

Report from the National Rural Women's Summit

27 – 28 June 2008

**Crowne Plaza Hotel
Canberra
ACT**

This report is presented by the Summit participants to the Australian Government, through the Minister for the Status of Women

Official Communiqué

National Rural Women's Summit

Saturday 28 June 2008

The National Rural Women's Summit has brought together eighty two women from rural, regional and remote areas including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and women with disabilities. We are committed to the well being of our communities and families. We are decision makers in small business, primary production, health, education and environment.

Our vision is for remote, rural and regional Australia to continue to be a great place to live and work – not only for now, but for our grandchildren's future.

Our communities, environment, industries, services and workplaces are facing rapid change. Drought, climate change, water issues, increased costs such as fuel and agricultural inputs, loss of services, and attracting and retaining skilled labour are only a few of the challenges facing us.

We recognise all areas of Australia face these challenges but the vast distances, lack of infrastructure and services that ensure we achieve equivalent outcomes to those living in urban centres not only isolates us, it stifles growth, innovation, entrepreneurship and adaptive capacity.

This threatens Australia's economic, social, cultural and environmental sustainability and prosperity. Urban and remote, rural and regional Australia is interdependent.

The significant messages from the Summit highlight that:

- Many of the issues and needs remain the same – they are not new – but they do require new solutions and approaches in a national bipartisan framework NOW
- The talent of rural women must be utilised for the sake of Australia's future
- Women from all backgrounds will work with government for better policy and on ground outcomes
- Australia requires immediate action on water
- Government and decision makers must recognise and value the contributions that rural women make to connecting and sustaining rural families, communities, businesses and services.

We now respond to the Prime Minister's election commitment. He promised that the Government would strengthen the capacity of rural women to participate in policy debate and provide quality advice on issues affecting remote, rural and regional communities to the Ministers responsible for primary industries, regional development, youth and women.

We fully agree with the Hon. Minister Pliibersek MP and the Hon. Minister Burke MP when they say that better policy is made when women are a part of it. We share their vision for having women fully participate in the decision making for remote, rural and regional Australia.

Policy advice, strategies and key recommendations for government are presented today and we request that the Ministers treat these as a call for outcomes.

There are 109 recommendations for the following themes:

- Climate change, environment and water
- Women in decision making
- Education
- Health
- Employment and business development

- Families and children
- Community building, reconciliation and new arrivals
- Young people
- Infrastructure, transport and telecommunications
- Training and skill development

Key recommendations include:

1. The need to immediately declare a 'National State of Emergency' for water;
2. The need to increase the number of women in decision making positions in order to achieve a fifty per cent minimum standard;
3. That a national rural health plan be developed that ensures equitable health outcomes for all remote, rural and regional Australians;
4. That a national rural education plan be developed that ensures equitable outcomes for all remote, rural and regional Australians;
5. Develop a national family strategy that ensures all Australian families are strengthened, supported and valued, have adequate child care, and are free of violence and abuse;
6. That young people are supported in education, business development and encouraged to develop entrepreneurial skills and expertise;
7. That disadvantaged remote, rural and regional communities are supported to develop their human capital and other resources through a range of services and support mechanisms;
8. That a single telecommunications package be developed for all Australians, using digital technology;
9. Immediate investment be made in research, development and the implementation of alternative energy forms/fuels;
10. That the Productivity Commission's review of Exceptional Circumstances include 'social inclusion principles'; and
11. That barriers to entry for young people into agriculture and rural businesses be addressed.

A comprehensive Summit report will be presented to the Ministers and will be available to all interested stakeholders.

We thank the Hon. Tanya Plibersek MP, Minister for the Status of Women, for hosting the Summit and creating a forum for engagement and outcomes. We also acknowledge the support of the Hon. Tony Burke MP, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry; the Hon. Anthony Albanese MP, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government; the Hon. Kate Ellis MP, Minister for Youth and Sport; Senator Claire Moore, Senator for Queensland and Ms Kirsten Livermore MP, Member for Capricornia.

We value the opportunity to contribute to and influence policy and strategy both via the Summit and on an ongoing basis through the National Rural Women's Network.

Historically, Australian women have led the way to have all women's voices heard.

Continuing this tradition in 2008, Australia's remote, rural, regional and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women claim a stronger voice in decision making. We will work with government and influencers to implement and deliver on our recommendations. This will ensure our families, communities, environment, industries and workplaces prosper for tomorrow.

There are a number of critical issues to be addressed that require immediate action. This action must ensure social inclusion, equity and long term needs for a fairer Australia.

This requires new ways of working appropriate for today's world and will include a national whole of government approach with a concerted effort for each sphere.

It requires courage, commitment and communication from all.

Ends.

Future Action

During the Summit there were significant announcements made by Ministers indicating some directions for the future:

- a. The Hon. Minister Plibersek MP announced the establishment of a review of current processes for Government engaging with women and women's groups across Australia, and invited the Summit participants to actively engage with the consultants conducting that review. Details of the review will be available from early October on the Office for Women website www.ofw.fahcsia.gov.au
- b. The Hon. Minister Burke announced that as part of Australia's Farming Future \$500,000 every year has been set aside for community capacity-building in the form of sponsorship of women in agriculture gatherings. In this way the Government and the Minister can talk to women on a state-by-state basis and Departmental officials can provide more direct assistance. The Minister's speech is available at http://www.maff.gov.au/transcripts/transcripts/june_2008/rural_womens_summit
- c. The Hon. Minister Plibersek MP invited the participants to prepare a report on the Summit with recommendations, and committed to providing a Government response to the recommendations by the end of 2008.
- d. The report will be sent to all women who expressed an interest in the Summit, and all participants, and published on the website of the Office for Women.

Chapter 1

The Summit

The National Rural Women's Summit was held over three days in Canberra from 27 to 28 June 2008.

Leadership and Management

The Summit was initiated by the Hon. Tanya Plibersek, Minister for the Status of Women, with the support of the Hon. Tony Burke MP, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, the Hon. Anthony Albanese MP, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government and the Hon. Kate Ellis MP, Minister for Youth and Sport. The Summit applauds the leadership shown with this initiative.

An Advisory Committee of representatives from key regional, rural and remote organisations made up an advisory committee to the event, including Indigenous representation, National Rural Women's Coalition, Australian Women in Agriculture, Women With Disabilities Australia and Regional Women's Advisory Council. The Summit was unanimous in its thanks to this group for their leadership.

The event and its administration were superbly managed by the Office for Women in the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs. The participants would like to thank staff of the Office who worked tirelessly to make this event a significant occasion.

The advisory committee was also supported by staff from relevant Government departments who gave critical input to the process. The advisory committee acknowledges that the success of the event and the potential to implement recommendations is dependent on close intergovernmental cooperation, and sincerely thanks the representatives for their interest and commitment in pursuing this topic. These representatives came from the Office for Women; the Regional Policy Unit in the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government; the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (Youth Bureau). Details of the Advisory Committee and staff members can be found in Appendix 1.

The Summit was facilitated by Anne Dunn (MIME) who is currently Chair of the Regional Women's Advisory Committee.

Welcome to Country

The *Welcome to Country* was given by Mrs Agnes Shea, Ngunnawal Elder. The participants expressed their gratitude to Auntie Agnes for her welcome and heartfelt speech which set the tone for open and committed discussion throughout the Summit.

Trade Show

The Summit was preceded by a Trade Fair where sixteen women engaged in businesses in regional, rural and remote Australia displayed their products. The items showcased were, in the main, produced by women from their local areas.

The full list of exhibitors is presented in Appendix 2.

Participants

An expression of interest call was circulated through women's networks, and resulted in around one hundred and fifty women indicating an interest in attending. From these submissions, eighty two women were selected from across all States and Territories, with a range of interests including commercial, government, agriculture, small business, education, health, arts and the environment. The process looked for diversity in background, age, interests and perspective. In particular the process encouraged participation from often marginalised groups including Indigenous women, women with disabilities and women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

The eighty two women who attended provide a vast array of experience and wide range of views on each topic. That consensus was achieved on all recommendations is both a miracle and a tribute to the thoughtful and respectful process engaged in by all participants.

The descriptive list of the organisations from which participants came is available at Appendix 3.

Summit Program

The program was a combination of three main activities:

- a) Presentations, including:
 - The Hon. Tanya Plibersek MP, Minister for the Status of Women
 - The Hon. Tony Burke MP, Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
 - Ms Libby Lloyd AM, Chair, National Council to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children
 - Senator Claire Moore, Senator for Queensland
 - Ms Kirsten Livermore MP, Member for Capricornia

- b) Workshops on the following topics:
 - Health
 - Education
 - Climate change – environment and water
 - Young people, girls and teenagers
 - Infrastructure, transport and telecommunications
 - Representation of women in decision making
 - Community building, reconciliation and new arrivals
 - Training and skill development
 - Employment and business development
 - Families and children

- c) Plenary sessions to reach agreement on all recommendations and the wording of the communiqué.

A full program is presented at Appendix 4.

Chapter 2

Background and Context

The Government has no interest in a talkfest. The Government's interest is in harnessing and harvesting ideas from the community that are capable of being shaped into concrete policy actions. Government, irrespective of its political persuasion, does not have a monopoly on policy wisdom. To thrive and prosper in the future we need to draw on the range of talents, ideas and energy from across the Australian community. For too long Australian policy making has been focused on short-term outcomes dictated by the electoral cycle. If Australia is to effectively confront the challenges of the future, we need to develop an agreed national direction that looks at the next ten years and beyond. (Introduction to the Australia 2020 Summit)

The Hon. Minister Plibersek MP, in her letter of invitation to express an interest in attending the summit, said as follows:

*“This Summit will bring together rural and regional women to discuss issues important to them, their industry and the wider rural sector. The central theme of the Summit is **Strengthening the Voice of Rural Women**. The Summit will provide an opportunity for women to develop strategies to influence the future direction of their own businesses, industries, communities and governments.”*

The Summit responds to an election commitment made by the Government:

A Rudd Labor Government will strengthen the voice of rural women in shaping rural and regional policy.

Labor will convene a National Rural Women's summit to identify and discuss the scope of issues, and determine processes for addressing them.

Following the Summit, Labor will strengthen the capacity of rural women to participate in policy debate affecting rural and regional communities by establishing a National Rural Women's Network to work in partnership with existing allied rural women's networks.

The National Rural Women's Network will be a joint initiative between the Departments of Primary Industries, Regional Development, and Youth and Women. The network will provide high level advice to the Ministers of these portfolios on a range of issues affecting rural and regional communities.

The Government acknowledges the importance of Indigenous people in rural, regional and remote Australia and seeks outcomes from the Summit that recognise and incorporate Indigenous people and communities in all considerations and recommendations.

The Government also reiterates its commitment to social inclusion as integral to the building of rural and regional communities which are economically, ecologically, and emotionally sustaining for all Australians. The Summit will explore the issues for disenfranchised groups and devise pathways for diverse voices to be heard at the Summit and into the future.

Chapter 3

Network Development

Following the Summit, Labor will strengthen the capacity of rural women to participate in policy debate affecting rural and regional communities by establishing a National Rural Women's Network to work in partnership with existing allied rural women's networks (Federal Labor Party Election Platform)

The Summit unanimously supports the Government's intention to establish a National Rural Women's Network. This Network will enable women from regional, rural and remote Australia to actively participate in the policy debates affecting their heritage, the places where they live and work and where they have built their families, lives, hopes and dreams. The women at this Summit identify with the country and land, are committed to a positive sustainable future and will work tirelessly to maintain and develop communities that are inclusive and caring. They look forward to an active partnership with Government to achieve this.

The following statement and proposal for a national network was endorsed unanimously by the Summit and is presented for consideration:

National Rural Women's Network

We are at a national turning point. We face unprecedented challenges regarding water, energy, sustainability, land degradation and the capacity to deal with and adapt to climate shift. Each of these issues impacts significantly on the social and economic fabric of our regional, rural and remote communities.

These challenges require high order national responses, particularly from government – in terms of policy settings and major national actions and responses, within a reasonably short period of time. The next few years are especially critical.

The direct impacts of these issues - food security, sustainable irrigation, water use and management, energy and transport, land degradation, and telecommunications - will be borne largely by people beyond Australia's cities.

Regional, rural and remote women have a crucial role to play in assisting national responses in addressing these and other critical issues. Women already play a key role in managing change in their communities. Hence, there is a need for an effective national mechanism that can bring women into the equation.

The formation of a national rural women's network - independent in spirit and properly resourced by Government - will serve this purpose. This initiative presents our national government with an enormous positive opportunity to utilise women's experience and voice in shaping the policy and program responses required for effective action on these major national challenges.

Purpose

To bring the voice and experience of rural women to bear on these critical issues of our time.

Principles

- We will get better policy if women have input
- Women want a model of social inclusion and participatory democracy (not a representative model)
- All policy on rural issues must be gender inclusive
- Women want a direct link between 'voice' and action – a national response to issues
- The best possible advice will reach Government via the entire pool of regional, rural and remote women

Membership

- Participation in the network is available to all women in regional, rural and remote Australia, and urban based women working with regional, rural and remote women

Function

- Provides ALL of Government with ready access to advice from rural women
- Provides the mechanism for the voice of regional, rural and remote women to be heard
- Identifies and engages women with the most appropriate expertise and knowledge on particular issues
- Holds a database register of women's profiles generated by the women
- Provides an interactive website of Government information, links to other networks, surveys and analysis
- Sources relevant information/opinion from rural women, collates and analyses the diversity of views and input, and presents this to Government
- Is recognised as a significant consultative mechanism with and for rural women
- Provides all regional, rural and remote women with access to information, discussion forums, a national events calendar and a mechanism for input to policy and programs
- Supports and strengthens existing and emerging networks for rural women (wide & diverse; formal & informal)
- Provides a continuous feedback loop between rural women and Government – for assessment of the efficacy of policy and action
- Provides small grants to enable/enhance communication between women and with Government
- Provides a mechanism for women to share information, ideas and support each other

Structure

- Does not replicate/replace any current networks or organisations and allows interaction with existing networks
- Requires a new type of structure to meet the Purpose
- Is permeable – women can move in and out – does not necessitate being a member of an organisation
- Is independent/stands alone and driven by rural women
- Will report to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Is adequately resourced for 5 years (then reviewed)
- Has dedicated staff/resources in order to communicate, consult, collate input, and disseminate information
- Is staffed at a high level and staff knowledge is retained
- Has an advisory committee drawn from the diversity of regional, rural and remote women (culture, age, disability, geography, occupation) with a finite term of tenure to guide the formation and operation of the Network
- Utilises multiple forms of communication to ensure access for all regional, rural and remote women

Women from the Summit welcome the opportunity to work with Government to develop this network into an effective consultation body that is respected and listened to by policy makers and program deliverers.

Chapter 4

Climate change – environment and water

Australia faces an unprecedented challenge from climate change coupled with our ever-expanding ecological footprint. We risk losing our natural heritage, our water resources, and the basis for our lifestyles and future prosperity. We have a brief opportunity to act now to safeguard and shape our future. (2020 Summit)

Topic scope

This workshop brought the perspective of women to the climate change debate and included examination of:

- Impact of climate change in primary production and in communities
- Ways to encourage wider participation by women in the debate
- How to provide choices for farmers facing adjustment that are not seen as failure
- Managing the land when it is no longer economically productive
- The need to invest in industry diversity and support innovation and creativity
- Enabling within and across community consultations to consider what the changes mean and to find ways to support each other
- The need for a review of all our current 'disaster' arrangements including quarantine etc. as they are not set up for climate change
- Recognising that off farm labour is subsidising Australian agriculture – particularly women's off farm labour
- Ensuring that corporate farming takes social cohesion in rural communities as an important component of its triple bottom line approach
- Engaging broader than farming interests in rural Australia in the climate change debate
- Encouraging a greater valuing of Australian rural and agricultural products

Our Vision

That we actively build a healthy, productive, sustainable environment that:

- Ensures sustainable food production
- Provides diverse, long term employment
- Builds community resilience
- Supports innovative new industries
- Conserves the land and waters

Through:

- Short, medium and long term planning
- Acknowledgement and inclusion of Indigenous people and their knowledge in the discussion and recognition of cultural sensitivities
- Active engagement of women in formal discussions and decision making
- An inclusive approach that engages rural, Indigenous and urban communities
- Rural policy development that recognises that rural/regional/remote Australia is more than agriculture
- Recognition that the environment and water are shared assets requiring an equity framework for future generations and the environment
- Valuing our environment and ensuring that decision making and policy is based on environmental considerations

Areas for Action

- Support for farmers to become specialists in their own environment, learning to use their local knowledge better
- Support for the fishing industry to participate effectively in the climate change debate and the impact of changing practices on their lives and on migratory fish species
- Research and development support for communities that are in survival mode and can't drive the change required by themselves
- High level marketing campaign to build urban/rural partnerships and interdependence
- Facilitated processes to achieve whole of community decision making for issues creating community conflict
- Development of links between population policies and climate change
- Reconsideration of Local Government re-zoning policies regarding the urbanisation of rural areas where suburbs and cities are being built on the best farming land
- Review of funding and grants for projects to ensure that support people are not all on short term contracts – e.g. Caring for Country is only a one year transition – so that skilled people can be retained
- Introduction of a government sponsored small loan scheme targeted towards business diversification e.g. the Grameen model
- Government policies that encourage home-based work and makes jobs transferable to rural areas
- Incentives for adaptation that are not just Exceptional Circumstance based
- Federal, State/Territory and Local Government interaction alignment
- Longer-term funding for research, development and extension
- An education campaign for climate change sceptics
- The development of a national climate change umbrella policy
- The development of incentives for environmental best practice e.g. Environmental Farmer Award
- The development of web based resources that appeal to young people
- Review of Exceptional Circumstances (EC), Disaster and Bio-Security programs to maintain a safety net/exit, including quarantine, flood, pests and diseases due to climate change
- Research on the impacts on water usage and service demands as a result of the increasing demographic pressures associated with retirement to rural areas
- Support for rural businesses – diversification, risk management, 'Climate change proofing' through taxation, training and access to projects/funding
- Programs for re-skilling the rural workforce
- Prioritising the development of alternative energies
- Review of Australia's relationships in the light of climate change
 - International trade policy
 - Trade agreements

Priority Recommendations

1. IMMEDIATELY declare a **national state of emergency for water** guided by the principles of a 'WAR CABINET' including bi-partisan support, which addresses legislation issues, marshals the troops and implements the best policies and programs with the best people;
2. Implement a **national** water plan (not just the Murray Darling Basin), which includes initiatives such as a national riparian 'LandBank' program; a national program to retrofit all rural and urban households and facilities to reduce use of fresh water; a program to promote adoption of water recycling; mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating water use; and the establishment of water meters where water exists in rivers and aquifers;
3. Carry out a holistic environmental audit (including hydrological research and complete carbon cycle studies) on rural and urban areas, which includes physical and social health indicators, undertaken from the 'ground up' before 2010;
4. Involve the agricultural industry in discussions and design of a national emissions trading scheme, based on a complete carbon cycle model appropriate to Australian conditions;
5. Engage with 'keystone' organisations (incl. farming systems groups) in regions to enable research and development (R&D) for local adaptation, training and capacity building, and to facilitate local action;
6. Declare a social inclusion framework for all R&D organisations, universities, CSIRO, Bureau of Meteorology, climate centres and research facilities and others as currently funded;
7. Establish a 5 year, consistent and integrated approach to funding programs for climate, environment and water, with the 4th year being a 'transition' year to new arrangements;
8. Declare a 5 year funding cycle for all institutions/organisations that receive Government funds for climate change research and development without ignoring the necessity for seasonal short-term, flexible investment;
9. Support and facilitate the infrastructure necessary to continue to enable diversification of business to ensure efficiency of resource use and retention of human capital in rural communities;
10. Invest in capacity building and training
 - a. In decision making skills to enable a cooperative framework for future negotiations (recognising that these issues are polarised and have opposing views);
 - b. Of those delivering programs (capacity building the capacity builders);
11. Implement a national water awareness, education and training program that increases understanding of water use (across industries, communities and individuals) and increases efficiency of water use (domestic and industry);
12. Instruct the Productivity Commission's review of Exceptional Circumstances (for the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry), to include social inclusion principles; and
13. Ensure that women are equitably represented on decision making bodies.

Chapter 5

Representation of women in decision making

'The lack of significant numbers of women on regional and rural bodies is an important opportunity cost for government, business and the community. We can cut that cost by tapping the talent of rural and regional women to fill positions on our boards, advisory committees and other bodies' (At the Table – getting the best people and making the right decisions for rural and regional Australia - DOTARS 2006)

Topic scope

This group discussed the role of rural, regional and remote women in formal decision making, including:

- Identifying issues for women in formal representation
 - Local Government
 - Industry bodies
 - Statutory corporations
 - State/Territory and national bodies
- Implementation of known strategies in relation to:
 - Development of leaders
 - Cultural and structural change in organisations
 - Clearing pathways for women
 - Creating support and information networks
- Indigenous representation on mainstream bodies
- Representation of community diversity on decision making bodies
- Research and data collection to monitor progress

Our Vision

- Women's experience, opinions, qualities and qualifications are RECOGNISED and VALUED and HAVE INFLUENCE
- Women are supported to take decision making positions and supported to stay in these positions
- Decision makers reflect the female demographic of the sector
- Financial and social constraints that work against women's participation in decision making bodies are eliminated
- Women support, mentor and assist other women into decision making positions and bodies
- Young women are encouraged and supported into decision making roles
- Decision making bodies (and their supporting organisations) are flexible and open to new ways of operating in response to differing requirements of women members (for example meeting times, provision of child care etc.)
- All decision making be informed by the social and community context for those decisions, and the outcomes to include an assessment of their social and community impact

Priority Recommendations

1. For each advisory board/ decision making body, coming up for reappointment or advice, all Ministers reject recommended nominations that have less than thirty per cent female representation from this day forward and that from this day forward there be a ten per cent increase every two years with the aim being a fifty per cent minimum standard;
2. That these requirements also apply to selection committees;
3. Organisations seeking exemptions from Recommendation 1 by putting a case for representation less than thirty per cent should first seek advice from the Office for Women who will consult their database. If this doesn't resolve the issue then the Australian Human Rights Commission will be consulted through the Office of the Sex Discrimination Commissioner;
4. Annual reporting to be adopted by all Government departments, agencies and boards on gender equity and representation issues;
5. That a gender plan with national benchmarks be developed regarding gender inequity in leadership, employment representation (as per the disability equity plan). That this recognise gender diversity and also diversity among women;
6. That legislation be enacted to prevent sporting, community and school bodies from excluding women from leadership because they pay fewer fees or have differential categories of membership; and
7. Support be provided to support women's participation in decision making, through travel subsidies, child care provision or reimbursement, communication allowance, teleconferencing.

Hastening the Pace of Change (from *At the Table – DOTARS 2006*)

There are three main requirements for driving changes needed to increase the numbers of women in decision making roles in regional Australia in the near future:

Leadership: Governments at all levels – federal, state and local – need to lead by example, increasing their focus on appointing women to boards, commissions and advisory committees. In the private sector, chairs or presidents and chief executives need to drive policies and practices in their organisations to increase the number of women in management and on boards.

Cultural and structural change: Governments at all levels again need to take the lead, demonstrating inclusion in their own communications, behaviour and processes. All organisations need to remove systemic structural impediments to women taking their place at the decision making table.

Clear pathways: Governments and other organisations need to ensure that systems are in place to provide women equivalent access to career or representative opportunities. These systems need to be embedded in recruitment, retention, development and promotion policies and practices.

Chapter 6

Health

If we want a healthy nation, let us be self-sufficient in producing our own health professionals. We need to develop a workforce that delivers the right care to the right people by the right professionals. The absence of doctors, nurses and health professionals in rural and remote Australia is a huge problem. (2020 Summit 2008)

Topic scope

This group considered health issues affecting rural Australia that include:

- Maternal and child health
- Mental health
- Cancer management
- Transport needs and support
- Access to services (including GPs, Allied Health & Specialists)
- Women's and Indigenous health services
- Accommodation and transport costs
- Access to services for people with disabilities
- Cultural health issues
- Health professionals
- Locally delivered services such as birthing centres
- Domestic violence

There were many significant areas requiring further discussion and development that could not be covered in the workshop's allocated time, including:

- Aged care and respite services to enable the aged to remain in the community
- Family planning services and sexually transmitted infections
- Affordable access to disability services and diagnosis of childhood disorders with the need for diagnosis and early intervention services
- Chronic disease / stress management / alcohol / smoking / diabetes / obesity

Our Vision

This workshop shares the ambitions of the National Rural Health Alliance that:

All Australians should have equitable access to appropriate health services, regardless of where they live. The diverse communities of rural and remote Australia should be healthy and health-promoting places in which to live and work.

The gap between rural and metropolitan health can be closed with national commitment and the allocation of a 'thirty per cent fair share' of resources and attention to the thirty per cent who live in rural and remote areas.

There are many and varied determinants of health and work to improve it in rural areas will continue to depend in part on strong partnerships between individuals, organisations and governments in metropolitan as well as rural and remote Australia.

Areas for Action

- Access and Costs
 - Investigate real accommodation costs for medical visits
 - Provide dedicated accommodation for Indigenous people
 - Acknowledge the costs for carers
 - Need non emergency patient transport
- Recruiting and supporting medical staff
 - Mentoring programs for new staff would be beneficial
 - More health workers trained in recognition of rural issues
 - Provide welcome programs for new health professionals
- Community responsibility for health
 - Local delivery is culturally important and provides for better continuity of care
 - Encourage women into positions on community boards
 - Policy directions need to come from the local level
 - Resource volunteer community groups who are providing transport and support services
 - Support creative community partnership programs e.g. 'Bugger the Drought', alternative health workshops (massage etc.)
 - Increase community health literacy using teachers, hairdressers etc. – first aid for mental health
- Bringing health services to the patient
 - Medical Specialist Outreach Assistance Program
 - Breast screening
 - Increase visiting specialist rounds
- Health services
 - Provide greater support for victims of sexual assault and domestic violence through shelters, transport and counselling
 - Need to address the acute shortage of respite care for the elderly
 - Need to address the issues with sexually transmitted diseases
- Data and Information
 - Need for a national data base of medical information and/or a national clinical IT system for use in emergencies
 - Undertake an economic analysis of the withdrawal of health services and:
 - a. The cost to the community,
 - b. Loss of business, families and other professionals, and
 - c. Patient outcomes.

Priority Recommendations

1. A National Rural and Remote Health Plan which embraces established health priorities and utilises evidence-based best practice for future directions, strategic planning involving health partners;
2. Thirty per cent of the national health budget should be spent in regional, rural and remote areas in keeping with population percentage;
3. Improve access to affordable transport particularly non-emergency transport and accommodation for families. Accommodation and transport for Indigenous families and families travelling away for health and maternity care need immediate attention. The Senate inquiry into the Patient Assisted Travel Scheme recommendations should be actioned now;
4. Rural and regional women's health services should be continued and expanded, taking into account the special needs of Indigenous women, women living with disabilities, women requiring support dealing with domestic violence (prevention, counselling, refuge access and long term support), rural refugee women and women dealing with cancer (access to screening and treatment services);
5. Recognise the importance of and prioritise the availability of local access to acute care facilities and allied health support/aged care in rural and remote areas including holistic preventative health, health literacy (e.g. mental health first aid) mental health services, respite services, disability support and management of chronic disease;
6. Creative recruitment and ongoing community support of health professionals with commitment to rural and cultural context training programs;
7. We expect that community engagement and participation validated by Government community services and funding guidelines to States/Territories should reflect best practice. We insist on the review and maintenance of community engagement and input. Proper governance of rural community health needs to be embedded at a local level with responsibility for funding and delivery locally.
8. Ensure access for women to culturally appropriate health services and where necessary interpreters, particularly regarding antenatal and postnatal care;
9. Ensure affordable dental care for rural residents as this is extremely important to the health of a community;
10. We advocate for government supported, locally delivered maternity services including antenatal screening and support, flexible midwifery options and post natal services, including breastfeeding support;
11. We must build and advocate for successful rural models and generalise and replicate them. Successful models include multi disciplinary health teams and mobile outreach services such as breast screening; and
12. Provide funding support for the development of community partnerships to develop local health plans and to deliver health promotion and prevention messages.

Chapter 7

Education

'By 2020 all remote, rural and regional Australians will no longer be disadvantaged in their educational opportunities and outcomes when compared with their metropolitan counterparts'. This outcome would assist with the attraction and retention of a well-trained workforce in remote, rural and regional Australia. (2020 Summit 2008)

Topic scope

This workshop considered the issues critical to rural Australia in the education system (excluding Vocational Education and Training which was discussed in another workshop), informed by the important work of the Rural Education Forum Australia and identified the priority action areas:

- Access
 - Affordability - e.g. transport, accommodation, Higher Education Contributions Scheme (HECS) debt; allowances - means testing is inappropriate for many rural families who are asset rich but cash poor
 - Flexible delivery models - e.g. telecommunications, home tutoring, mobile support, using capacity in community
- Inclusive experiences - curriculum, formal and informal learning
- Resources
 - attraction and retention of quality staff
 - right infrastructure for flexible delivery (importance of telecommunications)
- Communication - improve two way engagement - knowledge management and genuine partnerships
- Mapping what works, building on previous frameworks/actions
- Life long learning - systems and processes that enable re-engagement with education at any level
- Innovative, flexible strategies ensuring local solutions to achieve national benchmarks e.g. Community Learning Centre that engages the whole family. 'Hubs' that achieve critical mass/quality and addresses education, health and social needs of community and home schooling
- Genuine community engagement - grass roots, real partnerships building on the enormous social capacity of rural communities
- Basic literacy and numeracy as a non negotiable priority for all

Our Vision

Education outcomes will be significantly improved for regional, rural and remote residents through accessible, inclusive and flexible learning opportunities. These outcomes will include but not be limited to:

- Basic numeracy and literacy benchmarks that are comparable between urban and rural Australians
- Ensuring compulsory education is compulsory (current non attendance figures are unacceptable)
- The rural/remote/regional context is valued and understood, as is the link between education and regional development

Priority Recommendations

1. That as a matter of priority the gap be closed between educational outcomes for rural Australians (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) and urban Australians.
2. That the Government support the development of a peak education alliance that results in improved:
 - a. Coordination;
 - b. Collaboration;
 - c. Consolidation; and
 - d. Communication

within the sector and across agencies and NGOs at Federal, State/Territory and Local Government levels.

That the key roles of this peak body include but not be limited to:

- a. Advocacy;
 - b. Research; and
 - c. Engagement with all stakeholder groups.
3. That the Government, as a matter of priority, develops a Rural Education Strategy. This strategy will:
 - a. Build on assets in place - map what works, what doesn't, and identify gaps;
 - b. Provide evidence based strategies for the short, mid and long term; and
 - c. Provide clarity around priorities, timeframes, roles and responsibilities for outcomes in terms of:
 - o Structure;
 - o Process;
 - o Information; and
 - o Implementation.
 - d. Focus on issues including but not limited to:
 - o Access and affordability (transport, accommodation, HECS debt, inappropriate means testing);
 - o Basic literacy and numeracy for all Australians;
 - o The need for 'compulsory' education to be compulsory;
 - o Inclusive education experiences that are innovative and flexible to local needs, while meeting national standards;
 - o Building on the enormous capacity of rural regional and remote communities (not a deficit model); and
 - o Resource provision that results in
 - Attraction and retention of quality staff
 - Appropriate infrastructure for flexible service delivery (e.g. telecommunications).

Chapter 8

Young people

We call upon the youth of Australia to join us in meeting the challenges of our generation. We recognize that to effectively deal with these challenges requires creative thinking and new ideas. We have proposed a range of ideas that paint a picture for all Australians. Above all else we recognize that this is the start of a broader process, a process that will require the great ideas and input of all 2.8 million young Australians. (2020 Youth Summit 2008)

Topic scope

This workshop discussed the issues for young people (aged 15 – 30) in rural areas including:

- Attracting and retaining young people in primary industries and rural communities
- Supporting young families
- A new paradigm for young people to move into agriculture
- Career pathways that are clearly outlined and known
- Increasing the performance of rural high schools
- Access to education
- Indigenous young people
- Entrepreneurship and innovation
- Suicide, sexuality and drug related problems

Our Vision

The retention, attraction, development and contribution of young people in rural Australia underpin the viability and sustainability of rural communities, industry, businesses and governance. In the future there is:

- Increased opportunity for young people to participate and be engaged in career training and decision making
- Educational outcomes for rural areas that are equal to those of urban areas
- A skilled rural workforce across all sectors and available training that is utilised
- Because we got it right for young people, population growth for rural and remote regions has increased
- Increased showcasing of rural success stories
- Valuing of primary production and its contribution to communities
- Affirmative action to ensure the voices of young people are represented in decision making
- Positive action taken to include marginalised young people including remote, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, young people with disabilities, culturally and linguistically diverse young people and refugees
- All activity is underpinned by the following principles:
 - A voice for young people in decisions that affect them and about the broader community
 - A commitment is demonstrated to connecting with young people in the ways they choose to connect
 - A recognition of the 'dynamic flow' of rural communities and the individuals therein

Priority Recommendations

1. The development of a National Rural and Regional Young People's Network that facilitates social, professional and community interaction through web-based interactive technology (i.e. Young Australian Rural Network) and local chapters.
2. Support for leadership initiatives:
 - a. Short-term, intensive, annual national leadership course for young rural Australians that reflects the diverse demographic;
 - b. Affirmative action to secure places for young people on advisory boards/committees
 - c. Mentoring, as in Recommendation 3;
 - d. School programs are developed to support leadership pathway opportunities; and
 - e. Identify and harness the skills and energies of young change agents who have not yet had the chance to achieve recognised leadership positions.
3. Implementation of a national infrastructure for mentoring programs that are inclusive using a range of models to support social, career and leadership development;
4. Exploration and development of pathways for young people to move into primary production and town-based enterprise, and innovative ways for conducting farm business are created and supported;
5. Review by Government of the current drought policy with a specific focus on the impact of policies that affect young people, e.g. interest rate subsidies for young people who have recently purchased land;
6. Non-means tested support (e.g. AUSTUDY/ABSTUDY) for post-secondary education for rural and remote students to ensure equity of access to tertiary education;
7. National promotion of primary production as a career choice for all young people. A review of current eligibility criteria and effective flexible assistance for students pursuing agricultural studies;
8. A national review of school career services; and
9. Culturally appropriate education programs for the development of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are implemented and further resourced.

Chapter 9

Infrastructure, transport and telecommunications

The ability of remote, rural and regional Australia to competitively gain access to connect with and supply products to other parts of the nation, as well as the world, is constrained by deficits in infrastructure and unnecessary regulatory burdens. The challenge of providing improved infrastructure and new technology in the areas of transport, communication, education and water for remote, rural and regional Australia is considered a crucial priority for improving productivity and efficiencies and taking advantage of new opportunities. (2020 Summit 2008)

Topic scope

This workshop considered the infrastructure issues for and needs of rural, regional and remote Australians (informed by a report of the National Rural Women's Coalition *Transport: The Fabric of Rural and Regional Australia* prepared for the Office for Women) including:

- Transport to and within regional Australia
 - Support for the transport industry – truck drivers and owners
 - Safety implications of inadequate transport, especially in remote areas (including islands)
 - The need for an integrated and uniform rail, air and seaport system for goods and passengers through a partnership between States, Territories and the Commonwealth
 - The costs of aviation fuel affecting mustering in remote areas and school transport in the Islands
 - The need for return home services for remote patients as part of patient health care
 - Taxation review needs to consider proportionally negative affect of GST in remote communities that do not have the ability to reclaim
 - The need for Isolated Patient Travel and Accommodation Services to be more responsive to the needs of the range of people in rural and remote Australia
 - Alternative fuels and energy forms
 - Public transport in rural localities and establishment of transport hubs in regional centres
 - Include transport occupations on skills shortages lists
- Telecommunications access
 - Profit-driven supply means remote communities have ageing infrastructure
 - The need for maintenance that enables IT based remote health and education
 - Equitable access to telecommunications and the internet for people with disabilities
 - Implementation of digital technology
 - Technology for upskilling in rural and remote areas that is currently cost prohibitive
 - Subtitling of TV programs should be available in all areas of Australia
 - Connect Australia must be rolled out
- Infrastructure required to support communities and economic development
 - Housing – need for affordable housing to attract workers and aged care facilities
 - Need to ensure disability access to buildings and the built environment in the regions
 - Electricity - Single Wire Earth Return System is unreliable and does not support industrial growth
 - Solar subsidy expanded to rural and remote businesses
 - Aviation infrastructure - maintaining and developing aviation ground support at airports where Local Government cannot afford it as it is required for the Royal Flying Doctor Service
 - Infrastructure Australia could initiate a round of rural consultations

Our Vision

All Australians should have equity of access to efficient and affordable infrastructure, transport and telecommunications. These are essential to:

- Enable us to be safe (women's health and safety)
- Allow our businesses to prosper and grow
- Let us participate equally
- Build social inclusion and reduce social isolation
- Create sustainable communities
- Build a stronger relationship between urban and rural communities

Priority Recommendations

Transport

1. Retain and increase the diesel fuel subsidy;
2. Fuel levy to be based per litre NOT per price;
Urgent research, development & implementation of alternative energy forms/fuels to reduce the cost of food / business etc;
3. Increase uniformity of, and simplify, transport and trucking documentation for cross-border transport operators;
4. Increase Mobility Allowance for people with disabilities in rural and remote Australia; and
5. Federal Health Minister asks State/Territory Ministers to consider changes to patient transport schemes to fund patients returning *from* treatment and not just to treatment; also, not a dollar figure per week, but based on need. For example three times a week for dialysis or radiotherapy. (Refer Health Recommendation 3.)

Telecommunications

1. Develop a holistic telecommunications package for all Australians, using digital technology to deliver equitable, affordable and reliable access to broadband, mobile and landline, to enable safety, business, and community sustainability. The package should also invest in maintenance and technical support to enable users to use the new technology;
2. Government ownership of basic telecommunications infrastructure creates economies of scale and guarantees equity (should be considered an essential service). Under private ownership, upgrading ageing infrastructure in regional Australia is not profitable;
3. Invest in new satellites to enable digital technology; and
4. Ensure ongoing funding for the National Relay Service and ensure it delivers to rural and regional Australia.

Infrastructure

1. Reinvest in a community infrastructure program (like Regional Partnerships) with a transparent process;
2. Expand the solar subsidy to all businesses;
3. Consider community housing investment (based on WA model) to provide affordable housing in high cost areas, to increase employment – based on access for people with disabilities and ageing in place; and
4. Strengthen partnerships with local government to maintain regional air strip and on-ground support and airport facilities, these are vital for the Royal Flying Doctor Service health/safety.

Community building, engagement and new arrivals

Our vision is for a changed perception of rural Australia and its importance to the national economy and society and of all the opportunities of rural cities. All rural Australians will have equitable access to human rights and opportunities in health and education. Rural communities are creative, innovative and are well supported in research and development. Rural Australia will be a cultural melting pot and will be a place of choice for all Australians (2020 Youth Summit 2008)

Topic scope

This group considered ways to build strong, inclusive communities including:

- Working with and inclusion of Indigenous community members
- Community building programs
- Community hubs/one stop shops (similar to Canadian model)
- Mechanisms to support lower capacity communities
- Community consultation at all levels of policy development on key community issues
- Systems to support community capacity to access funds and resources (not just grant writing workshops)
- Innovative packages of mobile (combined) services to outback areas (child care, library, medical, welfare, banking, domestic/family violence, mental health)
- Supporting volunteers – skill banks
- Welcoming new arrivals
- Understanding cultural differences

Our Vision

Inclusive communities where everyone is supported to participate socially and economically in the decisions that affect their future, including the following features:

- Sense of pride that is celebrated
- Active and inclusive service clubs, networks and a strong volunteering culture
- Egalitarian/no class structure
- Local leadership, succession planning, with encouragement to a wide range of people to participate and all forms of leadership are valued
- Newcomers are welcomed and introduced
- There are community communications (newsletters, posters, information packages, bilingual)
- The community pulls together and the economy is vibrant
- People are communicating, happy, involved with others and show community spirit
- Migrants are retained – THEY want to be there as they are employed and supported
- Locals support local business, events and activities
- Extended families have returned because they want to come back
- Community supports their disadvantaged/disabled advocates
- Community advocates/takes a stand on social inclusion and social justice
- Tolerant, respectful, harmonious, welcoming of diversity, low crime rate/violence
- Voices of all community sectors are heard

Priority Recommendations

1. Integrate a whole of government (Federal/State/Territory/Local) approach to future community consultation in order to enable the development and delivery of agreed community-based programs;

Ensure that all such programs are transparent as to governance and accountability to the community;
2. Establish a regional grant scheme that complements 'Caring for Country' to support social inclusion, particularly in communities with less capital capacity. (This program to incorporate the evaluation of submissions based on need, not on word-smithing);
3. To further deliver programs to remote areas utilising 'mobile' service delivery models;
4. To review current policies regarding non-government organisation (NGO) and volunteer liability insurance to support community groups and volunteer activities. Consider the provision of public liability for community organisations including non-litigation clause;
5. Support and encourage community leadership programs;
6. Ensure there is support for communities to be innovative and to participate in their economy;
7. Review tax legislation so that NGOs and community leadership programs achieve deductible gift recipient status;
8. Review immigration legislation so that overseas trained doctors in areas of need have access to Medicare and public education;
9. Enable communities that are disadvantaged (due to lack of human capital and skills) to access Federal Government programs specifically to access a range of skilled support and services; and
10. Encourage all public servants involved in policy delivery to visit and spend time with their communities of place and interest.

Vocational training, skills development and workforce participation

Case studies demonstrated the substantial diversity in the socioeconomic context of the regions studied, which emphasizes the importance of Vocational Education and Training (VET) being enabled, through funding and other policies, to be responsive to local needs and conditions. At the same time, these regions were subject, to varying extents, to the ongoing impact of demographic change, globalisation, new technologies, and changes in work and labour markets. This complex pattern of community and regional development influenced our conclusion that the VET role should not be seen in terms of matching VET supply to a given demand, but rather that the relationship should be seen as a dynamic two-way interaction between VET and regional development. (National Council for Vocational Education Research - The double helix of vocational education and training and regional development June 2008)

Topic scope

This workshop discussed the need for training and skills development in rural, regional and remote Australia including:

- Access to formal training, VET courses and the need for flexible learning systems
- Access to training in non-traditional occupation areas and the acknowledgement of different learning styles
- Access to informal training and the need for hands-on training
- Ensuring the training offered is needs based
- On-line delivery systems
- Remote difficulties, including Indigenous communities
- Pathways to paid work for women
- Leadership training and mentoring
- Availability of rural and regional trainers
- Need for child care and elder care support for women re-entering training and work

Our Vision

Our vision is for active life-long learning, with communities embracing training and skills opportunities and people of all ages sharing their knowledge as they build multi-skilled communities.

The training system will:

- Be needs based
- Provide sustainable learning
- Have flexible training and work options
- Make proper allowance for the recognition of prior learning
- Acknowledge different learning styles and capabilities
- Use constructive and alternative approaches to assessment to respond to individual needs
- Provide access to formal and informal training and skill building
- Promote recognition
- Enhance job opportunities and provide pathways to employment
- Provide equitable access
- Be underpinned by a code of conduct and ethics that supports and values cultural difference and diversity

Priority Recommendations

1. Underpin all training models with a code of conduct and ethics that maintains a set of standards for valuing cultural difference and diversity;
2. Extend and implement an accreditation model to encourage capacity building that is culturally appropriate;
3. Ensure training providers have the skills to cater for different learning styles and capabilities and deliver flexible learning options that can be:
 - a. Online;
 - b. Home based;
 - c. Work based; and
 - d. Feature adaptable schedules.
4. Recognise the importance through funding for coaching, mentoring, tutors and shadowing to ensure skills are implemented;
5. Acknowledge the importance of Recognised Prior Learning through the extension of the Victorian pilot 'skills stores' into an adopted national initiative;
6. Ensure training providers incorporate training needs analysis and skills gap audits that recognise both individual and community needs;
7. Ensure continuation of funding for training programs which are consistent across States and Territories, e.g. current gap left by the removal of FarmBis and VET sector funding;
8. Ensure that competency based assessment utilises alternative approaches to meet individual needs;
9. Develop a communications strategy to enable community and individuals to access training, including the development of a central web-based register of training providers (both Registered Training Organisations and informal trainers), mentors, and volunteers or paid vocational training, skills development and workforce participation;
10. Ensure equity in access to learning and training through child care and carer initiatives and access to disability support facilities within institutions;
11. Initiate programs to obtain educators, coaches and mentors off all ages and cultural backgrounds;
12. Ensure equality in remuneration of traditional work type choices for women and that of the predominantly male work type choices, e.g. the beauty industry versus the building trades;
13. Establish a national database of national training needs research; and
14. Ensure career resources of particular relevance to Indigenous students and to students in remote and rural locations are available nationally.

Chapter 12

Employment and Business Development

A wide-ranging strategic national program should be developed, and it should have a regional implementation focus. It would promote remote, rural and regional Australia as a place to live and conduct business, with a national roll-out of the Victorian government's Make it Happen in Provincial Victoria campaign as a possible option. Under the strategic national program the promotional campaign would be supported by incentives designed to help remote, rural and regional businesses attract skilled and semiskilled employees, as well as unskilled people willing to undertake training, and help with equivalence recognition and the bridging of overseas qualifications for migrants. A strategic national program could also fund training in customer service for remote, rural and regional businesses; particularly those involved in tourism-based activities. (2020 Summit 2008)

Topic Scope

This workshop considered the issues for women in their participation in the economy and the development of businesses, and included discussion on:

- Impact of oil prices
- Interest rates and value of the Australian dollar.
- Labour shortages, superannuation and tax
- Child care
- Digital communication
- Trade barriers – regulations and the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service
- Training/apprentices/incentives
- Small business support networks in rural areas
- Research and development
- Drought assistance
- Tax incentives
- Export market development grants
- Integration of refugees into employment and the community
- Seasonal work challenges
- Worker support, e.g. housing
- Family businesses and succession.

Our Vision

- To provide a stable and supportive environment where families have the opportunity to live and work sustainably in rural areas and communities
- To encourage innovation and creativity in the development of new businesses
- To market regional Australia as an employment destination for young people and overseas workers
- To support and encourage women in the establishment of small to medium businesses

Priority Recommendations

1. That the Government extend the visa trial for seasonal workers beyond the Pacific to include other nations, such as people from East Timor;
2. That the Government extend working holiday visas for backpackers to widen age range and nationality and to remove time restriction on individual work place tenure. Remove superannuation requirements and reduce income tax levels for overseas itinerant workers;
3. That the Government deliver accessible and tax deductible child care for rural businesses including primary producers;
4. That the Government deliver Australia-wide digital communications access for business operation, training and marketing;
5. That the Government examine and review regulatory requirements for imported goods, including environmental standards and controls, to give genuine comparability to Australian produced products;
6. That the Government substantially increase apprentice incentives for employers and align these to the Consumer Price Index;
7. That the Government reintroduce FarmBis and extend the scope of professional advice and planning grants with online options;
8. That the Government extend the Office for Women pilot *Young Women's Leadership and Mentoring Program* across Australia;
9. Increase the number of Small Business Field Officers to rural areas to assist development of micro and small businesses, management of statutory and legal requirements and training;
10. That the Government streamline employment paperwork to reduce the impact on small and micro business and ensure consistency and accuracy of information supplied by providers;
11. Implement programs like the Food Processing in Regional Australia Program, broadening the business base to encourage industry and employment;
12. That the Government review income tax policies and incentives to encourage decentralisation into rural areas;
13. That the Government retain drought assistance for all affected properties and rural businesses with particular reference to allowing off farm/business assets; and
14. That the Government ensure retention of Export Market Development Grants.

Chapter 13

Families and children

There is much concern about the disparity in community services between urban and remote, rural and regional Australia. In the first instance, the Productivity Commission should audit the parity of community services in remote, regional and rural areas compared with those in urban areas. On the presentation of the results, action should be taken by governments to redress the identified inequities in community services. (2020 Summit 2008)

Topic scope

This workshop considered the issues facing families and children and how to support them including:

- Access to early childhood education and care, preschool education and early intervention for children with different needs
- Availability of family support programs and marriage guidance
- The need for programs to mitigate family violence and child abuse
- Access to child care
- Rural children's services that face special challenges, such as transport for children from out of town, fluctuating enrolments threatening viability, inability of a community to support competing care and education providers
- Communities need to retain the strong, local organisations that they have built up over many years to be responsive to their own needs, so that they can guide their own futures

Our Vision

'It takes a community to raise a child'

- All Australian children grow up in safe (free of neglect, abuse and violence), healthy, nurturing and caring communities
- All Australian families are strong, supported and valued
- All Australian families and relationships are free of any form of violence and abuse

Priority Recommendations

1. Develop a national family strategy focusing on contributing factors and end consequences of family breakdown and dysfunction;
2. Fund national mental health programs to deliver appropriate, flexible and effective services to all Australian rural and remote communities;
3. Make child care accessible to all Australian families by recognising and supporting flexible ways of providing quality child care in rural and remote communities;
4. Implement a national positive family relationships marketing campaign;
5. Implement integrated, co-ordinated interstate communications between government and community services regarding families at risk within appropriately responsive time frames;
6. Implement skills training for all service providers in inclusion and diversity;
7. Family violence and abuse preventative programs such as relationship training, parenting programs and mentoring addressing alcohol, drug and substance abuse with delivery through schools, workplace, community and sporting bodies;
8. Foster cultural change to recognise the real economic and social value of parenting;
9. Review Welfare to Work scheme to allow flexible solutions in rural and remote communities;
10. Encourage flexible employment which acknowledges the value of parenting in our community through practices such as sustainable paid parenting leave;
11. Assess social costs of families separated due to work requirements;
12. Improve support structures for rural and remote families living with disabilities, particularly early intervention;
13. Ensure availability of early childhood development programs across regional Australia; and
14. The administration of the baby bonus scheme be reviewed to ensure mother and child are provided with services appropriate to their needs.

Chapter 14

Indigenous Women

Our ambition is an Australia where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have formal recognition in the Australian legal framework and Australia's global identity is one that is recognised as being enriched by a living culture that is 50,000 years old. In this Australia in 2020, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have the same health, education and economic participation opportunities and outcomes as other Australians, are able to realise their hopes and aspirations and are affirmed in their cultural identity. This can only be achieved by taking measures now to urgently transform society to nurture today's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth and children. (2020 Summit 2008)

The importance of this Summit is that we (rural and remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders) had a rare opportunity to have our voices heard despite being the minority group and that we reached consensus across all areas raised. Furthermore, that we were given a commitment that our voices would be heard. The recommendations reached at the conclusion of the summit reflected a sense of hope for an increase of rural and remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in decision making on policy in rural and remote regions of Australia. Following the event, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders rural and remote community women present at the summit agreed to form the 'National Indigenous Rural and Remote Women's Association' to commence the process of formalising our structure and business operation to be able to engage at major forums such as this.

Australia's Indigenous population is around 510,000, or about 2.5 per cent of the total national population. Of these people only thirty per cent live in major cities – twenty seven per cent live in remote or very remote areas and forty three per cent in inner and outer regional areas. So seventy per cent of Indigenous Australians are living in regional, rural and remote Australia.

Indigenous culture and heritage is dynamic. It includes tangible and intangible expressions of culture that link generations of Indigenous people over time. Indigenous people express their cultural heritage through their relationships with country, people, beliefs, knowledge, law, language, symbols, ways of living, sea, land and objects, all of which arise from Indigenous spirituality. Inclusive relationships with Indigenous people are based on respect for this heritage and adherence to cultural protocols.

Many regional, rural and remote women leaders have expressed a desire to begin discussions with Indigenous women to explore the shared issues of living in regional, rural and remote areas. There have renewed efforts in recent years to include Indigenous women in mainstream conferences, committees and forums, but it remains the case that in women's gatherings, many Indigenous women do not feel their voices are heard. While it is true that gatherings such as this summit must consult with representatives of all women in regional areas, and recommendations are made for all women, the voice of Indigenous women is critical in developing priorities and actions as the experience of Indigenous women is different from all other women as a result of culture, history and experience. Indigenous women had much to contribute to this Australian summit.

In order to indicate respect for these differences, and in recognition that Indigenous people are the Traditional Owners of the land on which we all live, it is important to consider ways that would assist Indigenous women to take an active place within mainstream forums.

Participants: It is important to ensure that Indigenous women have an opportunity to participate in all issues that affect them, and so with a broad range of topics such as this summit there are Indigenous women in every workshop. Sometimes it may be necessary to invite participation by particular women who have specialist knowledge about a particular topic if that knowledge is not

held by other selected participants. For many Indigenous women a national summit may be their first exposure to policy development at that level and they may not nominate themselves for inclusion. Organisers therefore may need to seek out appropriate women and invite them.

Before the Summit commencement: It would have been helpful to include information and graphics on Indigenous Australians including leadership, community development, business, communications, employment etc. within the summit package material to be inclusive of Indigenous Australians issues and participation.

Summit commencement: *Welcome to Country* should occur at the beginning of the Summit – before all speakers. Indigenous people need to be invited onto the land of the Traditional Owners where the meeting occurs before they can participate in any activities. In the case of this Summit, at the beginning of the trade fair would have been a more appropriate time. An *Acknowledgment of Country* is a way that non-Aboriginal people can show respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage and the ongoing relationship of Traditional Owners with the land. A Chair or Speaker begins the meeting by acknowledging that the meeting is taking place in the country of the Traditional Owners.

Key-note speakers: The inclusion of an Indigenous key-note speaker would demonstrate the importance of Indigenous people and issues at the forum and provide an opportunity for an Indigenous leader to address all participants.

Workshops: Workshops could include Indigenous facilitators and coordinators as a way of engaging Indigenous women to share their views on the topics under discussion. For facilitators of all gatherings it would be helpful if participants were specifically invited to share their views on the topics under discussion, and space allowed at the end of a session for final contributions. Indigenous women work in both western and Indigenous communities and organisations. Time should be offered to explore the issues from both positions. It is important to acknowledge that non-Indigenous people cannot speak on behalf of Indigenous people on specific topics without consent. The same goes for Indigenous people speaking on specific issues on behalf of non-Indigenous people. These are important considerations for working together as Australians.

Implementation and program delivery in communities: In addition to the ways of inclusion in workshops, meetings and summits there are important issues to consider (or remember) about cultural/traditional protocols and practices before implementing services within the communities. *'Protocol means observing customs and communicating in a way that is appropriate and relevant.'* (page 9, Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, 2000).

As with most communities, relationships come before anything else. Outsiders who are unable to form relationships with communities will find their efforts frustrated. The person who introduces you or your group to a community is important to your acceptance. Genuine efforts at building good relations may overcome barriers. Demonstrating your respect and sensitivity towards the political structures of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and their protocols and ways of communicating will help you. (Local Reconciliation Groups Tool kit, Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, 2000: 10).

A number of protocol documents have been produced in recent years to meet the needs of particular communities, organisations, industry and situations. The following are a selection: *Ask First* - Australian Heritage Commission 2002; *Doing it Our Way* - NSW Ministry for the Arts 2002; *Taking the Time* - Museums Australia (Qld)1998, *As a Matter of Fact* - Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) 1998.

Chapter 15

Women with Disabilities

"Nothing about Us, Without Us"

The active involvement of persons with disabilities... has proved to be an excellent example of how the principle of full participation can be put into practice and how it can contribute to the development of truly inclusive societies, in which all voices are heard and persons with disabilities can help shape a better world for all. (United Nations Chronicle - International Day of Disabled Persons, 2004)

There are just over 4 million Australians living with disabilities. Current publicly available data does not allow accurate mapping of the numbers of women with disabilities who live in regional, rural and remote areas, but does show that the incidence of disabilities is higher for those outside major cities. Moreover, because women with disabilities are often isolated by lack of access to transport and other facilities our presence in remote and rural areas can be masked, and we remain invisible, hidden and ignored. Consideration of our needs must be an integral part of any planning, policy and program development for regional, rural and remote Australia. Moreover the incidence of disabilities is markedly higher for women with disabilities in Aboriginal communities, including a higher incidence of hearing and vision impairment.

Women with disabilities living in the bush are also involved in and concerned about all the rural issues raised by non-disabled women. However, all the challenges which affect women with disabilities living in urban centres are compounded by additional challenges for women with disabilities living in regional, rural and remote areas.

Many women with disabilities live in extreme poverty, are on fixed incomes such as the Disability Support Pensions or Aged Pension, with limited employment opportunities because of gender and disability discrimination. These barriers are exacerbated in regional, rural and remote locations where there is a lack of accessible workplaces with flexible work schedules.

Women with disabilities are most likely only employed on a part time basis so that their possibilities of earning adequate incomes are limited. Their poverty, low income and job insecurity are associated with extremely low rates of home ownership, and extremely vulnerability to lack of secure housing. The situation is more precarious in regional, rural and remote areas where the housing choices are more limited.

In Australia, the average workforce participation rate for people with disabilities is fifty three per cent (double that of the non-disabled population), and the unemployment rate is 8.6 per cent. Compared to men, women with disabilities have lower workforce participation rates and higher unemployment rates and are most likely to be underestimated in regional, rural and remote locations.

For people with high level physical needs, from twenty five to sixty per cent of income can be spent on assistive equipment and this is less available and more expensive outside major cities. Equipment upgrades, regular disability monitoring and specialist care cannot be found in regional, rural and remote areas, necessitating regular expensive trips to urban centres.

In regional, rural and remote locations women with disabilities face greater isolation problems than their urban counterparts:

- Lack of accessible public transport (most city public transport remains inaccessible to people with physical disabilities, and is even less accessible in regional, rural and remote areas). Taxi travel for those who cannot use public transport is exorbitantly costly and accessible taxis may not be available
- Fuel costs may make private transport too costly for someone on fixed income

- Lack of access to adequate information and communication technologies, including lack of provision of broadband services in regional, rural and remote locations, and the high cost of hardware, software, service provision and equipment maintenance
- Lack of access to adequate mobile networks for contact in disability emergencies
- Accessible general practitioner and general health services may not exist
- Lack of access to breast and cervical screening
- Disability support services may be non-existent
- Mental health services are also unlikely to be available (about fifty per cent of women with disabilities refer to mental health issues which exist in addition to a primary disability)
- Distances and costs preclude travel to regional centres for disability and health related treatment
- Lack of access to suitable, flexible work
- Lack of social supports
- Lack of peer networks, and lack of disability peer groups

In addition all women with disabilities are subject to levels of violence and abuse of at least double the rate experienced by non-disabled women. In regional, rural and remote locations, where women with disabilities are reliant on spouses and family members for transport, and where there are no refuges or refuges are inaccessible; there are extremely limited avenues of escape or support.

Reports of violence, abuse by women with disabilities are often ignored by friends, family members, violence services, disability services, health practitioners and the justice system, so that the violent situation cannot be resolved and perpetrators are not brought to justice.

Despite all these instances where women with disabilities face greater barriers to participation in society than any other group, these issues are often not understood or are overlooked by organisations which represent people with disability, mainstream women's organisations, communities, and all levels of government.

Priority Recommendations

1. Include women with disabilities in all decision making processes, using positive discrimination for their appointment to representative positions on advisory boards;
2. Implement all the recommendations to the Australian Government from the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, including collection and analysis of data disaggregated by disability, ethnicity, and race, improvement of access to health services for women with disabilities; and improvement of health infrastructure;
3. Improve access to support and carer services; and
4. Improve employment opportunities.

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Women (CALD)

“Women in rural areas were very isolated, lone voices in often not very encouraging and conducive environments. They were worse off than their sisters in cities; their voices were not heard nor represented in women’s and other forums” (Chairperson of Immigrant Women’s Speak Out Association NSW)

The following information is taken from a report *Rural CALD Women’s Speak Out – Report on the 1st Conference of Rural CALD Women in NSW (2005)*. This report was presented to the Summit facilitator by the Speak Out Coordinator for the issues to be included as part of the voice of the Summit. Further information on the Speak Out can be obtained from the Immigrant Women’s Speak Out Association – NSW Inc: women@speakout.org.au

Culturally and linguistically diverse women living in rural areas experience long term isolation, especially women who are born overseas and are from non-English speaking countries. This isolation has brought about other issues and problems:

- Difficulty in accessing information about topics such as domestic violence protection orders, the requirements of domestic violence provision in immigration regulations and other legal matters, various health services, welfare, counselling, education, training and employment
- Communication difficulties and a fear of not being understood
- Fear of authority particularly on the part of women from corrupt or oppressive socio-political regimes
- Reluctant to use services such as counselling because of misunderstandings of what counselling offers, based on their experiences with services or lack of such services in their country of origin
- Fear of being judged and blamed
- Discriminatory, insensitive or misinformed work practices by service providers. There is a lack of multilingual and culturally appropriate information about legal and social entitlements and processes and a lack of appropriate outreach programs by service providers
- Fear of deportation
- The intimidating nature of court proceedings for those who have to undergo legal procedures

Immigrant and refugee women need to come together to come out of their isolation and speak up about their many needs; for information to know what is happening around them; to be able to access the many services in their community but which are beyond their reach; to go to English classes to be able to speak to their neighbours; communicate with their Australian born children who learn English and forget their home language and they are unable to communicate at a deeper level and the women feel isolated in their own homes.

There is a vision for women to be able to go to someone if they are abused instead of being forced to live in the domestic violence situation in fear day and night. To have someone to express their feelings and to learn in a non-threatening environment together with other women who are in the same situation, to be informed – as information is power – and to have choices like other members of our society.

Priority Recommendations

1. Rural CALD Women's Speak Out as an immigrant and refugee women's forum should be held regularly as an inspiration for all generations and communities:
 - a. Lobby government and non-government organisations to support rural CALD women; and
 - b. Form and sustain a rural CALD women's strategy group.
2. Provide more opportunities to discuss issues on access to services:
 - a. Dissemination of information from community workers;
 - b. Develop data base on services and update existing materials;
 - c. Develop direct services by contacting local councils; and
 - d. Proper communication among service providers on how they support rural CALD women escaping domestic violence.
3. Develop ways to access comprehensive health services
 - a. Mapping of various pathways to community services
4. Develop cultural competency skills of community workers
 - a. Training in cultural sensitivity
5. Develop ways to improve interpreting services
 - a. Map out the 'realistic role' of interpreters
 - b. Develop feedback on use of interpreting services
 - c. Develop in plain language complaint procedures regarding access to services
6. Assist rural CALD women in documenting skills that they gathered from day to day life and volunteer work
 - a. Develop structures teaching methodology for English classes that are not intensive 5 days per week of lessons
 - b. Develop program in skills and adult education and training
7. Develop a proactive model in supporting rural CALD women to get employment and a more positive outlook in their job search especially due to limited rural opportunities
 - a. Train CALD women in starting their own business
 - b. Support those undertaking job search by providing transportation
 - c. Mentor rural CALD women on specific skills e.g. computer literacy
 - d. Form a CALD women's network in rural areas
8. Rural CALD women need to learn how to access CENTRELINK services
 - a. Produce CD in plain language: how to access the CENTRELINK services for women who are escaping domestic violence
9. Rural CALD women with families need specific support in working with children from diverse backgrounds
 - a. Develop culturally appropriate children's services
 - b. Develop and produce more culturally appropriate children's resources e.g. diversity in music, languages, games and toys
10. Consider rural CALD women and the issue of ageing and disability and the need for housing support services
 - a. Provide local services for rural CALD women dealing with the issues of ageing and disability and develop ways to support families seeking help
 - b. Develop strategies for setting up infrastructure for culturally sensitive nursing homes

A Note on Terminology: Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) / Non- English Speaking Background (NESB) / Immigrant / Migrant Women are terms that have all been used by government, NGOs and communities at various times. 'Non-English Speaking Background' (NESB) for some time was the preferred term to describe people who have immigrated to Australia, or who descend from immigrants. The current terminology is 'Culturally and Linguistically Diverse' (CALD), which recognises that cultural identification is more complex than linguistic background. The terms 'immigrant' and 'migrant' flag the unique socio-cultural space occupied by some women in Australia. However, these terms may have little applicability beyond the first generation, and even first generation immigrants may cease to see themselves as 'immigrants' after a period of time.
Women's Rights Action Network Australia

Final Word from Participants

We wish to acknowledge our participation as one that reflects many of our roles among our diverse backgrounds and are empowered by the sharing of views whilst at the Summit.

The very real opportunity to contribute to decision making at a national level was appreciated.

This Summit provided a way of working together in the spirit of reconciliation.

We now have a wider appreciation and increased knowledge of the diversity of issues that women are facing in rural and remote Australia and the value of a network approach to work together, identify common threads, establish priorities and explore solutions. We feel thrilled and privileged to have had the opportunity to participate.

We have made a start but we have only just begun. Now for the outcomes!

The Summit was a valuable opportunity for rural, regional and remote women and we drew on our diverse backgrounds, geography and experience to develop recommendations for a sustainable future for all Australians.

Thank you to the advisory committee for their passion, energy and intellect in steering this program and the participants. And to the unsung – the Secretariat – thank you!

Thank you to the Government for the opportunity to strengthen our voice; we acknowledge you are listening and look forward to your response.

It was great to be part of what truly was an inclusive process.

We appreciate and thank you for the opportunity to participate and share our views and ideas with this inspiring group of diverse women.

We commend this as a great opportunity for government to utilise the depth of experience, knowledge and high level skills of the women of rural, regional and remote Australia.

We see this as a very positive step towards continuing vital conversations and consultation with rural women.

We did our bit – now you do yours.

The success of this Summit depends on action.

Appendix 1

Leadership and Management

Australian Government Ministers

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| The Hon. Tanya Plibersek MP | Minister for the Status of Women |
| The Hon. Tony Burke MP | Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, |
| The Hon. Anthony Albanese MP | Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government |
| The Hon. Kate Ellis MP | Minister for Youth and Sport |

Advisory Committee

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Sue Salthouse | Women With Disabilities Australia |
| Cr. Napcia Bin Tahal | Deputy Mayor, Torres Island Shire Council |
| Alexandra Gartmann | Chief Executive Officer, Birchip Cropping Group (BCG) |
| Jeanette Long | SA Board Representative, Australian Women in Agriculture |
| Cathy McGowan A.O. | Managing Director of Catherine McGowan Consulting |

Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Janet Stodulka | Branch Manager, Office for Women |
| Joan Gilbert | Summit Coordinator, Office for Women |
| Jeannine Bevan | Director, Office for Women |
| Dirk Staunton | Project Officer, Office for Women |
| Julie Marginson | Account Manager, Communications and Media Branch |
| Turong Francis | Public Affairs Officer, Communications and Media Branch |

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government

| | |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| Elizabeth Bennett | Regional Policy Branch |
|-------------------|------------------------|

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

| | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Gabrielle Burrell | Director Youth and Family Support |
| Tarja Saastamoinen | |

Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Danusha Nainanayake,
Edwina Johnson
Natasha Mitchell

The participants would like to thank Joan Gilbert, Janet Stodulka, Jeannine Bevan, Julie Marginson, Dirk Staunton and the unseen backup staff of the Office for Women who worked tirelessly to make this event a significant occasion.

Appendix 2

Trade Show Exhibitors

The National Rural Women's Summit was pleased to welcome the following women and their businesses to the Trade Event held on the evening preceding the Summit:

- Bernadette Yhi Riley** Body Scrub, Soap and Body Balm, post card– Aboriginal owned and developed
Yhi-Merandai@bigpond.com 0437 426 449
- Susan McLeish** Promoting the Women's Gathering to be held at Coonamble in October 2008
mcleishs@nswfarmers.org.au 02 6824 2091
- Peter & Suzette Beresford** Hand made silver and gold jewellery
countrywear@bigpond.com 07 4655 1649
- Mary Nenke** Marinated Yabby Tails / Simply Tomatoes on Toast
cambinatayabbies@bigpond.com 08 9864 6054
- Kerry Anderson** Fair Dinkum Dog Coats
kanderson@mmnet.com.au 0418 553 719
- Marg Carroll** Books: "Ordinary People, Extraordinary Lives" and Reinventing the Bush" inspiring stories of young Australians (published 2008)
mcarroll@activ8.net.au 02 6366 8580
- Susan Bowers** Hand made books and art
bowersssusan@hotmail.com 0407 429 747
- Robyn Boundy** Intensive piggery - show case of business success
Robyn.boundy@bigpond.com 0429 923 014
- Sarah Sammon** Co-owner of Simply Rose Petals – exports world wide from farm in Swan Hill
sarah@simplyrosepetals.com 03 5032 9690
- Napcia Bin Tahal** Jewellery from Torres Strait
Napcia7@bigpond.com 0429 479 773
- Fiona Dempster** Hand made Books /Art
Fiona@n-carta.com.au 0403 470 979
- Ruth Lambert** Wine maker from Wamboin
ruth@lambertsvineyards.com.au
- Maree Brown Shepherd** Home made jams, marmalades, paste hampers etc
longhaven@iinet.au 0407 269 473

Pia Boschetti

Pearl jewellery
piaboschetti@hotmail.com

Dotty Fejo

Artist - Larrakia woman
CEO@radiolarrakia.org 0417 883 488

Suzanne Woods

Olive oil, olives, preserves, honey, pistachios, yabbies, vino cotto,
balsamic vinegar, lavender products, emu oil products, edible gifts
(panforte, biscotti) wines
swoods@wn.com.au 0438 287 191

Appendix 3

Overview of Participants

The Summit welcomed participants from across Australia:

From the Australian Capital Territory:

Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation, Australian Rural Leadership Foundation, Women With Disabilities Australia

From the Northern Territory:

Tangentyere Council, Larrakia Media and Arts, NT Playgroup Association, NT Women in Agriculture

From Tasmania:

TV Brecht and CF McCartie, Fruit Growers Tasmania

From South Australia:

SA Women in Agriculture, SA Advisory Board of Agriculture, Department of Primary Industries and Resources, Australian Women in Agriculture, Women's Industry Network Seafood Community, Australian Government Regional Women's Advisory Council, Ernabella Arts, Clare Valley Children's Centre, Team of Two

From Western Australia:

Latitude Pearls, Jarvis Estate, National Rural Women's Coalition, Cambinyata Yabbies, Kondinin Group, Curtin University of Technology, Rural Remote and Regional Women's Network, WA Women in Agriculture

From Queensland:

Cooee, Torres Shire Council, Qld Pork Producers, PC Brooks & Co, National Rural Women's Coalition, Institute of Child Protection Studies, Women in Sugar Network, AgForce Qld, Torres Strait Island Regional Council, Royal Flying Doctor Service, Qld Rural Women's Network, Gympie Chamber of Commerce, Qld Rural Workers Network, Queensland Country Women's Association, Women's Industry Network Seafood Community, Zonta Charters Towers

From New South Wales:

Charles Sturt University, Rural Women's Network, NSW Rural Women's Network. NSW Women with Disabilities, NSW Partners in Grain, Rural Doctors Association, Smith Family, Coonamble Women's Gathering, SE Advocacy, Breastfeeding Association, YHI Products, Rural Women's Advisory Council, Immigrant Women Speak Out Association, North Coast Area Health Service, National Rural Women's Coalition, High Resolutions consultancy

From Victoria:

Lodden-Murray Community Leadership Program, Victorian Women's Trust, Longhaven Orchard, Sunraysia Institute of TAFE, Defence Special Needs Support Group, Greater Green Triangle Area Consultative Committee, Birchip Cropping Group, Young Professional Network, Lurg Cattle Company, Foundation for Australian Agricultural Women, Department of Sustainability and Environment, Australasia Pacific Extension Network, Gippsland Lamb, Simply Rose Petals, Rural Ambulance Victoria, Grass Roots Mentoring

Appendix 4

Program

Friday 27 June 2008

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| 7.30 - 8.20am | Breakfast: Hosted by the Hon. Tony Burke MP Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry |
| 9.00 – 9.45am | Morning session 1 – Summit Opening Welcome to Country: Mrs Agnes Shea, Ngunnawal Elder Summit Opening: The Hon. Tanya Plibersek MP Minister for the Status of Women Keynote Speech: Ms Libby Lloyd AM Chair, National Council to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children |
| 9.45 -10.15am | MORNING TEA |
| 10.15am-12.15pm | Morning Session 2- Workshop Groups <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Health○ Education○ Climate change –environment and water○ Young people, girls and teenagers○ Infrastructure & transport & telecommunications |
| 12.15 – 1.00pm | LUNCH |
| 1.00-3.00pm | Afternoon Session 3 – Workshop Groups <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Representation of women in decision making○ Community building, reconciliation & new arrivals○ Training and skill development○ Employment and business development○ Families and children |
| 3.00-3.30pm | AFTERNOON TEA |
| 3.30 -5.00pm | Afternoon Session 4 – Plenary discussion Report back from groups Discussion of recommendations |
| 7.00-9.30pm | SUMMIT DINNER |

Saturday 28 June 2008

8.30 -9.00am Keynote Address: Senator Claire Moore,
Senator for Queensland

9.00-10.00am **Morning Session 5 – The Way Forward**
Review outcomes of previous day

10 – 10.30am MORNING TEA

10.30 – 12 noon **Morning Session 6 - Plenary discussion**
Discussion on communication between Government and rural, regional
and remote women, and recommendations on the establishment and
support of women's network/s.

12.00-1.00pm LUNCH

1.00-2.15pm **Afternoon Session 7 – Plenary discussion**
Communiqué
Recommendations

2.15-3.00pm **CLOSING SESSION**
Presentation of Recommendations to Government -
Ms Kirsten Livermore MP, Member for Capricornia