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Research in tropical societies



Connectivity and digital inclusion in Far North Queensland agricultural communities

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Problem



According to the Australian Digital Inclusion Index, farmers in Far North Queensland are one of Australia's **most digitally excluded** populations.

Research Activities

- Field work (May-Oct 2018)
 - 3 trips to FNQ
 - 3 property visits
- Outputs
 - Participant-focused report
 - 3 case studies
 - Policy-focused report
 - The Conversation article
 - Journal article (pending)



Findings (Community-level)

- **Infrastructure and access**
 - Layering up on devices and services
 - The network of services is vital
 - Basic needs are often met, but further progress is thwarted
- **Progression of industry**
 - Lag further and further behind in fast-paced digital economy
 - Attraction and retention of workers
 - Risk of non-compliance
 - Lack of digital ability to participate in conversations about their industry, especially on social media

Findings (Household level)

- **Gender plays a role**

- Traditional western gender roles are strong
- Paradox of digital inclusion of women
- Thirst for connections and entrepreneurial drive
- Women seem more connected than men (challenge ADII stats)

- **Generational digital ability**

- Low digital ability/access of decision makers
- Competing views on on-farm tech, Mum/Dad have final say
- Kids in remote households have poor digital mentoring