

# Fourth World Congress of Rural Women

Durban  
23-26 April 2007



South Australian Delegation Report

**September 2007**

**Lyn Breuer MP**  
*Delegation Leader*  
*Member for Giles*

**Lib Hylton Keele**  
*Delegation Coordinator*  
*Manager, Rural Affairs,*  
*PIRSA*



**Government of  
South Australia**





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## INTRODUCTION

### ***SOUTH AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT COMMITMENT TO RURAL WOMEN***

The South Australian Government recognises the current and potential role of rural women and in particular women involved in primary industries. A number of initiatives have been developed in the past, both in Primary Industries and Resources and through the Office for the Status of Women, that endeavour to build the capacity of our rural women.

The South Australian Government, through the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Hon. Rory McEwen MP, offered bursaries of \$3,000 each, to enable three South Australian women to attend the Fourth World Congress of Rural Women. The Bursary part funded the recipient's Congress costs.

The South Australian Government supported the South Australian Delegation through providing the Congress Leader Ms Lyn Breuer, MP Member for Giles. Primary Industries and Resources South Australia supported the initiative and provided coordination of the South Australian Delegation through Ms Lib Hylton Keele, Manager, Rural Affairs, PIRSA and organising the Pre Congress briefing meeting.

### ***WORLD CONGRESS HISTORY***

The Inaugural International Women in Agriculture Conference was held in Melbourne in 1994. This Conference was the first of its kind and was attended by over 800 women representing 30 different countries. The inaugural conference was extremely successful in raising the profile and recognition of the multifaceted role of women in agriculture and in developing strong networks for women to use.

A second international conference was held in Washington in 1998 and the third was held in 2002 in Madrid, Spain.

South Australia has supported strong delegations to each of the previous conferences and delegates have found that the experience has given them the confidence and motivation to take leading roles within their industries and contribute to their communities.

### ***SOUTH AFRICA***

The hosting of the Fourth World Congress of Rural Women by Africa was informed by the resolutions of the 2002 Congress held in Spain, when Ms Graca Machel received a ceremonial bowl, marking acceptance for South Africa to host the Fourth World Congress on behalf of Africa.

South Africa, through the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Affairs, hosted the 4th World Congress of Rural Women at the International Convention Centre in Durban from 23 to 26 April 2007. An African Consultation of Rural Women that was held at the same venue from 19 to 21 April 2007 preceded the congress.

The aim of the congress was to discuss universal and wide-ranging issues confronting rural women today and to share concrete experiences of successes in addressing these worldwide. These include: globalisation; trade; sustainable development (social, economic and environment); gender equality; food security and related issues of access to land, water, finance, new technologies, transport and roads; rural housing, women's health, governance and the impact of public policies on rural women.

Since its inception, discussions in these fora have provided a global perspective on issues confronting women in the world's rural areas. The theme of this congress was '*United in our diversity: Working together towards the total emancipation of rural women from poverty and hunger*'.

About 2,500 local and international delegates participated in the congress. Delegates were drawn from rural women themselves, government, civil society, international and intergovernmental organisations, nongovernmental organisations and community-based organisations.

In South Africa, representation was organised under the umbrella body of Women in Agriculture and Rural Development (WARD), which was launched on 15 October 2006.

Ms Mary Salce and the Australian delegation were recognised for having initiated the event, which now has huge support across the world.

In addition a parallel non-Government forum was held. The South African Civil Society, in partnership with the South African Government, created the Rural Women's Voices Tent Forum.

The objectives of the tent forum were:

- ~ To serve as a creative space where women representatives from all continents could organise cultural and spiritual events, exhibitions, and celebrations of their achievements;
- ~ To provide an educational space where workshops were conducted on topics such as poverty, HIV/AIDS, sustainable rural development, peace, food security and networking; and
- ~ To develop a strong network of women's NGOs working on sustainable rural development issues from both the Southern and Northern hemispheres.

## **Conference Program**

The main program of the congress occurred over three days from 23 - 25 April 2007. A copy of the Congress Program is attached as Appendix 1. (The following sessions are web linked to the papers presented - for further information.)

### **Day 1 (Monday, 23 April)**

- [History, objectives and expected outcomes of the Congress - Ms Lulu Xingwana, Sth Africa Minister: Agriculture and Land Affairs](#)
- [African Union Statement - Ms Yetunde Teriba, Acting Director: Women, Gender and Development Directorate](#)
- [Sustainable solutions for basic service delivery to marginalised and vulnerable groups - Dr Ronald Msiska, United Nations Development Program, Regional Service Centre](#)
- [Official opening of the Congress - Ms Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Deputy President: Republic of South Africa](#)
- [Achievements and lessons learned from Australia and Spain - Ms Mary Salce, Founding Member of the World Congress of Rural Women: Australia](#)

### **Day 2 (Tuesday, 24 April)**

- [Current developments on issues pertaining to rural women, Devaki Jain & Shubha Chacko: Indian Association of Women's Studies](#)
- [Globalisation and eradication of poverty, Ms Vangile Titi, Deputy Director General for Sector Services and Partnerships: Department of Agriculture](#)
- [Peace and security](#) – author unknown
- [Governance for sustainable rural development at all levels, Prof N. Luswazi](#)
- [Access to and control of resources and environmental security, Mpumalanga Department of Agriculture and Land Affairs](#)
- [Health and wellbeing, Dr Lindiwe Maiele Sibanda: FANRPAN](#)
- [Speech by Mr Trevor Manuel, Minister of Finance, Sth Africa at the Gala Dinner](#)

### **Day 3 (Wednesday, 25 April)**

- [Reports](#) from Conference workshop sessions
- [Reports](#) from the Rural Women's Tent Forum
- [Reports](#) from Civil Society sessions

### **CLOSING CEREMONY**

## ***Congress Process***

The Congress was conducted with general sessions in the mornings of the first two days where leading speakers gave presentations on the theme. The afternoons were divided into five simultaneous commissions or working groups, enabling more participation by delegates.

Five sub-themes were identified:

- ~ Globalisation and eradicating impoverishment,
- ~ Peace and stability,
- ~ Governance for rural development at all levels,
- ~ Environmental security and access to and control of resources, and
- ~ Health and wellbeing.

On Thursday 26 April 2007 the Australian delegation participated in a field trip organized for us by the South African Department of Science and Technology to the Vukuzakhe Women's Group Medicinal Plants Project. More information about this project is contained later in this report.

## ***Congress Delegates***

Delegates at the Congress came from wide ranging organizations including:

- ~ Management personnel responsible for designing international, national, local or regional public policies (equal opportunities programmes in rural development)
- ~ Management personnel of public and private institutions, NGOs and not-for-profit institutions running programmes that specifically favour rural women
- ~ Women promoting rural development projects, experiences and initiative, especially in equal opportunity
- ~ Women managers and technical staff members at rural development centres

- ~ Professionals from academic and scientific spheres and the agri-food sectors
- ~ Professionals in agricultural research, extension and dissemination, including those involved in new information technologies
- ~ Rural development association networks
- ~ Women living in rural environments and participating in activities related to agriculture, fishing, aquaculture, livestock raising and forestry
- ~ Women in positions of political, managerial and/or technical responsibility in different cooperative, political, union and local institutions or NGOs targeting the development of rural women

## **THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN DELEGATION**

### ***DELEGATION LEADER***

#### **Ms Lyn Breuer MP, Member for Giles**

Lyn Breuer was elected to the South Australian Parliament in 1997 and is the first woman to hold this regional seat which stretches west from Whyalla and north to Coober Pedy. She is the only Country Labor Member in the Lower House and has a strong commitment to regional development. Lyn chairs the Environment Resources and Development Committee, and is a member of the Aboriginal Lands Parliamentary Standing Committee.

### ***DELEGATION COORDINATOR***

#### **Ms Lib Hylton Keele, Manager, Rural Affairs, PIRSA**

Lib has worked with rural communities for twenty-five years in capacity building and community development. She was a member of the National Organising Committee for the Spain Congress in 2002 and has coordinated the South Australian Delegation to all four International Congresses. Lib Hylton Keele, Mary Salce (Vic), Yvonne Jennings (Vic) and Heather I'Anson (SA) are the only Australians that have attended all four International Rural Women's Conferences/Congresses.

### ***DELEGATION MEMBERS***

#### ***2007 Bursary Recipients***

##### **Ms Sarah Jared, Naracoorte (*bursary recipient, 2007*)**

Sarah Jared lives near Naracoorte and has a mixed farm focussing on export and new markets in East Asia, feedlotting and agroforestry. She is the Area Manager with Bayer Animal Health in Naracoorte with networks in the South East, Fleurieu, Kangaroo Island and the Murray Mallee. Sarah is also a member of the Primary Industries Skills Council, is involved with the Santa Gertrudis Cattle Association and a founding member of the National Santa Gertrudis Youth Group.

**Ms Denise Johns, Port Pirie (*bursary recipient, 2007*)**

Denise lives on a farming property near Crystal Brook in the Upper/Mid North. The property focuses on high quality grain production and sheep. Denise's roles include bookkeeping, grain marketing and financial investments, as well as actively participating in all decision making processes relating to the business. She has a Bachelor of Teaching and is in her final year of a Postgraduate Degree in Business Management. She is also employed by Regional Skills Training to co-ordinate a Postgraduate course in Clare. Along with her husband she also operates a scrap metal business in the Mid/Upper North.

**Ms Judy Schroeder, Pinnaroo (*bursary recipient, 2007*)**

Judy is in partnership on the family farm, Gunallo Pty Ltd, which is a 4,000 acre property near the Victorian and South Australian border. They are dry land farmers growing cereal crops and running a merino sheep stud. To support the family and community Judy is also an Arts and Health Community Development Officer for the Mallee Communities and is employed by Country Arts SA and the Mallee Health Service.

***General South Australian Delegation Members***

**Ms Liz Ballinger, Wolseley (*bursary recipient 2002*)**

Liz operates a property and business in the South East of South Australia. For the past 15 years she has grown lavender and produces lavender products, plants and produce at Teatrick Lavender Estate, which is currently run as a tourism venture open to the general public. She is a founding member and past Chairperson of Women in Business and Regional Development in the South East and was 1999 Enterprising Women of the Year for business and community input.

**Ms Kate Breuer, Adelaide**

Kate lives in Adelaide where she is studying a Bachelor of Arts with a major in English. She hopes to one day be a writer and also has a keen interest in humanitarian issues and understanding women's issues and the needs of developing countries.

**Ms Anne Dunn, Adelaide**

Anne Dunn is a former CEO of a South Australian Government Department and is currently a freelance facilitator/mediator and organisational developer. She chairs the Commonwealth Government's Regional Women's Advisory Council that reports to the Deputy Prime Minister.

**Ms Linda Eldredge, Clare (*bursary recipient 2002*)**

Linda Eldredge lives in the Clare Valley and has a wheat, barley and sheep property. She works for Regional Skills Training, lecturing in Business Management from Certificate IV level to the Graduate Diploma in Business Management (Regional and Rural Sectors). Linda is the Chair of the SAFECOM Advisory Board and she is a South Australian Grains Industry Trust Trustee

(Ministers Representative), a member of the SA Small Business Development Council and a member of the 2007 Rural Women's Gathering Committee, Clare.

**Ms Heather l'Anson, Tothill Creek (*bursary recipient, 1998, 2002*)**

Heather is a merino sheep, cereal crop and small seeds and legume farmer, company director and marketing consultant. She farms at Tothill Creek in the mid north of South Australia. Heather is a member of the SA Passenger Transport Board, Doppio Teatro Inc and an Executive member of the Marrabel Rodeo. She is a member of the South Australian Farmers' Federation, Landcare, the Country Fire Service and a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

**Ms Jane Moore, Clare**

Jane is the Director of the Clare Valley Children's Centre which is an integrated child care and kindergarten. Jane is a volunteer breastfeeding counsellor for the Australian Breastfeeding Association and the coordinator of the local women's group – Women in Management. She is also the Chair of the 2007 SA Rural Women's Gathering, Clare.

**Ms Robyn Muster, Freeling**

Robyn is a partner in a mixed broad acre cereal/hay producing property, manager of a 40 sow piggery and is in charge of marketing grain for the enterprise. Robyn was the first female elected to the Royal Adelaide Show Council and is the Vice Chair of the Grain and Fodder Committee. She is an executive member of the Freeling Agricultural Bureau and Secretary of the Faith Lutheran School Council. In 2003 Robyn was awarded the Light Regional Council Citizens Award. Robyn represented the GRDC group Partners in Grain.

**Ms Kelly Muster, Freeling**

Kelly is a year 10 student at Faith Lutheran School. Kelly has her own purebred Berkshire pig stud and exhibits her pigs at the Royal Adelaide Show.

**Ms Carol Schofield, Inman Valley (*bursary recipient 2002*)**

Carol chairs the Western Mt Lofty Ranges Water Allocation Planning Committee and is a member of the Fleurieu Regional Development Board, Premier's Food Council and South Australian Murray-Darling Basin Natural Resources Centre Inc. Carol was the RIRDC Rural Women's Award winner for 2000 and was made a member of the Order of Australia for her services to the Agriculture and Aquaculture industries in 2004.

## **PRE CONGRESS**

### ***PRE CONGRESS BRIEFING MEETING***

The pre-Congress briefing meeting for the SA Delegation was held on Wednesday 11 April 2007, all known Congress participants from South Australia were invited to the meeting and to be members of the South Australian delegation (*Agenda is attached as Appendix 2*)

### ***DELEGATE BADGING***

The South Australian delegates were invited to use their own Akubra style hat with a scarf supplied by PIRSA to distinguish the South Australian contingent. This enabled delegates to find each other in the crowds both inside the Congress venue and when the groups were in the general public. This proved to be a valuable security measure as the general public realised that each of the Australians were a member of a larger group. The hats also enabled other Congress participants to identify the Australians very easily which was of benefit for opening dialogue but could also prove challenging when constantly targeted by other participants for help for their communities.

### ***COUNTRY BRIEFINGS***

#### ***Australia***

The pre-Congress SA Delegation briefing meeting included sessions on Australia and Australia's general position in relation to a number of agricultural, cultural, export, import, quarantine and women's issues. The sessions were conducted by key managers in the public sector with aim of orientating the delegates to the issues and questions that they may have to address in South Africa.

#### ***South Africa***

The pre-Congress SA Delegation briefing meeting included sessions on issues pertinent to South Africa. The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade outlined issues from their South Africa desk, which included the political status and security status of Australians in relation to South Africa. The main message was to use caution, do not take any undue risks and to register with [www.smartraveller.gov.au](http://www.smartraveller.gov.au).

### ***SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS***

#### ***Standard Operating Procedures***

Standard operating procedures were developed and are included as Attachment 3. The procedures were outlined with the delegation and with the relevant officers in Primary Industries and Resources South Australia.

### ***Passports***

Copies of the passports of all the South Australian delegates were taken and held in the safe at PIRSA in the event that a delegate lost or had their passport stolen while in South Africa.

### ***Financial Arrangements***

Delegates were advised to have a number of options available to them to access money while in South Africa and to inform their banks of their travel dates and arrangements.

Two members of the South Australian delegation reported attempted fraud on their credit cards from overseas after their return.

### ***Contact Lists***

A contact list of the delegates was collated that included their contact number while in South Africa and details of their flights in and out of South Africa. This list was circulated to all South Australian delegates.

### ***Registering Delegates with Foreign Affairs***

The South Australian delegates were registered with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and details of the consulate contact in Pretoria were circulated to all the South Australian delegates.

### ***MEDIA***

A media release was made from Ministers McEwen's office announcing the availability of the bursaries and inviting applications. A media release was made announcing the bursary recipients and a third media release was made from PIRSA regarding the South Australian delegation. Delegation members submitted reports to their local media and the Stock Journal on their return.

### ***LIAISING WITH INTERSTATE DELEGATES***

There was no formal coordination of the delegation from Australia and some informal coordination of a contact list of Australians attending was undertaken by PIRSA through internet contact. PIRSA submitted this amalgamated list to the congress organisers and to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

### ***AUSTRALIAN DELEGATION***

There were 36 Australian delegates, many of whom were self-funded, some had contributions from their industry organisations and some were in receipt of a State Government subsidy. Anne Dunn and Jan Cameron were the only people supported by the Australian Government and Anne Dunn was the only person with direct connections to the Australian Government.

The absence of an official representative from the Australian Government made it difficult for the South African Congress organisers to communicate with the

Australian group before and during the Congress. As there was no general organisation of the Australian group there was no central information point to distribute or receive information. The South Africans did not know who to approach from the Australian group to discuss organisation or protocol issues. This gave the impression that Australia was disorganised and unprofessional. This needs to be addressed before the Fifth World Congress in India (2010).

Lib Hylton Keele coordinated a list of names and contact numbers of the Australian group and circulated this on day one of the Congress to help ensure that people could contact each other particularly in case of an emergency. Anne Dunn invited the Australian group to meet after the close of day two and this was the only opportunity for the Australian group to debrief and network. Organising both of these was difficult in South Africa and could have been pre-arranged in Australia if a central organisation mechanism had been established.

There were Ministers and senior public servants from many countries present, formally acknowledged and at official functions for government representatives. While Australia was a major player in the history of the Congress and was acknowledged as important it was not recognised in an official capacity at any of the functions.

It will be important in the planning for the Congress in India to establish some formal leadership of the delegation. The responsibility for this coordination would reasonably sit with the Office for Women in FaCSIA, Industry Partnerships in DAFF or the Regional Women's Advisory Council in DoTaRS.

Aside from leadership in the host country, the official representative could ensure that all Australian delegates meet each other, have debriefing sessions during the conference and arrange a cultural briefing for delegates before departing Australia. It will also be essential to ensure that there is Indigenous participation in the delegation.

## ***Australian Delegates***

Lyn Breuer (SA)	Denise Johns (SA)	Linda Harrington (Vic)
Kate Breuer (SA)	Linda Eldredge (SA)	Yvonne Jennings (Vic)
Lib Hylton Keele (SA)	Jane Moore (SA)	Barry Jennings (Vic)
Trevor Keele (SA)	Anne Dunn (ACT)	Bernadine Kenyon (Vic)
Carol Schofield (SA)	Jan Cameron (Qld)	Allison Long (Vic)
Heather l'Anson (SA)	Sonia Muir (NSW)	Marion Murphy (Vic)
Liz Ballinger (SA)	Anne McRae (NSW)	Naomi Pye (Vic)
Robyn Muster (SA)	Karolee Wolcott (NSW)	Mary Salce (Vic)
Kelly Muster (SA)	Airlie Worrall (Vic)	Delwyn Seebeck (Vic)
Sarah Jared (SA)	Cate Bell (Vic)	Hodi Beauliv (Vic)
Ashley Jared (SA)	Leanne Bunn (Vic)	Susanne Connelly (Vic)
Judy Schroeder (SA)	Kate Earle (Vic)	Desley Va'aparamu (Vic)

### ***HANDOVER TO INDIA***

The Congress concluded on day three with a salute to Australia, Washington, Spain, South Africa and the announcement that the Fifth World Congress for Rural Women will be held in India in 2010 and the ceremonial bowl was handed to India.

While the closing ceremony heralded the official close of the Congress the South African Government arranged for the Australian group to undertake a field trip to a South African rural women's project the following morning. A bus collected Australians from three hotels and was accompanied by a security vehicle, a police vehicle and an ambulance.

### ***THE SOUTH AFRICA PROJECT (ESHOWE MEDICINAL PLANTS)***

#### ***~Overview of Vukuzakhe Women's Group Project by Anne Dunn***

The Australian delegation undertook a field trip to a medicinal plants farm out of Eshowe (about three hours north of Durban). This was an outstanding opportunity to talk to a group of (black) South African women about their lives, families and farming.

The group has a five acre piece of traditional land on which they have planted traditional medicinal plants. They have targeted their planting to plants that are used for common complaints such as arthritis, colds, rashes etc, and avoided high profile and difficult topics such as AIDS. This is mostly because they are able to demonstrate the healing qualities of traditional herbs for common complaints through a research partnership with the Institute of Natural Resources at the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal. In addition, they are very

concerned about the claims made by people about cures for HIV AIDS (including mineral water being supported by Winnie Mandela).

There are 18-22 women supporting their families in this project. The women grow the herbs, dry them and then hand them over to traditional healers who use traditional recipes to mix the herbs. The women then receive them back and make hand lotions, oils and tonics with the mixed herbs. This partnership is new and exploratory, but is working so far and has the support of the traditional owners of the land. The big difficulty with the project is the land and money required to scale up the production to make it commercially viable and completely self funding. The Australian delegation offered to help raise some money (they need \$60,000 and we agreed to target for \$10,000, of which we currently have \$3,000).

During our visit we attracted the attention of the men, including the traditional owners who came to see what we were up to and why we were having such a good time together (singing, talking, gardening etc). We made speeches for each other and as a result of our commitment to help raise some money, the traditional owners agreed to allocate more land for the project. So there was great celebration all round.

The Australian delegation will stay in touch with this group at least until the end of this year – and we will attempt to raise \$10,000 to help them move to the next stage of their commercial development. It was inspirational to be with these women and to hear about the difference the project has made to their confidence, their sense of a positive future and their dreams now for their families.

The project highlighted the value of working with rural people and women in particular, assisting them to value add in areas that they know well and believe in. This type of project also helps preserve traditional skill and knowledge that may otherwise be lost. This is may be important in Australian rural communities where many skills have been devalued and under utilised due to technological advances and risk subsequent loss. Skills may include all aspects of stock handling, food preparation and preservation, water storage, family and stock health, small scale horticulture. While many of these skills are not required now on a day to day basis they may form the basis of small scale industry, value adding or be necessary in exceptional circumstances.

The benefits of officially recognising, showing appreciation and valuing the project, the outcome and the abilities of the women was very apparent. The simple act of a group of Australians visiting, showing interest in the work being done even on this small scale assisted the group with their self esteem and their standing within their own community, amongst elders and with the men in the community who are often under employed and often suffer from low self esteem.

It was mentioned that there had been a growing resistance to this project in the community by the men who felt that it was not important and the project was at risk of the men not letting the women be involved and taking any remuneration gained from them which would prevent reinvestment and growth of the operation. The elders and the men who came down to witness the visit pledged continued and increased support for the project.

There are issues and learnings which may have direct parallels for indigenous people and people from non English speaking backgrounds (NESB) projects in Australia. Many traditional medicines, processes and activities could be managed in a similar way. This may assist in increasing self esteem among indigenous and NESB women, help to preserve traditional knowledge and increase income into communities. Investigation into using this approach with natural resource management (NRM) projects in Australia may highlight alternative approaches to NRM activities, showcase activity in a community, begin mainstreaming NRM and raise the profile of NRM in communities.

## POST CONGRESS

### **POST CONGRESS DEBRIEF MEETING**

A post congress meeting was held 20 June 2007 to debrief and finalise the South Australian Delegation Congress report and recommendations are contained herein. (*Post-Congress meeting Agenda is attached as Appendix 4*)

## ISSUES

On registration SA delegates were asked if they represented civil society or government. To be a government delegate you required a letter from your government and an accompanying invitation from the Congress organisers however, there were no pre-requisites for a civil society representative.

Key issues continue to be:

- ~ Health: HIV/AIDS, Rabies, diabetes
- ~ Water: sanitation, availability
- ~ Power: security of electricity supply
- ~ Structural: patriarchal systems, land ownership and women
- ~ Technology: communication

The South African women showed a pride and a capacity to help themselves.

The black South Africans are a majority in their country and have instituted structural political reform to gain more proportionate representation.

White South African rural women were not well represented at the Congress.

Poverty levels in South Africa are different and not comparable to those in Australia.

Australians and Australian farmers are perceived as wealthy.

Women are reluctant to visit or participate in international exchange programs because they have to have an HIV/AIDS test and as HIV/AIDS is so prevalent in South Africa many women do not want to know their HIV status.

## OUTCOMES

The outcomes from this congress will become clearer over time as papers are published and an official report prepared by congress organisers. However, some significant outcomes for Australia are easily articulated:

- ~ The esteem with which Australia is held as being the founders of this world-wide movement provides a real opportunity for the Australian Government in its international relations
- ~ The networking and interchange between primary producers from around the world has led to new knowledge on disease prevention, program establishment and funding opportunities.
- ~ The growing understanding among Australian delegates that the challenges for third world farmers are the same as ours – just magnified a thousand times over – has given us perspective on our difficulties
- ~ The engagement by the Australian delegation in world discussions about water, new crops, making small towns work, health and suicide issues and the challenges of working in a global economy has contributed to making these women ready for further engagement in debates and leadership in rural Australia
- ~ Seeing and understanding how women can be disempowered by forceful government intervention that excludes them was a powerful message for governments and public servants
- ~ Learning to sing (with 2,500 other women) at any quiet moment in the proceedings (e.g. when the speaker was late and when the AV equipment broke down) gave us a new picture of celebration and a new view of how to make a conference lively. We proudly sang We Are Australian in the closing ceremony to a standing ovation
- ~ Sharing experiences with women from around the world focused our attention on the achievements, challenges and opportunities in Australia and increased our knowledge and understanding of what is happening in our own country
- ~ Hearing first class speakers from a wide range of countries gave a glimpse of the rapid pace of change in agriculture and rural towns across the world.
- ~ It is necessary to keep reading, learning, maintaining our networks and attending international events in order to keep up with the rate of change and keep Australian rural businesses and communities in touch with potential opportunities
- ~ The determination and hard work of women from African countries to make a place for themselves in rural and agricultural industries with minimal resources is inspirational
- ~ Being with women from new and emerging democracies has made us envious of the legislative frameworks they have that write commitment to equality for women into statutes and structured programs that achieve equality as normal part of business.
- ~ The participation by South Australian rural women in the Congress has helped empower them and raise their self esteem and status encouraging them to contribute further to their own communities and their industries. Delegates at past Congresses have shown an increase in the roles they have taken on in their industries and communities and their increased participation is informally documented and tracked by PIRSA.

## OPPORTUNITIES

The Congress provided delegates with an opportunity to watch, think, discuss and reflect on the various ways countries were addressing a variety of problems in primary industries and rural communities. While many of the solutions were not new the Congress provided an opportunity to graphically depict the benefits to the communities they were designed for. This enabled delegates to see the practices in detail and to begin to assess the relevance for application in their own industries and communities. This is an opportunity and an experience that the delegates could not get from any other forum.

While aspects of the Congress impacted delegates in various ways and each delegate viewed the outcomes with vary degrees of appreciation every delegate could see opportunities for transferring the some information in practical ways in Australia.

Aspects and opportunities include:

### ***Micro Finance Enterprises***

Skill and capability development through the initiation of micro finance enterprises proved a valuable way of building social and economic capacity, increasing wealth and raising self esteem.

- ~ Value adding to horticulture produce
- ~ Bulk creation of and marketing traditional medicines
- ~ Making handicrafts that are of an export quality standard

Many successful businesses in Australia began as small scale in-home micro enterprises i.e. Maggie Beer, Saltbush Clothing and Constantine Quilts. Often women have well developed business concepts but can not raise the investment finance or command a portion of the farm income to pursue the idea. Micro financing could be applied in rural communities through foundations and banks under similar criteria used by the Rabobank. Community organisations could be utilised to help establish support networks and distribute information.

### ***Creating Structures***

A number of examples were presented outlining structures that had been developed in regional areas that increased production, developed markets and increased wealth in rural areas.

- ~ RUDI-SEWA District India – this structure draws together 350,000 members, 5000 groups, it provides income of Rps 3,000 per month for the producer and creates secondary employment for a further 1000 people. The structure provides procurement from farms, value addition, weighing, packaging, labelling and pricing, finishing goods and stock process and delivery at distribution centre.

### ***Peace Building***

Delegates were touched by stories such as the struggle of the Burundi Women. Burundi is a small country in Central Africa bordered by Rwanda in the north and Tanzania in the South and South East and the Democratic Republic of Congo in the west and has a population of 7.2 million people.

In 1993 the first elected president was overthrown and a decade of war followed. The country is recovering socially, economically and politically since a peace agreement was signed in September 2006 with the last rebel movement ready to join reconstruction and development.

The impact of war on the women was devastating they were displaced, exiled, dispersed, raped, infected with HIV/AIDS, widowed then rejected by family. In many cases they were victims of polygamy.

The Burundi women have joined together to lobby government to deal with national solidarity, human rights and gender, revise oppressive laws, establish micro projects to alleviate poverty and establish women's organisations. The Burundi Constitution has been revised to ensure 30% representation of women in government. No fees are charged for mothers to deliver babies at public hospitals ensuring babies are delivered in safe environments. Health services are free for children under the age of five. Primary education is free which allows all children to attend school and reduces the discrimination of female children.

### ***Local Government's Role in Rural Women's Development***

A case study from the poorest province in South Africa highlighted practical ways to enhance impoverished rural women's participation in their own development and in changing their own situation.

The first step is to raise the consciousness of women themselves to sustain development initiatives. To do this women must be given the opportunity to reflect about themselves, their history and why they are in poverty today in order for them to build self confidence and to discover in themselves the power to change their own situation. Out of this reflection can come a common understanding and a clear vision of a non-patriarchal society.

The next step is to conduct development research that is pro poor and focussing on rural women. Merge mega municipalities in order to exchange knowledge and share resources.

Build the capacity of community based organisations and local municipalities that specialise in preparing rural communities to learn through rural based models.

Train rural organisations in rural resource management and form education training centres consortiums for capacity building and training of cooperatives. Train women in how government works and establish mentoring opportunities. Develop gender based methodologies and conduct research to address the feminisation of poverty. Undertake legislative and administrative reforms to give women full and equal access to economic resources. Use credit and savings methodologies that are effective in reaching women in poverty and use innovation in reducing transaction costs.

### ***Violence and Tradition***

While women are often victims of violence they can also be perpetrators of violence through the practice of culture and tradition. Investigate the role that culture plays in the perpetuation of poverty, violence, inequality and illiteracy and the role that tradition can play in alleviating these conditions. Delegates

commented that often more subtle forms of violence go unrecognised in our communities in Australia and it is important that we all assess the role we as women may unconsciously play in perpetuating not only violence but a female under-class and a patriarchal society.

### ***Valuing Traditional Ways***

An underlying and re-current message was the need to value traditional ways and look for solutions with the indigenous people. There is a need to encourage the expression of traditional ways in order to seek new solutions that take into account a wealth of knowledge that could be lost. This was reinforced with the sentiment, “development must be done with us if it is to be done” and the catch phrase “nothing about us without us”.

### ***Poverty and Health***

Poverty and health were key issues at the Congress. In African countries the poverty is severe and health (diabetes, HIV AIDS) are chronic. Delegates recognised and commented that while the level and degree of infection and severity are not comparable the problems in health and poverty in Australia should not be trivialised.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are recommendations from the South Australian delegation.

That the Australian Government:

1. Facilitate the coordination of an Australian Delegation to the Fifth World Congress in India in 2010.
2. Approach the Fifth World Congress organisers and request a position on the organising/advisory committee.
3. Facilitate the coordination speaker/presenter/facilitator participation and papers for Australia.
4. Offer bursaries to ensure Australian rural women participate in the Fifth World Congress in 2010.

That the South Australian Government:

5. Facilitate the coordination of a South Australian Delegation to the Fifth World Congress in India in 2010.
6. Offer bursaries to ensure South Australian rural women participate in the Fifth World Congress in India in 2010.

That Primary Industries and Resources South Australia, through Sustainable Systems:

7. Provide support to the South Australian Delegation group to enable them to foster the liaison with South African Communities and the Eshowe Medicinal Plants Project in particular.
8. Coordinate a committee to develop guidelines for the establishment of a community trust fund to help support self funded South Australian delegates to the Fifth World Congress in India in 2010.
9. Facilitate the briefing of the South Australian Delegation to the Fifth World Congress in India and coordinate a session by the Australia India Association prior to leaving Australia.
10. Coordinate a briefing of the South Australian Delegation on their arrival in India two to three days prior to the Fifth World Congress and ensure they all undertake an Oxfam orientation in India.

That the South Australian Delegates to the Congress:

11. Commit to increasing the capacity of their industry and their community.
12. Investigate the avenues for ensuring Australian legislative frameworks have a commitment to equality for women and that the statutes and structured programs achieve equality as normal part of business.
13. Investigate opportunities:
  - ~ for micro finance enterprises in rural communities;
  - ~ the role of local government in rural women's development;
  - ~ valuing traditional ways (indigenous and NESB), and
  - ~ poverty and health in rural Australia.
14. Increase their participation in their industry or community groups.
15. Communicate with their contacts in South Africa to increase the quality of life for all rural women.
16. Take opportunities to mentor rural women in their community.

*(The Declaration adopted by Africa Countries participating at the Congress is attached as Appendix 5.)*



## APPENDIX

### APPENDIX 1: CONGRESS PROGRAM

FOURTH WORLD CONGRESS OF RURAL WOMEN , ICC, DURBAN, 23 – 26 APRIL 07

----- ARRIVALS AND REGISTRATION (Sunday , 22 APRIL 2007) -----		
Arrival and Registration	Secretariat	14:00-19:00
Supper	All	19:00-21:00
----- DAY ONE (Monday , 23 APRIL 2007) -----		
SESSION 1: PROGRAMME DIRECTOR: MINISTER BUYELWA SONJICA, SA DWAF		
<b>Registration and Coffee</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>08:00-09:00</b>
Welcoming Remarks	Chairperson	09:00-09:10
AU Statement	African Union	09:10- 09:30
Concept Note and Outcomes of the Congress	Ms Lulu Xingwana, SA Minister for Agriculture and Land Affairs	09:30- 10:30
Achievements and Lessons Learned from Australia, USA and Spain	Ms Graca Machel, Receiver of Bowl from Spain	10:30 – 10:50
<b>TEA BREAK</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>10:50 – 11:20</b>
Official Opening of Congress	President Thabo Mbeki, President of the Republic of South Africa	12:00- 12:30
Cultural item	Cultural Group	12:30- 13:00
<b>LUNCH</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>13:00 – 14:30</b>
International Perspectives: (MDGs, Beijing, WSSD)	UN Secretary General/ Head of UNDP/ DG of FAO	14:30- 15:30
African Agenda on Rural Women (Outcome of the Africa Pre-Congress Preparatory Session)	AU Commissioner/ Ambassador Jess Duarte	15:30- 16:30
<b>TEA BREAK</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>16:30 – 17:00</b>
Progress made since Spain High Round Table on Key Thematic Areas	Heads of delegations/ Regions of the World: Africa, Europe, Asia, North America, South America	17:00 – 19:00
<b>Mayoral Reception</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>20:00- 22:00</b>

----- DAY TWO (Monday , 24 APRIL 2007) -----		
PROGRAMME DIRECTOR: AFRICA CONTINENT		
Recap on Day One And setting up Commissions	Chairperson	09:00-09:30
Current Developments on Issues Pertaining to Rural Women	Prof Wangari Maathai, Kenyan Deputy Minister of Environmental Affairs and Nobel Peace Laureate	09:30- 10:15
Key Note Address: (Topic)	Ms Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, South African Deputy President	10:15-11:00
<b>TEA BREAK</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>11:00 – 11:30</b>
<b>FIRST SESSION OF COMMISSIONS ON FIVE THEMATIC AREAS</b>		<b>11:45 – 14:00</b>
<b>Theme 1:</b> Globalisation and eradicating impoverishment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Millennium goals – halving poverty by 2015</li> <li>- New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)</li> <li>- Policy coherence from WSSD to WCRW</li> <li>- Corporate Accountability</li> <li>- Gender budget initiatives</li> <li>- Literacy and education for sustainability</li> <li>- Equitable access to new technologies and media &amp; Increase access to credit</li> </ul>	
<b>Theme 2: Peace</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Human Rights and Women's Human Rights</li> <li>- Security Council Resolution 1325</li> <li>- Peace education</li> <li>- Non-violent conflict resolution</li> <li>- Violence against women and children</li> <li>- Refugees/Trafficking</li> </ul>	

<b>Theme 3:</b> Governance for rural development at all levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender balance by 2014</li> <li>• Engendering rural development</li> <li>• Participation of marginalized groups</li> <li>• Gender audit/global gender monitoring</li> <li>• Women's role in environmental and rural governance</li> <li>• Agricultural support programs</li> <li>• Barriers to participation – literacy, poverty, economic empowerment etc.</li> </ul>	
<b>Theme 4:</b> Access to and control of resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women's property and land rights</li> <li>• Security of Tenure</li> <li>• Land Restitution</li> <li>• Maputo Declaration</li> <li>• Impact of natural disasters</li> <li>• Biological diversity</li> <li>• Privatization of natural resources</li> </ul>	
<b>Theme 5:</b> Environmental security and health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate Change</li> <li>• Sexual and Reproductive Rights and Health</li> <li>• HIV/AIDS &amp; other related diseases</li> <li>• Access to Health Care and Women's Health</li> <li>• Maternal and Child Mortality</li> <li>• Drinking water</li> <li>• Waste and toxic substances</li> <li>• Unsafe employment</li> </ul>	
<b>LUNCH</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>13:00 – 14:30</b>
Second Session of Commissions To Develop Recommendations and Programme of Action	<b>ALL</b>	14:30- 17:00
<b>TEA BREAK</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>17:00 – 17:30</b>
Reports from Commissions	Rapporteurs	17:00 – 19:00
<b>Gala Dinner Hosted by First Lady or Deputy President</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>20:00- 22:00</b>

<b>----- DAY THREE (WEDNESDAY, 23 APRIL 2007) -----</b>		
<b>PROGRAMME DIRECTOR:</b>		
Discussions of Commissions Report	<b>ALL</b>	09:00-10:30
<b>TEA BREAK</b>	<b>ALL</b>	10:30 – 11:00
Resolutions from Stakeholders Forum	ALL	11:00 – 12:00
Report back from Round Table	Heads of delegations	12:00 – 12:30
<b>LUNCH</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>12:30 – 14:00</b>
Adoption of Declaration	ALL	14:00 – 16:00
<b>TEA BREAK</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>16:00 – 16:30</b>
Ceremonial hand Over of the Bowl	Mi Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma SA Minister of Foreign Affairs	16:30 – 17:00
Closing ceremony	Ms Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka SA Deputy President	17:00- 17:30
<b>CLOSURE</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>17:30-</b>

**DAY FOUR: FIELD TRIP (OPTIONAL)**

## **APPENDIX 2: PRE CONGRESS BRIEFING SESSION**

Wednesday 11 April 2007, 12.15 – 5.00pm, PIRSA, Meeting Rooms 1 & 2  
7<sup>th</sup> floor, 101 Grenfell St. Adelaide

### **PROGRAM**

- 12.15 – 1.00pm Welcome to the SA Contingent, congratulations to the bursary recipients and introduction to Lyn Breuer, Delegation Leader and Chair of the briefing session. Explanation of the briefing program and SA Contingent introductions: Delegates to say where they are from and to give a brief explanation of their industry, sector or rural community involvement.  
*Facilitator:* Lyn Breuer , SA Delegation Leader
- 1.00 – 1.30pm LUNCH
- 1.30 – 2.00pm Primary Industries and Resources SA  
*Speaker,* Don Plowman, Executive Director, Agriculture and Wine, PIRSA for the Chief Executive, Primary Industries and Resources South Australia – “Global issues for Australian Primary Industries and Resources”
- 2.00 – 2.30pm Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade  
*Speaker:* Ann Matthews, Business Relations Visits officer, Department of Trade and Foreign Affairs “Issues in Durban, South Africa – politics, culture, trade and safety”
- 2.30 – 3.00pm The Office of Regional Affairs  
*Speaker:* Jacqui Triggs, Executive Officer, Regional Community Consultative Committee, Office of Regional Development – “Global issues for regional and community development”
- 3.00 – 3.15pm AFTERNOON TEA
- 3.15 – 3.45pm The Office for Women  
*Speaker:* Fiona Mort, Manager, Policy, Office for Women – “Global issues for rural and regional women
- 3.45 – 4.15pm The Media Unit, PIRSA  
*Speaker:* Julie Gregory, *Communications Manager, Media Unit, PIRSA*  
“Travelling in Durban and pre and post congress media”
- 4.15 – 4.45pm South Australian Delegation Issues  
*Speaker:* Lib Hylton Keele, Manager, Rural Affairs, PIRSA. “Conference registration, passports, travelling, what to take, delegates packages, Check - Business Cards, flights, accommodation, badging, mobile phones, meetings”
- 4.45 – 5.00pm Questions and photos CLOSE



## **APPENDIX 3: STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE**

### **OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE**

**The following is the Standard Operating Procedure for the South Australian Delegation to South Africa**

#### HAZARD MANAGEMENT

1. Register Australians Overseas [www.smartraveller.gov.au](http://www.smartraveller.gov.au) .....
2. Follow the government 'smartraveller' travel advice for South Africa (copy attached).....
3. Appropriate 2 vaccinations.....
4. Travel accompanied whenever possible (preferably in a group).....
5. Wear minimal jewellery.....
6. Tell another South Australian Delegate your movements .....
7. Do not go out at night unless:
  - a. Accompanied.....
  - b. Only take official taxi transport (ordered by the hotel).....
  - c. Going from the hotel direct to the destination/return.....
  - d. Someone is aware of your movements.....

#### COMMUNICATION SYSTEM AND EQUIPMENT

8. Mobile phones appropriate.....
9. All delegation members are in mobile phone contact.....
10. All delegation member's mobile numbers and accommodation addresses circulated to all delegation members.....
11. All delegation members to meet at close of business each day In the International Convention Centre, Durban (registration area) or phone/text a message to coordinator.....
12. Delegation Coordinator to phone Meg Partridge (Adelaide) each morning local Durban time (6- 7pm CST).....

#### EMERGENCY RESPONSE

13. In the case of a Delegation member being un-contactable for a period of three hours the Delegation Coordinator will contact the Australian High Commission Pretoria – South Africa .....

Delegates Name..... Signature.....  
Date .....



## **APPENDIX 4: POST CONGRESS DEBRIEF MEETING**

**11am to 2pm, Wednesday 20 June 2007  
Parliament House (meet in the foyer at 10.50am)**

### **AGENDA**

1. Welcome and Around the Table (Delegation Leader Lyn Breuer MP – *(impressions of the Congress, South Africa & special memories)*)
2. Report
  - 2.1 Purpose/Aim/Message
  - 2.2 Who will receive a copy
  - 2.3 Structure
  - 2.4 Contents
3. South Africa Project Brief and Update (Eshowe Medicinal Plants)
4. Global Issues from The Congress
5. Issues for Australia from The Congress
  - 5.1 Women
  - 5.2 Primary Production
  - 5.3 Rural Communities
  - 5.4 Indigenous People
6. What Can We Do to Make a Difference?
  - 6.1 For Australia
  - 6.2 For South Africa
  - 6.3 For India
7. Other Learnings (not on the congress agenda)
8. The Value of a South Australian Delegation for South Australia
9. Recommendations to South Australian Government
10. Recommendations to the Australian Government
11. Establishing A Congress Trust Fund (Carol Schofield)
  - a. Purpose /Aim
  - b. Contributions
  - c. Eligibility Criteria
  - d. Administration
12. Speaking Opportunities
13. Lunch (1.00pm)
14. Close (2.00pm)



## **APPENDIX 5: DECLARATION ADOPTED BY PARTICIPATING AFRICAN COUNTRIES**

### **Declaration adopted by African countries participating at the 4th World Congress of Rural Women**

We, the people of the African Continent participating at the Fourth World Congress of Rural Women in Durban, South Africa, from 23 to 25 April 2007 and representing government, rural women organisations and civil society;

Welcome the growing awareness of African governments, civil society, organisations and the international community of the need for strategies and programmes to improve the situation of women in rural areas;

Note with deep concern that the economic and financial challenges (crises) in many African countries have severely affected the socio-economic status of women, especially those in rural areas, and the continuing rise in the number of rural women living in poverty; *Further note* that these economic and financial challenges as they affect rural women are by and large as a result of inequities in trading regimes between the developed and developing countries;

Further note the adverse impact of gender inequality on the economic growth of the continent and the disproportionate burden of poverty on rural women.

Recognise the urgent need to take appropriate measures aimed at further improving the situation of women in rural areas;

Take note *of the* country and commission reports presented during the Conference, highlighting the challenges facing rural women.

We therefore urge African Governments through the African Union Commission, in partnership with the civil society and corporate sector to:

### **ECONOMIC**

1. Undertake necessary measures to give rural women full and equal access to productive resources, including the right to inheritance and to ownership of land and other property, credit/capital, natural resources, appropriate technologies, markets and information, and meeting their basic requirements in water and sanitation.
2. Initiate innovative credit delivery systems, establish market linkages, create and revitalise people's institution including local self governance institutions.
3. Strengthen policies, programmes and partnerships to improve the access to land, water and other natural resources related to the livelihoods or rural women.
4. Support the increase in agriculture production to ensure food security through investments in rural physical and institutional infrastructure and

the generation of employment, focusing on development of micro and small enterprises.

5. Initiate action to make an inventory of cost-effective and appropriate technologies within the continent and work towards evolving a mechanism for technology transfer by using the services of national, regional and international organisations.
6. Support a network for rural development managers with a special focus on information and communication technology and rural industries.

## **SOCIAL**

7. Invest in the human resources of rural women, particularly through health and literacy programmes and social support measures.
8. Address the issue of rural poverty in a comprehensive, integrated and holistic manner through mobilising political, economic and social resources for sustained development and by channelling the flow of national resources and international development assistance for this purpose.
9. Strengthen partnerships to eradicate diseases such as HIV and AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and all other diseases and ensure availability of primary health care to the women in rural areas.
10. Take note of the adverse impact of gender inequality on the economic growth of the continent and the disproportionate burden of poverty on rural women.
11. Protect and promote women's full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by ensuring that gender equality principles get mainstreamed into the national development agenda and gender sensitisation is carried out at all levels.
12. Take necessary legal, policy, administrative and other measures for the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence and other harmful practices against women.
13. Adopt affirmative measures including scholarships at all levels for female students in rural areas, promote non-formal education and literacy programmes for rural women, including the girl child, in order to address gender imbalances in education and training.
14. Develop technical assistance and capacity building programmes including exchange visits, skills, and competency training among agriculture and rural development facilitators.
15. Urge Corporate Sector to take up social responsibility initiatives by supporting development programmes in rural areas.
16. Call upon the women of the world, particularly in the developed countries, to pledge their solidarity and support to the cause of rural women and development on the developing countries.

17. Mobilise the women of the world to champion the cause of rural women and development, in international forums such as the United Nations, World Trade Organisations, Peace and Security Organisations, Aid and Development Organisations and other international, regional and national forums.

## **GOVERNANCE**

18. Integrate the concerns of rural women into national development policies, strategies and programmes, in particular by placing a higher priority on resource allocation related to the practical and strategic interests of rural women.
19. Strengthen national machineries and establish institutions for mutual co-operation and collective actions among governmental bodies in various sectors and non-governmental organizations that are concerned with rural development.
20. Improve the representation of rural women in all structures of power and decision making including leadership positions institutions of governance, public and private sector and civil society organisations.
21. Increase the allocation of our national budgets to develop rural areas focusing on basic minimum needs, sustainable natural resource management and environmental conservation.
22. Work towards exploring the possibilities of collaborative research on problems and solutions concerned with rural development and women by establishing partnerships for technology transfer and narrowing down the digital divide and technology divide.
23. Ensure adequate availability of young professional rural extension workers and creation of knowledge centres of the member countries.
24. Promote equality in the application of customary laws and rules relating to traditional leadership, especially to granting equal status to women chiefs.

We declare that we remain fully committed to the realisation of the aspirations of rural women as reflected in this Declaration. We will continue to work together in the coming years to mobilise political and financial resources and to establish enduring procedures globally, regionally and nationally to monitor the implementation of the Declaration. We further call upon the peoples of the rest of the World to support the governments of the developing world in their endeavours to change the world for the betterment of all the peoples of the world, in particular rural women of developing countries.



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[www.4thworldcongressofruralwomen.co.za](http://www.4thworldcongressofruralwomen.co.za)

[www.nda.agri.za](http://www.nda.agri.za)

Dunn A, Report on the 4<sup>th</sup> World Congress of Rural Women Durban – South Africa, April 2007.

Contributions from South Australian Delegates at the Post Congress meeting and from email contributions from those not present.

Various un-authored papers and presentations from the Congress DVD.