

Partnerships  
for progress



Annual  
Report  
2017

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Cover: Meg Wheatstone (UYFB graduate) and farming partner Simon Perry

*Rangapū he wāhanga ki a koe, he wāhanga ki a au.*  
*You have a part, I have a part.*

## We're here to

equip and support women  
to generate economic, social  
and environmental progress  
in New Zealand's primary  
sector and rural communities.

## ...so that

women are vital  
partners in world-  
leading New Zealand  
primary industries.

## To make this happen

we're working in  
partnership with industry  
and individuals to focus on  
people, profit, planet and  
progress.



# Chair's report

As New Zealand's primary sector faces new challenges and opportunities in a world of uncertainty and changing attitudes, we have stepped up our response to increasing demand for women's development.

The 2017 year brought deeper and wider industry partnerships so that more women across more sectors can drive progress through creating positive environmental, social and economic change.

The year began with a strategic review of AWDT's vision, purpose and priorities. It had become clear that after our first six years, we had largely achieved our founding vision. Satisfying as that was, we realised that it was time to reset our strategy to ensure we can meet the continued growth in demand for women's development.

Enlisting the help of our strategic partners and Escalator Alumni, we reset our vision as 'Women are vital partners in world-leading New Zealand primary industries'. We clarified our purpose to reflect the economic, social and environmental progress women can make in businesses and rural communities.

Conversations with stakeholders involved in the strategy review not only sharpened up our reason for being, they reinforced that we share many of the same values and aspirations.

Leading on from our vision and purpose, we set two clear goals and nine priority areas for the next three years, including our business as usual – the research, design and delivery of core programmes. Progress on each of these priorities to date is detailed further in this annual report.

Securing funding is one thing, having a family of partners who share our values and determination to fulfil our vision, is another. The on-going investment and active participation of our partners is vital in enabling all women to access the development they want and their industries need.

Thank you to the organisations who continue to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with us; ANZ, Agmardt, Beef + Lamb New Zealand, DairyNZ, FMG, Red Meat Profit Partnership, Ministry for Primary Industries, CRS Software and Worksafe, along with sponsors KPMG and Farmers Weekly.

In 2017 we welcomed Ravensdown to our family of strategic partners. Our shared view around the long-term sustainability of the primary sector, whilst maintaining productive and profitable farm businesses, means this strategic partnership is based on strong foundations.

We formed a new three-year partnership with the Ministry for Primary Industries which is investing \$289,000 from its Sustainable Farming Fund. This aims to enable women to lead businesses and rural communities through learning to

engage with markets and stakeholders at local, national and global levels, and by better telling their own stories and those of their sectors.

Our graduates are not only leading in businesses and communities, but are increasingly partnering with us to research, design and deliver our programmes. Their own rich experiences and commitment to AWDT's vision continue to be a key part of our long-term success and sustainability.



Strong business partnerships are vital for farmers to succeed in times of unprecedented change. Recognising this and responding to demand from farming men, we piloted a new RMPP-funded programme for sheep and beef farming partners to plan their business futures together.

Financially, conscious spending in areas of organisational sustainability resulted in a reduced surplus for 2017. We worked to more appropriately resource AWDT for the growth experienced over the past two years and the future needs of our stakeholders.

Our work to create leadership pathways for women was recognised when we won the 'Outstanding Pathway to Governance Leadership' category of the 2017 Women in Governance Awards. Recognising and celebrating innovation, excellence, creativity and commitment to diversity, the award is testament to the thousands of graduates who are transforming their businesses, industries and communities.

The outstanding contribution of our Patron, Mavis Mullins, to economic and social development in New Zealand was recognised in July when Mavis was inducted into the New Zealand Business Hall of Fame. We are honoured and privileged to have Mavis in our midst as a role model and inspiration to all women, and as a champion of AWDT's work. Congratulations on this fitting acknowledgement Mavis.

Our progress as a rapidly growing organisation has called for leadership succession planning at both governance and management levels, to ensure AWDT's long-term sustainability.

After five years of service, Trustees Hinerangi Edwards, Ross Verry and I retire from the board at our AGM in May 2018. Thank you Hinerangi and Ross for your time, dedication and wisdom. My personal journey with AWDT



that began as a 2012 Escalator participant will continue, and I know the three of us will remain closely connected with AWDT as forever champions of its work.

We look forward to welcoming three new Trustees who will bring valuable skills, connections and diversity of thinking to the board. A nationwide Trustee recruitment process carried out in late 2017 attracted a strong field of candidates.

Succession is also underway at management level to meet the operational demands of more programmes, more participants and new priorities. This has included the appointment of Acting General Manager, Jo Priddle, to allow Lindy Nelson to begin to transition out of day-to-day operations and into strategy and programme development while remaining as a Trustee.

AWDT is well-prepared for the future with well-established partnerships, culture, reputation and strategy, and expanded operations. I hand over the Chair to Mavis Mullins, who has stepped back in to help guide AWDT through its next stage of growth.

Thank you and best wishes to my fellow Trustees, Lindy Nelson, our partners, staff, graduates and supporters who are contributing to women becoming vital partners in world-leading New Zealand primary industries.

**Charmaine O'Shea**  
**Chair**

## Statement of Service Performance

As part of its commitment to best practice, AWDT reports to Charities Services under Tier 3 of the Statement of Service Performance (SSP) reporting standards. It has three key measures of service performance.

1. Women attend programmes.
2. AWDT provides accessible programmes.
3. The programmes meet course objectives.

Non-financial information related to the 2017 SSP is provided in this document. Financial information is provided separately and is available on request.



# Executive Director's report

Tēnā koutou katoa

In a year when change facing the primary sector felt like it reached exponential levels, AWDT again lived its core values and responded to support women adapt to issues that threatened their world.

It was clear that women needed to make sense of their situation amongst the dialogue around change and the belief that their social licence to farm had seriously eroded. We worked in new ways to equip and support them to navigate this and restore their sense of who they are and their roles as primary producers.

Much of this was about removing fear and addressing the natural human response of feeling overwhelmed and threatened. We got alongside people, understood their immediate needs and adapted our offerings to instil confidence and empower them to find or regain their sense of purpose and direction.

In 2017 we delivered development and support to 56 percent more women than in 2016, breaking new ground with fresh research, two pilot programmes and new partners, while building our own capability to sustain our organisation into the future.

An investment of \$289,000 was a vote of confidence by the Ministry for Primary Industries in women and in our ability to support them to grow and sustain businesses and communities. Through this three-year project we are extending development to women who are on the periphery of our previous work.

The project involves researching, designing and delivering pilot programmes for three groups of women who are not currently well-supported but are vital to the sector's future success; younger women entering primary sector careers, Māori women, and professional women looking to utilise their leadership within primary industries.

These programmes will support women to lead within the environmental, economic and social contexts, ensuring businesses and communities can thrive and adapt to change.

With our new vision set, our focus was on integrating development within the constructs of people, planet, profit and progress into all AWDT programmes.

We recognise that women don't work in a vacuum, and to achieve success within these four constructs, a whole-of-farm-team approach was needed. With the support of the Red Meat Profit Partnership (RMPP), a new programme for sheep and beef farming couples was piloted.

This programme confirmed that everything changes for farming partners when they work together to collaborate



on what the future looks like. They know where they are going and develop the right approaches and systems to get there. With adaptations following the pilot evaluation, the resulting programme, Future Focus, will be rolled out in seven regions from mid-2018.

While our foundation programme First Steps underwent review in 2017, we worked with Farming Mums New Zealand (FMNZ) to help women cope with and respond to stress and uncertainty, particularly in the dairy sector.

Working with FMNZ members we designed a one-day workshop called Girl on Fire, in partnership with CRS Software (page 24). This brought FMNZ members, who mostly connect on social media, face-to-face with each other and alongside Escalator Alumni Julia Jones and myself, as we supported them to face the future with confidence.

With the support of Māori leaders, facilitators, graduates and our newly-formed Māori Advisory Group, we were able to connect more closely with wāhine Māori to support them in their agribusiness roles. We will connect further with Māori women in stage three of the Sustainable Farming Fund project in 2019.

Our two RMPP-funded programmes for farming women scaled up once again – delivered to 349 critical farming partners in 20 regions. Looking ahead to 2018, 500 more critical farming partners in 32 areas will participate in UYFB and Wāhine Māia Wāhine Whenua (WMWW).

During 2017, with funding support from our strategic partner Beef + Lamb New Zealand, we were able to support the leadership of 16 regional groups. These are graduates of UYFB and WMWW who come together to build knowledge transfer, connect with industry, network and support women who are embracing their roles as critical farming partners.

Indirectly, this has reached many more women as the groups have drawn in women who are not AWDT graduates.

Independent research commissioned by our programme partner Worksafe, confirmed our own evaluations that the Protecting Your Team programme has been highly effective in giving women the ability to lead health and safety practices on farms.

The Escalator programme went from strength to strength with eight different sectors represented in the 2017 cohort and the 2018 programme substantially oversubscribed.

Our response to the decline of social licence to farm is to use our reputation and the leadership platform we have built to connect urban and rural communities through a women-led values approach. Our aim is to see how we can reframe the conversations, find the common ground and take a whole-of-New Zealand approach to challenges.

Planning began on a collaboration with our Escalator Alumni to create this platform where rural and urban New Zealand women come together to talk freely about the big issues of food production, food security, health and wellness.

As we respond to needs in the primary sector, we have increased investment in people and systems needed to ensure we continue to deliver high-quality products and experiences.

A quality control framework to equip our growing facilitation team to consistently deliver top-quality development was introduced, alongside continued professional development.

Our expanded HQ team included the newly-created Acting General Manager role held by Escalator Alumni member, Jo Priddle. Establishment of this role has allowed time for me to transition from business as usual to an 80 percent focus on innovation and transformation.

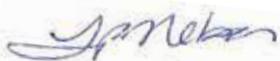
In 2010, I stood in Parliament and launched AWDT alongside two founding Trustees and our patron Mavis Mullins. We had my research, a small seed investment and a mighty vision for the future of New Zealand primary industries where women were vital partners in its success.

To lead an organisation that is achieving this, alongside dedicated Trustees, committed staff, and facilitators - all whom deeply believe in our 'why' and bring it to life on a daily basis through what they do, has been a deeply humbling experience.

I thank you for the privilege of allowing me to work alongside you, to collectively create this transformation in our sector.

The near future will see me move from the operational leadership of the organisation, remaining as a Trustee to give my full focus on the next horizon for AWDT and our sector.

Whatungarongaro te tangata toitū te whenua - a person disappears from sight but the land remains.



**Lindy Nelson**  
Executive Director



## Board of Trustees

AWDT is governed by a board of seven appointed Trustees with extensive experience of primary industry governance and management.

They come from throughout New Zealand, from Northland to Southland and meet quarterly.

As part of AWDT's leadership succession, Charmaine O'Shea, Hinerangi Edwards and Ross Verry will retire from the board in May 2018 after five years of valuable service.

At the end of 2017, a nationwide recruitment process for three new trustees attracted a strong field of candidates from which appointments were made.

The outstanding contribution of our Patron, Mavis Mullins, to economic and social development in New Zealand was recognised in July when Mavis was inducted into the New Zealand Business Hall of Fame.



Charmaine O'Shea, *Chair*



Ross Verry



Hinerangi Edwards



Lindy Nelson *MNZM*



Dr Scott Champion



Fi Dalgety



Murray Donald



Mavis Mullins *MNZM, Patron*

# Our strategy (2017 - 2019)

After AWDT's first six years of establishment and growth, in 2017 we developed our strategy to cement that growth and gear up for the next stage – long-term sustainability to meet industry needs, now and in the future.

The strategy recognises that AWDT remains in a strong growth phase. Two clear goals and nine priority areas are focused on leadership and operational efficiency, and ensuring that our products and services evolve to reach new people who are engaging with us.

Progress on each priority to date is detailed further in this report.

## Our purpose

To equip and support women to generate economic, social & environmental progress in New Zealand's primary sector and rural communities.

## Our vision

Women are vital partners in world-leading New Zealand primary industries.

## Our priorities

### GOAL 1: AN EFFICIENT & EFFECTIVE AWDT

1. Strong leadership, succession and operational capability
2. Industry partnerships that meet needs
3. Engaged alumni and graduates
4. Thought leadership and engagement

### GOAL 2: DELIVER GREAT PRODUCTS, SERVICES & SUPPORT

5. Research, design and deliver core programmes
6. Focus on people, planet, profit, progress
7. Research needs and extend reach
8. Customer driven programmes that maximise value
9. Introduce digital delivery

## Our values

Standing shoulder to shoulder  
Supported growth

Keeping it real  
From farm to the boardroom

Creating positive change  
In lives, communities, businesses,  
industries

# 1

# Strong leadership, succession and operational capability

AWDT is well-prepared for the future with well-established culture, reputation and strategy; strong industry partnerships; and expanded management and operations.

The fledgling organisation started in 2010 by a small group of passionate people has evolved to the point where it is focused on building capability for long-term sustainability.

The culture of supported growth embedded from day one prevails today as operations have grown to meet the demand for women's development.



## ■ Leadership succession

Succession planning at both governance and operational levels to provide continuity of leadership was well-advanced in 2017.

AWDT Chair Charmaine O'Shea, and Trustees Hinerangi Edwards and Ross Verry will retire from the board in May 2018 after valuable five-year contributions. We appointed three new Trustees to join us in May 2018 following a national recruitment process. AWDT Patron, Mavis Mullins, will become Interim Chair to help provide a smooth transition for the new-look board.

The Acting General Manager role was established slightly earlier than anticipated to pave the way for the planned transition of Executive Director Lindy Nelson to other roles in 2018. Lindy's vision, strategic skills and relationships will be retained through dedicated projects and remaining as a Trustee.

## ■ Expanded operations

The past 18 months have seen increased investment in the skills, people and systems needed to deliver high-quality products and experiences, now and in the future.

During the year we expanded our small team of staff based at our Eketahuna headquarters, welcoming Escalator Alumni Jo Priddle to the Acting General Manager role in August. New facilitators were appointed and trained to deliver various programmes in the regions.

Our people, both office-based employees and contracted facilitators from around New Zealand, come from within and outside of primary industries.

We aim to be an employer of choice, attracting the best available talent to meet our future needs. As well as industry experts, we continued to attract talent from our growing pool of graduates who are already living our values and have become our 'culture keepers'.

37 facilitators

3 new in 2017



## ■ Facilitator accreditation

A quality control framework was introduced to equip our expanded facilitation team to consistently deliver top-quality development. Facilitators take five steps on the way to becoming accredited - observing, in-training, co-delivering, independent and accredited. During the year, 16 facilitators reached 'independent' or 'accredited' levels. AWDT provided two-day training for 26 facilitators - 'Elevating Your Facilitation Skills'

## ■ Reaching the regions – despite the weather

*“Don’t worry ladies - these UYFB facilitators will get through. A rather interesting morning as we made our way from Wairoa towards Waipukurau today. So, it wasn’t wild pigs or a hawk but slips, flooding and the like that slowed our progress today! The lives and times of an UYFB facilitator - it’s all worth it when we have such rich and rewarding days with Critical Farming Partners in places like Wairoa (yesterday) and Waipukurau (tomorrow) - bring it on! ”*

Facebook post by UYFB Facilitator Pattie O’Boyle



## 2

## Industry partnerships that meet needs

Our industry partners enable us to invest in high-quality programme research, design and delivery. The true value of these partnerships is realised when, together, we identify development needs in the primary sector and are resourced to meet them.

Investment in women's development by our partners means that all women have access to our programmes, without the barrier of cost.

Long-term relationships with key investors - ANZ, Agmardt, Beef + Lamb New Zealand, DairyNZ, FMG, RMPP, CRS Software, Worksafe, along with sponsors KPMG and Farmers Weekly – have provided certainty for AWDT's operational delivery.

Two new partnerships formed in 2017 set the scene for another phase of AWDT growth in 2018; Ravensdown as a new strategic partner and the Ministry of Primary Industries through its Sustainable Farming Fund.

*“We have seen the value of the Escalator programme for many women over the years – and not just in the people we've supported. The alumni are leading new initiatives and discussions that would not have happened otherwise. We are seeing some rich rewards being delivered to agricultural businesses and communities.”*

John Bennett, ANZ



## ■ Values fit key to strategic partnerships

As AWDT entered a new phase of growth and development, we welcomed Ravensdown as a strategic partner.

With the products, expertise and technology to help farmers reduce their environmental impact and optimise value from the land, Ravensdown takes a long-term view of stewardship and relationships. This is what makes our partnership a true values fit, not only with each other but with our wider family of partners. We look forward to supporting each other as we work towards a smarter New Zealand.



**“Since we started our relationship, our partnership with AWDT has definitely progressed. This is because our two organisations share a common set of values and a belief that smarter farming is the answer for the challenges facing New Zealand.**

**Smarter farming is a big picture concept but in reality, it's made up of countless actions of individuals including each and every person attending an AWDT course.”**

Greg Campbell, CEO Ravensdown

**“The UYFB programmes aren't just about upskilling women in farming - they're about building resilient farm partnerships. Sharing the business and mental load of farming is already the norm on many farms and we have found a real willingness for other farmers to make this change because of the potential profit improvement.**

**When you engage women more in farming businesses it is powerful and we are seeing very positive results from that.”**

Malcolm Bailey, RMPP Chairman



## ■ New partnership with MPI

The Government invested \$289,000 from MPI's Sustainable Farming Fund for AWDT to extend its work to three groups of women who have been identified as part of the key to sustainable primary industry growth – young women, Maori and women with careers outside the primary sector (page 23).

**“Our primary industries are a vital part of our way of life and are responsible for over 78 percent of our exports. In order to keep these industries internationally competitive, we need investment, innovation, market development and a skilled workforce.**

**Projects such as this, which recognise the contribution women have to make in industries that may not be their traditional domain, are key to our future success.”**

Louise Upston, Associate Primary Industries Minister (March 2017)

### 3

## Engaged Alumni and graduates

AWDT graduates are an extension of our organisation, supporting and encouraging other women to invest time in their development. Their powerful and supportive networks now stretch the length and breadth of New Zealand.

Every week we are inspired by graduates from all AWDT programmes who continue to step up to transform their businesses, industries and communities, from the farm to the boardroom.

Increasingly, they are tackling the social, environmental and economic challenges and opportunities – in industry organisations, farming businesses, Māori agribusiness and communities.



**93** Escalator Alumni

**>50%** of alumni have governance roles they did not have before

**30** alumni turned up to support the 2017 Escalator graduation

**900+** women engaged with AWDT Regional Hubs nationwide

## ■ Alumni partnership

*"We're continuing to facilitate connections so alumni have ready access to support from each other, along with professional development opportunities.*

*In 2017, being involved in AWDT Board meetings helped us identify how we can help AWDT drive towards its vision.*

*After a highly successful gathering to support the 2017 graduates, planning began for a joint alumni/AWDT initiative to address specific sector challenges in 2018."*



Jane Wright, Chair Escalator Alumni

## ■ Leadership in action

*"Escalator challenged me to move out of the 'doing' and into thinking and acting more strategically. I found that my strength is connectedness and helping people to work together.*

*My Escalator experience enabled me to support other farmers to lead positive environmental change in the dairy sector by chairing the DairyNZ Dairy Environment Leaders Programme and the Ballance Farm Environment Awards Alumni and representing farmers on the Dairy Environment Leadership Group."*



Tracy Brown, 2015 Escalator Alumni

## ■ Thriving Regional Hubs

Momentum continued to build in the 16 Regional Hub groups formed by AWDT graduates around New Zealand. The hubs provide ongoing support, connection and learning for many more women at local levels.

Together with Beef + Lamb New Zealand and RMPP, AWDT supported group leaders with monthly coaching, mentoring and resources. In 2017, Hub initiatives included workshops covering topics ranging from native planting to bull genetics, a joint meeting of three Southland Regional Hubs, visits to a meat processing plant and CRS Software courses.



## 4 Thought leadership and stakeholder engagement

As AWDT has matured as an organisation, engagement with our partners, graduates and the wider sector has deepened.

Together with our industry partners we continue to identify new opportunities for women to play their part in addressing the challenges and opportunities facing the primary sector. This has resulted in new funding, new programmes and delivery of skills and confidence to more women than ever before.

Through growing social networks, events and the news media AWDT works to raise awareness of industry issues and communicate how women are part of the answer. This is amplified by our graduates who are leading new conversations as they connect with both rural and urban New Zealand.

### ■ Platforms for urban engagement

New opportunities emerged to connect with urban audiences so that we can find common ground on how New Zealand produces food.

AWDT Executive Director Lindy Nelson's involvement with the worldwomen17 conference led to strong attendance by primary sector women, including 13 Escalator Alumni and more than 60 others who accessed the event through AWDT networks.



Not one to miss an opportunity, Lindy, as conference MC, used the primary sector to demonstrate a point about perception and portrayal of situations by the media. Lindy asked the 500-strong audience whether they had eaten that day. Every hand went up. "So, if you have eaten today you have the primary sector to thank," she said.

After inviting the primary sector attendees to join her on stage Lindy added: "These women produce your food; they are part of farming partnerships which create produce that creates prosperity for New Zealand. These women are not environmental denigrators - they want what you want".

The next 24 hours brought new conversations, connections and awareness between women from urban and rural New Zealand.

We are working to build on this in 2018 with our strategic partner ANZ and the Escalator Alumni. The aim is to create a platform where New Zealand women can talk freely and connect on the big issues of food production and security, health and wellness.





## ■ Making the mainstream

The inspiring stories of our graduates frequently feature in both farming and mainstream media. Many graduates willingly tell of the impact of their personal experiences and growth, inspiring and motivating other women to engage.

A four-page feature in the July 2017 issue of NEXT Magazine told the stories of AWDT, Lindy Nelson and Escalator Alumni members Claire Nicholson and Sandra Matthews to urban New Zealand.

Quoted in the article, Lindy talked about the confidence she gained from winning the Business and Innovation category of the 2013 NEXT Woman of the Year:

**“Suddenly people were asking me to speak. It gave me a platform to talk about my story and my belief in women to transform our food production story and to engage with women not in the farming sector. That NEXT win was an affirmation that what I was doing had value. It meant a lot coming from a women’s magazine.”**

## ■ Working alongside Māori

With the support of Māori leaders, facilitators and graduates AWDT connected more closely with wāhine Māori to support them in their agribusiness roles. It is clear that these people share our bold vision, face similar challenges and see the unique value that women bring.

AWDT Trustee Hinerangi Edwards and patron Mavis Mullins lead the formation of an AWDT Māori Advisory Group to guide our engagement with wāhine Māori and ensure our programmes are culturally relevant and meaningful.

*“The thing about the Wāhine Māia Wāhine Whenua programme that really attracted me is not only the women that have come onto our marae and graduated – but it's the women who are behind the scenes who are ensuring that this kaupapa stays strong. It's the likes of Tina Ngatai who was at the graduation, it is Lindy, it is Mavis Mullins so I just want to acknowledge in Māori it's ka tika ki muri ka tika ki mua, which is basically if you get things right in the back then things in front will happen.”*

Willie Te Aho, Managing Director Manawanui Developments Ltd/Ngāti Koroki Kahukura



Poto Davies, Wāhine Māia Wāhine Whenua graduate/Trustee Ngāti Koroki Kahukura

## 5

# Research, design and deliver core programmes

In 2017, more women completed more programmes than ever before, an increase of 56 percent on 2016. Programme quality and customer service remained high on our agenda and this was evident in consistently positive feedback in every programme evaluation.

The cycle of research, design, deliver continues for our core established programmes, as well as the new pilots. Programme material is continually refreshed and updated to meet changing industry needs so that it remains real and relevant. Work began to incorporate the contexts of people, planet, profit and progress more deeply into all programmes.

## In 2017

- 56%** more graduates than in 2016
- 309** UYFB graduates across 20 locations
- 40** Wāhine Māia Wāhine Whenua graduates
- 14** Escalator graduates from 8 sectors
- 64** Protecting Your Team participants
- 16** Beef + Lamb NZ Farmer Councillors trained
- 119** Girl on Fire participants
- 32** participants in UYFB Partners' Pilot



## ■ Research validates health and safety programme



**“There’s a lot of information that comes through in this health and safety programme so disseminating that and getting your head around it, plus spending the time to know what will make a difference to your business is really important. So, it’s been good to have Coral driving that for our business.**

**Her ability to get the info, and disseminate it back, firstly to me then get it across to our staff in a good manner was fantastic. It’s been a great use of resources and a good teambuilding exercise for all of us. ”**

Rob Buddo, Hawkes Bay farmer (right).

Clear evidence that AWDT’s Protecting Your Team programme is improving health and safety practices on farms was presented in independent research commissioned by our programme partner Worksafe.

The research concluded that women found the workshops relevant and engaging, learnt key aspects of health and safety practices and how to implement these, had increased confidence and a commitment to change, and reported an observed positive behaviour change after the programme.

Women are applying what they learned in the workshop to their jobs and farms. Evidence of behaviour change in health and safety practice among the women was found in the following areas:

- identifying, assessing and controlling risks as a team
- communicating risks
- increasing training, information and supervision of personal protective equipment on farm
- monitoring worker health and risks
- managing vehicle equipment and building maintenance.

*“Our farm manager is on board because of the way we approach him and talk to him now – we were going about it the wrong way. Now we involve him more than telling him how it’s done.”* Protecting Your Team participant

## ■ First Steps becomes ‘It’s all about YOU’

Our foundation programme, First Steps, launched back in 2011, took a break in 2017 as we took the opportunity to review its focus and our approach to the market.

We found that the need for this two-day purposeful development programme was greater than ever. The barriers women face to progress and development identified in Lindy Nelson’s research 10 years ago, have been joined by increased pressures around environmental management and profitability, particularly in the dairy sector.

While First Steps was being reviewed, AWDT delivered its new Girl on Fire workshop to 119 women in partnership with CRS Software and Farming Mums New Zealand. The one-day workshop developed confidence, created connections and celebrated women’s contributions at all levels (page 24).

Places on the first two ‘It’s all about YOU’ programmes for 2018 were quickly snapped up and planning for more programmes in 2018 began.

CRS Software continues to support this experience that many participants have described as ‘life changing’.

## Critical farming partnerships



In 2017, our two Red Meat Profit Partnership-funded programmes saw 349 more women upskilled, confident and engaged as critical farming partners. This brought the total number of Understanding Your Farming Business and Wāhine Māia Wāhine Whenua graduates to 780 since 2014.

Research with graduates consistently shows that when women gain the knowledge confidence and skills to contribute more effectively, positive changes are seen across the farming business.

Planning was completed for delivery of the two programmes to 500 more women across 32 rural centres in 2018. Before registrations opened in November, more than 200 enquiries were received for 2018.

### ■ Her Story – Binks McCurdy

"First and foremost, the UYFB course gave me no-end of confidence and some totally new skills," says UYFB graduate Binks McCurdy of Hawkes Bay.

"I've realised how crucial I am to the success of our business. I'm more involved with fine-tuning the finances so we can move to the next level of farming."

"I've also gained confidence in having more of a voice with our advisors."

After Binks completed UYFB, Dave and Binks set 12-month and 5-year business and personal goals. "We've already gone back over the 12-month plan as a family and found we've achieved more than half of it in the first three months."

"I can see the benefit of creating more efficient office systems and increased financial tracking. Both being on the same page has helped us plan better and gain confidence in our future ambitions," says Dave.



Binks and Dave McCurdy, Hawkes Bay farmers

## ■ Wāhine Māia Wāhine Whenua

In 2017, 40 Wāhine Māia Wāhine Whenua graduates gained the farming business knowledge needed to better engage with their iwi and hapu farming organisations. As with UYFB, understanding the key business drivers is leading to different conversations around the decision-making table.

Four Wāhine Māia, Wāhine Whenua (WMWW) programmes were delivered in 2017, and four more were planned for 2018.

We set up the AWDT Māori Advisory Board to assist with the continued evolution of programme content for wāhine Māori. The board is also ensuring that we connect with wāhine around New Zealand.

As this programme matures, and as a result of feedback received, AWDT will work towards fully-accredited wāhine Māori facilitators instead of their current 'sponsor' role.

***“The role of women in sheep and beef farming and indeed all New Zealand agribusinesses is absolutely vital to maximising performance.***

***To extrapolate that out to Māori women: wāhine māori have a unique position as being directly connected to papatuanuku, the land. I see an incredible opportunity for Māori women to contribute to the key challenge areas of environmental management and moving from commodity marketing towards adding value through the brand NZ identity, the Aotearoa identity.”***

Doug Macredie, Te Arawa, Sector Capability Manager Beef + Lamb New Zealand



Doug Macredie, Te Arawa, Sector Capability Manager Beef + Lamb New Zealand

***“Absolutely invaluable to myself, not only as a woman, but also as a critical farming partner. Everyone should do this course, even if they think they have it under control! Cheers so much for this course, I know just how much it has transformed me in a few months... that will last a lifetime and be passed on after that. Thank you! ”***

2017 Wāhine Māia Wāhine Whenua graduate



## ■ Her Story – Amanda Burling

### *Life-changing courses reignite passion*

Five years ago, Taranaki accountant, farm manager's partner and mother of three young children, Amanda Burling, felt like she had completely lost her way.

"I was a stay-at-home mum. My life revolved around the kids, school and playcentre, I was stressed out, felt completely dependent on others and not feeling in control.

It was full on with three little kids and we needed a new vehicle which we couldn't afford. I had thought about going back to work but just couldn't see how it could work and couldn't see a way forward. I had completely forgotten who I was and felt totally dependent on my partner."

The turning point in Amanda's life was two Agri-Women's Development Trust courses that boosted her confidence and helped her rediscover her deep-seated passion for farm accounting. It also led to her contributing financially to her family.

"The two courses literally saved me - Understanding Your Farming Business (UYFB) reignited my passion for helping other farmers with their finances. First Steps reminded me who I was."

UYFB had an immediate impact for Amanda.

"The first day of the course reminded me that I really missed working closely with the financial side of farming. I literally went home that night and emailed a friend to see if she knew of any accounting jobs going. I started within the month. On day two of the course, we were having a discussion around what had changed and I was able to say I had gotten a job!"

During UYFB, the opportunity to do the AWDT First Steps programme came up. Even though I didn't have the funds to invest in myself at the time, Lindy Nelson allowed me to do it.

Lindy saw something in me at that point that I couldn't see and no one close to me had seen for a while either. To have someone else believe in me at that time was huge because my own self-belief was pretty low. It played on my mind for years that I had a debt to pay, so I contacted Lindy and offered up this story.

First Steps highlighted what was important to me in life – I'm a shocker at taking on way too much and not prioritising. It made me realise how small my life and social circle had become. It helped me concentrate and certainly broadened my horizons. It also gave me a really good self-awareness.



All of a sudden, I knew my preferred learning style, my strengths and what made me tick. Information is power – and boy did that make me feel powerful.

After a few years in the first job, I decided I wanted to focus on my passion which is working with farmers. I sent my CV to a couple of contacts and was successful in landing a role in a large Taranaki firm, Staples Rodway. At first, they weren't sure where my skill set would fit in, but it has developed into a role where I now specialise in agri-software systems. Part of my continually-evolving role is working with farmers to create the best systems for them. Staples Rodway provides an excellent pathway for self-development and progression.

I love analysing information and have a deep-seated passion to give farmers the information they need to make them work smarter, not harder. I have seen how hard farmers work but they don't always get the same results. Having the right information at the right time can make a huge impact on decisions made on the farm.

When the recession hit in 2009, my partner and I were made redundant from our job managing a large lease block for owners who had just taken it on. I don't know the full extent of what happened, but I am certain that good and timely information was not utilised within their system. The result had a huge effect on my family.

When times get tough, as farmers we often stick our head down and work harder. We get fatigued, and decisions that were already being put off become even harder. That's where I know I can help.

Farming and hard work are just what I know. I grew up on a sheep and beef farm, then mum and dad converted to dairy when I was nine. When I finished school, I worked as a wool handler for 18 months in Taranaki and Central Otago.

I've always been on the farm and now support my partner in the farm management side of things. I love being a part of discussion groups and now feel like I actually have something to contribute. At first, I would just sit there and take it all in and then pick my partner's brain all the way home. The kids were in the car with us one night after a discussion group and during a pause in conversation they said, "Wow Mum, we had no idea you knew so much about farming!"

Now I'm in charge of myself and my life. I am no longer completely reliant on others for my or my family's wellbeing. I know who I am now and where I want to be. I am working my way up. We were able to buy a house and we now know that if anything happens we'll be ok."



## 6

# Focus on people, planet, profit, progress

Global food trends, customer research and new business practices suggest that agricultural business, products and value chains will be judged by customers and consumers against the four pillars of the quadruple bottom line - people, profit, planet and progress.

Each AWDT programme supports women to lead within these four mutually dependent areas – responding to change needed and incorporating them into their businesses.

Hence our purpose: "To equip and support women to generate economic, social and environmental progress in New Zealand's primary sector and rural communities."

## 1 PEOPLE



**How we look after and care for ourselves, the people in our businesses, farming families and regional communities. It includes health, safety and wellbeing.**

## 2 PROFIT



**Competitive productivity in farming enterprises. Engaging with the value chains and services that support and enable production, positioning and product sales/marketing.**

## 3 PLANET



**Ensuring ecosystems are sustainable in the long-term at individual, community, regional and national levels.**

## 4 PROGRESS



**Adaptive innovation, being able to learn and change through trial and error, being comfortable taking risks, integrating new technologies and making constant adaptions.**

## 7

## Research needs and extend reach

In March 2017, the Ministry for Primary Industries invested \$289,000 from its Sustainable Farming Fund in a project to extend AWDT development opportunities to three groups of women:

1. Young women who are entering primary sector careers.
2. Māori women in regional communities who have the potential to create and support self-sustaining enterprises that meet cultural, economic, environmental and community aims.
3. Women with careers outside agriculture and whose expertise is of value to the sector.

These groups have been on the periphery of AWDT's current offerings yet are critical to sustainable growth in the primary sector. The three-year project involves researching,

designing and delivering pilot programmes that will support these women to lead within environmental, economic and social contexts, so that businesses and communities can thrive and adapt to change.

During the year we completed research on the needs of the first of three groups of women we will be supporting - young women in primary industries. Work began to design a pilot programme for this group to be delivered in the first quarter of 2018.

Led by Escalator Alumni member, Dr Bronwyn Smits, the research involved a literature review, focus groups and a survey of more than 400 young women throughout New Zealand. Building on earlier AWDT research, it revealed more about the attitudes of women towards people, profit, planet and progress and the barriers and promoters for women's own leadership development.

## The journey from 'Yourself' to 'Myself'

We know that when women possess a stronger, more confident self-awareness, they are empowered as leaders.

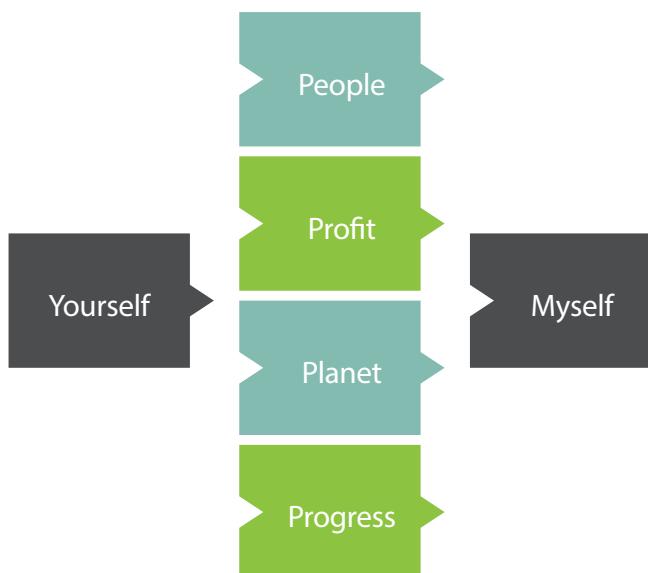
This journey that women undergo towards leadership can be described as an evolution from 'Yourself' to 'Myself'. What does this mean?

'Yourself' is women's view of their own actions and behaviour **as seen by others** and moulded by the attitudes and opinions of others.

'Myself' is **how women see themselves**, once they have found and understood their core values, strengths, purpose and potential.

This idea of the journey towards a solid, confident core is vital to realising potential and overcoming impediments or barriers to growth. Once women reach this level of self-awareness, they have the confidence to appreciate and build on their strengths.

### Summary of influences



Dr Bronwyn Smits  
Project Researcher/Escalator Alumni

## 8

# Customer-driven programmes that maximise value

An understanding of individual, industry and community needs sits at the heart of every AWDT development programme. As these needs change, our programmes are extended and adapted to meet them. In 2017, we responded to new demand and industry challenges by researching, designing and delivering two pilot programmes for two new groups.

## ■ Planning for better farm performance - together

The success of the RMPP-funded Understanding Your Farming Business programme sparked new demand from men and women for farming partners of UYFB graduates to be offered similar access to the business tools and knowledge.

With the support of RMPP, we responded to this demand by piloting a new programme for 16 couples in Feilding and Gore. It brought UYFB graduates and their farming partners together as a team to focus on business planning to increase profitability.

This programme confirmed that everything changes for farming partners when they work together to collaborate on what the future looks like and develop the right approaches and systems to get there. Conversations between partners progressed from general discussions to specific plans for improving the business with defined outcomes.



With adaptations following evaluation of the pilot, a new two-day programme called Future Focus will be rolled out to more than 100 farmers in seven regions from mid-2018.

*“Hugely beneficial to a lot more farmers out there in similar situation to us who have run their farms for 10 years thinking they are running a steady ship, but if they spoke about it they would realise there is a lot more to be learnt.”*

Pilot programme participant

## ■ Girl on Fire

In partnership with CRS Software, AWDT worked with Farming Mums New Zealand (FMNZ) to help women cope with and respond to stress and uncertainty, particularly in the dairy sector.

AWDT's original research found that confidence holds many women back from engaging in their own business and community aspirations. This was confirmed in a new survey of FMNZ members which found:

- 49% of respondents lacked confidence to achieve what they want to in life
- 45% lacked the support they needed in life right now
- 44% were not involved with a community organisation. Some wanted to be and some lacked time and/or confidence to get involved.

Our response was to design and deliver the one-day 'Girl on Fire' workshop which connected 119 FMNZ members face-to-face, building on what is happening online to help them see their value. Escalator Alumni member Julia Jones, Lindy Nelson and FMNZ founder Chanelle O'Sullivan supported the women who went away with renewed confidence and motivation to contribute to their farms, communities and industries in new ways.



*“I walked away from today inspired and feeling I now have some tools to be more confident, improve my communication and enhance my coaching skills.”*

*“Challenged me to ‘step into the arena’ and more so I will explore the best way to do that.”*

*“Absolutely loved every minute of it. I loved how we were all made to keep introducing ourselves to new people, everyone was in the same boat!”*

Girl on Fire participant



## Our partners

### Strategic partners



THE AGRICULTURAL AND MARKETING  
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### Programme partners



Ministry for Primary Industries  
Manatū Ahu Matua



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