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Author(s)	Byrne, Anne; Duvvury, Nata; Macken-Walsh, Áine; Watson, Tanya
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## **Finding ‘Room to Manoeuvre’: Gender, Agency and the Family Farm**

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Women on Irish farms have been a subject of feminist analysis over the past two decades. Salient themes in the literature on farm women have been the constraints of patriarchal agriculture (O’Hara 1997; Shortall, 2004), the invisibility of women’s farm work (O’Hara 1998), gender inequalities in ownership of farm assets (Watson et al. 2009), increasing professionalisation of farmwomen outside of agriculture (Kelly and Shortall 2002; Hanrahan 2007); and the need to investigate and theorise property ownership as an emerging concern. For Shortall (2004) land ownership is the critical factor underpinning male domination of the occupational category ‘farmer’, determining the power differentials between men and women in Irish family farming. Within this research nexus, the central concern of our paper is to explore how women’s property ownership acts to disrupt gender relations within family farms in Ireland.

Recent evidence suggests that gender inequality in property ownership continues to be a reality within Ireland. The 1991 Census of Agriculture indicated that only ten percent of women owned farms, with more than half (56 percent) inheriting farms on the death of their spouses, positioning widows as the most likely group to be property owners (NDP GEU 2003, 22). The 2010 Census indicates that women own just over 12 percent of farms, representing little historical change. Despite this continued restricted access and limited opportunities for women to acquire ownership

of farms and farmland, we regard instances where farmwomen do own property ‘in their own right’ critical for understanding future implications for farm family agriculture. Does women’s property ownership disturb gender relations on the farm? If so, what are the pathways of the impact on gender relations? Does it enhance agency for women in decisions made about the family farm? How is the potential discomfort of the woman property owner as an independent agent negotiated?

In selected cases of farmwomen’s experiences of ownership and management of farm property, we examine women’s agency in the context of the complex relational dynamics that take place in family farming. Reflecting on the importance of choice, we use an empirical approach that is centred on biographical narrative analysis to explore how women negotiate farm family dynamics, gendered (and generational) power relations. We understand gender as a sociological and social identity category that can be analysed, disturbed and disrupted and is constituted and reconstituted within power relations (Pini 2008). Taking note of O’Hara’s (1998, 22) claim that there is always ‘room to manoeuvre’ within the frame of family farming, and understanding women as active participants in consciously shaping own lives and identities, our analytical concern is primarily with the experiences of farmwomen as they negotiate the management and ownership of family farm property in contemporary Ireland.

Our starting point is that women traditionally enter farming through marriage and familial relations; that a gendered division of labour characterises family farms and households; that gendered identities have been characterised as unambiguous; that unequal power relations persist between men and women; and, agriculture in Ireland is best described as ‘family farming’, that privileges men, preoccupied as it is with patrilineal continuity, succession and land ownership (O’Hara 1997; Shortall, 2004).

Research findings from northern Europe reflect little or no disturbance of the prevalent pattern of male ownership of land and male predominance in the occupational category of farmer (Brandth 2002). It appears that Ireland is no exception. Cultural norms support continuity of family land ownership and patrilineal inheritance, whereby the head of household continues to farm into older age, limiting not only female farmers but younger and new entrant farmers' access to farmland.

Our analysis, framed by theoretical models of feminisation in agriculture as first mentioned by Barberis (1972), explores three cases where male farm property ownership in Ireland is disrupted in conventional and non-conventional agricultural settings<sup>i</sup>. Do these cases provide evidence of new opportunities for women to become farm property owners, and in what contexts? Our research focuses on the effects of feminisation and the relational context in which farmwomen's agency is exercised arguing that a disruption to the gender order in farm and family life is evident. How this disruption alters women's participation in farming and family life has not been fully investigated to-date. This chapter focuses on the processes whereby women become eligible and credible farmers while remaining mindful of the demands of family life.

### **Gender, Agriculture and Feminisation: the Role of Property**

The implications of feminisation processes for women's agency in agriculture is a research concern. In exploring farm women's roles in a global context, the "feminisation of agriculture", originally defined by Barberis (1972) (Inhetveen and Schmitt 2004, 84) captures growth in women's participation in agriculture (including remunerated participation and increases in farmwomen as independent property

owners and entrepreneurs (de Schutter, 2013)). Barberis (1972, 10 cited in Inhetveen & Schmitt 2004, 84) elaborated how the feminisation of agriculture can take three main forms:

“*substitution* (women taking over activities because economic development allows men to disdain them); *integration* (where women do work ostensibly considered traditional for their sex), and, *competition* (where women vie with men for equal employment opportunities and in all aspects of social and political life)”.

Inhetveen and Schmitt (2004) review a diversity of scenarios in which the feminisation of agriculture is played out, illustrating the paradoxical nature of feminisation processes that may or may not benefit farmwomen. Cernea (1978) and Pfeffer (1989) associate feminisation with the industrialisation of agriculture where women’s work burden increases, but remains invisible and largely unpaid; and de Schutter (2013, 34) attributes women’s increased formal participation in the agricultural labour force as potentially “exercising a pressure downwards on wages of all farmworkers”. Equally, feminisation processes can refer to improving women’s position within agriculture particularly within the alternative agricultural economy. Here women are identified as pioneers pursuing entrepreneurship in new markets such as rural tourism and niche food. It is in this context that Ventura (1994, 27 cited in Inhetveen and Schmitt, 2004, 86) observed the phenomenon of ‘progressive feminisation’ where farmwomen “went beyond imitating the male pattern or traditional pattern in which women either depended on men or replaced them”. This form of feminisation is echoed in Pini’s (2008) discussion of a “new feminine subject position in agri-politics, that of the ‘alternative agricultural activist’” (Liepins 1998, 376, cited in Pini 2008, 101) where women are assuming managerial roles in

organisations outside of conventional agriculture. Such progressive feminisation is directly associated with Almås' (1991) masculinisation thesis, resulting from women's movement away from family farms through off or indeed on-farm work, with possible reduced agency for farmwomen.

A question that arises from the feminisation literature is the role of property ownership in determining beneficial outcomes and opportunities for enhancing women's agency. Shortall's (1999, 72) analysis of Irish farmwomen's gradual disenfranchisement from the dairy sector identified men's ownership and women's lack of ownership of dairy farms as the invasive underpinning determinant. Gidarkou, Kazakopoulos and Koutsouris's (2003, 409) study of Greek farmwomen's uptake of policy measures targeted at young owners of farmland, found that farmwomen property owners who entered farming on the basis of personal choice, were provided with opportunities to "establish – and subsequently strengthen – their social and economic autonomy in the farming household". This echoes research undertaken by Bhatla, Duvvury and Chakraborty (2010, 231) indicating that the protective function of property ownership against domestic violence was contingent on women's active involvement in their property, including "...the woman's access to it and her ability to control and make decisions about it". As a counterpoint, however, one of the less optimistic conclusions reached by Gidarkou et al (2003, 40) is that at least a quarter of the women's entry to farming and their ownership of farms represented a strategy for farm men within their households to access policy benefits with the women heads never becoming involved in farming in "any real way". This finding, representing cases where men continued to operate and control farms despite farmwomen's ownership, is consistent with Bhatla, Duvvury and Chakraborty's (2010) finding that women's lack of access to and active involvement in their property mitigates against

the potential benefits for women arising from their ownership. In a broader discussion of feminisation of agriculture processes, de Schutter (2013) highlights the crucial role of farmwomen's choices in understanding how different agricultural scenarios (industrial waged farm labour on one hand and family farming on the other, for example) lead to enhanced empowerment and agency for women. De Schutter's (2013) emphasis on choice points to the importance of agency, which can be either effective (improving the quality of life within defined parameters) or transformatory (resisting or struggling with the defined parameters initiating a longer term process of change in family/social values, roles and responsibilities) (Kabeer 2005). Kabeer (2005, 438) clarifies that agency includes not only bargaining and negotiation but also "deception and manipulation, subversion and resistance as well as more intangible, cognitive processes of reflection and analysis." Clearly, women's access to, involvement in and control of farm property deserves further consideration in the Irish context.

### **Data and method**

In this chapter we analyse three empirical cases of where feminisation processes are evident and in which farm women's agency is deployed. We draw from two qualitative datasets, both of which were generated using the Biographic Narrative Interpretive Method (BNIM) over a recent time period (2009-2011). BNIM is both a method for eliciting narrative expression and is concerned with the analysis of 'inner' and 'outer' worlds of historically and culturally situated individuals (Wengraf 2004). The first of the datasets represents four BNIM cases of women property owners in rural Ireland, operating both within and outside of conventional agriculture. The second dataset represents 10 BNIM cases of diverse farm partnerships between men, and men and women, including those related and unrelated by kin. Across all fourteen

cases, a high-level thematic analysis suggests that feminisation processes (substitutive, integrative, competitive, and progressive) resonate with the experiences of Irish women and men. Informed by feminist theories of agency (cf. Kabeer 2005), our thematic analysis led to the selection of three paradigmatic cases of women in family farming. The cases include two farmer women, one a full-time farm property owner, the other a full-time farm lease holder, and the third a full time off farm main income earner. Following O’Hara (1998, 162), our analytical focus is towards “women as active agents who challenge and negotiate patriarchal structures or even use the tension between capitalism and patriarchy for their own ends”. In querying how farm women influence ownership and management of farm property and the consequences for gender relations, we explore particular incident narratives<sup>ii</sup> of resistance to, rejection of and negotiation with patriarchal power.

### **Case Studies: Irish Farmwomen and Property**

A farmer and landowner in her own right

Our first case concerns a married woman, a professional farmer, who continued to operate her farm independently from the farm of her husband after marriage. The farm woman is the more prominent farmer of the two and had formal education and training in agricultural production. The spouses entered into a joint farming enterprise under the auspices of a Milk Production Partnership (MPP),<sup>iii</sup> a consensual decision motivated by the financial benefit attainable through stock relief as well as increased pension entitlements.

The narratives of both spouses consistently illustrated a keen awareness of production efficiencies, demonstrating strong motivations to operate a commercially oriented, economically viable farm. As rules at the time required farm partnerships to



operate under a single herd number<sup>iv</sup>, the couple decided that the joint farm enterprise would operate under the farmwoman's herd number. This is unique to the 10 farm partnership cases studied and an outlier in the context of MPP statistics which show that only .3 percent operate using women's established herd numbers (Roche, 2013). The discontinuation of the farm man's herd number – a number that had been transferred from generation to generation of his farm family - was highly symbolic and premised on his recognition of the superior assets and farming skill of the farmwoman, her clear ownership of her farm and his perception of changing societal attitudes towards the roles of women in general. The farmwoman was adamant that her number be preserved, while her spouse, although regretful that his family herd number would be discontinued, had agreed "to surrender" his herd number. "So it's eh that was probably the big one, from I suppose from em eh the hardest thing at the time I suppose was... but I had to surrender my herd number". The symbolic importance of the farm woman retaining her herd number, identifying herself as not 'just married in' to the farm but a farmer and landowner in her own right, is significant in both spouses' narratives. The farm woman had retained her farm as an independent entity in her own name after marriage and wished to continue to retain her herd number despite entry to a farm partnership. Her wish to do so is couched in her feelings of solidarity with the historical and contemporary contexts of women's subordinate roles in agriculture.

*Well what I felt myself is, I felt my mother worked hard for years and I felt a lot of women worked hard for years and they weren't seen in their own right and they had no title to nothing after all the work they did over the years in the farms they married into. So I didn't want that to happen to me really because I said I was farmer in my own right, I worked hard all my*

*life on the farm, I was entitled to keep my own name, that's why I kept my own name and I thought this was a better way of trying to keep all that together kind of thing really.*

The perceived impotency of women's past lives and unappreciated labour transforms the significance of the herd number for this farm woman. The herd number becomes a potent symbol that protects her from the legacy of the past and catalyses the farm woman's sense of her own agency and capabilities. In her refusal to repeat, reproduce or recapitulate to normative conventions, the farmwoman constitutes a different future for herself. The prioritisation of business efficiency over hegemonic traditions of ownership and management of farmland was evident in the spouses' narratives. Post partnership, the amalgamated farm was referred to as the farmwoman's farm rather than 'my' or 'our' farm. "I always call it 'tis (spouse's) farm..." (Male Spouse). The farm man spoke of how his natal family members were initially less than happy with the family farm entering into a farm partnership. The farm woman's bond with and care for his parents mediated the disruption to traditional ownership patterns to a significant extent. Her father-in-law continued his involvement in what ostensibly became the farmwoman's farm. The farm man described his parents as "ahead of their time" in their attitudes to change, transferring the family farm to him when he was only 24 years old.

In summary, the woman's background in agricultural education, her clear prior ownership of her property, her proven record in effective management of a productive farm and her desire to be a farmer 'in her own right', enabled her to position herself in the occupational category of farmer. The farmwoman's sentiments of solidarity with generations of farmwomen who had little or no access to property combined with the farm man's supportive recognition of the right of the farmwoman, to be a professional

farmer, were significant. The farm man's parents' accommodating attitudes to change and provision of practical support as well as the farmwoman's caring relationship with her parents-in-law, eased the change in traditional ownership patterns, subsuming the farm man's natal farm into her stronger farm.

### Struggling to be accepted as a competent farmer

Our second case relates to a farm woman born into a family farm, who sought to become a professional farmer in her own right, having attended formal agricultural education. The farm woman, similar to farm men awaiting inheritance of family farms, felt inhibited and often undermined by the farm owner, her father, to the extent that she could not apply her knowledge and skills on the family farm. In the absence of support from her father and feeling constrained in her ambitions for the family farm, she left farming. She explained: "I was after going to ag. college so he wasn't taking me seriously I suppose with some of it too. But ehm, it was nothing really, but enough that I wouldn't stay on farming with him. You know I'd say "we should be at this now" and he'd say "ya right" and then it never happened. Ehm...he's just not a farmer." She felt she had the capacity and competencies to provide valuable inputs into the farm productive process, but her father, the landowner, did not recognise or utilise her knowledge and skills. In turn she interrogates what it means to be a farmer and challenges her father's performance of the profession as she understands it.

Initially she worked as a contractor for Farm Relief Services<sup>v</sup>, and then ran a retail business partnership with a friend that facilitated a better work and family balance, having subsequently married and had children. Her tacit and acquired knowledge of farming, the complex relational skills developed while working in a male-dominated profession, the development of a strong business acumen as an

entrepreneur and the complexities of joining family and work lives, eventually enabled her to negotiate a return to the family farm. She leased farmland from her father to establish a long desired on-farm tourist enterprise, namely a 'pet farm'. Though constrained from making decisions or implementing changes on the main or 'host' farm, to her surprise her father had unquestioningly agreed to lease land to her for her tourism enterprise. She stated, "He had no hesitation at all. He just said 'ya go for it'." And "He didn't say anything really. Not at all. Anything at all. And let me belt on".

Looking back to an earlier phase in her life, the farmwoman recognised that her father was not ready to include her in his farming enterprise, despite the fact that she was the only heir. This may have been due to his own experience of a delayed transfer of the farm from father to son (he was 45), his receipt of EU payments for farming, his understanding that traditional farming was for men only in conjunction with the importance of the occupational identity of farmer to himself and to others. But his advancing age, her mother's support for her eventual inheritance of the family farm and her own desire to establish a tourism related pet farm enterprise, provided the opportunity she needed. As she noted, "I would have done it about 15 years ago only daddy wasn't ready. He was still farming the land strong at that stage using cattle and he was doing tillage and so then as things started to go downhill I just said to him, 'would you be interested?' and he said 'ya'. So that's when we started".

The farm woman's pet farm enterprise falls within the category of alternative or non-conventional agriculture, and although requiring significant farming skill, is prominently oriented to providing a service to visitors. The farm woman had visited similar enterprises and was aware of the diversification movement. She stated, "Diversification was coming in and just thought like, well if they can do it I can do it

like d'you know?". Despite her father's intransigence concerning the transfer of the main farm, ("He's as stubborn as the tree there"), she is more confident that she will inherit the whole farm as her father approaches retirement. Her diversified business may in fact be the means for accomplishing full ownership. As the business becomes more profitable, she can foresee the possibility of offering her father an annual payment in return for full possession of the family farm. Despite the rejections and resistances, finding 'room to manoeuvre' within the overlapping frames of family and (non-conventional) farming, provides the pathway into full farm ownership for this farmwoman.

In this case the farm woman actively seeks a solution for negotiating change between masculinisation and progressive feminisation processes that maintains familial bonds and secures the viability of the family farm. While not yet a full owner of the family farm, her diversification enterprise is intended to provide the financial means to 'retire' her father from farming and pursue her ambitions for the development of the farm enterprise. Her determination and fortitude is impressive. Her father's lack of recognition of her achievements, competencies and evident interest in farming, amounts to his refusal to acknowledge his daughter as 'farmer'. This is not a refusal she accepts and in turn she questions his entitlement to be professionally identified as a farmer. She continues to consciously strategise in order to disturb his sole possession of the occupational category while acknowledging his intransigence, "He will never change". In the meantime she has found a way of living alongside her father, contributing to the family farm economy and actively reconstituting own personal and professional identity as farmer.

Rebounding on masculinisation: farmwomen's agency through off-farm work

Our third case represents the influence of farmwomen on decisions to enter into a farm partnership with another farm. The impetus to establish a farm partnership between two neighboring dairy farmers was strongly driven by one of the spouses of the two male farmers. This case is a contrast to the previous two cases as the farmwoman neither owns nor leases farm property. The farm woman is involved in occasional work on the farm, as well as working full-time off the farm, for which she undertakes a long daily commute. The couple has young children of school age. The farm man is the main farm operator with little or no help, as modeled by Almås' 'one man farm' (Almås 2010). The spouses' narratives concern their persistent difficulties managing work time and family time; unsuccessfully negotiating competing time demands for labour intensive farm work, full-time off farm employment, travel time, while caring for young children. These difficulties provided the impetus to seek an alternative solution. Entry into a farm partnership was strongly driven by the farmwoman as the couple sought to find a workable solution to their time-related problems which was a source of stress and distress. The male spouse commented, "It's the issue of time. We had no time. It was a major problem I can't tell you". The farmwoman reached a point where she could no longer sustain the 'double burden' of working full-time outside the home while caring for children and undertaking the vast majority of household and domestic work. As the main income earner, and appraising the economic rationale of child-care costs that surpassed farm income, she felt that she could influence the decision to enter the farm into a farm partnership. She reflected, " So I, we couldn't go on as I was mm and... he was...not there. It was madness because we were losing like... with everything all the time". It was on these grounds that the farm partnership model was identified as a potentially promising venture, echoing Kirkbak and Flo's (2005) study of Norwegian farm partnerships.

Our qualitative data illustrate evidence of women working off farm as economically powerful actors negotiating the settlement of the competing claims of farm work, paid employment, household and caring responsibilities. In reference to O'Hara's (1998) categories of women's working relationships (helper, homemaker, working for the family farm, farmwomen in paid work) this case could be described as 'working for the family'.

### **Conclusion**

Gender power relations in farming in Ireland have been previously described as fitting family farm discourse with unambiguous subject positions. In utilizing the feminisation thesis to elucidate women's experiences of farm family management and property ownership, our evidence suggests that both men and women's subject positions are undergoing alteration, showing more ambiguity than previously anticipated. While this may be indicative of change, a closer focus on agency is advised. The selection of data here concerns women negotiating with spouses and fathers about the family farm allowing the following observations. The narrative data point to the significance of agricultural education, prior property ownership, evident success at farming and/or main breadwinner status as supporting women's agency. Family support, awareness of the lack of recognition given to women's contribution to family farming historically, combined with women's collective rights to equal treatment are also needed for change to occur. Our data provide evidence of both effective and transformatory agency in women's narratives.

There are also examples in the narratives of women's (and men's) resistance to patriarchal power, subverting domination by developing skills and experiences off farm, enabling a return to farming that supports the sustainability of the family farm

and opening up succession opportunities for future generations of women. Farm partnerships with spouses emerge as important legal and opportunity structures to enable women to express their own occupational identity as farmer, which requires ideological adjustment from spouses and family members. We argue that these cases are illustrative of 'reconstitutive feminisation', an elaboration on substitutive, integrative, competitive and progressive feminisation as well as masculinisation of agriculture. The societal shift in resources (educational, economic, cultural) towards women, opens up the possibility for changes to occur in both productive and reproductive activities. 'Reconstitutive feminization' places the emphasis on the changes that take place at the level of self as well as effectively negotiating within the farm family concerning productive (farm work) and reproductive (family work) activities.

In the first case, highlighting the complex power dynamics of multiple family relationships between two family farms, the spouses are aware of disrupting patriarchal relations and found 'room to manoeuvre'. In this case, competitive feminisation was articulated and facilitated by professional competencies, drawing on available ideological resources of equal opportunity, and a feminised orientation to care and relationship building. The farmwoman recognised that the relational bonds of marriage and family enabled her to position herself as a credible and eligible candidate as farmer of the amalgamated farms. In this repositioning, her personal identity and professional identity of farmer are aligned, demonstrating effective agency that arguably may manifest as transformatory agency in the longer term.

Women becoming independent entrepreneurs 'in their own right' by establishing on or off farm enterprises, represents a route for progressive feminisation, an intentional strategy to avoid the constraints of traditional patriarchal agriculture. In



our second case, the farmwoman's establishment of a 'pet farm' represented a departure from conventional agriculture in which she had formal training and was involved in all of her life. To some extent this case represents Almås' (1991) masculinisation processes in her father's refusal to transfer the farm to her provoking her exit from farming. Aspects of integrative feminisation are evident in her return through setting up a 'pet farm', an activity characterised as having 'feminine' traits and arguably not in direct competition with her father. While aware of the impact of factors such as ownership status, marriage status vis-à-vis the farm owner, earning capacity, and the nature of habitual power relations in the farm family, our narrative data consistently showed evidence of farmwomen having at least *some* but more often than not *considerable* influence on decisions relating to ownership and management of the family farm.

Women also the struggle to overcome the competing claims for a family life, maintain relations of intimacy while managing the time and energy demands of productive off farm and less productive on farm employment. The economic resilience of Irish family farms is increasingly tied to off farm income (Teagasc, 2011) –with fifty-two percent of farmwomen working off farm, indicating that more than half of their income was “regularly taken up by the household and/or farm” (Meredith, 2013). In our third case the woman initiated a process of decision-making to alter the operational status of the farm to improve family life and achieve more integrated parental roles in family care. Masculinisation processes can be understood as rebounding on agriculture as women leverage their economic power outside agriculture to influence farm family decision-making.

These cases provide evidence of the repositioning of women in family farming that are not fully captured by the feminsiation thesis to date. The narrative data

suggest that women's agency serves to protect their sense of themselves as a person, their family care and economic welfare while remaining linked to family farm sustainability. In all of the three cases there is evidence of effective agency as women seek to secure the sustainability of the farm enterprise but positioning themselves as significant actors who can initiate change on behalf of themselves or their families. In each of the cases, women's access to economic resources (land and income earned) expanded the possibility for their participation in making real choices about the farm economy and family life, disrupting traditional gender and generational relations. This in effect is transformatory agency at work. The reconstitutive feminisation thesis is compelling as it shows how women empower themselves in the context of the family farm to become eligible and credible candidates for the occupational category of farmer. This is contingent on a number of factors; including the farmwoman's agricultural skills and knowledge, her capacity for entrepreneurship, her level of property ownership, and her access to off or in farm income. What this suggests is that family relations and farm sustainability issues cannot not be treated as separate spheres. Reconstitutive feminisation captures the process whereby women return to the family farm and initiate a series of purposive and meaningful actions in concert with men that enable them to be active participants in shaping and re-shaping their own lives as farmers, daughters, wives and mothers. It also engages with disturbances to identity and gender relations as women participate in joint decision making with fathers and spouses concerning productive initiatives in the farm economy and required adjustments in family relations, demonstrating effective *and* transformatory agency. As women position themselves in farm and family decision making, they are clearly no longer subject or subordinate but articulate and determined to be farmers and active participants in the family farm, as expressed by the repetition of the

phrase, *'in my own right'*. Women come to the fore with a *sense* of agency, or with 'awareness of meaning, motivation and purpose' of their actions (Kabeer 2005, 14). Thus in reconstitutive feminisation both agency and a sense of agency weave together producing transformatory agency. In the context of new empirical evidence of women's ownership and of outcomes of policy measures, such as Ireland's incentivising of joint farming ventures, reconstitutive feminisation provides a nuanced framework to analyse disturbances to patriarchal power in the context of changing rural gender relations.

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<sup>ii</sup> Particular incident narratives are a feature of BNIM. See Wengraf (2004).

<sup>iii</sup> Currently there are 662 registered partnerships, of which 25 percent involve women as partners (Roche 2013) and of these, 15 percent of the women had their own land prior to participation in a partnership.

<sup>iv</sup> A herd number is issued by the District Veterinary Office for the purposes of disease control to the person responsible for care and maintenance of animals on the land used by the owner of the animals for farming purposes (Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Information Note 280513, 2007).

<sup>v</sup> Farm Relief Services (FRS) is a farmer-owned co-operative organisation that provides farmers with general farm labour and specialist farm services of skilled, locally based operators from their contractor register.