professional/business networking tool to build and maintain relationships. It is growing at the rate of one new user per second.



## Key recommendations and learnings

### **From the Dubbo Future Direction Forum<sup>8</sup>**

#### **Top two activities the RWN should KEEP doing as voted by participants in the Forum:**

1. Networking with women's groups (7)
2. Support the Rural Women's Gatherings (5)

*Keep rural Women's Gatherings so that rural women can come together and laugh, cry, learn and engage ~ paper survey.*

#### **Top two activities the RWN should START doing as voted by participants in the Forum:**

1. Put a spotlight on the cover of *The Country Web* to encourage men to read it too (7)
2. Social Media (integrating Facebook, blogging, Twitter) (6)

#### **Top two activities the RWN should STOP doing as voted by participants in the Forum:**

1. Rethink the Rural Women's Network name to be more inclusive
2. Review the REL random email format into a weekly e-newsletter



*Some of the women who attended the Dubbo Future Directions Forum in November 2011*

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<sup>8</sup> This was an invitation-only half day 'workshop' in Dubbo on 3 November 2011 with 19 women. The aim was to engage with a range of diverse stakeholders by 'dialoguing' and gathering data on the effectiveness of current RWN activities and harvesting possible ideas for the future. **See Appendix 6 and 7 for full data on Dubbo Forum.**



## **From the online and paper surveys**

### **Top four activities the RWN should KEEP doing from both surveys:**

#### **1. Rural Women's Gatherings (17)**

*Have enjoyed the great speakers at ALL Rural Women's Gatherings, enjoyed meeting and greeting other rural women ~ paper survey.*

#### **2. The Country Web newsletter (12)**

*I like The Country Web in print, please don't change it. Good to pass on ~ online survey.*

#### **3. Rural Email List (REL) (7)**

#### **4. Shaping Our Futures Together (SOFT) courses (6)**

*I have not personally attended SOFT although have heard good feedback ~ online survey.*

*I think SOFT offers learning different perspectives and sharing goals that really assist – rather more beneficial than trying to work through on your own ~ online survey.*

Both survey formats did not provide a clear enough method of extracting the most commonly mentioned RWN activities to STOP nor START.

Comments about what the RWN should STOP doing were made by individuals with no significant trends apart from saying that the RWN should stop *nothing* – the most common response.

Trends for what the RWN should START doing focused around social media, leadership training and delivering projects to more remote areas and to youth.

*I admire the partnership of Rural Women's Network; NSW Centre for Volunteering; and the NSW Office for Women's Policy for Hidden Treasures Honour Roll ~ online survey.*

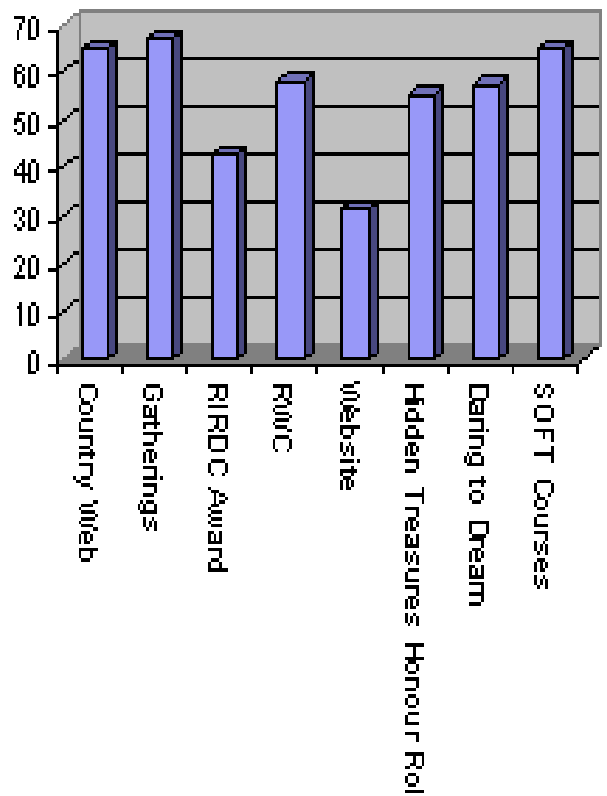
*The graph shows satisfaction ratings of key RWN projects from both the paper and on-line surveys combined (as percentages).*

### **Overall RWN customer service satisfaction**

Only respondents of the online survey were asked for feedback on overall customer satisfaction of RWN services.

66% were very satisfied with the current level of service, 25% were somewhat satisfied and 9% were unsure. None were dissatisfied.

*On a scale from 1 to 10 this network is 9.9. The everyday emails I find the most useful to forward on to anyone that I think would be interested. Without this network there a lot of women out there that would not know what is going on. I would like to see it keep going the way it is ~ online survey.*





## Summary of online survey<sup>9</sup>

n=94 responses were received from the 472 sent.

It should be noted that the Survey Monkey website used for the online survey only allowed 10 free questions which limited the efficacy of survey design. Invitations to complete the online survey were sent to all subscribers to the RWN's Rural Email list (REL) as this provided a relatively random survey.

### **Demographics**

The Online survey showed the majority of our respondents were women in their 50s (34%) and 40s (25%). Only 20% were in their 30s and 11% in their 20s. Most of these lived on a farm (36%) or regional city (27%) or rural village/town (26%). Only 1% stated they were Aboriginal while 7% identified as being from a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) background.

### **RWN programs and projects**

Over half (55%) found **The Country Web** newsletter to be very useful and 54% found **Rural Women's Gatherings** to have been somewhat or very beneficial to them.

Nearly two thirds (65%) agreed the **Rural Women's Council** was an effective way to directly inform government about rural women's issues and that the annual **Hidden Treasures Honour Roll** was a very useful way of acknowledging women's volunteering roles (64%).

Over two thirds (70%) thought the **RIRDC Rural Women's Award** was a very useful way of increasing leadership opportunities for rural women and that the **Daring to Dream** stories were a very useful way of celebrating and sharing rural women's stories.

Just under half (49%) found the **RWN website** to be very useful, 37% had read the '**Beyond the Kitchen Table**' **AgToday** column and only 14% subscribed to the RWN **Twitter** account.

Of those who had done a **Shaping Our Futures Together (SOFT)** workshop, over half (55%) said it gave them tools to develop their confidence and self esteem and built their understanding of how to develop meaningful personal goals. Even more (65%) believed SOFT increased their awareness of the value of networking.

*SOFT was Awesome – I still refer to some of the lessons ~ online survey.*

*I was not able to attend, but I think SOFT would be very helpful to most women~ online survey*

Nearly a third of the respondents (31%) said they could afford to pay up to \$50 for a SOFT course and 27% said they could pay up to \$150. Only 4% said they could not afford to pay anything to attend a SOFT course.

*SOFT gives rural women opportunities and access to training and skills otherwise difficult to access in rural areas ~ online survey.*

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<sup>9</sup> see Appendix 4 for copy of online survey questions      n=94 responses received.

## **Communication tools**<sup>10</sup>

Email was the most popular daily communication tool (86%) closely followed by the internet (78%). Referrals of the Rural Email List (REL) information was very high (80%) with 46 different groups listed as having been sent a REL email by a respondent.

### **Top four activities (by mention) the RWN should KEEP doing:**

1. ***The Country Web* newsletter (10)**
2. ***Rural Women's Gatherings* (7)**
3. ***Rural Email List (REL)* (7)**
4. ***Shaping Our Futures Together (SOFT)* courses (6)**



## **Summary of paper based survey**<sup>11</sup>

n=64 responses received from the 250 distributed.

It should be noted that results of this particular survey have been strongly influenced by respondents being given it at the 2011 Rural Women's Gathering at Gloucester. The paper based survey questions were slightly different to those of the online survey.

## **Demographics**

The paper survey showed the majority of our respondents were women in their 60s (37%) and 50s (31%). Only 11% were in their 70s and 5% in their 30s. No respondents in their 20s completed the survey. One quarter of the responses came from women living in the south west of NSW near Wentworth (25%) which may have skewed some of the results.

## **RWN programs and projects**

Over two thirds found **The Country Web** newsletter to be very or somewhat useful and over half (56%) said they had recommended the newsletter to someone else.

Although nearly a quarter of the respondents (24%) had not been to a **Rural Women's Gathering** before Gloucester, nearly three quarters (73%) said Gatherings had been somewhat or very beneficial to them.

Only three respondents had done a **Shaping Our Futures Together (SOFT)** workshop, two had read the '**Beyond the Kitchen Table**' **AgToday** column and six subscribed the **Rural Email List (REL)**. No-one subscribed to **Twitter** and just under a quarter (22%) found the **RWN website** to be very useful.

As with the online survey nearly two thirds (63%) agreed the **Rural Women's Council** was an effective way to directly inform government about rural women's issues and that the annual **Hidden Treasures Honour Roll** was a very useful way of acknowledging women's volunteering roles (66%).

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<sup>10</sup> When radio first came on the scene in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, it took 38 years for the medium to reach 50 million people a day. For television, it took 14 years. The Web needed only four years and Facebook only two. In 2010, cyberspace hosted an average of 247 billion e-mails a day. [www.womens-forum.com/meetings/program/session/managing-time-in-an-elite-five-habits-and-five-tools](http://www.womens-forum.com/meetings/program/session/managing-time-in-an-elite-five-habits-and-five-tools)

<sup>11</sup> see Appendix 5 for copy of survey questions

Under a third (30%) thought the **RIRDC Rural Women's Award** was a very useful way of increasing leadership opportunities for rural women.

Over half (57%) thought the **Daring to Dream** stories were a very useful way of celebrating and sharing rural women's stories.

### Communication tools

Email was the most popular communication tool (66%) closely followed by print (63%).

*I didn't know there was a website ~ online survey.*

### Top two activities (by mention) that the RWN should KEEP doing:

#### 1. Rural Women's Gatherings (10)

*I have not attended a Gathering so the only answer I could put was that it wasn't beneficial to me. I am sure there is value in holding the Rural Women's Gatherings ~ online survey.*

#### 2. The Country Web newsletter (2)





## Appendix 1: Shaping Our Futures Together (SOFT)

Around 1000 women have completed a SOFT course since the program was launched in 2001. SOFT builds on the diversity of leadership capacity in rural communities by exploring leadership skills and tools which enhance women's self-esteem/confidence, goal setting skills and support networks and are mapped to a national competency.

The two-day SOFT workshops rely on external funding to help cover costs. Some towns have been very successful in sourcing funds and have had the workshop run more than once as indicated below.

Since 2001 SOFT courses have run in the following locations:

- |                                  |                         |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Barham                        | 36. Mt Hope             |
| 2. Bethungra                     | 37. Murray Downs        |
| 3. Bingara                       | 38. Narrabri            |
| 4. Bombala                       | 39. Orange              |
| 5. Bourke                        | 40. Orange              |
| 6. Bourke                        | 41. Orange              |
| 7. Bourke                        | 42. Parkes              |
| 8. Bourke (ISOFT <sup>12</sup> ) | 43. Queanbeyan          |
| 9. Caldwell                      | 44. Scone               |
| 10. Camden                       | 45. Scone               |
| 11. Coleambally                  | 46. Tamworth            |
| 12. Condobolin                   | 47. Tamworth            |
| 13. Corowa                       | 48. Tamworth            |
| 14. Corowa                       | 49. Tarcutta            |
| 15. Cronulla                     | 50. Tocal               |
| 16. Crookwell                    | 51. Tocal               |
| 17. Deniliquin                   | 52. Tooleybuc           |
| 18. Enngonia                     | 53. Urana               |
| 19. Finley                       | 54. Wagga Wagga (ISOFT) |
| 20. Forbes                       | 55. Walcha              |
| 21. Galong                       | 56. Wellington          |
| 22. Ganmain                      | 57. Weethalle           |
| 23. Gloucester                   | 58. Wollongbar          |
| 24. Goodooga                     | 59. Yamba               |
| 25. Griffith                     | 60. Yanco               |
| 26. Harden                       | 61. Yeoval              |
| 27. Henty                        | 62. Yeoval              |
| 28. Hillston                     | 63. Young               |
| 29. Hillston                     |                         |
| 30. Inverell                     |                         |
| 31. Inverell                     |                         |
| 32. Kempsey                      |                         |
| 33. Lake Cargelligo              |                         |
| 34. Leeton                       |                         |
| 35. Lightning Ridge              |                         |



Online survey comments:

- Loved the SOFT course I attended in Henty.
- It's been a while I think I need a refresher.
- I have not done SOFT but would love to give female volunteers in rural NSW an opportunity to participate.
- I have not attended SOFT but I support it, given Australia is still very much a patriarchal society.
- I have done a few different workshops similar to SOFT and it reinforced what I have learnt.

<sup>12</sup> Specialist Indigenous SOFT workshops





## Appendix 2: Locations of NSW Rural Women's Gatherings

Gatherings are annual events organised by community groups with input and support from the RWN. Gatherings provide opportunities for rural women to access decision makers, training and support services. They also provide opportunities to exchange information and develop support networks.

Over four hundred women attended the very first NSW Gathering held in Orange in 1993. From that inaugural event came enthusiasm for a state-wide community driven Gathering to be held annually. Weekend events have been held every year since in the following towns (in alphabetical order):

1. Bega	2005
2. Bourke	2002
3. Cobar	1996
4. Cooma	1998
5. Coonabarabran	2004
6. Coonamble	2008
7. Gloucester	2011
8. Grafton	2006
9. Gunnedah	1994
10. Hay	2007
11. Junee	2009
12. Kempsey	2001
13. Moree	1999
14. Orange	1993
15. Temora	2003
16. Tocal	1997
17. Wellington	2000
18. Wentworth	2010
19. Yanco	1995



Some members of the 2011 Rural Women's Gathering committee (Gloucester)

The 20<sup>th</sup> Rural Women's Gathering will be hosted by Parkes 12-14 October 2012.

*The Gathering provided me with an opportunity to meet so many people in one spot. Brilliant ~ paper survey.*

*I have only attended two Gatherings. I would dearly love to attend more but getting the time to attend them is always difficult and they are usually a long way away. Or have not been held in my area ~ online survey.*

*Unfortunately I have not attended Gatherings, but I do enjoy reading about them ~ online survey.*



## **Appendix 3: Full data collection of survey results**

### **Online survey results (survey monkey)**

94 surveys were completed. All percentages refer to feedback from respondents who completed that particular question unless otherwise noted.

### **Demographics**

#### **Gender**

97% were female and the majority were in their 50s (34%) followed by those in their 40s (25%). 20% were in their 30s and 11% in their 20s.

#### **Location**

87% lived in NSW and the majority lived on a farm (36%) followed by those living in a regional rural city (27%).

12% lived in a remote location and 26% lived in a rural village or town.

4% lived in Sydney, Wollongong or Newcastle.

#### **Cultural Background**

Only 1% identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

7% said they were from a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) background.

### **RWN activities**

#### **Country Web**

55% found the newsletter very useful.

*Respondent ideas for Country Web themes/articles: Domestic violence, family relationship, mentoring women into community decision making working groups. Information for parents on pathways to further education and training opportunities, information on financial support for students and trainees who must live away from home to get qualifications. Provide clear explanations about changing government rules, regulations, tax changes, up coming policy issue and Adult education opportunities for parents in isolated areas e.g. electronic banking and office procedures.*

#### **NSW Rural Women's Gatherings**

54% found the Gatherings to have been somewhat or very beneficial to them.

#### **Rural Women's Council (RWC)**

65% agreed the RWC was an effective way to directly inform government about rural women's issues.

#### **Hidden Treasures Honour Roll**

64% thought the Honour Roll was a very useful way of acknowledging women's volunteering roles.

#### **Daring to Dream story project**

70% thought Daring to Dream stories were a very useful way of celebrating and sharing rural women's stories.

## **RIRDC Rural Women's Award**

70% thought the award was a very useful way of increasing leadership opportunities for rural women.

## **RWN website**

49% found the website to be very useful.

## **Shaping Our Futures Together (SOFT)**

Percentages here refer to ONLY those who had been to a SOFT workshop (only 31 respondents completed this section)

17 SOFT 'graduates' (55%) believed it gave them tools to develop their confidence and self esteem.

17 SOFT 'graduates' (55%) believed it built their understanding of how to develop meaningful personal goals.

20 SOFT 'graduates' (65%) believed it increased their awareness of the value of networking.

On the question of how much respondents would be prepared to pay to do a SOFT course:

31% stated they could afford to pay up to \$50 to attend a SOFT course

27% up to \$150

11% up to \$250

4% said they would like to attend but were not in a position to pay anything

16% were not interested in attending a SOFT course

17% were unsure

## **Communications tools**

The tools most used EVERYDAY were email (86%) and internet (78%) followed by radio (54%) and word of mouth (49%).

The tools least used EVERYDAY were webinars (1.4%) and the RWN website (1.4%)

The tools most used WEEKLY were print (36%) and word of mouth (26%) followed equally by radio (16%) and Facebook (16%).

The tool least used WEEKLY was webinar (2.9%)

The tools most used 2-3 TIMES A MONTH were RWN website (38%) followed by print (16%) and Youtube (13%).

The tools least used 2-3 TIMES A MONTH were internet (4%) and Facebook (4%).

63% did not use Twitter, 42% did not use webinars and 41% did not use YouTube as a communication tool at all.

*I am strongly averse to social networking websites due to privacy issues, Twitter is a waste of time, no time for this stuff anyway*

*I spend a lot of time on a computer at work and often don't have time or inclination to spend more time on a screen at weekends*



*I don't know what webinars are*

*I most appreciate any information on philanthropic support / assistance, innovative and successful rural community initiatives that other communities can learn from and perhaps replicate*

### **Beyond the Kitchen Table RWN AgToday column**

27 of the total respondents (37%) had read the column

*Well written with interesting topics*

*Do not buy the Land read it online*

*It is a great column to set it aside from the more technical and serious agricultural stories.*

### **RWN Email List (REL)**

80% of respondents had forwarded a REL posting to someone else.

To show the broad scope here are listed referral points provided by respondents (some acronyms are unknown and appear was written):

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| 1. AWIA (Australian Women in Agriculture)                          | 16. NSW Farmers' Association               | 41. NIRWA   |
| 2. Riverine Plains (farming systems group)                         | 17. Royal Agricultural Society             | 42. MWA   |
| 3. Corowa Ag'n'Chat  | 18. The Land newspaper                     | 43. AgChatOZ  |
| 4. Griffith interagency children's services youth                  | 19. Regional Interagency                   | 44. My own rural network for sharing information electronically |
| 5. LMD (Lower Murray Darling) CMA (Catchment Management Authority) | 20. TAFE Institute                         | 45. Community groups I am a part of.                            |
| 6. Red Cross Staff Zone representatives and other colleagues       | 21. QLD Rural Women's Network              |   |
| 7. Queensland Murray-Darling Committee                             | 22. Wincott                                |   |
| 8. Personal list   | 23. ARLPABC Rural                          |   |
| 9. Where is the Art (WITA)   | 24. Centacare                              |   |
| 10. Conservation Agriculture                                       | 25. FACSIA                                 |   |
| 11. No-till Farming Association (CANFA)                            | 26. Local farming group                    |   |
| 12. Facebook   | 27. Rice Growers Assn                      |   |
| 13. Inner Wheel  | 28. Australian Fodder Industry Association |   |
| 14. Church   | 29. CWA (Country Women's Association)      |   |
| 15. Rural Dental Action Group                                      | 30. Eugowra Progress Association           |   |
|  | 31. WOB                                    |   |
|  | 32. PCANSW                                 |   |
|  | 33. Zonta                                  |   |
|  | 34. University of New England              |   |
|  | 35. Elders                                 |   |
|  | 36. Outback Arts                           |   |
|  | 37. friends                                |   |
|  | 38. flying solo                            |   |
|  | 39. TAFE                                   |   |
|  | 40. AIRWA                                  |   |

## **RWN Twitter account**

Only 10 of the total respondents (14%) subscribe to @NSW\_RWN Twitter account.

## **What programs should the RWN STOP doing and WHY**

### **Scope of comments**

- *None I think all of them are very well thought of and very well done*
- *Hidden Treasures - not of wide interest so only relevant to local people so does not raise status of women to general public*
- *Unsure of value of the roll of honour*
- *Need to communicate across state borders*
- *Rural Women's Gatherings - not an effective use of funding, doesn't appear to stimulate on-going community activity, dollars per head seems excessive when compared to cost of conducting some other local women's events (effective ones appear to be those developed and run by the informal/formal locals leaders without large amounts of govt funding)*
- *Do training to deliver skills which will enable women to live better lives, independently, regardless of whether or not they have partners, families*

## **What programs should the RWN KEEP doing?**

**WHY is it important to you and HOW do you want them delivered (same? different? If so how?)**

### **Scope of comments**

- *Rural women need to communicate and be given opportunities to learn, lead and be informed of what is going on for women in their State*
- *Landlearn looks exciting*
- *Women's Gathering - they are important and you do them so well! I hear from others who have attended and the enormous wealth and pleasure they get from them*
- *I think Women's Gatherings are the most accessible for all women across NSW. I think anyone would feel welcome to participate in these days and benefit from them*
- *Daring to Dream.*
- *Not everyone would have enough confidence to nominate for Rural Women's awards or even Hidden Treasures*
- *Scholarships and awards for women and girls to encourage them to strive to be better, both for themselves and for their communities*
- *Rural Women's Council should continue to provide input and direction to the network*

## What programs should the RWN START doing?

### WHY is it important to you and HOW do you want them delivered?

#### Scope of comments

- 2012 is the UN International Year of Cooperatives - There may be something in that
- Push real assistance for rural kids (and young women) to get government assistance to go to city universities
- Try to engage younger rural women and teenagers. Support for younger rural women to keep them in the area and in agriculture, it's important to me because I work in agriculture and it truly is a 'mans world'
- Help facilitate women's agricultural discussion groups
- I would like to see more of a focus on helping young women to become leaders in their communities - especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds. They are the leaders of the future, the ones who hold the world in their hands. We need to find and then foster the talent in our rural communities for the benefit of all Australians.
- More leadership programs for geographically isolated women. Every country community relies heavily on volunteers to fundraise, to build and strengthen sporting and community welfare organisations locally. Governance and financial training should be a normal course of action for committee members but out in isolated areas where do they find the people to offer such training? Regional TAFE is always some distance away, transport to and from is always an issue as is cost of training. Online training is a good thing but will never be better than face to face training.

## How satisfied are you with the current level of services provided by the Rural Women's Network (RWN)?

66% were very satisfied with the current level of service, 25% were somewhat satisfied and 9% were unsure. None were recorded as unsatisfied.

#### General Comments

- I like to get information even if I can't act upon it.
- Are there people out there that would mentor online?
- Encourage more input from diverse women instead of the usual suspects
- Use Facebook to get peoples favourite services/website they use. Let the people start compiling data for you.



The current RWN team (LtoR): Allison Priest, Emma Regan (job shares with Allison), Sonia Muir and Novelle Hasling.

## **Paper survey results (Gloucester Rural Women's Gathering)**

64 surveys were returned and manually collated.

### **Demographics**

The greatest number of respondents were in their 60s (37%) and 50s (31%). 11% were in their 70s and 5% in their 30s. No respondents in their 20s completed the paper survey.

25% came from postcode 2648 (Wentworth in south western NSW)

### **RWN activities**

#### **Country Web**

86% were aware of The Country Web newsletter and 69% found it somewhat or very useful. 56% recommended the newsletter to someone else.

Comments:

*Very interesting for websites and for issues for rural families*

*Great info about life! What people are doing, challenges, and their passions. Great stuff.*

#### **Rural Women's Gatherings**

24% of respondents had not been to a Gathering before the Gloucester weekend. Of the 59% who had been to a Gathering, most had attended the Gathering at Wentworth (2010) (41%) followed by 25% at the Junee Gathering (2009).

73% of respondents said that Gatherings had been somewhat or very beneficial to them.

Comments:

*Gained a great appreciation of the value of women in general and also how women appreciate each other and love to share their marvellous talents with each other no matter where they are from. BRAVO!*

*The workshops, key speakers and comradeship are all beneficial and add to life's quality.*

*Great to meet other women, relax and unwind. Learn and gather great info, be challenged and have an opportunity to share my passion of interest by having a stall.*

*It's an opportunity to get away from the stresses of the farm and catch up with old friends.*

*Found it stimulating, unsettling and challenging.*

#### **Shaping Our Futures Together (SOFT)**

Only three respondents had completed a SOFT course (4%).

#### **Beyond the Kitchen Table RWN AgToday column**

Only two respondents had read the column.

#### **Rural Email List (REL)**

Only six respondents subscribed to the REL

#### **RWN Twitter Account**

No respondents subscribed to the Twitter account.

### **Rural Women's Council (RWC)**

63% of respondents were aware of the RWC and 45% agreed it was an effective way to directly inform government about rural women's issues.

### **Attending a Rural Women's Forum**

55% said they would be interested in attending a half day RWN forum if held within a two-three hour drive from where they lived.

### **Hidden Treasures Honour Roll**

66% of respondents had heard of the Hidden Treasures Honour Roll and 33% thought it was a very useful way of acknowledging women's volunteering roles.

Comments:

*Encourages women who earn recognition and also others to participate in community activities.*

*Females are a very resilient bunch and many go unrecognised.*

*Public recognition by peers for those often overlooked diverse roles and pathways women have taken.*

### **Daring to Dream books**

22% of respondents were aware of the Daring to Dream books and of those 58% had read the stories on the RWN website. Of those 57% thought it was a very useful way of celebrating and sharing rural women's stories.

Comments:

*Would be good to publicise these stories in a broader way – newspapers, women's magazine.*

### **RIRDC Rural Women's Award**

59% were aware of the RIRDC Rural Women's Award. And 30% of those thought it a very useful way of increasing leadership opportunities for rural women.

Comments:

*Encouragements and awards though not 'looked for' are much appreciated.*

*It encourages women to believe they are capable of anything*

*A bit up there for me*

### **RWN website**

69% had visited the RWN website and 22% of those found it to be somewhat or very useful.

### **What programs should the RWN STOP doing?**

Only four respondents left comments which focused on points to do with the Gatherings in particular or suggested stopping nothing.

## What programs should the RWN KEEP doing?

*My first ever Women's Gathering. Congratulations on a well organised, friendly informative two days.*

*Supporting women. We need it.*

*Radio interviews to reach isolated women giving them information and contact details.*

## What programs should the RWN START doing?

- *Lobby the government to stop the mining of coal seam gas until such time as more information is available and made public.*
- *Have opportunity on rego for Gathering to see participant contact details for networking (like SOFT networking sheet).*
- *Establish a Rural Women's Investment Development Fund.*
- *Maybe send Country Web as a one-off mailout to more isolated properties, so that these women become aware of the newsletter.*
- *Advertise so that more women become aware of RWN and what's available.*
- *Interviews on daytime television shows preferably on local channels. To show the positive outcomes of communicating with women of similar interests.*
- *Have small local rural gatherings for women so that we can get to know some of the people in our areas.*

The most popular communication tools used by respondents to access and exchange information are in priority order (please note that respondents were able to tick more than one box):

1. Email	66%
2. Print	63%
3. Internet	52%
4. Radio	41%
5. Women's Days	17%
6. Facebook	16%
7. Twitter	nil



## Appendix 4: Rural Women's online survey questions

### Rural Women's Network 2011 Feedback Survey

#### **Some basic information about you!**

This survey has 10 questions and should take you about 10 minutes.

1. Please make sure you answer the \*5 sections of this question!

\*1. Your gender?

\*2. What is your age?

\*3. Are you from NSW?

\*4. What best describes where you live in NSW?

\*5. Are you Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander or from a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Background?

☐ Female

☐ Male

☐ 19 or younger

☐ 20s

☐ 30s

☐ 40s

☐ 50s

☐ 60s

☐ 70s

☐ 80s+

☐ I am NOT from NSW

☐ YES I live in NSW

☐ I live in a remote location

☐ I live on a farm/property

☐ I live in a rural village/town

☐ I live in a regional rural city

☐ I live in in Sydney/Newcastle/Wollongong

☐ YES I am Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander

☐ YES I am from a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Background  
(please specify your background)

## Rural Women's Network activities

The RWN program works in innovative ways to share information and promote action on rural women's issues, often in partnership with stakeholders. We would greatly value your feedback.

2. Please tell us what you think about any of the following Rural Women's Network (RWN) activities you are aware of or have been involved in:

	Not at all	Somewhat	Very	Unsure
Has the Country Web been a useful resource for you?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Have the NSW Rural Women's Gatherings been beneficial to you?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you think the NSW Rural Women's Council is an effective way to directly inform government about rural women's issues?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you think the annual Hidden Treasures Honour Roll is a useful way of acknowledging rural women's volunteering roles?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you think the Daring to Dream story project is a useful way of celebrating and sharing rural women's achievements?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you think the RIRDC Rural Women's Award is a useful way of increasing leadership opportunities for rural women?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do you find the Rural Women's Network (RWN) website useful?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Any comments?



### Rural Women's Network's Shaping Our Futures Together (SOFT) workshops

SOFT workshops aim to build on the diversity of leadership capacity in rural communities by exploring skills and tools which enhance women's self-esteem/confidence, personal action planning skills and support networks.

3. If you have been to a two-day Shaping Our Futures Together (SOFT) course please give us feedback on your experiences.

	Not at all	Somewhat	Very	Unsure
Did SOFT give you tools to develop your confidence and self esteem?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did SOFT build your understanding of how to develop meaningful personal goals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did SOFT increase your awareness of the value of networking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other comments

4. What would you be prepared to pay to attend a two-day Shaping our Futures Together (SOFT) course?

- ☐ YES I could afford to pay up to \$50
- ☐ YES I could afford to pay up to \$150
- ☐ YES I could afford to pay up to \$250
- ☐ YES I could afford to pay up to \$350
- ☐ YES I could afford to pay up to \$450
- ☐ YES I would like to attend a SOFT course but am not in a position to pay
- ☐ NO I am not interested in attending a SOFT course
- ☐ Unsure

Please write in your email address if you would more info on SOFT

5. Please tell us how regularly you use the following communication tools to access and exchange information:

	Everyday	Weekly	2-3 x a month	Rarely	I don't use this
Print	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Email	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Internet	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
RWN website	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Radio	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Twitter	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Facebook	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Women's Days	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Webinars	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You Tube	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Word of mouth	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments

6. Have you ever read the 'Beyond the Kitchen Table' column by the Rural Women's Network in The Land newspaper's AgToday monthly supplement?

- ☐ YES
- ☐ NO
- ☐ Unsure

Comments

7. Have you ever forwarded a Rural Women's Network (RWN) Rural Email List (REL) posting to someone else

- ☐ YES
- ☐ NO
- ☐ Unsure

What are the top 3 key networks/organisations you would link into regularly?

8. Do you subscribe to the Rural Women's Network (RWN) twitter account:@NSW\_RWN?

- ☐ YES
- ☐ NO
- ☐ Don't know what twitter is

If you have a twitter account what is your account name?

### Thinking about the future

We are really keen to get your ideas on what programs you think the Rural Women's Network needs to KEEP doing, STOP doing or START doing and WHY.

9. What improvements and/or ideas would you like to suggest?

What programs should the RWN  
STOP doing and WHY?

What programs should the RWN  
KEEP doing? WHY is it important to  
you and HOW do you want them  
delivered (same? different? If so  
how?)

What programs should the RWN  
START doing? WHY is it important  
to you and HOW do you want them  
delivered?

### Customer satisfaction

You made it! This is the last question. Thanks again for your time. Any questions about this survey or the Rural Women's Network can be directed to [rural.women@industry.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rural.women@industry.nsw.gov.au).

10. How satisfied are you with the current level of services provided by the RWN

- ☐ Not at all
- ☐ Somewhat
- ☐ Very
- ☐ Unsure

How could we improve?



## Appendix 5: Rural Women's paper based survey questions



Department of  
Primary Industries



### 2011 Rural Women's Network (RWN) Survey

Your feedback is important to us so thank you for taking 10 minutes of your time to complete this survey. Please put your completed survey: in the BOX at the RWN Stand; mail to RWN, Locked Bag 21, Orange 2800; email to: [rural.women@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rural.women@dpi.nsw.gov.au) or fax to: 02 6391 3650.

To go in the draw for a FREE Daring to Dream book please include your contact details.

NAME:			
ADDRESS:			
	POSTCODE:		
EMAIL:			
PHONE:		MOBILE:	
o Tick if you would like a copy of the final evaluation report outcomes and include your email.			

Your age group: o 19 or younger o 20s o 30s o 40s o 50s o 60s o 70s o 80+

Tick if you are from an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background o

Tick if you are from a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse background o

What is your postcode?

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Q1. Are you aware of The Country Web newsletter?

Yes o No o

If Yes, has it been a useful resource for you? (Circle number that best suits for each question)

0	1	2	3	4
Not at all		Somewhat		Very

How?

Have you ever recommended The Country Web to someone else?

Yes o No o

Q2. Have you been to a NSW Rural Women's Gathering(s)?

Yes o No o

If Yes, which one(s)?

Have Gatherings been beneficial to you?

0	1	2	3	4
Not at all		Somewhat		Very

How?

Q.3 Have you ever attended a Shaping Our Futures Together (SOFT) course?

o Yes If Yes, where?

o No If No, go to Question 5

3.1 Did SOFT give you tools to develop your confidence and self-esteem?

0	1	2	3	4
Not at all		Some		Heaps

Can you give an example?

3.2 Did SOFT build your understanding of how to develop meaningful personal goals?

0	1	2	3	4
Not at all		Somewhat		Heaps

How?

3.3 Did SOFT increase your awareness of the value of networking?

0	1	2	3	4
Not at all		Somewhat		Heaps

How?

Q.4 Have you read the Beyond the Kitchen Table column in AgToday? Yes ☐ No ☐

If Yes, have you found it interesting and informative?

0	1	2	3	4
Not at all		Somewhat		Very

How?

Q.5 Do you subscribe to the RWN Rural Email List (REL)? Yes ☐ No ☐

If Yes, have you found it useful?

0	1	2	3	4
Not at all		Somewhat		Very

Have you forwarded any of these REL emails to someone else? Yes ☐ No ☐

Q.6 Do you subscribe to the RWN Twitter account: @NSW\_RWN? Yes ☐ No ☐

If Yes, have you found it useful?

0	1	2	3	4
Not at all		Somewhat		Very

Have you re-tweeted any of the tweets? Yes ☐ No ☐

Q.7 Are you aware of the NSW Rural Women's Council? Yes ☐ No ☐

If Yes, is it an effective way to directly inform government about rural women's issues?

0	1	2	3	4
Not at all		Somewhat		Very

Would you be interested in attending a RWN ½ day women's forum if held within a 2-3 hour drive of where you live? Yes ☐ No ☐

Q.8 Have you heard of the annual Hidden Treasures Honour Roll? Yes ☐ No ☐

If Yes, do you think it is a useful way of acknowledging women's volunteering roles?

0	1	2	3	4
Not at all		Somewhat		Very

How?

Q.9 Are you aware of the Daring to Dream BOOKS? (There are 2 editions) Yes ☐ No ☐

9.1 Have you read any Daring to Dream stories on the RWN WEBSITE? Yes ☐ No ☐

If Yes to either, do you think it is a useful way of celebrating and sharing rural women's stories?

0	1	2	3	4
Not at all		Somewhat		Very

How?

Q.10 Are you aware of the RIRDC Rural Women's Award? Yes ☐ No ☐

If Yes, do you think it is a useful way of increasing leadership opportunities for rural women?

0	1	2	3	4
Not at all		Somewhat		Very

How?

Q.11 Have you EVER visited the RWN website? Yes ☐ No ☐

If Yes, have you found it useful?

0	1	2	3	4
Not at all		Somewhat		Very

How?

Q.12 What do you think is ONE thing the RWN should:

STOP doing:

and WHY?

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KEEP doing:

and WHY?

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START doing:

and WHY?

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Q.14 which of the following communication tools do you regularly use to access and exchange information?

- ☐ Print  
 ☐ Email  
 ☐ Internet  
 ☐ Radio  
 ☐ Twitter  
 ☐ Facebook  
 ☐ Women's Days  
☐ Other - Please specify:

Q. 15 Please feel free to send us any extra comments and THANK YOU again for taking the time to help us gather information to make the Rural Women's Network more effective



## Appendix 6: Summary of raw notes from the Dubbo Forum

The group was divided into three groups. Each group's points were presented before participants were asked to vote on the one they felt most strongly about (red indicates those that had the most votes)

- **Stakeholder organisations and groups represented by the 19 women at the Dubbo forum included:**

Central West farming Systems, Parkes women's Gathering Committee, DPI Rural Support Worker, Quota international, Lachlan Health Council, Meals on wheels, Anglican women's Landcare, SOFT participants, Rural Women's Council members past and present, Aboriginal representative, Country Women's Association (CWA), Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW,) Coonamble Council, Coonamble Chamber of Commerce, 2828 Gulargambone, Gulargambone rural transaction centre, Coonamble Health council, Women out West, NSW Women in Agriculture, Orana Women in Agriculture, Probus, U3A, VIEW, Youth, Inspiration House Services Inc Dubbo Emergency Accommodation Project, Dubbo Migrant Support worker, daring to Dream contributor, National Association of the Visual Arts, Western Plains Cultural Centre Advisory Board and Friends., Fresh Arts, Synapse (Australian network for art and technology ANAT), Hidden treasures recipients, Dubbo and Gilgandra Red Cross, Dubbo Field Naturalist & conservation society, YWCA, St Vincent's de Paul, Western Aboriginal Tenant Service and Advisory Service, NSW Health, Western NSW local health district women's health program.

- **Invitations were also sent to the following groups who were unable to attend:**

Richmond Fellowship, Centacare, RIRDC award finalists/winners, Australian Women in Agriculture (AWiA), Mission Australia, Catchment Management Authorities, NSW Farmers, Member for Dubbo, TAFE Western and Livestock Health and Pest Authority.

### K E E P

WHAT	WHY	HOW	Vote
Community Support	Access to people Clarity of purpose Keeper of knowledge	Adequate funding Rapport with local media	
Women's Council	Is lobby groups/Minister	Rural Lobby groups need to be informed.	2
Rural Women's Gathering	Diversity of participants Networking Meeting new people/ideas Learning	Promotion – The Country Web Continue funding	5

WHAT	WHY	HOW	Vote
	The expertise of a small rural community Draws people together		
County Web	Communication Information “Keeps it in front of you” Relevant themes	Hard copy still important Sufficient DPI RWN Staff	1
SOFT	Giving women Confidence Make training Accessible Providing leadership skills Very unique avenue for RWN to get feedback through deeper engagement	Source of funding Sponsorship	
RIRDC	Promotion of women in agriculture	Seek sponsorship to allow RWN to organise	
Stories in Country Web	Acknowledging women Inspiring women Educational		
Country Web Book Reviews Health Raising Kids	Keep up-to-date		1
Role in Networking Strong – manage	Saves time and is beneficial		
Daring to Dream Profiles in Country Web	Useful Head – knowledge Heart – passion Hand – skills		
Hidden Treasures (Country Web Stories)	Community asset register ‘trigger’ to connect. Reflect on who’s in your community		1
<b>Networking</b>		<b>Involve all women’s groups</b>	<b>7</b>
Pushing for recognition		Keep programs	



WHAT	WHY	HOW	Vote
Encourage regional women's issues – advocacy	Support for Daring to Dream and Hidden Treasures	Recipients of 'awards' do more mentoring in own communities	2
Annual Forums		More practical /fun workshops	3
Country Web	Vary writing audience Very wordy and paper colour + print		1
Continuation of support of CWA			
Rural Women's Award			

### START

WHAT	WHY	HOW	VOTE
Facebook	Relevant to young (all) women	Call IT	2
Radio Program	Comes with wider audience	Linked to subject in AgToday (Beyond the Kitchen Table)	3
Field Day representation Attending Local Shows	To promote RWN	Table in DPI marquee	
<b>Social Media such as Facebook etc</b>	<b>More coverage to a range of people using these tools</b>	<b>Facebook – majority of social interaction</b> <b>Blog of Country Web – link info social media strategy</b> <b>Twitter more blog. Link twitter to facebook – trans to twitter</b> <b>Interlink all forms</b> <b>Interest area – segregate – organise info.</b>	<b>6</b>
Aboriginal Forum	Won't go to a mixed forum Won't/can't travel to cities	Inform Aboriginal community Lacking community interest Get young women involved Mentoring	2
Marketing RWN	Young women Don't forget regional 'city' women or women in business	Change name (Regional Women's Network?)	
Education	Issues groups	Country Web	3

WHAT	WHY	HOW	VOTE
Financial Health		REL (headings)	
Health	Carers Bigger health sections in Country Web Better inter-government communications Mental health	Network – create with Dept. Health. Western Health Summit – Govt bodies – voluntary bodies etc.	1
Multicultural Forum	Bigger group of Sudanese/Sri Lankan etc women	Educate Health Other groups to communicate Financial assistance Health interagency Report MACCA (Mins Ad Con)	2
Skill-based based Workshops Time management Goal setting Anger management Resume writing for women (converting community work into corporate work opportunities)	Up skill Confidence TRAINING  Out of workforce Women have gaps.... Children	Face to face! ½ day/mornings 10 – 2pm Promoting and linking with those groups Delivering training: not RWN delivering but Helping other e.g. Centacare, Relationships Australia	2
Help other programs plus groups happen – promote and network e.g. Encore – YWCA Partnerships	Struggling to get numbers SUPPORTING EXISTING PROGRAMS	Promotions Building Partnerships NFP, FBO, Charity, Social Enterprise, Local Govt. CONNECT PEOPLE showcase @ Gatherings	3
Great connections with local Government	Why are women not getting involved?  ASSET REGISTER	Help develop community asset register – who + what they do? Groups of Councils Strategic Partnerships	
<b>Increase men's readership</b>	<b>Country Web seen as a women's magazine</b>	<b>Front cover could have pic of a man or spotlight on some male content</b>	<b>7</b>

WHAT	WHY	HOW	VOTE
Local RWN “Advocates” “Champions” (Reference network)	Spread the word  Reference GROUP across the state	Directory/email Contacts Strategic reference Group – telelink 1/4ly (Jane) Invite EOI Sth/Nth/Western etc. Up to 40 Local government?? Gathering Minister Country Web column	4

### STOP

WHAT	WHY	HOW	VOTE
Daring to Dream	Cost Project (could be ceased)	No Daring to Dream 3 book?	3
Hidden Treasures	If cost is an issue. Credibility		
Use of word ‘RURAL’ reflects a farming focus – REGIONAL may better reflect.	Rethink the Rural Women’s Network name to be more inclusive  Perhaps change name to REGIONAL instead of RURAL	Limits people’s idea of ‘group’ REGIONAL encompasses rural and cities	10
Delivery Change	Country Web	Cut down costs by blurb and twitter Colour difficult to read Write to particular audience by each piece – easier to read	2
Rethink the REL format From daily to a weekly e-newsletter format	Try a format that is just one line listings with a web link/phone no.	Cut back on number of emails – lack of time.	7
SOFT other Workshops	Others can do these!		4



## Appendix 7: Evaluation of RWN Future Directions Forum: Dubbo

How would you rate the following aspects of the forum (fill in one circle per statement)

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree		
	1	2	3	4	5		
1. The forum was worthwhile to me	8	6					
2. The RWN presentation was useful to the process	6	6					
3. I learned at least one new thing about the RWN	5	5	2				
4. I made at least one connection that could be useful to me	7	5					
5. The length of the forum was right for me	6	7					
6. The forum program flowed well	7	5					
7. I had good opportunities to have my say	8	3					
8. The forum was well organised	8	4	1				
9. The venue was conveniently located for me	11	4					
10. The catering was of a good standard	5	6					
11. How satisfied are you with the <u>current level of services</u> provided by RWN	Not sure	Not satisfied at all	A bit satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Quite satisfied	Quite satisfied	Extremely satisfied
				1	4	3	3



## Appendix 8: List of the final key 12 recommendations

**Recommendation 1:** Develop a whole of NSW engagement strategy that ensures RWN activities are held in all regions.

**Recommendation 2:** Create a map that shows RWN engagement activities across NSW regions annually.

**Recommendation 3 :** Establish a team of volunteer ‘women’s voices’ – one from each region to participate in quarterly link ups to provide regular feedback on activities, pursue ideas and identify hot and emerging issues.

**Recommendation 4:** Develop a collaborative activity with a key women’s group each year.

**Recommendation 5:** Hold a Future Directions Forum specifically targeting Aboriginal women.

**Recommendation 6:** Hold a Future Directions Forum specifically targeting women from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds (CALD).

**Recommendation 7:** Get clarity on the future of the NSW Rural Women’s Council.

**Recommendation 8:** Redesign the RWN logo to be more inclusive or regional and remote women.

**Recommendation 9:** Continue to support the annual Rural Women’s Gathering Committees, produce two copies of *The Country Web* newsletter annually, distribute the *Rural Email List (REL)*, record and promote rural women’s stories through *Hidden Treasures*, coordinate the *RIRDC Rural Women’s Award* and offer *Shaping Our Futures Together (SOFT)* courses.

**Recommendation 10:** Develop a spotlight on the front cover of *The Country Web* to attract men to read it.

**Recommendation 11:** Hold a Future Directions Forum specifically targeting younger women.

**Recommendation 12:** Research resources needed to extend the RWN’s social media presence.

**Recommendation 13:** Continue to monitor growth of Twitter followers.

**Recommendation 14:** Approach departmental ‘social media champions’ to assist with social media planning and run lunchbox training sessions on social media for staff.



**NSW Department of Primary Industries  
Level 2 161 Kite Street (Locked Bag 21)  
ORANGE NSW 2800**

**T: 02 6391 3611**

**F: 02 6391 3650 |**

**E: [rura.women@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rura.women@dpi.nsw.gov.au)**

**[http://twitter.com/NSW\\_RWN](http://twitter.com/NSW_RWN)**

**[www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/rwn](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/rwn)**



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